South African Journal for Research in Sport, Physical Education and Recreation, 2016, 38(3): 15 - 26.
Suid-Afrikaanse Tydskrif vir Navorsing in Sport, Liggaamlike Opvoedkunde en Ontspanning, 2016, 38(3): 15 - 26.
ISBN: 0379-9069

RELEVANCE OF OLYMPISM EDUCATION AND SPORT-FOR-DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

The phasing out of physical education (PE) in South African public schools in the 1980s has left a void relating to the relative inability to deliver on strategic outcomes of government departments. Contemporary Life Orientation (LO) and PE curricula and practices in public schools (especially those in impoverished communities) rely on external implementing agencies for delivery. Global agencies, such as the International Olympic Committee and international sport federations deliver on mega sport event legacy programmes, often through school-based programmes. Current sport-for-development and Olympic-related educational practices in search of a meaningful PE model based on a human justice framework that will foster optimal physical activity participation opportunities for all in different settings is examined. A Foucauldian lens of governmentality provides a conceptual framework for a multi-agency model of good governance, and illuminates crucial insights in terms of how sport, as a dominant paradigm, perpetuates a persuasive framework for neoliberal thinking and practices. Many such practices are entrenched in competitive sport and are perpetuated by the sport ethic. Some key questions remain since they relate to the necessity for constructing relevant PE curricula and models that can leverage global content and mega sport event legacies in an integrated and sustainable way.

Key words: Physical education; Olympism education; Sport-for-development; Schools.

INTRODUCTION

Physical education and school sport in South Africa are key government priorities, and the government is seeking a cost-effective model to deliver on envisaged educational and sport-focused outcomes (SRSA, 2012, 2013a & b). At a recent national multi-stakeholder workshop (26 January 2016), the Department of Basic Education called on PE experts to develop 'big ideas' for open sources for PE as a topic in the Life Orientation Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DBE, 2016).

This initiative is underpinned by a human rights based approach driven by the Technical Support Unit of the Department of Basic Education. This unit prioritised writing LO textbooks, teacher training, public engagement and research (DBE, 2016). During the workshop it became clear that LO and PE have congested policy spaces, with a plethora of implementing agencies delivering diverse life skills and sport-related programmes. The persuasiveness of the competitive sport paradigm has significant political traction, and mass sport participation

programmes are funded by SRSA (Sport and Recreation South Africa) to align PE and school sport to deliver on this competitive sport agenda.

Since the new political dispensation was realised in 1994, South Africa has emerged as the continent's leader propagating the 'power of sport', when the then President Mandela, stated:

> Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else can. Sport can awaken hope where there was previously despair (Nelson Mandela, Laureus World Sports Awards Ceremony, 2000).

Government's pro-poor policies focus on the redistribution of wealth and implementing mass sport participation programmes within a Sport-for-All framework (The Presidency, 2014). The emphasis on science, mathematics and English as core subject areas in the lower quantile (no-fee or poorer) schools, contributed to the outsourcing of sport- and life-skills related subjects. Even relatively better resourced schools face various challenges in implementing quality programmes, since most of the public schools abolished PE in the mid-1980s (Van Deventer, 2007). To some extent, this void has been filled by social entrepreneurs (non-governmental organisations) delivering diverse physical activity programmes, many of which originated as sport event legacy projects (Burnett, 2015).

South Africa has increasingly hosted international sporting events with the pinnacle being the 2010 FIFA World Cup and the 2022 Commonwealth Games (Cornelissen, 2004; www.durban-2022.com). The 2010 FIFA World Cup attracted influential sport-for-development agencies delivering value-based education and sport activities at schools, such as the high profiled GIZ/YDF (Youth Development through Football of the German Development Corporation), programme, co-funded by the European Union (Burnett & Hollander, 2013). Global stakeholders, like the IOC (International Olympic Committee) and United Nations' International Working Group for Sport Development and Peace (chaired by the Deputy Sport Minister of South Africa), promoted the delivery of sport-related social transformation programmes at schools (Kidd, 2008, 2011, 2013).

AIM OF RESEARCH

Thus, the time is ripe for the development of an innovative and globally informed, yet indigenised PE curriculum and school sport practices to which Olympism education and sport-for-development programmes can contribute. It is against this background that the paper aims to address:

(1) Olympism, Olympic education and Olympism education;
(2) Sport-for-development approaches through a Foucauldian lens of 'governmentality';
(3) Educational paradigm for enriching PE and school sport; and
(4) Recommendations for informing policies and practices.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF OLYMPISM

Ideologies of Olympism

In the late 19th Century, Pierre de Coubertin regarded Olympism as a valuable educational tool for the youth and the IOC was the driving force for propagating it globally. With its roots in Ancient Greek philosophy, Olympism presented a fusion of Western Christianity and democratic cosmopolitanism proposed by Thomas Arnold and the English school system. From the outset, Olympism as an ideology was enshrined in myth and the socio-political realities of the day (Monnin, 2012).

