

THE ROLE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION
IN
SOUTH AFRICAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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requirements for the degree of Magister Educationis in the
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KEYWORDS

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Relaxation and Leisure

ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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The minithesis argues that Physical Education is marginalised in the South African primary school education sector. Through this marginalisation, Physical Education has been reduced from having full subject status, to being only one of the components, of one of the primary school learning areas [subjects], namely, Life Orientation. Simultaneously, Physical Education finds itself in a situation in which it is generally being taught by a class teacher and no longer by a specialist Physical Education teacher. Possible reasons for this marginalisation are expressed, however, the argument that Physical Education is an imperative in the holistic development of the child, is also espoused.

The minithesis critically examines the route that South African primary school education is taking and focuses on the issues of holistic education and development, Outcomes-based Education and Life Orientation. In addition, these issues are linked to the concept of holism, and the value and potential that Physical Education has in developing the primary school learner holistically, are identified, as well as elaborated upon. Furthermore, Physical Education is linked to imperatives such as personal development, health promotion, health education and health promoting schools. Therefore, the minithesis attempts to substantiate the significant, positive and educational role that this phenomenon, namely, Physical Education, plays in these lifestyle and education imperatives.

In conclusion, the minithesis proposes a course of action that requires a paradigm shift from the current South African primary school education model, to a more holistic one. In their deliberations and eventual strategies, education policy developers, curriculum planners and educators, need to consider and make provision for total and complete holistic education and development. In so doing they need to include Physical Education in the South African primary school system, as well as provide exposure and access to its true and full potential.

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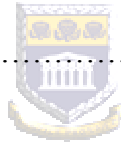
DECLARATION

I declare that *The Role Of Physical Education In South African Primary Schools* is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

PAUL CHARLES HENDRICKS

SEPTEMBER 2004

SIGNED:



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DEDICATION


The minithesis is dedicated to you,
Lyle and Tammy
and may it serve as a source of inspiration in your further studies,
healthy living, lifelong activity and lifelong learning experiences.

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CHAPTER 1

THE MARGINALISATION OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

During the period 1948 to 1994, South African society was characterised by a segregated and racist policy framework, referred to as, apartheid. The apartheid framework ensured an unequal and divided South African education system, with nineteen education departments. These education departments were structured around issues of race, geography and ideology. Each department functioned independently of the others and promoted the social, political and economic positions that the people of its constituency occupied under the then apartheid government (Department of Education, 2002b:4).



In February 1996, having realised its new democracy in 1994, South Africa's Department of Education [DoE], through its "Education White Paper 2" informed the country of its new position on "The Organisation, Governance and Funding of Schools" (Department of Education, 1996:1-35). All schools now ultimately functioned under one education system that was driven by the country's national Department of Education, along with its nine provincial structures (Department of Education, 1996:1-35).

In its steps towards correcting the separate and unequal schooling system of the apartheid era, the Department of Education introduced the notion of a single learner-teacher ratio. The ratio relevant to the ordinary primary schools was 40:1, which meant that at each of these schools, one teacher would be allocated for every 40 learners. Once the necessary calculations and appropriate teacher allocations were made, there where teachers were in surplus, they were deemed as

being in excess of the staff establishment of the school. These teachers had to leave that particular school and either be redeployed to an understaffed school, or they were offered a voluntary severance package, which afforded them the opportunity to exit the education system. This whole process of rationalisation was also known as the “*right-sizing*”, or in some cases, the “*down-sizing*” process (Department of Education, 1996:1-35).

Since the right-sizing process, which started in 1996, there is a perspective that argues that Physical Education is being seriously compromised by some of the changes that have taken place in the South African education system. Kloppers (2000:3) explains:

The right-sizing of teaching staff at State schools has resulted in most schools losing their physical education (PE) teachers rather than staff who taught academic subjects. Schools in disadvantaged areas are worse off than schools in middle class areas, which are in a position to employ coaches and teachers over and above the quota of teachers allotted to them by the State. The salaries for these posts are obtained from school fees. The result of this disparity has increased the gap between former “White” and “Black” schools [The term Black is used in a generic sense to include all previously disadvantaged schools].

In response to Kloppers’ explanation, one of Western Cape Education Department’s Chief Curriculum Advisers, Wayne Alexander (personal interview, 02 September 2003), said that whilst he agreed with the explanation, one aspect in particular, needed to be highlighted, clarified and understood. This aspect is that when Kloppers speaks of “losing their physical education [PE] teachers”, he is implying that the affected schools transformed a Physical Education specialist into a class teacher.

The main focus of class teachers was the delivery of a number of different subjects to their own classes. They did not have the time to teach Physical Education to all the other classes. However, the affected teachers remained fully-fledged staff members of their respective schools. Alexander (personal interview,

02 September 2003) then further explains that while the relevant teacher still remained on the staff establishment of the school, most schools generally had very little or no access to a specialist Physical Education teacher. This in turn brought about the deterioration and, in many cases, the demise of Physical Education at schools. In addition, through the process of syllabus revision, subject rationalisation and ultimately, the development of a unitary, national curriculum, Physical Education no longer finds itself as a subject with its own identity (Department of Education, 2002b:4). It now functions as only one of the focus areas, of one of the learning areas, namely, Life Orientation. Life Orientation includes the learning outcome, Physical Development and Movement, which covers the subject matter, Physical Education (Department of Education, 2002a:4-7).

During the post-apartheid period of South African transformation and reform, the focus of the majority of schools shifted to the more classroom-based and academic-based content. This led to the apparent lack of focus on the more creative-based and activity-based content like the Arts and Physical Education.



Generally there are two schools of thought around the status of Physical Education. The first school of thought holds the view that Physical Education should form an essential part of the core curriculum. The other is that Physical Education, whilst important to the child's development, is regarded as being of secondary importance to the core curriculum, especially when an institution wants to improve its poor academic performance (Gabbard, 2000:19). The minithesis however, will show the imperative role that Physical Education can play in South African primary schools. It will also elaborate on how South Africa can deliver holistic education and development to the South African learner.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

In recent years, the staff establishment of the South African schools that ranges from Grades R to 7 has been right-sized by the state, so as to accommodate a

learner-teacher ratio of 40:1 (Department of Education, 1996:25). With schools now limited to one teacher for every 40 learners at primary schools, the workload involved in this type of exercise results in class teachers shifting their main focus to that of completing and laying emphasis on the classroom-based and academic-based syllabi. Added to this is the fact that Physical Education has lost its subject status and has now been reduced to a single learning outcome of the South African primary school education system (Department of Education, 2002a:6). This situation creates neither an environment, nor conditions conducive for a specialised and practical entity like Physical Education to take place. As a result, Physical Education has become marginalised and at times, ignored. In certain instances the subject matter is deemed as being time consuming and irrelevant for the teacher who has to conclude a syllabus, and the learner who has projects, designs, demonstrations and research to complete, as well as tasks, tests, assignments and assessments to pass. This is a shift from the apartheid era when Physical Education formed part of the curriculum and there was the perception that as a teacher, one had direct access to the educational value of Physical Education.



1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE PROBLEM

In the minithesis I argue that the full potential of Physical Education is not being realised in South African primary school teacher practice. Possible reasons for this are:

- The 40:1 learner-teacher ratio;
- Very few specialist Physical Education teachers;
- Physical Education is not given priority status (Department of Education, 1997c:19);
- In addition, Physical Education has also undergone a name change. It is now called “Physical Development and Movement” (Department of Education, 2002a:7);

- In Grades R to 9, only one lesson period per cycle is allocated for Physical Education. This translates to approximately thirty minutes per week. (Doreen Solomons, personal interview, 02 May 2004);
- There is either a lack of interest or lack of resources within the schools (Doreen Solomons, personal interview, 02 May 2004); and
- There is a lack of knowledge of the benefits of Physical Education (Marion Lees, personal interview, 03 May 2004).

Despite this marginalisation of the subject, the argument is presented that Physical Education can still make a contribution to the holistic education and development of the learner, even when only functioning as a single learning outcome of a learning area. Also, as a Physical Education practice, it can contribute to the objectives of education. In further support of this argument, I contend that Physical Education practices can contribute to the prevention of health-related problems, as well as improve the learners' quality of life and learning capacity and capability.



While highlighting the contributions that Physical Education can still make within the limited space that has been created for it, it is my intention in the minithesis to examine how Physical Education is generally being treated in the South African primary school education system. I also focus on the fact that the vast majority of South African schools continue to “lack the capacity to serve as a means to health” (World Health Organisation [WHO], 1995:1). According to the WHO (1995:1), “Many schools place the health of students and school personnel at risk”, however, “there are ways to eliminate or reduce such risk, but many schools will require increased capacity to become health promoting schools”.

1.4 ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM

In presenting my insight and position regarding the role of Physical Education in South African primary schools, I:

- a) *utilise* various primary and secondary sources of literature and conduct various interviews with relevant role-players, while adopting an analytical and philosophical approach. I attempt to give evidence for, and substantiate, why Physical Education should be placed more strategically and with greater emphasis within the South African primary schools system;
- b) *address* the related issues that give rise to the apparent marginalisation of Physical Education. I also attempt to research its status and the reasons it should not be marginalised as a practice within the South African primary school system, as is presently happening;
- c) *investigate* the integral function of Physical Education and its possible potential in the holistic education and development of the learner;
- d) *research* how Physical Education links with the Life Orientation learning area. This will be done against the backdrop of the relevant South African primary school Life Orientation policy documents;
- e) *examine* the objectives of education, bearing in mind that “educational objectives are often classified into three domains or areas of behavior: cognitive [thinking], affective [feeling], and psychomotor [doing]” (Wuest & Bucher, 1995:67); and
- f) *focus* on the issue of Physical Education within the ambit of health promotion, as “health education concerns itself with the total well-being of the individual, encompassing physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual health” (Wuest & Bucher, 1995:12). Health Education also focuses on the health and welfare of the whole person. “There can be no doubt that South Africa’s prosperity is dependent upon the health and welfare of its population. Therefore, all learners should be provided with a sound knowledge of the benefits of healthy living and a safe way of living” (Department of Education, 1997c:19).

Presently, according to Alexander (personal interview, 02 September 2003) and Nariman Khan (personal interview, 16 April 2004), generally in South Africa, there is a decline in good family values, morals, respect and dignified behaviour.

The elements that seem to be coming to the fore include individualism, materialism and selfishness. Unfortunately, each of these elements has the potential to give rise to an unhealthy environment. However, by learning about and implementing the proper health promotion strategies, South Africans will be privy to quality information around healthy living and lifelong activity. They will also develop and grow as individuals, as well as become team players with healthy lifestyles. This will go a long way in assisting the country in its growth, as well as provide it with tools to lever itself out of a crumbling societal state and elevate it to a position where it enjoys the moral high ground. Through healthy interaction and teamwork, South Africans will have access to nation building elements like common and shared visions, missions, values and definitions. These will provide the country with the roots that it needs to anchor itself, while also creating the opportunity for it to take itself to a higher level. Zohar and Marshall, who are proponents of the “ultimate intelligence”, which is “the intelligence with which we balance meaning and value, and place our lives in a wider context” (Zohar & Marshall, 2001:Back Cover), claim:



If the healing that results is on a personal level, we get ‘everyday’ or personal art – a painting, say, a novel, a style of dress or a deep personal relationship that heals the artist. If healing takes place on a transpersonal level, beyond the ego and beyond the existing culture, we get transpersonal or ‘great’ art, the art of a Bach or a Dante or a Dostoyevsky, which can heal a whole culture (Zohar & Marshall, 2001:249).

This quote is extremely relevant to the whole concept of health promotion and the healing process. It emphasises the need to move beyond the self and personal desires. By implication, the quote highlights the shallowness of individualism, materialism and selfishness. One can only but imagine just how much the country will develop and grow were this way of thinking and approach to life entrenched in the South African education system. The WHO (1995:1) explains:

The school is an extraordinary setting through which to improve the health of students, school personnel, families and members of the community. It is a means to support the basic human

rights of both education and health. It offers opportunities to achieve significant health and education benefits with investments of scarce education and health resources.

As such, the school should ultimately be preparing the future human resources of South Africa for the various roles that they will have to play and the type of lives that they will lead in this dynamic society of ours. It is therefore imperative for the state to realise the potential and importance of Physical Education, as well as the need for Physical Education to form an essential part of the core curriculum. During its realisation process, the state should concomitantly and on an equitable basis, increase the status, input and scheduling of Physical Education.

1.5 OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 introduces the research and outlines the problem relating to the diminished role of Physical Education in South African primary schools. Furthermore, this chapter delineates the background to, and rationale for, the minithesis. As such, it states the intent, aims, methodology and relevance of the minithesis. Ultimately, Chapter 1 provides a context for the minithesis, while also giving an overview of the relevant chapters.

Chapter 2 explores, investigates and examines international literature regarding the role of Physical Education in the education system of various countries. It speaks of the need for Physical Education in the primary school sector and of the different approaches and attitudes towards the subject matter. Following this, it highlights some of the problems experienced when teachers attempt to implement Physical Education as a learning area at their schools.

Chapter 3 outlines the historical development of the Physical Education curriculum in South African primary schooling. It gives a brief explanation of the Physical Education inequities of the apartheid era and then outlines the introduction of Physical Education into a post-apartheid South Africa.

Chapter 4 focuses on the present status of Physical Education in the South African schooling system. It gives an interpretation of what the Physical Education field covers. Chapter 4 also defines Physical Education, the challenges that it faces, and its anticipated contributions to the development of the whole child.

Chapter 5 describes the latest developments in education and focuses on issues like holism, holistic education and development, whole school development, Outcomes-based Education, Life Orientation and health promoting schools.

Chapter 6 explains how Physical Education can best be adapted to fit in with the new developments in education, in order to contribute to the appropriate development of the primary school learner. It also looks at the lessons that the implementers of Physical Education can learn from studies done elsewhere in the world.

Chapter 7 deals with the way forward for Physical Education and its role in South African primary schools. It establishes a vision and mission and proposes various implementation strategies to pave the way forward. This chapter elaborates on how Physical Education can contribute to lifelong activity and healthy living. It also looks at the health of the whole person and how Physical Education can contribute to the collective condition and integrated whole of the mind, body and soul. This integrated state of being is essential to actualising potential.



CHAPTER 2

INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Today's primary school education aims at providing experiences for learners, so as to enable them to realise their capacity as active and participatory members of society. It is the role of the school to develop the learners' lateral and creative thinking skills while also giving them access to a broad educational base, covering a myriad of topics (Department of Education, 2002b:8). This will capacitate them with the ability to explore all their alternatives and make informed decisions in life. The learners need to be stimulated and motivated in order for them to realise their full potential, yet also to realise that they are ultimately responsible for their own actions.

Thomas, Lee and Thomas (1988a:5) claim that:

Physical Education makes an important contribution to total development. Even though educators talk about "the total child", during a typical school day, time and energy are devoted primarily to academic subject matter. Educators express concern for the social, emotional, and aesthetic needs of the child – planned sequences are provided for these concerns – yet

physical education, like music and art, is taught when time is left over. If the child is truly a physical, intellectual, and social being, then educational plans must meet the whole needs of the child. A child's physical needs go beyond food and shelter; for good health a child requires vigorous physical activity. To maximise a child's total development, physical activity must be planned by the teacher and systematically performed by the child.

Physical Education as a discipline, therefore, goes beyond primary school education, as it has a significant impact on both, society and its people. Entities such as sport, health and nutrition, which are by-products of Physical Education, can provide individuals with stability, especially when all else seems to be lost. Furthermore, lifelong activity and healthy living are built on the very foundation of fitness and nutrition education, which are also by-products of Physical Education.

2.2 THE NEED FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION



Physical activity and more specifically, Physical Education, is an imperative for the total education of primary school learners. It helps them to realise mind-body-soul unity (Holdstock, 1991[a]:50-51). It also capacitates the child with the ability to seek victory while managing defeat and to become citizens of the world without foregoing their citizenship of their own country.

By nature, Physical Education encourages learners to explore and find their own solutions to their physical movement and physical activity problems. This type of exposure to problem solving activities will assist learners in becoming problem solvers, as they engage in the development of their own solutions, defend their uniqueness and maintain their sense of individuality. Engaging in the problem solving process builds character, as well as boosts the self-image and self-esteem of the individual (Wuest & Bucher, 1995:118).

Two components of Physical Education, namely, physical activity and physical movement, are valuable and essential components to the educational experience, as they make a positive contribution to the lives of people. Physical activity and physical movement ensure that while learners are involved in intellectual pursuits, the necessary balance for them to realise their full potential as human beings is provided, as these two components provide the learners with their all important physical experiences.

Therefore, as a consequence of what Physical Education has to offer, South Africa, as part of its commitment to the transformation and development of education and its commitment to the holistic development and growth of the country's children, needs to re-examine its education system. South Africa needs to introduce the concepts of development, growth and education through Physical Education. Physical Education must not be seen as an obscure entity whose meaning and identity must either be searched for, or extracted, from another body of knowledge. Rather, a clearly defined approach will assist the subject matter in developing its own profile and legitimacy, and prevent it from either being replaced, or becoming the marginalised educational component, which is happening currently.

2.3 THE VARYING APPROACHES TO PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Countries are unique and therefore approach initiatives and situations in unique ways. Similarly, Physical Education practices differ from country to country. For example, the Irish schools apply a holistic approach to Physical Education. They emphasise the contribution that Physical Education makes to the growth of individual, as well as group, well-being. In Ireland, the learning of Physical Education involves the acquisition of knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes. The Irish also recognise Physical Education's potential for integration with other curriculum areas (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 2003:1).

In South Africa, Life Orientation, the learning area of which Physical Education is a component, is arguably the central learning area in the South African education system. Life Orientation creates opportunities for learners to capacitate and empower themselves in an integrated and holistic manner, and it provides opportunities for learners to develop necessary life skills, for example, one skill that learners must develop, is the maintenance of a healthy and active lifestyle. It is here where Physical Education really comes into its own as a learning outcome and potential learning area, as amongst other things, it contributes to, for example, the functioning of most of the body's systems, namely, the skeletal, nervous and muscular systems.

However, the University of Manchester (2000:1), in "Press Release 8th March 2000" declared that:

Decreasing curriculum time allocations; budgetary controls with inadequate financial, material and personnel resources; low subject status and esteem; marginalised and under valued by authorities typify the tenuous position of school physical education world-wide. Accordingly, there are concerns over the future of the subject in the school context.

A one-year, worldwide survey of the state and status of school Physical Education commenced in October 1998 and its preliminary findings were presented at the World Summit on Physical Education in Berlin, in November 1999. A summary of findings of this survey, completed by Hardman and Marshall, suggests that the "actual implementation" of Physical Education "does not meet" with international "statutory obligations and expectations". It also states that in all parts of the world there are reductions in the times allocated to Physical Education and that on several continents Physical Education is seen as being a non-productive educational activity (International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education, 2001:17-24).

Regarding resources, this same survey states that funding cuts prevail during periods of financial constraint and that there are serious material resource problems in over two-thirds of the surveyed countries. It also claims that there is a

lack of qualified teaching personnel and that the class teacher was inadequately prepared to teach physical education (International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education, 2001:25-30).

Furthermore, the “Issues and Trends in Physical Education” part of the survey revealed a failure to provide meaningful Physical Education experiences within certain contexts (International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education, 2001:30). Moreover, it appears that countries largely implement and manage a “competition-based curriculum”, where the “performance discourse” dominates over the “participation discourse” (International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education, 2001:31). There was also a redefining of Physical Education, where the curriculum was being redefined in order to accommodate other educational outcomes (International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education, 2001:31).

The University of Manchester released a “Crisis Update” with regard to the “Worldwide Survey of the State and Status of School Physical Education”, so as to keep us informed about new information gained through the survey (University of Manchester, 2003:1-2). Extracts from the “Crisis Update” for 1999 explain that Uganda had class sizes of up to 250 learners, while in the United States of America, daily Physical Education “still remains a dream” (University of Manchester, 2003:1-2). It further explains that Brazil has poorly prepared Physical Education teachers, while French primary schools lack specialist Physical Education teachers. In Singapore, Physical Education is dismissed as being of lesser importance than their other subjects, and in Augsburg, Germany, financial constraints seriously affect the teaching of Physical Education. In Victoria State, Australia, an overcrowded curriculum continually threatens the teaching of Physical Education (University of Manchester, 2003:1-2). Further information provided in the “Crisis Update” shows that similar trends prevailed during 1998. In New Zealand there was a wide variation of daily Physical Education, to no Physical Education classes, whereas in Canada, Physical Education time detracted from academic learning time. Also, Canada underwent a

process of educational reform and consequently the Physical Education resources have all been cut. Lastly, in Finland they have decreased financial and staff resources and there are no Physical Education specialists on the National Board of Education (University of Manchester, 2003:1-2).

2.4 CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Ironically, at a time when nations are becoming more and more aware of the importance of healthy living and lifelong activity, Physical Education finds itself struggling to exist as a priority subject matter in the educational system of both the developing and developed countries. To add to its struggle, Physical Education needs to also cope with a number of other challenges, which include general attitudes, discipline, class sizes and resources, as well as a reduction in allocated times and level of support.

To be seen as a frill and not a priority, stigmatises the existence of Physical Education as relevant and priority subject matter. As a consequence, disinterested learners treat Physical Education with scant respect. Possibly, they see it as a want and not a need, and therefore they attend their Physical Education sessions in an inappropriate manner. This type of attitude impacts negatively on the rest of the learners in the class, which ultimately results in eventual discipline problems, manifest in issues like deviant behaviour. For example, certain learners deliberately come late for their Physical Education sessions. Some learners even adopt a disruptive attitude, while others see these sessions as unimportant. These offenders feel that they can do what they please and ignore the position and mandate of the Physical Educator. This is further compounded by the lack of resources, class sizes and limited time available for Physical Education sessions. It is important to note that the issues highlighted in this paragraph are international phenomena (International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education, 2001:32-33).

One of the biggest challenges in South Africa is the type of support and lack of vision shown by the state. The Department of Education's apparent lack of foresight with regard to the optimal utilisation of Physical Education and the priority status that it deserves, is demotivating, especially to those that recognise the potential of Physical Education holding its own as a learning area.

Finally, the summary of findings of the survey that was completed by Hardman and Marshall states that there is widespread scepticism and pessimism regarding the future of Physical Education. The situation seems bleak. Physical Education may cease to exist in schools in the near future (International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education, 2001:32).

2.5 CONCLUSION

Internationally there are varying approaches to Physical Education. Each country is unique in its delivery and execution of the subject matter. However, a steady decline in the status and importance of Physical Education is generally being experienced internationally. The subject matter is under constant threat of extinction within the schools and is marginalised for a number of reasons, which include financial constraints, a lack of resources and a reduction in time allocation.

Despite its position as playing only a minor role in the primary school education system of many countries, Physical Education is designed to contribute to the child's cognitive, psychomotor and affective development. The subject matter takes account of the complete person and gives attention to each of the parts that make up the whole, thus developing individuals who will be able to cope with all the relevant societal expectations, demands and pressures expected of them.

In South Africa, it must be understood that in the period, 1948 to the present, the country has undergone major political changes and transformation processes, including curriculum transformation and development (Department of Education, 2002b:6-8). These political changes and transformation processes, along with the relevant world trends, are sure to have influenced, amongst many other things, the implementation of Physical Education in South African schools and more specifically, in its primary schools.

CHAPTER 3



THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN SOUTH AFRICAN PRIMARY SCHOOLING

3.1 INTRODUCTION

During the apartheid era, the South African government indulged in practices such as unequal resource allocation. Education, which was one of the sectors that practised unequal distribution of resources, caused that only certain schools were privileged to implement Physical Education as a subject. At that time, South Africa had nineteen different educational departments (Department of Education, 2002b:4). The more privileged and advantaged education departments ensured that provision was made for Physical Education at their schools. Conversely, the

less advantaged education departments and their historically disadvantaged schools could make no real provision for the implementation of Physical Education, due to a lack of equipment, facilities and qualified Physical Education teachers. Physical Education thus became either a neglected or forgotten entity at the affected schools (Spamer, 2001:1). Added to the adverse conditions that prevailed at these historically disadvantaged schools, were a general lack of resources, malnutrition, violence and a host of other socio-economic constraints. All of these constraints contributed significantly to Physical Education and sport being either abandoned or down played at these schools. It must also be noted that even amongst these schools, which were largely Black institutions, there were those schools that were worse off than others (Kloppers, 2000:3).

Alexander (personal interview, 02 September 2003) explains that in terms of national policy at the time, most, or all of the nineteen different education departments, included Physical Education in their respective policies and curricula. However, in a number of the schools, Physical Education was not practised as a result of a serious lack of resources, such as, human and physical resources. Instead, many of these historically disadvantaged schools played sports at various times during the school day and viewed this as Physical Education.

3.2 THE INCLUSION OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

During the apartheid era the curriculum played a vital and powerful role in reinforcing the inequalities of the constitution of the prevailing system. This explains why curriculum changes in post-apartheid South Africa started immediately after 1994. The National Education and Training Forum [NETF] was established to oversee this change. The brief of this forum was to begin a process of syllabus revision and subject rationalisation, that would lay the foundations of a single, core syllabus, free of issues such as discriminatory and insensitive language (Department of Education, 2002b:4). This generally brought about a change in attitude and nobody was either protected, or neglected, by the boundaries of separatism. Subsequently, attention was paid to subject matter like

Physical Education and the accessibility thereof to both the teachers and the learners. The National Minister of Education, in accordance with the suggestions of the NETF, appointed sub-committees to evaluate the various existing syllabi.

For Physical Education, representatives from all the relevant education-based bodies were included on the Physical Education sub-committee. After a succession of meetings on the future content of the Physical Education syllabus, the NETF recommended that schools should use the existing syllabi in the interim and that provinces develop their own syllabi along certain guidelines (Spamer, 2001:1). Alexander (personal interview, 02 September 2003) contextualises this declaration made by Spamer, by explaining that given the time constraints at that stage, 1995 to 1996, the provincial education departments were given the interim mandate to utilise the existing syllabi, while developing their own syllabi along certain guidelines. However, all their deliberations, actions and outcomes had to be underpinned by a range of “New South Africa democratic principles” (Alexander, personal interview, 02 September 2003). For example, there needed to be a movement towards co-educational Physical Education practice, sensitivity towards the socio-historical background of the people of the country and acceptance of the fact that it was important to place Physical Education within a health model. Furthermore, there needed to be recognition and acceptance of the underlying principle, that progress towards the development of one single education system for all the learners in the country, needed to take place.

During the course of 1997 and as the educational transformation process unfolded, the Department of Education’s curriculum-related policy document was released. With regard to Physical Education, this curriculum-related policy document made provision for only one specific outcome, whereas in total, the learning areas included in the said policy document jointly consisted of 66 specific outcomes (Department of Education, 1997c:4). This one specific outcome that alluded to Physical Education reads: “Evaluate and participate in activities that demonstrate effective human movement and development” (Department of Education, 1997c:4). Furthermore, the policy document

introduced Physical Education as only one of the focus areas, of one of the learning areas, namely, Life Orientation (Department of Education, 1997c:4).

Throughout South Africa's post-apartheid transformation period there has been a continuous refining of its school curriculum. The country has now, after a number of changes and amendments, reached the stage where it has developed its latest policy document, the "Revised National Curriculum Statement [RNCS]" (Department of Education, 2002b:4-6).

3.3 PHYSICAL EDUCATION POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

According to the RNCS, provision is made for 8 learning areas and they will serve as the bodies of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that learners must have access to, be exposed to, and experience. The learning areas are Languages, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Technology, Social Sciences, Arts and Culture, Life Orientation, and Economic and Management Sciences (Department of Education, 2002b:9-10).



Physical Education, which consists of the necessary elements to assist with the holistic development of the learner, is very relevantly housed within Life Orientation, as the "Life Orientation Learning Area Statement" focuses "on the holistic development of learners" (Department of Education, 2002a:4-5). "Life Orientation is fundamental in empowering learners to live meaningful lives in a society that demands rapid transformation" (Department of Education, 1997c:2). With reference to the present Physical Education-related learning outcome of Life Orientation, it needs to be noted that *physical* and *motor development* are integral to the holistic development of learners, as they make a significant contribution to the *social, personal* and *emotional development* of the learner. Play, movement, games and sport contribute to developing *positive attitudes* and *values* and also focus on *perceptual motor development, games and sport, physical growth and development, and recreation and play* (Department of Education, 2002a:6).

However, even though post-apartheid South Africa has been undergoing continuous educational transformation and changes, the RNCS document, with regards to Physical Education, still only makes provision for a single, specific outcome. The Department of Education did not seize the opportunity to utilise the full potential of Physical Education. Furthermore, in the Department of Education's RNCS document, the term *Specific Outcome* has been changed to *Learning Outcome* and the total of 66 specific outcomes has been streamlined, yet strengthened, to become 36 learning outcomes (Solomons, personal interview, 02 May 2004).