The IOC's concept of Olympism is captured in the Olympic Charter as a "philosophy of life", which places sport at the service of creating a "peaceful society" (IOC, 2013a:11). Olympism is further considered to represent a human rights perspective and fundamental ethic principles of non-discrimination, filtered by values of fair play and equality. It is this vision that resonated with the United Nations and led to the president of the IOC obtaining UN observer status in 2009. The partnership inspired the current strategic drive of the IOC to deliver on six of the Sustainable Development Goals (IOC, 2015). Olympism and its practices are not unproblematic and have attracted criticism from many sectors.

The idealistic model of an integrated mind, body, emotion, and conscience premised on 'universal ethical principles' is increasingly questioned. MacAloon (2016:62) states that Pierre de Coubertin was unsuccessful in connecting "his intuitions and insights on the discursive and pragmatic levels", being ignorant of Emile Durkheim's social theory at that time. However, he created a global sport festival with rituals and layered symbolic codes that lasted more than a century (Meinberg, 2016). Olympic values of fair play, leadership, excellence, respect, friendship and finding joy in effort, reached global acceptance and relevance through the Olympic Movement (Devitt, 2012). For the IOC, the internationalisation of Olympic ideals and values assumed a high level of compatibility with different cultures - a display of "a kind of multi-functionality" (Lenk, 2016:19).

Kohe (2010:488) is sharp in his criticism of Olympic idealism being integrated into PE curricula, and advocates for vital critical socio-political components in demystifying "contemporary illusions about sport, orthodox understandings of Olympic history and the IOC's idealistic and corporate propaganda". Inherent in this criticism is the construction of assumed universalism. Guest (2009) questions the assumed *universalism* and its relevance as a homogenising ideology for grassroots sports programmes in Africa. The universality and stability of such an ideology is also questioned by Teetzel (2012), who states the inevitability of change and need for new contextual interpretations.

Concepts may have some element of stability, but are differently interpreted in particular time periods and geographic locations, where they appear as unique or adapted conceptions. The concept of Olympism cannot defy *realistic expressions of time and place*, as is argued by Parry (2006:91), who states that for universal validity of Olympic values "each nation can sincerely commit itself, general by its own culture, location, history, tradition and projected future".

MacAloon (2016) equally emphasises the dynamic nature of cultures, whereas Sahlins (2000) refers to it as the indigenisation of modernity. In this sense, Olympic values are reflective of a *colonising process* and the promotion of consumerism in a highly commercialised environment (Lenskyi, 2012). As encapsulated by Badiou's Kantian ideas and Césaire's advocacy for an international left, radical thinking and agency challenge the status quo of powerful neo-colonial networks (Pithouse, 2013). A mega sport event often provides the stage for stakeholders to act out their mandates, often dictated by global powerhouses from the Global North. Thus, the critique is also directed towards the absorption of (sport) development policies and programmes by implementing agencies from the Global South (Patsantaras, 2008).

New World black thinkers like C.L.R. James and W.E.B. Du Bois warn against neo-liberal thinking and structuring debates to perpetuate Western-centric practices (Pithouse, 2013). Socio-political constructs have the facade of political agency, but fail to deliver equitable opportunities for all. Most legacy programmes linked to sport events lack sustainable resources and local ownership to effect meaningful local social impact. For this reason, Darnell (2007:607) advocates that "sport [for] development work be integrated into all forms of development inherent in diverse social settings", and proposes that it should harbour a self-critical edge.

The following section offers 'governmentality' through the lens of Foucault as the conceptual framework against which notions of educational sports legacy programmes might be understood. Two main educational thrusts associated with the Olympic Games and other mega-events relate to PE curricula and sport for development programme implementation.

Foucauldian lens of 'governmentality'

With multiple agencies delivering diverse content, the question emerges relating to how the diverse content and plethora of implementing agencies will deliver on an integrated or synthesised model based on good governance principles. Other dimensions for school curriculum infusion include issues relating to active citizenship, consumerism, the politics of the body and ideological tensions.

Michel Foucault and other political theorists engaged with the phenomenon of governmentality in a neo-liberal, modernist context, which implies a high level of reflective self-governance, active citizenry (youth), and increased consumerism (Chatziefstathiou, 2012b). This requires a critical view of heightened levels of consumer culture at mega-events, especially as it also intersects with the discourse of development and the affordability of global sporting events in developing economies of the Global South. Chatziefstathiou and Henry (2009) reflect on tensions between neo-liberalism, socialism, capitalism and conservatism. They question the unequal power relations and popularise bourgeois games and an Olympic sporting movement despite the rhetoric of social equality that would be promoted by sport event legacy programmes (Chatziefstathiou, 2006).