Presently, as a Life Orientation focus area in the South African primary schools, the Physical Education curriculum is divided into three phases, namely, the Foundation Phase, the Intermediate Phase and the Senior Phase.

In the Foundation Phase [Grades R to 3] the Physical Education focus is for learners to discover, explore and experiment with movement patterns and movement possibilities and the aim is to stimulate gross motor development and physiological growth (Sitzer, 2003:2). Examples of the Physical Education focus in the Foundation Phase include that the learner: "Participates in free play activities"; "Demonstrates ways of throwing, striking, rolling, bouncing, receiving and moving with a ball or similar equipment"; "Uses a combination of body parts to locomote, rotate, elevate and balance, with or without equipment"; "Performs basic movements in sequence and with repetition, with and without equipment" and "Explores expressive movements using contrasts of speed, direction, body shape and position" (Department of Education, 2002a:15, 22-23). All in all this approach has the makings of developing into a good Physical Education foundation from which the learner can eventually progress.

In the Intermediate Phase [Grades 4 to 6] the movement patterns are more defined. Physical Education becomes more specific. At this stage the programme introduces the basic principles of fitness, locomotor and non-locomotor

movement patterns. It is also at this stage that certain educational media have been introduced. These include activities and aspects such as sport, dance, gymnastics, recreation, aquatics, as well as safety and first aid. The learners are exposed to more specialised skills and a variety of sport types are used to stimulate physiological and psychological growth and development (Sitzer, 2003:2). Examples of the Physical Education focus in the Intermediate Phase include that the learner: “Demonstrates basic field and track athletics techniques”; “Explores a range of target games”; “Demonstrates knowledge of safety measures in and around water”; and “Applies relevant concepts in a variety of striking and fielding games” (Department of Education, 2002a:34-35). Whilst this appears to be the most logical next step in the Physical Education continuum, the overall time allotted for these activities is insufficient for maximum and truly effective Physical Education-based growth to take place in the learner.

In the Senior Phase [Grades 7 to 9] movement activities become more defined and specific (Sitzer, 2003:2). Examples of the Physical Education focus in the Senior Phase include that the learner: “Participates in an outdoor adventure programme through orienteering in different environments”; “Plans and implements a programme to improve techniques of rotation, balance and elevation”; “Assesses own physical wellness level and sets personal goals for improvement”; and “Critically evaluates and executes a game plan for individuals or team sport” (Department of Education, 2002a:46-47). Generally, at this stage of their development, learners are able to execute more specialised skills and activities in Physical Education.

Life Orientation, as one of the learning areas in South Africa’s Outcomes-based Education [OBE] system, requires of learners that they would have achieved certain outcomes. The learners’ achievement of these outcomes is then assessed. Similarly, the execution, progress and achievements of the learner in Physical Education, as a part of Life Orientation, should be assessed. All learners from Grade R to Grade 9 will be required to demonstrate and display their achievement of learning outcomes according to prescribed assessment standards. At the end of

Grade 9 all learners will have to complete an external task. This task is known as the Common Task Assessment [CTA] and together with the year's Continuous Assessment [CASS] of the learner, an assessment is made as to whether the learner has been successful in meeting the necessary criteria and requirements, or not (Sitzer, 2003:2).

This system to a large extent prepares the learners for the future, in that they, after successfully meeting the necessary requirements, will now be able to pursue a career path or direction of their choice. This choice will have been uncovered and informed via their exposure to the content of the “General Education and Training [Grades R-9] Band” (Department of Education, 2002b:5-6). However, an area of concern, is that due to the allotment of insufficient time, true exposure to the potential, qualities and opportunities that exist within the subject matter, Physical Education, cannot take place. This then places the learner in a less advantaged position when making career decisions.

3.4 SOME CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED



In each of the three phases, too little time is allotted to Physical Education, which is now also known as “Physical Development and Movement” (Department of Education, 2002b:26). For example, as a learning outcome of Life Orientation in the Intermediate Phase, Physical Education only qualifies for a part of the 8% of time allocated to this learning area. In terms of time, this 8% translates into approximately 2 hours 16 minutes per week (Department of Education, 2002b:17-18). Along with Physical Education in the Life Orientation learning area, there are three other learning outcomes in the Intermediate Phase, namely, *Health Promotion*, *Social Development* and *Personal Development*. These four learning outcomes all enjoy equal status with regard to scheduling under the umbrella structure of Life Orientation. It is for this reason that Physical Education ultimately only has an allotted time of approximately **34 minutes per week**, which is about half of its previously allocated time of approximately 60 minutes per week (Department of Education, 2002b:17-26). This is insufficient time for

learners to be able to experience the full potential of an entity such as Physical Education (Solomons, personal interview, 02 May 2004). Consequently, it can be argued that the South African education system denies learners access to subject matter that is able to contribute meaningfully to their education, development, growth, career choices and lives.

Furthermore, with Physical Education now becoming an aspect of education that is assessed at the primary school stage of a child's life already, the threat of learners at this level eventually stressing and panicking about results, may well become a reality. The potential now exists for learners to become highly competitive about the execution of the subject matter. To a certain extent, this approach to Physical Education marginalises the subject matter even further, as learners may consequently not fully allow themselves to enjoy the recreational aspect and value of Physical Education. Instead, the learner may now treat Physical Education as a results-driven entity.

To promote Physical Education and for the full benefits and value of the subject matter to be experienced, learners should be given the opportunity of enjoying it on an informal and recreational, yet controlled and monitored basis. In this regard, Solomons (personal interview, 02 May 2004) defends the Department of Education's position, stating that the whole notion of an assessment system was introduced in order to put control and monitoring mechanisms in place. Teachers will now feel forced to teach Physical Education, as the necessary record-keeping of the learner's capabilities and progress must happen. No longer will the system depend only on the conscience or moral obligation of the teachers to teach Physical Education, but rather also on the teachers' commitment to fulfil their prescribed duties.

3.5 CONCLUSION

The aim of the new South African education policy is to promote holistic development. It encourages its citizens to subscribe to the principles of lifelong

learning, healthy living, good citizenship and holistic education. This is reflected in the country's White Paper on Education and Training, which speaks of "values and principles of education and training policy", "succeed in lifelong education and training of good quality" and "open access to education and training" (Department of Education, 1995:21-22). The White Paper further speaks of "redress of educational inequalities", "mutual respect for our people's diverse religious, cultural and language traditions" and "education in the arts, and the opportunity to learn, participate and excel in dance, music, theatre, art and crafts ... on an equitable basis" (Department of Education, 1995:21-22). In addition reference is also made to, "counter the legacy of violence", "independent and critical thought", "curriculum choice", "an appropriate mathematics, science and technology initiative", and "environmental education" (Department of Education, 1995:21-22).

According to the principles contained in the country's White Paper on Education and Training, it is implied that the arts and physical activity, for example, dance, will assist in the combatting of issues like anxiety, physical illness, neurosis and violence (Department of Education, 1995:21-22). However, the understanding and acceptance of this way of thinking must be seen as being part of a process, as the country's people are progressively educated in the changed approaches and systems. Furthermore, these new approaches will possibly also encounter certain barriers, for example, a lack of resources, poverty and resistance to change.

Unfortunately, despite the country's new educational paradigm, South Africa in its implementation strategies still fails to completely recognise and give scope to the true worth of Physical Education. In fact, instead of utilising the subject matter to its fullest potential, the system minimises Physical Education's input by generally letting it be taught by non-specialists and by having taken away its status as a fully-fledged subject. Arguably it is here where South Africa misses an ideal opportunity of exposing its learners to holistic education and development in one of the simplest, easiest and most accessible manners.



CHAPTER 4

THE PRESENT STATUS OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

As outlined earlier, in the primary school education system of South Africa, there is only one learning outcome that alludes to Physical Education (Department of Education, 2002a:7). However, it remains the nature and intention of Physical Education to develop the learner holistically. Therefore, Physical Education, by virtue of its elements and sphere of influence, which includes *movement, physical, affective, social* and *cognitive development*, has the capacity, ability and potential for integration and assimilation with various learning areas. This type of subject matter infusion actually advantages the learners, as it creates the opportunity for them to have greater exposure to at least one or more of the elements of Physical Education. Consequently, the additional access means that the learner is privy to more than the officially allotted time of approximately 34 minutes per week. The elements and sphere of influence of Physical Education also assist in the development of movement skills, motor efficiency and health, as well as the attitude, self-concept, values, self-confidence in making decisions, and emotions of the learner. In addition, it lays emphasis on interpersonal relationships, social responsibility, as well as knowledge, assessment and application of movement techniques of the learner.



According to Williams (1989:1), “School physical education gives many children their only opportunity to develop physical potential. ... It satisfies a need for activity, provides an opportunity for laying the foundations of a lifelong interest in physical activity, and is a medium by which many of the aims of education can be achieved”.

Through Physical Education, learners are encouraged to develop active, productive and healthy lifestyles. It also impacts positively on the mental health, social and interpersonal relationships of the learners, as well as the development of their skills (Wuest & Bucher, 1995:63).

4.2 INTERPRETATION OF WHAT THE FIELD COVERS

Physical Education is a subset of “human movement phenomena”, which is the term given to a specific and umbrella and education category (Wuest & Bucher, 1995:12). Wuest and Bucher (1995:12) write:

In 1972 professionals seeking to describe the theoretical structure of physical education as an area of scholarly study proposed the term, human movement phenomena. Human movement phenomena may be defined as the broad category under which the body of knowledge labeled physical education can best be subsumed.

Then too, there are other bodies of knowledge that find themselves residing under the term Human Movement Phenomena, some of which are Human Ecology, Physical Therapy, Recreation and Human Engineering. When the focus is on formal education and the contributions that the Human Movement Phenomena make in this arena, one focuses on the body of knowledge known as, Physical Education. Furthermore, when the focal point becomes primary school education, the main focus will be on the component known as, “Physical Education for children” (Wuest & Bucher, 1995:12-13).



4.3 THE PRESENT NATURE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION


The broader education system at school focuses on the growth, development and experiences of the whole child. At the same time, according to Wuest and Bucher (1995:6), “Physical education is an educational process that has as its aim the improvement of human performance and enhancement of human development through the medium of physical activities selected to realize this outcome”.

Wuest and Bucher (1995:70) go on to suggest that Physical Education is the only area of the school curriculum that promotes the development of motor skills and fitness, and that no other curricular area contributes to development in the psychomotor domain. Williams (1989:1) states that the “educational potential” of Physical Education “will of course only be realized if a well-planned, broad and balanced curriculum is offered”.

According to Kirk and Tinning (1990:4), “Another response may be that the main criteria for the inclusion of ... physical education ... is to serve purposes ... such as maintaining students’ fitness and health, providing them with leisure-time skills for adulthood or with sports skills for elite performance”. Also, the Department of Education and Science (1991:58) advises: “Schools will need to include equal opportunities considerations among the criteria by which they select the content of physical education programmes, so that all children have the opportunity to experience a range of physical activities ...”.

Based on the previously stated assertions and advice, it could be argued that Physical Education adds to the quality of health and well-being of the learner. It could further be argued that learners will feel fitter and fresher, develop more energy, possess more vigour and vitality, as well as be sharper and clearer minded, and therefore become more effective and efficient in their activities, learning and daily lives, if Physical Education is implemented optimally. Moreover, education through the medium of Physical Education has the potential of contributing to a successfully integrated, multi-disciplinary, educational curriculum. For example, Physical Education can be utilised to explain examples like the functioning of the respiratory system in Biology, the lever systems and the laws of motion in Physical Science, as well as the lymphatic system in Health Education. Hence the reason it can be said that Physical Education concerns itself with the growth and enrichment of the individual’s life and performance. In addition, children naturally indulge in physical movement and physical activity like crawling, walking and playing. In this way they discover more about the world around them and gain confidence as a consequence of the number of successful experiences that they encounter via these activities and life processes. Physical Education can therefore be interpreted as the foundation of the human being’s lifelong, physical, learning processes and experiences (Wuest & Bucher, 1995: 62-94).

4.4 PHYSICAL EDUCATION AT PRIMARY SCHOOL LEVEL

Generally, the current education system in South Africa guards against the implementation of rigid and regimental Physical Education. The accepted approach to the subject matter is to ensure that the learner feels comfortable, free and natural. In this way a more conducive learning environment is established, thus providing extra space for greater creativity, lateral thinking and less inhibited responses on the part of the learner. According to the Department of Education's RNCS, Physical Education is *not teacher-centred*, but *learner-centred* and *experiential*. This is a direct shift from the traditional teaching methods of the past. The role of the OBE teacher now shifts from that of a trainer, to that of an educator and facilitator. The educator-cum-facilitator as part of the learning process educates the learners by using creative and stimulating teaching methods and as such guides the learners in their activities. This approach stands in direct contrast to the days when the teacher trained the learners in the learning process mainly through the talk-and-chalk, do-as-I-do and do-as-I-tell-you-to-do teaching methods. With these methods the learners were expected to be either passive listeners, or robotic followers, or  both (Alexander, personal interview, 02 September 2003).

To a certain extent, especially in the case of Physical Education, the RNCS and OBE implementation strategies are contradicted by the fact that the learners will at various stages during their primary school career be formally assessed on the execution of their tasks. Given this, where learners now need to attain certain minimum assessment standards in Physical Education, exposes them to stressful recreational situations. There appears to be an inherent contradiction contained in the formal assessment, because one of the functions of Physical Education is to promote recreation, and people participate in recreational activities to unwind and rid themselves of their stress, and not to place themselves in stressful situations. The possible and logical solution to this dilemma would therefore be that the learners' execution of their Physical Education tasks should not be formally assessed at primary school level and that the focus should be on self-discovery,

enjoyment and recreation. The educational, developmental and growth processes should be natural, learner-centred and experiential.

Physical Education assists with the development of the child's motor skills. It gets the child to recognise that the body moves as a whole and not as individual parts. This then can develop children to a point where they understand and appreciate the movement procedures of their bodies, and where they can move and do their activities in a co-ordinated, rather than a disjointed manner. Physical Education also involves self-evaluation and peer-evaluation. Learners are now given the opportunity to correct themselves, thus creating the opportunity for them to observe how they have developed as individuals. This leads to self-appreciation and positive self-esteem. In addition, peer evaluation allows learners to develop an appreciation for the potential and skills of others. Through their observations and evaluations they learn from their peers and grow as a result.

Equipment and apparatus play a significant role in the delivery of many Physical Education activities. Working with these resources requires the learner to follow various safety precautions. The appreciation of space, the appropriateness of apparatus, as well as equipment utilisation and accessibility also come into effect. Having to be aware of what is happening and what is needed, as well as the taking of responsibility, adds to the further growth and development of the learner's experience, knowledge and life skills. However, in South Africa where the distribution of resources is skewed as a result of the previous apartheid policies, the learners find themselves grappling with varied problems. For example, the information surrounding equipment and apparatus, as noted earlier, bears relevance for the learners at the more advantaged schools. These are the schools that are fortunate to have the necessary equipment, apparatus and facilities for the true potential of Physical Education to be delivered and executed. Secondly, there are varying degrees of less fortunate schools, which range from not-so-poor to extremely poor. Generally, depending on how poor they are determines the type of resources that exist at these schools. For example, some schools have a lack of equipment and apparatus, others have a lack of dedicated practice and playing

facilities, and then there are those plagued by vandalism, abuse and theft of equipment and apparatus. These examples emphasise the unequal distribution of resources, as well as the unfair legacy left behind by the previous apartheid system. The varying circumstances that prevail at schools, probably also perpetuate the unequal growth of Physical Education at these institutions.

4.5 CHALLENGES

Children becoming healthy, holistically developed, active adults, must be one of the guiding forces that carries South Africa through the twenty-first century. Generally, children have the potential to lead healthy and active lifestyles. Therefore, one of the country's visions should be to ensure that its learners are capacitated with the necessary knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, as well as commitment that will enable them to effectively embrace the ethos of lifelong activity and healthy living. Hence, South Africa's teachers should assist in creating the necessary environment for the country's learners to develop positive attitudes to life, so that these learners can be brought closer to the realisation of their true potential. One way of ensuring that learners appreciate the ethos of lifelong activity and healthy living, is to capacitate them through the medium of Physical Education.

The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (2003:1-2) informs all education authorities that the elimination of Physical Education from the school curriculum may be detrimental to the health and learning of the children. Children must be provided with opportunities to engage in physical activity and be taught to make positive choices. Strengthening basic knowledge about Physical Education is critical to the health and academic performance of individuals.

South Africa's future and its prosperity are dependent on the health and welfare of its people. Many significant social and health problems exist amongst the country's population, with a number of these problems stemming from the types of lifestyles led, for instance, a high percentage of South Africans lead lifestyles

fraught with deficiencies and dependency. Amongst others, they do not follow a healthy diet, there is a lack of physical activity and movement, they indulge in alcohol and substance abuse, and they exhibit reckless and careless sexual behaviour. In a recent survey entitled *Sustainable Coastal Livelihoods Study*, it is stated that there is disease, a lack of infrastructure, education and skills, and a cyclical nature of poverty, crime and violence, as well as insufficient health care (Department of Environmental Affairs & Tourism, 2002:11). However, negative, destructive and self-destructive lifestyles, as well as the consequences that are brought about by them, can to a large extent be overcome, avoided and prevented. South Africa's quality of life can definitely be improved if its people can make informed choices. The country's learners must be provided with the necessary and relevant learning experiences and at least a basic knowledge of the benefits of a healthy way of life. Therefore, given its potential and multi-faceted nature, Physical Education should definitely form part of the holistic development of the learner and be included at all the relevant educational levels. The fields of study and activities of Physical Education include physical movement and awareness of the body, personal and perceptual motor development, as well as gross-motor and affective development. Individually and collectively, these fields of study and activities will all contribute to the improvement, growth and development of our learners, as well as in time, our country.

Physical Education extends, applies and transmits knowledge, skills, attitudes and values about, and through, physical activity and physical movement, in order to enhance the quality of life of all human beings. This capacitates the learner to cope with issues like the rigours and pressures of formal schooling, work, national service, recreation and sport.

4.6 ANTICIPATED LEARNER DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

The nature of Physical Education is such that it addresses more than just the development of a healthy body in a healthy mind. Instead, Physical Education addresses the educational needs of the child, in a holistic manner.

In explaining the related educational growth of the child, I have developed the following diagram, Figure 1, to depict the type of process that is involved. Figure 1 diagrammatically explains how Physical Education plays a major role in the holistic education and development of children. It shows how Physical Education impacts on the critical thinking and intellectual, physical and motor, as well as the emotional and spiritual competence of children, thus assisting with their cognitive, psychomotor and affective development. Consequently, the children are developed in a holistic manner and this improves their overall performance levels, and in so doing, the levels of their skills improve. In addition, their levels of performance regarding Physical Education improve and with this improvement, their overall skills improve further. Also, in this way the process of development continues cyclically.

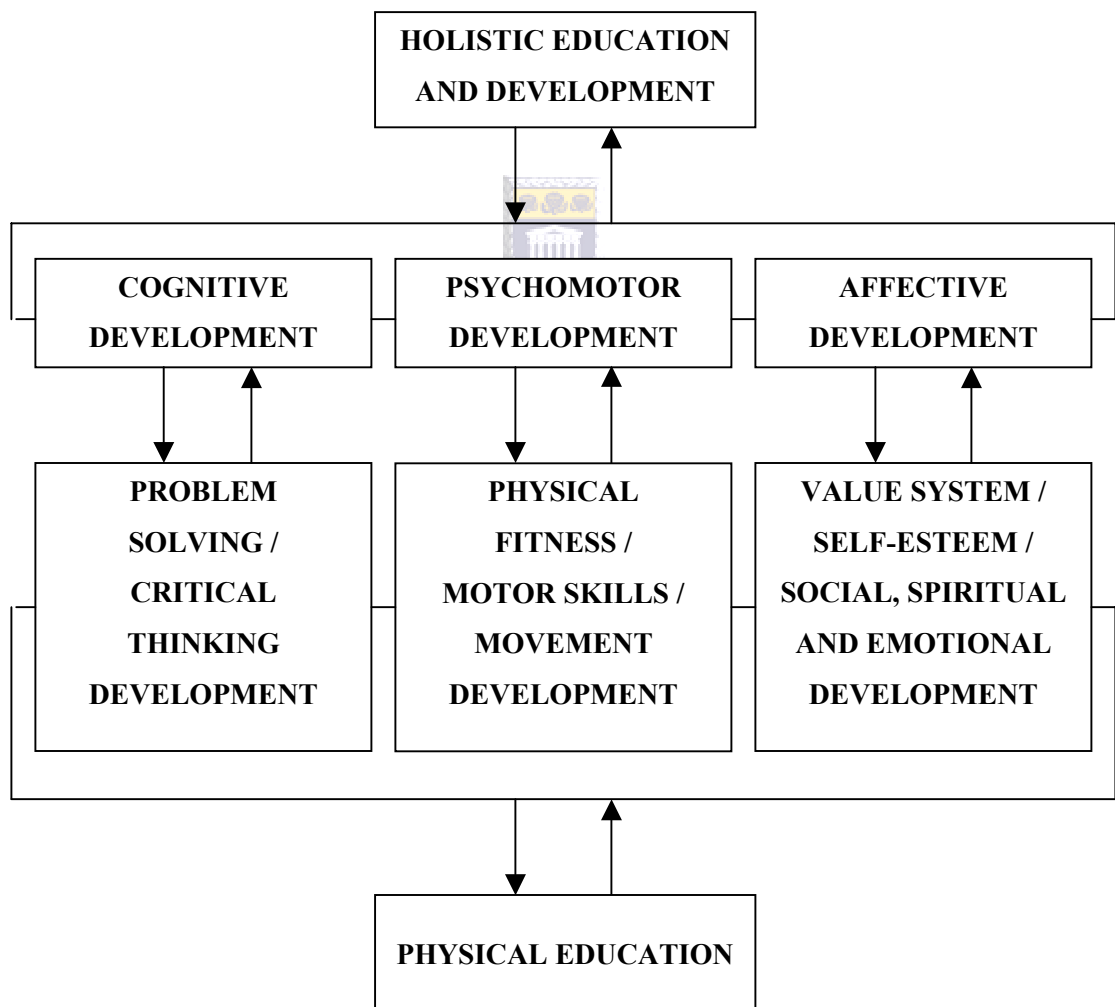


FIGURE 1: The nature of Physical Education (Hendricks, 2003).

When focusing on the cognitive development of the learner, teachers concern themselves with the critical thinking and intellectual skills of the child. Through the medium of Physical Education, teachers can impart knowledge and understanding for participation in movement activities, in a healthy and safe manner and environment. Also through the medium of Physical Education, teachers can strive to impart knowledge and understanding relating to the function and development of the human body.

For the development of the physical and motor skills of learners, teachers can utilise Physical Education activities. These Physical Education activities will assist learners with the realisation of an acceptable level of physical fitness. Furthermore, when developing the physical and motor skills of learners, the main focus areas must include aerobic efficiency, muscular strength, flexibility and endurance. It is the intent of Physical Education to provide learners with a broad variety of physical skills, thus enabling them to participate in a wide range of activities.



Embedded in the nature and scope of Physical Education, is the promotion of socially acceptable behavioural patterns. To improve the social skills of the learner, Physical Education focuses on interpersonal relationships such as teamwork, fair play, camaraderie and leadership. It also encourages the child to participate in positive physical, recreational and leisure activities. Physical Education further concerns itself with the emotional skills of the learner. It promotes the appreciation of recreational, creative and competitive activities. In addition to this it motivates positive attitudes towards health, exercise, recreation, education, spirituality and generally, lifelong activity and healthy living (Wuest & Bucher, 1995:6-28).

4.7 THE WHOLE CHILD

For teachers to assist with the education and development of the whole child, they need to educate and develop the learner in a holistic, collective, well-balanced and integrated manner. “To educate the whole child, his heart and will must be reached, as well as his mind” (Barnes & Lyons, 1979:7).

Figure 2 on the following page illustrates the interconnectedness of the human being, thus highlighting why learners should be taught in a holistic, collective, well-balanced and integrated manner. Furthermore, Figure 2 shows how the different beings of the human work together. The state of existence of the human being is presented in its various forms, with each form having areas that need to be exercised via various exercise activities. These various exercise activities are needed to stimulate, motivate and energise the human being’s very existence. Ultimately, under the desired state of existence, we note that essential to the whole existence of the healthy human being, is the state of relaxation/leisure. Here, and for the sake of the minithesis, the term’s relaxation and leisure are used interchangeably. This is being done because of the close attachment that the two terms have with each other and because of the nature of the diagram [Figure 2] and the explanations that are accompanying it.

At its most extreme, ultimate and desired state, relaxation, which speaks to us of abatement and resting, is a leisure experience. When enjoying a leisure experience, one’s mind transcends its normal state, to an euphoric and free state, and one has no regard for time. Leisure is more than just a short break or temporary release from work to restore one for more work. Rather, it is the highest value of life, whereas work is the lowest. Leisure represents an ideal state of freedom and the opportunity for spiritual and intellectual enlightenment (Krause, 1978:42).

Godbey (1990:9) offers the following definition of leisure, which he says is a redefinition for our world and our time:

Leisure is living in relative freedom from the external compulsive forces of one's culture and physical environment, so as to be able to act from internally compelling love in ways which are personally pleasing, intuitively worthwhile, and provide a basis for faith.

<u>OUR</u> <u>BEINGS</u>	<u>PRESENTED</u> <u>FORMS</u>	<u>AREAS TO BE</u> <u>EXERCISED</u>	<u>EXERCISE</u> <u>ACTIVITIES</u>	<u>DESIRED</u> <u>STATE</u> <u>OF</u> <u>EXISTENCE</u>
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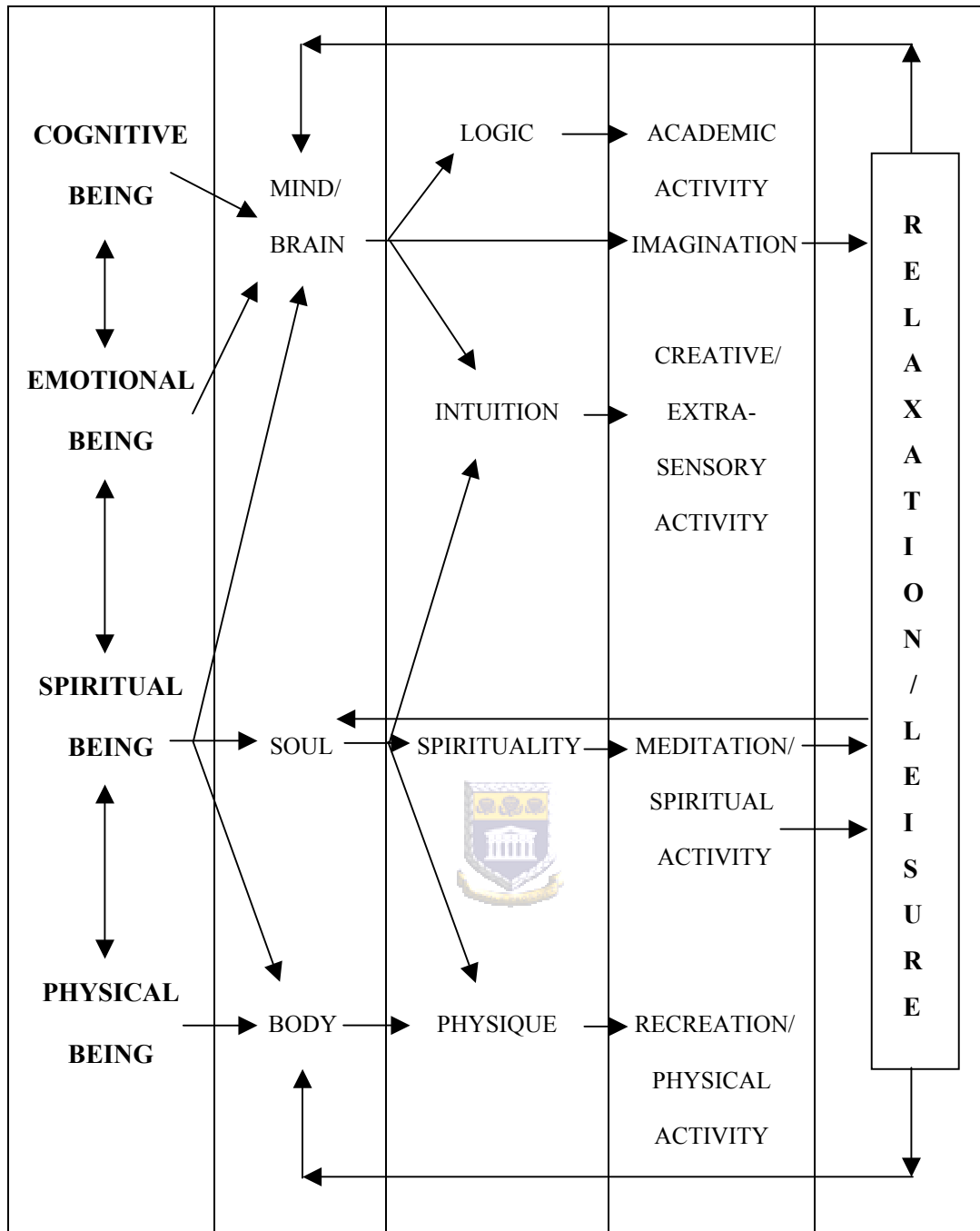
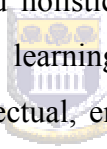


FIGURE 2: The interconnectedness of the human being (Hendricks, 2003).

Figure 2 depicts relaxation/leisure as the base state around which our beings [cognitive, emotional, spiritual and physical] revolve. Our beings, through their journeys in life, cyclically proceed towards reaching higher levels. The base state is the point at which the mind, body and soul integrate and a harmonious unity

prevails amongst them. This consequently provides the human being with the balance, inner peace and revitalisation needed to maintain a healthy way of life. As the base state, relaxation and ultimately leisure, might find itself at the turning or pausing point, or at the end of a process. Ironically, it also finds itself at the beginning of a fresh, new, or renewed process, as it is at the base state where the beings, as a collective, start afresh or anew. This fresh or renewed start implies a change in attitude and behaviour, and these attitudinal and behavioural changes are key to improved health and achievement. By the learners collecting and reassessing their thoughts, words, deeds and what they have left undone and adopting a holistic, integrated, or whole person approach to their situation, they should find that they have moved closer to the realisation of their expected or desired outcomes. Furthermore, through contemplation, unearthing the unconscious and making the unconscious conscious, learners are also brought closer to the realisation of their true potential.

In order for learners to be developed holistically, they need to have access to holistic education. In this form of  learning experience learners receive an education that focuses on their intellectual, emotional, social, physical, creative and spiritual potential. Holistic education hones in on the learners' intrinsic love for connection and oneness with their physical, as well as spiritual world, and not just on the academic intra-classroom and inter-classroom competitions that learners so often experience. In fact, it rather moves the learners more towards their natural and pure state, where the focus is on fostering collaboration and interdependence, which in turn opens communication and positive interaction with others. This type of communication and interaction enables children to experience that connectedness, that unity, that need for each other. Temple-Thurston with Laughlin (2000:45) claim: "The presence of unity, interconnected in and through everything in existence, is always with us. It waits for us to perceive it from the level of the personality. It is what we are."

Holistic education values spirituality and spirituality is a state of connectedness to all life. Moreover, spirituality is a state of oneness, where in this oneness each soul has the opportunity to express its unique self. To my mind, spirituality, along

with creativity, which is another element of holistic education, are probably two of the most fundamental pillars in making South Africa and the world, dynamically positive places.

4.8 CONCLUSION

Despite being positioned and recognised as only a minor role-player in South African primary school education, Physical Education, which forms part of an umbrella structure known as the Human Movement Phenomena, is intentionally designed to contribute to the child's cognitive, psychomotor and affective development. The subject matter considers the complete person and gives attention to each of the parts that make up the whole, thus developing a well-balanced individual. Physical Education promises to develop people to the point where they will be able to cope with all the relevant societal expectations, demands and pressures that are pitched at their level.

Currently, Physical Education in South Africa's primary schools is marginalised through policy. It appears that Physical Education has become a casualty in the development of a single education system for a new South Africa, as opposed to an apartheid South Africa. It seems as if in its thinking the policy developers neither fully recognised, nor appreciated all the valuable elements that Physical Education can add to a system that promises to educate the learner holistically.

Invariably there are even more challenges in the path leading to Physical Education's realisation of its goals, for example, inadequate resources, high learner-teacher ratios, recalcitrant nature of some learners, organisation of the school, and competition from colleagues. However, according to Sparkes (1990:16), "... it is the implicit rather than the explicit, the outside rather than the inside of formal structures and procedures, and the informal resources of influence rather than authority that operate in relation to innovation and change". How well this statement depicts the very nature and character of Physical Education, and therefore against all odds, Physical Education still manages to

assist the South African education system in its attempt to deliver education to the whole child.



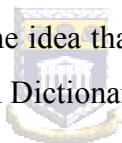
CHAPTER 5

THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The new policy frameworks for South African education attempt to add value to the learning and teaching process and experience by introducing the notion of *holism* into education. Language that has now become common place and which finds itself firmly embedded in the South African education vocabulary are terms like: *holistic education, whole child, whole school, developing holistically, and holistic education and development.*

For clarification, the term *holistic* is an adjective derived from the word “holism”, which philosophically puts forward the idea that “a whole is greater than the sum of its parts” (Collins Essential English Dictionary, 2003:359).



The concept of “Holism” ... is often regarded as a synergism of WHOLE, HEAL, and HOLY ... WHOLE stands for wholesome, unbroken, unfragmented ... the wholeness of the human body. HEAL ... the patient is the true healer. The doctor ... the facilitator ... not the one that ‘cures’ – for all is from within. HOLY refers to the mutual respect between doctor and patient, and especially for the doctor to view the patient as a manifestation of Holiness [‘created in the image of God’...]... (NaturalTherapy.com, 2002:1-2).

Holism therefore, “... is a lived experience, a way of life”. It is, “The oneness with all things, living and non-living...” (Holdstock, 1991b:6). Holism is also about “embracing the totality of something in the knowledge that it is so much greater than the sum of its component parts; things cannot be understood by the isolated examination of their parts” (Porritt, 2001:113). According to Bloom

(2001:xiii), in “the holistic approach ... people should be free to explore meaning and reality in as many ways as are available”.

The value and truth in the philosophical statement, “a whole is greater than the sum of its parts”, can be seen when applied to the human being (Collins Essential English Dictionary, 2003:359). In our very own existence we are made up of various parts, namely, the mind, the body and the soul, which, when functioning together, gives us life.

5.2 HOLISTIC EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

When contextualising the understanding of the term, *Holistic Education and Development*, “Education” can be defined as being the noun used for the word, “educate”, which means, “advise; give information to” (Reader’s Digest, 1994:468). In today’s approach to education, to educate means to facilitate, and the facilitator creates the necessary environment and stimulates a process that is pursued by the learner (Alexander, personal interview, 02 September 2003).

Opportunity holds the space for learners so that they have access to influences that will assist them to realise optimally every human capability. Steiner (1979:Back Cover) states: “the need for imagination, a sense of truth and a feeling of responsibility – these are the three forces which are the very nerve of education”. Accordingly, the former Minister of South African Education, Kader Asmal, explains:

At its broadest level, our education system and its curriculum express our idea of ourselves as a society and our vision as to how we see the new form of society being realised through our children and learners. Through its selection of what is to be in the curriculum, it represents our priorities and assumptions of what constitutes a “good education” at its deepest level. (DoE, 2002b:1).

“Development” is defined as “a stage of growth or advancement” (Reader’s Digest, 1994:396). It denotes changes through time. According to Steiner (1979:Back Cover), “Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives”.

Holistic education and development can therefore be construed as being a means of providing learners with advice and information, as well as opportunity and guidance, which will allow them to inform, change, grow, develop, enrich and advance their minds, bodies and souls, together. It is a process where all the relevant elements are interdependent and jointly play a role in the growth or advancement of an experience. Holistic education and development is therefore not a fragmented and detached experience, where for example one’s body, mind and soul are considered to be totally independent of each other. Rather, it is a process that involves the whole, living, complete, human being.

5.3 WHOLE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT



There exists an extremely close relationship between the culture of the school as a whole and the quality of its classroom experiences. The content of the actual Social Sciences, Mathematics, Languages and other learning areas’ lessons that take place in the classroom, constitutes but only a portion of the child’s foundation and preparation for the future. In addition, children are influenced by various elements that exist within a formal school setting, for example, the identity, structure and ethos of the school (Davidoff & Lazarus, 1997:41-49).

For growth to take place within a school context, we need to develop all the elements of the school’s existence, such as, its identity, structures, strategies, technical support and human resources. This development must be addressed in a holistic manner, as each aspect individually, as well as collectively, impacts on the growth and development of the learner. The school in its entirety is more than just the sum of its learners, educators, support staff, infrastructure, resources,

school community and external environment. It is the way in which these individual elements synergise, complement, interact with, and relate to, one another. The relevant elements are interdependent and flourish as a collective, thus developing a unique organisation, which gives rise to its own culture. Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:6) describe organisations as “essentially collectives of people”. These collectives of people define policies, generate structures and manipulate resources. Added to this, the collectives of people engage in activities that will assist them in the realisation of their desired goals. These desired goals are in keeping with their individual and collective values and needs. Within the context of a school, helping people to learn is one of the desired goals.

In order to drive and enhance the holistic development of a school, the relevant organisation requires a holistic leader. Sterling with Davidoff (2000:42-43) advises that holistic leaders must be visionaries who have a deep understanding of themselves, the way that they relate to one another at their respective schools, as well as the different elements of their schools. Moreover, holistic leaders must know and be sensitive to the overall movement and direction of their schools, from the past to the present, and they must also have a clear understanding of the educational and the socio-political context in which they are working.

5.4 CURRICULUM 2005 AND OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION

The introduction of a curriculum change in South African education in order to deliver a fair, just and unitary education system, was inevitable. In 1998, The South African Department of Education introduced Curriculum 2005 into its schools. This was the vehicle to drive post-apartheid education. In the year 2000, the Department of Education reviewed, streamlined and strengthened the implementation of Curriculum 2005.

Curriculum 2005 adopted an *outcomes-based* approach to education. “Outcomes-based education considers the process of learning as important as the content. Both the process and the content of education are emphasised by spelling out the

outcomes to be achieved at the end of the process” (Department of Education, 2002b:10-11).

The South African focus on Outcomes-based Education [OBE] includes issues such as, *the learners and their needs, human diversity, accountability, responsibility, participatory and democratic decision making*, as well as *access to the relevant and necessary resources*, so that children are assisted in the realisation of their full potential.

In its educational delivery mechanisms OBE hones in on aspects like *the process of integration*, as well as *the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes*. Throughout the process of integration, knowledge capacitates the mind, skills develop the body, and values and attitudes fulfil the soul (Van Der Horst & McDonald, 1997:3-8). It can therefore be argued that if implemented correctly, OBE will be supporting the holistic needs of the learner. This means that learners will be able to discover what their interests are, and where their talents lie. OBE also creates opportunities for learners to develop and grow as creative, respectful, disciplined, productive citizens, by encouraging them to flourish in what they are good at, and in so doing, move them closer to realising their true potential.

5.5 LIFE ORIENTATION

The learning area Life Orientation guides and prepares learners for life, while concurrently equipping them for meaningful and successful living in a rapidly changing and transforming society. In its RNCS policy document the South African Department of Education explains:

The Life Orientation learning area is central to the holistic development of learners. It is concerned with the social, personal, intellectual, emotional and physical growth of learners, and with the way in which these facets are interrelated. The focus is the development of self-in-society. The learning area’s vision of individual growth is part of an effort to create a

democratic society, a productive economy and an improved quality of life (Department of Education, 2002a:4).

Life Orientation assists in enabling learners to make informed decisions and to take appropriate action regarding health promotion, social development, personal development, physical development and movement, as well as orientation to the world of work. Together these five focus areas address the human and environmental rights embraced by South Africa (Department of Education, 2002a:4).

Life Orientation subscribes to the philosophy of positive and healthy lifestyles and the whole concept of good citizenship, where the focus is on issues like inclusivity, unity, human rights, transparency, taking responsibility and the practice of democratic principles (Department of Education, 2002a:4-5). The focal point of the learning area is on the development, strengthening, co-ordination and integration of each learner's *self-image, self-esteem, intellect, creative, physical, spiritual, emotional and moral powers*. It also focuses on their quest for lifelong learning and their growth in the areas of developing *healthy relationships, making informed and responsible decisions*, as well as *promoting creative, lateral and critical thinking*, and *capacitating the learner with sound survival, coping and community-building skills* (Department of Education, 2002a:4-5).

Sadly, and very myopically, the South African RNCS policy document presents us with a major gap in the education system of the country. It makes provision for only one learning outcome that implies the introduction and application of Physical Education, despite the subject matters' potential and relevance to the delivery of holistic education and development. The said learning outcome reads as follows: "Physical Development and Movement: The learner will be able to demonstrate an understanding of, and participate in, activities that promote movement and physical development" (Department of Education, 2002a:26).

This marginalised exposure of Physical Education lessens South Africa's opportunity to present its learners with such an apt medium for the promotion of

holistic education and development. Given the ambit of Life Orientation as a learning area, this would have been the appropriate space for the complete exposure of the learner to the true worth of Physical Education. Better still, with the type of value and potential that resides within Physical Education, the subject matter deserves more than being a component of a learning area. It should not be the equivalent of an add-on, or merely appended to a learning area. The importance and centrality of Physical Education to the holistic education and development of the learner cannot be over-emphasised. Hence, Physical Education should be presented as a learning area, as opposed to merely a learning outcome.

5.6 HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS

While individuals must take responsibility for their own lifestyles and the achievement of optimal health, the school should assist in empowering the learners to make informed and values-based decisions about lifelong activity and healthy living. Schools, however, cannot take responsibility for the promotion of the health and well-being of the learners. This should form part of the family values that are taught to the learners within the realms of their respective homes and communities. Between the school, the home and the community, there needs to be a healthy relationship, good co-operation and a clear understanding of the roles that need to be played by each of them.

All learners should have the right to a safe, healthy and positive learning environment. Furthermore, a school is a part of the learner's community and should reflect the values and way of life of its people. Therefore, a school should be developed into a health promoting entity, and as such, it will assist with the development of the self-esteem, as well as maximise the learning of every learner, and build a sense of community. "Good health is integrally linked to successful education. Children must be healthy to be educated and they must also be educated to be healthy" (Health Promoting Schools, 2001:1).

Physical Education, Health Education and Health Promotion should play a major role in the core curriculum and way of life of a *Health Promoting School* (HPS). At this type of school a clear link must be established between *physical activity, physical movement, health and well-being*, as well as a definite emphasis must be laid on a *safe and healthy environment* and *community participation*. A HPS is a place where all members of the school community work together, and in so doing, provide learners with integrated and positive experiences. A broad, yet inclusive range of structures and policies, which promote and protect the total health and well-being of all their learners, are developed at these Health Promoting Schools. This type of school “is constantly strengthening its capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning and working” (World Health Organisation [WHO/OMS], 1999:1).



Central to the functioning and performance of any HPS is the development of active lifestyles and the practising of a healthy way of life by the whole school community. As part of its health promotion strategies, a HPS strives to provide opportunities for Physical Education, as it plays a major role in experiences such as weight loss and the control and maintenance of ideal health. In addition, Physical Education contributes to the relief of stress, the strengthening of the immune, cardiorespiratory and skeletal systems, as well as protects one against premature heart disease, cancer and perhaps even death (Reader’s Digest, 1990:101-109). Positive feelings associated with exercise have a physiological basis in hormones and body chemicals, thus it can be deduced that exercise has social, psychological and emotional benefits. During exercise the brain secretes endorphins and these help to decrease pain, produce euphoria and suppress fatigue (Insel & Roth, 1991:113). In a HPS, cognisance must be taken of the rights of learners. Appropriate provision must be made for their Physical Education needs, as it provides them with a wide range of necessary activities. According to Insel

and Roth (1991:113), “The body is made to work best when it is active. Left unchallenged, bones lose their density, joints stiffen, muscles become weak, and body chemistry and systems begin to degenerate. To truly be well, you must be active”.

5.7 CONCLUSION

Presently, South Africa, along with most of the world, is undergoing an era of addictive and deviant behaviour, for example, drug abuse and truancy are rife. This addictive and deviant behaviour is synonymous with an unhealthy way of life and points to an emptiness and a disconnectedness of spirit. Concurrently, South Africa is suffering an HIV and AIDS pandemic, as well as pervasive, low self-esteem and lack of productivity, lack of tolerance and widespread poverty (Khan, personal interview, 16 April 2004). This qualifies Life Orientation as being one of the most important and relevant learning areas in the South African school set-up. Moreover, given the scope of this learning area, the issues at hand will be addressed holistically and therefore there will be a clear focus on the development of the learners’ understanding of the relevant issues, including those delineated in sections 5.2 to 5.6.

Through Life Orientation, learners will have access to information that should enable them to develop intervention strategies, which will promote core issues like *healthy living*, *lifelong activity* and *lifelong learning*, in an informed manner. All aspects of the issues at hand need to be addressed in an integrated fashion, which will take into consideration the physical, intellectual, social, emotional, creative and spiritual potential of learners, and in this way develop them holistically. However, what Life Orientation lacks, is the maximum exposure that it should be affording Physical Education. This would probably have completely set Life Orientation aside from all the other learning areas, as the maximum exposure of Physical Education would have added further value to the depth of the learning area. Furthermore, if South Africa was to introduce Physical Education as a self-standing learning area, learners will in all probability derive

even greater benefit from the country's education and schooling system, than what they are presently experiencing.

CHAPTER 6

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

AND

THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRIMARY SCHOOL LEARNER

6.1 INTRODUCTION

While an active and healthy lifestyle leads to the potential for self-actualisation, Physical Education provides learners with the necessary opportunities to improve and increase control over their health and well-being. Moreover, Physical Education not only develops a healthy mind and a healthy body, but also allows learners to experience the joy of movement, the opportunity to develop competencies, as well as the opportunity to enhance perceptions of themselves and others. This is something that very few aspects of school life can provide. Physical Education forms an integral and significant part of the development of the whole learner and should therefore not be as neglected an educational area as is currently happening within the South African primary school system. South African education subscribes to the development of the whole child and has committed itself to the promotion of this way of thinking. It should therefore champion the cause of Physical Education, as the subject matter has the potential to make an unique contribution to all learners.

6.2 THE AIM AND FOCUS OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

According to Sitzer (1997:2), “Physical and Health Education teachers will be responsible for non-academic outcomes under the learning area: Life Orientation”. Sitzer (1997:2) also stated that in keeping with the “critical outcomes of education”, Physical Education teachers need to consider, as part of their “primary outcomes”, the fact that “learners should develop physically, socially and emotionally”. In addition, the learners must “develop an awareness of ecology, as well as know how to preserve life, prevent disease and illness, and promote recovery” (Sitzer, 1997:2). Consequently, learners will develop holistically, given the fact that a definite focus is being placed on their whole being.

Whilst recognising Physical Education as a Life Orientation focus, it needs to be emphasised that this is insufficient exposure for a focus area like Physical Education. With all that Physical Education has to offer, the subject matter is being marginalised through its limited exposure and as a result, learners are experiencing a grave injustice. Not exposing our learners to the maximum potential of Physical Education is not only depriving them of the true worth of the subject matter, but also denying them complete access to holistic education and development.

In keeping with this way of thinking, a United States Surgeon General, David Satcher (2000:29), stated: “I think that we’ve made a serious error by not requiring physical education” in schools. Gabbard (2000:30) added: “...A quality physical education program is basic in preparing children for lifelong physical fitness and good health”.

6.3 THE APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEARNER

In Physical Education, which includes physical activity as well as movement activity, the learner encounters various learning processes. Barnes and Lyons (1979:7) explain:

First, in the Rudolf Steiner or Waldorf method, comes the encounter; then encounter becomes experience; and out of experience the concept crystallizes. Encounter, experience, concept – perception, feeling, idea: these are the three steps in every genuine learning process.

Very often, as a consequence of learning, learners when exposed to some or other physical or movement activity, improvise or adapt their actions to execute that which needs to be performed. When learners encounter certain challenges, they even change their approach to a particular action, or their execution of a particular exercise, to achieve the expected outcome. More often than not, the intention is normally to utilise that which is learnt or acquired through knowledge, to perform that which is desired or expected, in the shortest space of time, but also in the most effective and efficient way.

Learning takes place when one gathers or gains knowledge and wisdom, and mostly this occurs through instances like studying, being taught, practice, or experience. Via these processes one will grow and develop further. As the growth takes place the potential of the learner is developed. This moves the learner closer to the desired aim and objective of a learning experience.

According to Wuest and Bucher (1995:217), there are “three stages of learning: the *cognitive stage*, the *associative stage*, and the *autonomous stage*”.

The cognitive stage, as the first stage, is where the learner tries to come to grips with the nature and the aim of the exercise and the activity that is to be experienced. It is here that the learners try to gather a clear understanding of what is expected of them. They therefore have to listen attentively to all instructions and closely observe all demonstrations. Then, after decoding this information, the learner develops a delivery mechanism that involves a clearly thought out plan of action in order to execute the exercise. On initial delivery of the exercise there are many mistakes and the situation only improves through constant feedback and corrective action, both of which are given by the educator. Repetition helps the

learner to develop a routine, however, the execution of the exercise will lack finesse (Wuest & Bucher, 1995:217-218).

Thereafter, the second, or *the associative stage* is where the learners work at refining the execution of the skill. Therefore, the flow, the timing, the rhythm and the smooth flow of the skill is continuously practised. In this way the learners work at achieving finesse in the execution of the exercise. This leads to fewer mistakes being committed and the learners now mainly have to concentrate on rectifying the consistently recurring mistakes. As the learners strive toward achieving mastery in, and of, the exercise, they continuously make adjustments, adaptations and variations to the action, flow and execution of the exercise. Here too, the educator assists by pointing out certain weaknesses, mistakes and faults, and then gives the necessary guidance and support (Wuest & Bucher, 1995:218).

Finally, *the autonomous stage* is reached. This is the third stage of the learning process and it can only be achieved through practising and correcting, and yet more practising and correcting. As a direct consequence of the practising and corrective actions, the execution of the intended exercise becomes almost automatic. This means that the learner does not have to pay deliberate attention to all aspects of the execution of the exercise at all times. The execution of the exercise has by now become second nature to the learner. For example, at this stage football strikers no longer have to concentrate on the fundamentals of the kicking skill. Instead their focus can be on issues like, where between the goalposts the ball must be kicked, what type of flight the ball must have and how hard they must kick. Also, at this stage learners are more dependent on their own knowledge, skills, agility and attitude, than they are on the educator. This is where they mainly start teaching themselves, as they seem to know exactly when they are doing something wrong and what they are doing wrong. Ultimately, they have now reached the stage where they know when, where and how to make the necessary adjustments to the execution of their acquired skill (Wuest & Bucher, 1995:218).

Learners do not experience the learning stages at the same rate. In fact, all individuals learn at their own pace, as they are each different and they also experience different pressures, forces and circumstances at varying points in time. It is therefore imperative that the educators concerned are sensitive to these facts and that they take cognisance of them and are guided by them.

Furthermore, the acquisition of knowledge is grouped into three areas of study, namely: cognitive learning, psychomotor learning and affective learning. Utilised together, these inform the learner holistically and in an integrated manner.

6.3.1 *Cognitive learning and development*

It is in the area of cognitive learning and development where improving the problem solving abilities of learners are largely concentrated upon. In addition, teachers will provide learners with as many learning experiences as possible, including teachings in the area of Physical Education. This will assist in the development of learners' knowledge, their understanding of things and their ability to identify concepts. Furthermore, cognitive learning and development can take place through Physical Education, which in fact contributes to the development of critical thinking skills. For example, to acquire or perform a Physical Education skill, a learner must go through a series of processes that will all require cognitive involvement, such as: *analysing, comparing, contrasting, sequencing* and *evaluating* the various challenges as they present themselves.

As a further example of growth in the sphere of cognitive learning and development, learners will, during their formal school lifetime and through their learning experiences, at some stage or other, move from a point of recklessness, unnecessarily daring behaviour, and ignorance. One of the positive directions in which learners may move if exposed to physical activity, is where they will become aware of, and adhere to, issues such as the safety demands of Physical Education. In addition to this they will also acquire a basic knowledge of the body and its functions.

6.3.2 Psychomotor learning and development

Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy (1995:1) refers to psychomotor development as “the maturation of psychologic, muscular elements that constitute behavior”. According to Massey University (2002:1), psychomotor learning refers to the learning of physical movement [“motor”] and a mental [“psycho”] component. It can therefore be understood that psychomotor development concerns itself with the growth of the learners’ mental activity, which includes aspects such as *reflex movements, basic fundamental movements, perceptual abilities, physical abilities, skilled movements* and *nondiscursive communication*. In short, it means that the main focus is on the growth of the learners’ physical fitness and their motor skills. This growth is a process, as it starts from the time that the learner is in the womb of the mother, to the time that the learner dies. The development is continuous. If given the opportunity, somewhere during this process learners will be at a point where they are able to crawl, then walk, run and eventually even participate in recreational activities and play sport. Through various learning experiences and over a period of time, learners will reach a point where they can perform the relevant actions and movements more skillfully and gracefully, as well as potentially even execute these skills and movements to rhythm.

6.3.3 Affective learning and development

The focal point of affective learning and development is the development of the learners’ values, as well as social, emotional and spiritual outcomes. Values such as *respect, discipline, honesty, camaraderie, commitment, fair play, loyalty* and *responsibility*, are some of the disciplines promoted through Physical Education. Then too, factors like the enhancement of *self-esteem, co-operation, leadership* and *emotional control*, are also promoted as outcomes, with Physical Education being used as the vehicle to drive the process. It is also here where through their learning experiences children will develop a desire to lead an active and healthy

lifestyle and appreciate the qualities of disciplines like fair play, camaraderie and honesty. In addition to this, children will respond to aesthetic experiences like those that present themselves in activities such as dance, gymnastics, football, high jump and hurdles.

6.4 INTERNATIONAL LESSONS TO BE LEARNT

Taking cognisance of their constitution, South Africans should be open to learn from the experiences and strategies of others, especially when it concerns issues such as:

- Gender equity: The United States of America, regarding Physical Education and females, developed an approach that promotes physical activity amongst girls. The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports [1997] delivered a report, "Physical Activity & Sport in the Lives of Girls: Physical and Mental Health Dimensions from an Interdisciplinary Approach". According to Kane and Larkin (1997:vii), this report examines the benefits, the barriers and the kinds of environments in which girls learn. It also refers to the "complete girl" and her social, physical, emotional and cultural environment, rather than just one aspect of her experience.
- The educational value of Physical Education: Physical education is vital for the overall education of young people. Governments are neglecting the Physical Education programmes of schools. Often funds are being channelled to privately run sport associations. "They are confusing physical education ... with competitive sport", says Marcellin Dally of UNESCO's Physical Education and Sport Unit (UNESCO, 2003:1).
- Physical Education in general: The "Declaration of Punta del Este [MINEPS III]" states that the resources required for delivering quality programmes in Physical Education must be made available (International

Council of Sport Science and Physical Education, 2001:130-131). It further states that Physical Education is a human right for all children and that Physical Education programmes must be implemented in the education system and the community. Added to this is the allocation of human and financial resources and the fact that sectors must co-operate in the promotion and development of Physical Education within the context of a culture of peace (International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education, 2001:130-132).

When considering and addressing concerns such as gender equity, the problem of confusing Physical Education with competitive sport, and the implementation of quality programmes, South Africa must take a positive and unambiguous stand, which falls in line with the spirit of the country's constitution.

6.5 CONCLUSION



The optimal health of a person is dependent on the health of all the person's individual, yet integrated components, namely, the cognitive, emotional, spiritual and physical beings of the person. This contributes holistically to the health of the whole individual.

An active lifestyle is a way of life in which Physical Education and all its various components, such as movement, is valued and integrated into the daily lives of people. Physical Education establishes the cornerstones for lifelong activity and healthy living, by providing learners with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to strive towards the realisation of optimal health. It forms an integral and significant part of the development of the whole learner and should therefore not be as neglected an educational area, as what it presently is in the South African primary school education system.

The benefits of Physical Education include *muscular strength, flexibility and respiratory endurance*. Regular movement activities improve motor skills and motor co-ordination. Collectively these benefits and improvements lead to boosted confidence in one's abilities and capabilities, and this cascades to an improved self-esteem, self-confidence, as well as enthusiasm and a will to participate. In addition, Physical Education adds value to society through its teachings of social imperatives, such as the importance of teamwork and the acceptance of rules.

For the learning process to be effective, a positive school environment needs to be prevalent. Here, Physical Education with its potential and positive education-based factors can play a leading role, as it provides learners with the opportunities that stimulate and motivate them to communicate, analyse and question. It also provides learners with experiences that encourage them to apply cognitive concepts, as well as create the space and opportunity for them to develop their affective and psychomotor skills.



“It is important that educators consider all three domains [cognitive, affective and psychomotor] when planning learning experiences to meet individuals' needs” (Wuest & Bucher, 1995:67). In this way, as in the case of Physical Education, educators will be contributing to the holistic needs of the learner, as they will be paying attention to imperatives like academic activity, creative activity, imagination, relaxation, spirituality, meditation and recreational activity. This is how the necessary space can be created for learners to be able to access that which will make them develop and grow as whole individuals, while also acknowledging that they form part of a greater whole, for example, the universe.

The Physical Education experience, which is also the experience of physical activity and movement activity, is unlike any other aspect of school life. When one evaluates its potential and benefits, one can only conclude that Physical Education is invaluable for the personal and holistic development of the learner. A further conclusion is that within the school environment, Physical Education is

just as invaluable for the promotion of lifelong, active living, as it is for the education and motivation of healthy lifestyles. Consequently, it is for these very reasons that the South African government needs to recognise the importance of Physical Education, treat it as a priority entity, and provide the necessary resources and strategies for the effective and efficient implementation thereof.

CHAPTER 7

THE WAY FORWARD



7.1 INTRODUCTION

“To adapt to this world, the child abdicates its ecstasy” (Laing, 1967:118). This quote aptly describes the prevailing conditions under which a newborn baby enters this life. It tells us that the baby, through birth, is introduced to an unknown situation and socialised so as to fit into it. How easy it would be for the baby to slip into a stereotype, conditioned and restricted lifestyle, however, as the custodians of our children, it is our moral obligation to facilitate a principle-based transition. Our nurturing process must include giving the children access to the types of tools and life skills that will equip them with the necessary knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, which will enable them to realise their true and full potential. These tools and life skills must also create the opportunity for children to be able to live a life that will contribute positively and meaningfully to the world.

Furthermore, parents should teach children to value and think positively of themselves, their families and their communities. If learners continuously have harsh and negative thoughts about themselves and from where they come, they are indulging in a self-destructing process. This type of practice and thinking leads learners to believe that they are under-achievers, and consequently, they will under achieve in the execution of their tasks.

Children tend to emulate adults that are closest to them and will indulge in those activities that are continuously spoken about and actively performed by their parents and older family members. It is therefore imperative that parents and older family members become positive role-models for the family's children. They must educate their siblings on the matters of family values, healthy living, lifelong activity and lifelong learning, as well as physically lead by example, thereby showing their children the way.

Liedloff (2001:162) describes how the reactions and responses of children vary when they are exposed to, and stimulated by, certain types of facilitation approaches and conditions. For example, if a child lives with criticism, it learns to condemn; with hostility, it learns to fight; with ridicule, it learns to be shy; with shame, it learns to be guilty; with tolerance, it learns to be patient; and with encouragement, it learns confidence. Also, if a child lives with praise, it learns to appreciate; with fairness, it learns justice; with security, it learns to have faith; with approval, it learns to like itself; and with acceptance and friendship, it learns to find love, both in itself and in the world.

Therefore, it is important to recognise that the custodians of the children must impart wholesome values, principles and attitudes to their siblings, as well as contribute positively to the knowledge, understanding, skills and life skills of the learners. Relevant to this is Physical Education. Its subject matter dictates that learners must have access to, as well as be exposed to, its content, principles, values and spirit, as early on in their lives as possible. They must be presented

with the opportunity to interact with the wide range of activities that Physical Education has to offer, such as sport and recreation, rather than concentrating on, or specialising in, only one or two types of activities. Participating in a variety of activities will expose learners to a number of different skills, thoughts and processes, as well as giving them access to a myriad of movements. In so doing, the development of their strength, flexibility, eye-hand and eye-foot co-ordination, manual dexterity, as well as muscular co-ordination, is prompted.

7.2 THE VISION AND MISSION FOR EDUCATION

South Africa's adoption of the ideals and objectives of Outcomes-based Education [OBE] dictates that its education system is based on a holistic education approach. One therefore needs to acknowledge that while certain changes to present South African educational approaches and practices have already taken place, there is still more that needs to be done, so as to ensure the sustainability of relevant programmes, initiatives and implementation strategies. With the school playing a pivotal role in its community and by creating access to the full potential of Physical Education, is in many cases going to require a major paradigm shift to take place within the minds of those who are instrumental in education policy development and implementation.

A revised and relevant curriculum has to have at its very core, the principles of *empathic living, family values, respect, honesty, integrity, fairness, lifelong learning, lifelong activity and healthy living*. These will become the heartbeat of the education system and will flow like lifeblood through the veins of every learning area. The learning areas in turn should function together in a values-centred, morals-orientated and principle-based manner, and assist in developing learners to be able to work towards meeting their intended outcomes through a truly holistic approach.

7.3 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Given the fact that a period of approximately five years has elapsed between the initial and final draft of the minithesis, and also that the RNCS has been implemented during this time, explains why in certain instances some of the strategies mentioned, already form part of the implementation stage. However, the importance of maintaining the inclusion of these strategies in the minithesis lies in their relevance. Consequently, this relevance requires that these strategies are emphasised, supported and sustained, as in the case of strategies like: partnerships, teamwork, an integrated approach, indigenous knowledge systems, a learner-centred approach and social development.

To assist schools in their quest to deliver holistic education and development, and to promote a healthy way of life, I suggest that a multi-disciplinary approach to this complex problem be adopted. The various sectors, which should include the education, health and welfare, safety and security, and cultural affairs and sport departments, must combine their expertise and resources. This type of intersectoral collaboration will be able to address burning and critical issues, such as truancy and HIV and AIDS life skills strategies, in an integrated and streamlined way. The joint venture will develop the capacity to deliver a holistic service to its clients, as they would have initiated a joint and common vision, along with a jointly strategised method of delivery.

7.3.1 Integrated learning

It is important that South Africa adopts the principle of integrated learning. Through this approach to education the learners will experience the learning areas as linked and related. They will also experience the links and interrelationships that occur within a learning area. For example, in the Department of Education's Life Orientation learning area, learning outcome 1, which deals with health promotion, is linked and interrelated with learning outcome 4, which deals with physical development and movement. This also links with, and relates to, learning outcome 3, which deals with personal development (Department of Education, 2002a:7). Integrated learning is integral to an outcomes-based approach to

education and it promotes the holistic development of the learner. Therefore, the integrated learning approach needs to be emphasised at teacher training level of the Department of Education. Through these training sessions teachers will remain informed of the value of this type of approach and will constantly be made aware of the possible links and interrelationships that exist within, and between, certain learning areas.

7.3.2 Physical Education as a learning area

According to Khan (personal interview, 16 April 2004), many South African schools do not focus on, nor do they practise, the principles and ethos of healthy living and lifelong activity. Also, Physical Education as espoused in the minithesis generally does not enjoy the exposure that it should, within the South African primary schools education system. Hence the reason, throughout the minithesis, I motivate for Physical Education's official, **increased status**, and for its inclusion as a priority learning area that will be given every opportunity for subject matter exposure and unbiased learner access. Physical Education and its vast potential have the qualities and abilities to perform an integral function in the holistic education and development of the learner. This underlines the reasons for the South African Department of Education to, as soon as possible, include Physical Education as part of the country's core curriculum. The subject matter has a major role to play in South African primary school education, as "Physical education is the sole area of the curriculum that provides students with information about human movement and explores with them its many dimensions" (Wuest & Bucher, 1995:71).

7.3.3 A structured daily plan

Whilst a holistic approach needs to be followed, a **structured daily educational system** needs to be put into place. This system must create space in its delivery mechanisms for definite focus on each of the component parts relevant to the

holistic development of the child, namely, the head [mind], the hands [body] and the heart [soul].

I therefore motivate that, generally, the formal school day needs to be divided into three equal parts, with the first part of the day catering for the academic type [head/mind] activity, for example, Mathematics, as the brain is fresher and more energetic earlier in the day. The second part of the day will cater for the more artistic type [heart/soul] activity, such as, Drawing, as this changes the children's focuses and soothes them into the next part of the day. The third part of the day belongs to the more practical type [hands/body] activity, such as, Physical Education, as this will enable learners to rid themselves of their pent up energy in a creative, recreational, yet educational way. Physical Education will also round off the child's day appropriately, in that it will draw all the component parts of the being together, as it stimulates the brain, adds rhythm to the heart and exercises the body. It also sets the tone for after school recreational, physical, movement and creative activities that include ball games, drama and gymnastics. Hereafter the child will probably feel fulfilled and should be able to relax peacefully, sleep and thereby feel rejuvenated, motivated and prepared for the next day. Managing the day in this way will add more value to the children's lives, as all the relevant component parts of their beings are catered for on a daily, regular and structured basis. It also exposes the learners to proper time management.

7.3.4 Avoid burn-out

It is necessary not to rush children through their different levels of growth, development and education. If children show potential, rather let them develop in tandem with their emotional growth, than to push them at an accelerated pace and eventually have them suffer of burn-out. Children who suffer of burn-out will lose the desire to continue and this will stunt their growth and create unfulfilled potential. Often this condition also leads to addictive behaviour. Moreover, through the educational process children should primarily be exposed to subject matter that is of relevance to them, their environment and their growth as

individuals, whilst still remaining team players. Also, the various education interactions should be geared towards building the dignity, self-worth and self-esteem of the learner.

7.3.5 Africanise for Africa

In Africa, the field of Physical Education needs to assist with enriching learners regarding their African heritage. To encourage the positive development of the self-esteem, self-worth and dignity of the learners, greater emphasis must be placed on African dances and its underlying philosophies. This way of thinking is affirmed by the following statement that was made by Holdstock (1991b:10):

Like so many other aspects of behaviour in Africa, dance is not an event in itself, but a connectedness with others and the external world. Someone or something is always danced. Dancing is giving and taking. It places the person in the centre of his or her world. It ‘grounds’ the individual. The downward directedness of African dance, in contrast to ballet, ties the dancer to the life-giving energy of the Earth Mother. In so doing, it enables the person to join forces with an eternal rhythm which provides sustenance and strength. African dance is saying yes to life in the most dynamic way.

African dances and dancing should therefore become an imperative of the integrated approach of education, with special attention being given to the diverse cultures prevalent in Africa, and more specifically, South Africa. Furthermore, dance is an important vehicle for social integration (Keim, 2003: 155-165).

The curriculum needs to shift from being “exclusively directed at the external world to one having room for intrapersonal development”, as a person’s body and mind function together and not as separate entities (Holdstock, 1991b:10). However, whilst other folk dances may well be seen as being of secondary importance to the learners, they should still have access to it, as it is necessary for their global experience, development and growth (Solomons, personal interview, 02 May 2004). Simultaneously, learners should have access and exposure to more African-based sport and recreation activities, e.g. indigenous games. Already, in

South Africa, efforts in this regard have been undertaken by the Department of Education, as well as Sport and Recreation South Africa, with its joint Indigenous Games Festival initiative, in Bloemfontein, in 2004.

7.3.6 Learner participation

Personal, active involvement in a process is of greater value to learners than for them to be taught something through a teacher-centred or talk-and-chalk approach. It is often easier to remember the actual experience than to remember the explanation. Experiential learning is learning through activity and creativity. Therefore, activity and creativity in education, and active education, where the learner is directly involved with the learning process, is of vital importance.

Teaching methodology needs to exercise a greater focus on rhythm, if we want our education to be more relevant to the learners of Africa. Through rhythm we can encounter and engage in a number of experiences, such as movement, singing and acting. These experiences will make learning more activity-based and all children can benefit from livelier education.

Generally, rhythms are important to healthy and holistic patterns, for example, cosmic cycles like the seasons, and the cycles of the month, affect us. African culture, through the medium of rhythm, pays homage to our oneness with nature, as the natural rhythms within us, connect us with the larger wholeness (Holdstock, 1991b:11).

With further regard to learner participation, the following abridged version of the poem, “The Student’s Prayer” (Zohar & Marshall, 2001:290), gives fresh meaning to the interactiveness and delivery mechanisms of holistic education and development:

Don’t impose on me what you know,
I want to explore the unknown
and be the source of my own discoveries.

Let the known be my liberation, not my slavery.

The world of your truth can be my limitation;
your wisdom my negation.
Don't instruct me; let's walk together.
Let my richness begin where yours ends.

Show me so that I can stand
on your shoulders.
Reveal yourself so that I can be
something different.

You believe that every human being
can love and create.
I understand, then, your fear
when I ask you to live according to your wisdom.

You will not know who I am
by listening to yourself.
Don't instruct me; let me be.
Your failure is that I be identical to you.

This poem is an indication of how learners can be guided, but not be restricted by prior knowledge. The poem also depicts how learners can be assisted to discover things for themselves, as well as be enriched by utilising the known as a springboard from which to work. Learners should be allowed to explore the unknown without their teacher's personal barriers, inhibitions and fears, but with their teacher's support, honesty and openness. Moreover, learners need to develop themselves and grow as whole and complete individuals. In reality, teachers should know their learners and appreciate them for who they are, and not for who they want them to be. Ultimately, learners should be given the space to become self-informed and self-sufficient. Teachers should function as facilitators and create the space for their learners to experience things for themselves. Consequently, teachers should allow learners to develop as independent beings.

This is in keeping with holistic education and development, as holism is about dealing with the whole being and entire entity; education is about facilitation and discovery, and especially discovery of self and experiences; and development is about growth and taking forward. Adding even greater value to the education

process, we have facilitation, which is a process that creates the space for learners to discover themselves. Both education and facilitation is about the understanding of the learners' potential and the unique gifts that they bring to the world, as well as the knowledge that they hold to fulfil their life-purpose, which is in the service of universal enrichment. Given this paradigm, education goes way beyond just the teaching of subject matter like Social Skills, Mathematics and Accounting. Rather, it focuses on the discovery of self, potential, gifts and creativity in universal growth.

7.3.7 Teamwork

Education is about participating, co-operating, experiencing and teamwork rather than competing, being individualistic and being self-centred. Almost all work situations are dependent on the teamwork of individuals in order to achieve success (Holdstock, 1991b:11). To a certain extent, Physical Education covers these needs through the types of qualities that it promotes, for example, participation, teamwork and camaraderie, as opposed to individuality and serious competition.



7.3.8 The curriculum

All components of the curriculum must be justified on the grounds of some kind of relevance, and the design of basic schooling needs to relate to the life and work of the wider community. Given the South African situation, attempts must be made to introduce relevance through new curricula in fields such as safety and security, life skills, social, environmental and integrated studies. Curriculum is about content, process and intention. Therefore, a clear attempt must be to make education relevant to the needs of the South African society.

The core focus of a primary school must not be to measure the abilities of the learner and the staff, neither must it be to focus on the mastering of curriculum content, getting a certificate, being taught by someone, becoming a specialist and treating knowledge as a commodity. Rather, the core focus should be for learners to be exposed and given access to, and be educated in, issues like safety and security, life skills, human rights, collectivism, holism, as well as physical, emotional, spiritual, social, political and economical needs. With reference to Figure 2, learners also need to be made aware of the importance of life imperatives such as imagination, recreation, meditation and ultimately, relaxation and leisure. The curriculum therefore has to make provision for these issues and it must do this through relevant learning areas and subject matter.

To assist South Africa in addressing concerns such as equity, and maintaining and sustaining its democratic principles, the country's curriculum needs to cover subject matter such as *social development*. Furthermore, South Africa must ensure that provision is made for all learners to be able to access the resources and interventions that will enhance success. For instance, learners who experience barriers to learning through being confined to wheelchairs, should be provided for in such a way that they are able to perform their functions and produce their tasks maximally, as well as optimally. The curriculum must also accommodate the fast tracking of the development of those learners who have been disadvantaged through the apartheid history of the country. This will assist the historically disadvantaged learners to, in the shortest possible period, be at a point where they are on an equal footing with the other learners of their age. The eventual equality in status will not only develop the self-esteem of the relevant individuals and their communities, but will also create the opportunity for these individuals and communities to add value to society, as they bring along with them their wealth of life skills and streetwise experiences.

The curriculum must demand that facilities be provided for optimal, personal growth, as actualisation requires creativity. The demand for facilities may well lead to intersectoral collaboration with other state departments, where these

departments assist with the provision of resources at schools. Utilisation of these resources and facilities will benefit the development of the relevant learners, and their personal growth will go a long way towards building their self-confidence and self-esteem, as well as strengthen them as individuals. The resultant regeneration in self-confidence and self-esteem and eventual self-actualisation, will assist learners with the growth and development of their spirit and help them develop a love for life and living, as well as respect for their country and respective communities. Through initiatives such as intersectoral collaboration and the provision of resources and facilities, learners will become more aware of, and recognise, the role that their country is playing in their lives. Consequently, South Africa's children may well develop a greater sense of patriotism and pride for, and in, their country.

Through the curriculum, the notion of good citizenship must be facilitated. Citizenship can be included as one of Physical Education's focus areas. Here, learners must acquire socially accepted knowledge, understanding, skills, norms, attitudes and values, and thus develop into productive, respectable, creative and active citizens. Citizens who not only have an appreciation for, but who also activate the whole ethos and practice of, lifelong activity and healthy living.

In short, the type of school and schooling system that is desired and recommended, is one that is equal to the holistic education and development of the child and which is constantly strengthening its capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning and working. This briefly describes the framework and ethos of a Health Promoting School. It seems conclusive then, that every primary school level, learning institution, should be developed into a Health Promoting School.

7.4 LIFELONG ACTIVITY AND HEALTHY LIVING

Imperative to the growth of learners is the type and quality of information that they acquire at an early age. If learners have access and exposure to the relevant information, value systems, sets of principles and life ethos of their desired and

intended future, then this is more than likely the way of life that they will adopt and live by. However, continuous appraisal of the direction and situation of the life of the individual learner needs to take place, as learning is an ongoing process, life is ever-changing, and the individual can be disabled through unhealthy behaviour, or through a lack of education with regards to healthy behaviour. In fact, communities can become crippled as a result of the same reasons. Therefore, in addition to the continuous appraisal, it is vitally important that the necessary support systems be put in place, so that the positive development and growth of the learner will be sustained and maintained.


Once learners have already accessed and developed contrary tendencies and habits, it is extremely difficult for the teacher to first undo these, and then to encourage and support new and relevant ones. Simultaneously, it is hard for the learner to undo these tendencies and habits, and then to develop new and relevant ones. Therefore, already from childhood, learners must be exposed to, and receive, the relevant information, value systems, sets of principles and ethos of life and living. This way of living must then be perpetuated, sustained and maintained throughout the learners' life here on earth. Consequently, this means that parents must live according to the way of life that is being mooted, and become the type of role-models that children need to emulate. Educators and parents need to join forces, and with the common denominator, the child, form a partnership. The intended and relevant outcome of this partnership needs to be jointly communicated, strategised, executed, sustained and maintained.

Central to the strategies developed to assist learners in their development and growth, must be their journey towards the state of relaxation and leisure referred to in Figure 2. Throughout life's journey and en route to each of life's stations, whilst moving on to one's final destination, a person encounters and undergoes many trials and tribulations. This is very trying and stressful, and in order for the momentum of developmental travel to be maintained, there must be a period of relaxation, and ultimately, leisure. Here, recuperation, internalisation and consolidation take place after each of life's stations has been reached. This being

so, will ensure rejuvenation, and the desire to continue the journey will be rekindled, as life and living is but a journey and not a destination. Therefore, built into the ethos and spirit of life, must be the imperatives called relaxation and leisure. The leisure experience of having a relaxed mind, a relaxed body and a relaxed soul, must be the underlying factor of life's holistic equation. For this purpose, three primary forms of relaxation and leisure can be identified and recommended, namely, Imagination for the mind, Recreation for the body and Meditation for the soul.

7.4.1 Imagination

Gardener (1979:161) emphasises the importance of imagination to the human being by explaining: "modern man hungers after imagination because he wants to come closer to the life of life". Gardner (1979:161) also captures the value that imagination can add to both the education, as well as rejuvenation processes, in:



When, through imagination, awareness of the world's becoming lightens the burden of factual experience; and when through imagination the will-to-become adds weight to otherwise weightless ideas, transforming abstract thought into formative power, the soul is doubly invigorated.

To have imagination, is for the mind to have the ability to be creative, inventive, innovative, visionary, ingenious, insightful, original and resourceful. The mind is able to form images or concepts of external objects that are not present to the senses.

7.4.2 Recreation

The modern day perceptions and perspective of what recreation represents, are captured in the philosophies of theorists like Kelly and Torkildsen. Kelly (1982:25) describes recreation as being the re-creation of energy or the restoration of the wholeness of mind, spirit and body, in the individual's ability to function. Torkildsen (1986:197) defines recreation as consisting of two main foci, with the one being an activity focus, which is related to sports, games, art and other leisure

time pursuits, and the other being an experience focus. The experience focus relates to the effect an activity has on a person and a person's self-fulfilment. Generally, recreation refers to renewal, revision, refreshing, restoration and recovery, and presupposes a previous situation or activity that has depleted or exhausted the wholeness of the individual.

7.4.3 Meditation

The primary purpose of meditation is to exercise the mind and to develop an attitude that is humble, positive and spiritual. It is an exercise that increases your awareness of yourself and your surroundings. Regularly practising your meditation exercises is important. The type of exercise that you would practise, is thinking. Here the main focus should be positive thinking, where you take negative experiences, look for the positive strands within them, focus on these, and build from this point. If you consistently practise your meditation, you will develop your meditative skills. Furthermore, being humble and positive in your attitude draws you closer to the Creator, and this makes the meditative experience, a spiritual one.



Many people find that meditation quietens the mind. It “allows them to listen to God or let the spirit of life enter them. ... Meditation ... can give you a vital sense of transcendence” (Reader's Digest, 1990:375). It makes you feel as if you are being connected to something larger than yourself. Physical activity or sport can also bring about peak experiences. A woman one day described recurrent experiences of religious faith while jogging: “I feel more inspired when I'm jogging than I ever did in church. Sometimes I just have the sense of going beyond myself and being aware of and part of everything around me” (Reader's Digest, 1990:375). Similarly, when children play or indulge in various recreational activities or sport, it appears as if their minds are far away from whatever may be bothering or disturbing them. Ada Hendricks (personal interview, 05 May 2004) described how her children felt when they were busy with their favourite sporting activities:

My grade seven daughter, Tammy, says that when she swims, she feels free. She thinks of nothing and when she is finished swimming, she feels totally relaxed. Similarly, my eighteen year old son, Lyle, claims that when he fences, at some stage his brain becomes numb and his body takes over. After fencing, his mind is sharper and more focused and he studies much better.

Meditation can influence one's life in an extremely meaningful way if it is practised consciously, consistently and continuously over a considerable period of time. Eventually, through this type of meditative practice, individuals can release themselves from their stresses and strains as they enter another level of existence. At this level of existence the mind will become relaxed. The peaceful state of mind revitalises the mental and physical state of the relevant individual.

7.4.4 Relaxation and Leisure

Imagination [mind], recreation [body] and meditation [soul] are all elements of relaxation and leisure, as they each aim at relaxing the individual. Through deep relaxation our minds are shifted to another plane where we become oblivious of our problems. At this point the individual is undergoing a leisure experience. The state of oblivion, or break from the norm or our daily routine, helps to revitalise the mind, body and soul. In our quest for lifelong activity and healthy living, we need to recognise the importance of relaxation and leisure. Relaxation, and ultimately leisure, practised in the true sense of the word, removes our minds from nagging and stressful thoughts. Total relaxation can be experienced when the mind, body and soul have simultaneously realised a relaxed state. Hence it is advised that the proposed relaxation activities be executed in a holistic manner, thus ensuring the intended outcome and elevating the state of the individual to the heights of a leisure experience.

7.5 CONCLUSION

Presently, the importance of Physical Education is constantly being spoken about, however, relatively little has thus far been realised in the attempts to have it instated as a priority learning area. In South Africa, the Department of Education has played down the importance of Physical Education and has instead laid clear and strong emphasis on the 3 R's: reading, writing and arithmetic. In addition to this, the Department of Education offers special awards for learning areas like Science, Technology and Mathematics. Conversely, relatively little encouragement and support is given to voluntary, school-based organisations that offer activities like sport and recreation to their learners.

Sadly, it needs to be said that whilst one acknowledges that South Africa is undergoing an education transformation process, its marginalisation of Physical Education shows that it still has not strategically seized its opportunities completely. Perhaps it is the country's resistance to, or fear of, complete change, or its lack of vision, information or insight, but Physical Education is an area in which South Africa could, and should have, made a revolutionary paradigm shift. Given the priority role that Physical Education can play within the South African primary school education system, the subject matter should be recognised as an imperative. In keeping with the ethos and philosophy of holistic education and development, as well as active living and healthy lifestyles, South African learners must be exposed to, and given access to, Physical Education, on a much larger and more intense scale than that which is presently prescribed. Physical Education is the key and central subject matter to the living of active and healthy lifestyles and the delivery of holistically developed learners. Therefore, when education and curriculum planners address the issues involving holistic education and development in South African primary schools, aspects such as those espoused in the following table should guide them. These amended extracts from the content of the minithesis are presented in tabular form, so as to highlight some of the most important considerations involved when addressing holistic education and development, and curricula philosophies and subject matter:

<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>The learning areas entrenched in the curriculum should function together in a values-centred, morals-orientated and principle-based manner, and assist in developing learners to be able to work towards meeting their intended outcomes through a truly holistic approach.</p> <p>Intersectoral collaboration amongst relevant government structures and/or non-governmental organisations can address burning and critical issues, such as truancy and HIV and AIDS life skills strategies, in an integrated and streamlined way. In a combined fashion the relevant sectors and/or structures can develop the capacity to deliver a holistic service to its clients, as the joint venture would have initiated a common and shared vision and delivery strategy.</p> <p>It is important that the principle of integrated learning be adopted. Through this approach to education the learners will experience the learning areas as linked and related. They will also experience the links and interrelationships that occur within a learning area.</p> <p>Physical Education must be given official and increased status in the South African primary schools education system and it must be included as a priority learning area that will be given every opportunity for subject matter exposure and unbiased learner access.</p> <p>A holistic approach must be followed. A structured daily educational system needs to be put into place in all South African primary schools. At least two, one-hour per school week sessions of Physical Education must be allocated to each primary school class. These one-hour sessions should be placed a minimum of one day apart from each other.</p>
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<p>6.</p> <p>7.</p> <p>8.</p> <p>9.</p> <p>10.</p>	<p>African dances and dancing should become an imperative of the integrated approach of education, with special attention being given to the diverse cultures prevalent in Africa, and more specifically, South Africa. According to Keim (2003:155-165), dance is an important vehicle for social integration.</p> <p>Generally, rhythms are important to healthy and holistic patterns, for example, cosmic cycles like the seasons and the cycles of the month, affect us. African culture, through the medium of rhythm, pays homage to our oneness with nature, as the natural rhythms within us, connect us with the larger wholeness (Holdstock, 1991b:11).</p> <p>Relevance through new curricula in fields such as safety and security, life skills, social and environmental studies, needs to be introduced, as curriculum is about content, process and intention. These fields of study should be structured in an integrated format, so that learners can experience a holistic and interrelated approach to education.</p> <p>The learners need to be made aware of the importance of life imperatives such as imagination, recreation, meditation and ultimately, relaxation and leisure. The curriculum therefore has to make provision for these issues and it can do this through learning areas such as Arts and Culture, and subject matter such as Art, Dance, Drama and Music. More specifically, Physical Education can play a major role in the provision of space for these life imperatives, as well as provide the necessary exercise activities for the development and growth of the mind, body and spirit of the learner.</p> <p>The curriculum, in keeping with the South African constitution, must facilitate the notion of good citizenship. Citizenship can be included as one of Physical Education's focus areas.</p>
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In recognising the importance of relevant education and the role that Physical Education can play in the implementation of holistic education and development, I propose that South African school communities become proactive about the implementation of Physical Education in their schools. These school communities, which in fact consist of the parents, learners and staff of the relevant schools, need to know how important they are, especially when it concerns nation building. Therefore, school communities should apply pressure on the country's national and provincial governments and facilitate a process whereby these governments can deliver relevant education and curricula in all its schools. The national and provincial governments of South Africa must provide the necessary infrastructure and resources for schools, so as to enable all the structures within a school to contribute towards the delivery of relevant education to all its learners.

The implementation of a new approach to education in South African primary schools is firstly going to require that the education and curriculum planners, as well as the educators, are open to change, and that they all develop a critical understanding of the situations relating to relevant and holistic education. Implementing sustainable and meaningful change is going to need an understanding of the process of change. The process of change calls for the relevant role-players to let go of past traditions and stereotypes, and that they absorb new, fresh and holistic ideas into the education and curriculum framework. They clearly need to become agents of change who are not going to be bogged down with obsolete education and curriculum ideologies. Educational institutions and more specifically schools, as well as educators themselves, are key players in the delivery of a transformed and relevant education system and curriculum.

As human beings, we must realise and recognise just how important we are to ourselves, as well as to others. We must live to fulfil our life-purpose and know divine guidance, as this forms part of a greater rhythm and is inherent in holistic thinking. "You are here to enable the divine purpose of the universe to unfold. That is how important you are!" (Tolle, 2001:v).

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