Governmentality transcends binary oppositions and abstractions whilst harbouring a universal imagination of rule embedded in social processes and individuation practices evident in embodied discipline and surveillance (Vrasti, 2013). For Foucault (2013), disciplinary power has a regulatory function with identified roles and responsibilities within a social hierarchy.

With the disciplinary power invested in controlling bodies of sport (the IOC and international sport federations), different surveillance techniques are utilised to ensure homogenisation and a shared pool of resources and knowledge to achieve collective goals. Olympic and Olympism education and sport-for-development programmes deliver disciplinary effects through 'good governance'. It also cascades to the formation of a sport ethic, regulations (anti-doping), and coaching practices to ensure the docility and obedience of athletes, who in turn echo sport virtue and value participation to all sectors of society (Markula-Denison & Pringle, 2007).

The quest for sustainable sport event legacy impact is often translated into the delivery of programmes through existing systems, of which PE seems to be an obvious channel. A generic thread speaks to value education as proposed by bid specifications, a value education for potential host cities and countries that would inevitably also package it in a national framework.

Olympic education versus Olympism education

Advocating for constructivist pedagogies for Olympism education and its location within a PE context underpinned by critical pedagogy, requires a repositioning of the field (Culpan & Wigmore, 2010). Less critical conceptualisations found expression in Olympic education toolkits and globalised programmes often associated with IOC legacy programmes implemented under the jurisdiction of National Olympic Committees (NOCs) and Olympic Academy Commissions (Culpan & McBain, 2012).

Many of these programmes can be placed on a continuum of a 'factual and historical' approach (traditional Olympic education), a holistic approach, and full integration within the PE and school sport framework to foster critical thinking through experiential learning (Olympism education) (Culpan, 2015). The proposed constructivist framework for Olympism education proposes a new way of thinking about teaching, learning and knowledge construction by connecting "sport and movement experiences with lived and authentic contexts" (Culpan & McBain, 2012:99). Olympism offers a synthesis of the psychological, social and critical dimensions of constructivism in a pragmatic way to develop from experiential learning and humanist positioning to sharpen independent thinking and self-reflection (Culpan, 2015).

Several influential models exist, such as that of Naul (2008) and an extended version on a didactic matrix provided by Nikolaus (2016). Binder (2010, 2012) developed generic material on Olympic education as value-based education for global implementation of the Olympic Values Education Programme (OVEP). Diverse models and evaluations report moderate but positive effects, such as the Olympic Education Programmes in Lithuanian schools (Šukys & Majauskiene, 2014), and Greek schools (Hassandra *et al*., 2007). Parry (2012) refers to relatively short-term effects of legacy programmes, yet acknowledges the potential positive contribution of such programmes at the Youth Olympic Games and for the upcoming Olympic Games in Rio in 2016.

Olympism education seems to reach beyond the Olympic Games as a global sporting event by informing mainstream value-based PE and physical activity programmes, specifically in an Olympic host country (Parry, 2012). It is in this vein that sport for development as social movement successfully intersects by propagating sustainable value education programmes associated with sport and physical activities (Kidd, 2008; Culpan, 2015).

Sport-for-development and value education

Kay (2012) described how sport-for-development carries a high level of political significance with recognition as an *Olympic legacy concept*. The concept of legacy and 'development' of Third World nations though elite and sport-for-development (life skill-based) programmes are premised on the bourgeois concept of catching up the historical delay. Global integration that allows for the flow of foreign capital and expertise frames an image of political agency for development work in different spheres, including in different sports practices (Pithouse, 2013).

Many dominant approaches are mostly reductionist, and are informed by positivist logical modelling, with the implication that sport may serve as an antidote to many social ills, and that sport is inherently 'good' (Coakley, 2011). This trail of thought assumes a deficit model of vulnerable populations who are inevitably deviant and in need of sport for personal development and empowerment. Coalter (2013) speaks out against this deficit model approach and argues that impoverished populations should be understood in the context of their living conditions. People are not merely mechanisms in linear processes of growth and development, and sport participation delivers very varied results with specific effects for specific populations under certain conditions.

Over statement of positive effects of value-based *sport-for-development programmes* resonate with similar sentiments about Olympism as critical scholars contribute to a body of knowledge from a grounded theoretical perspective (Darnell, 2007; Burnett, 2015; Sugden, 2015). Political activists, such as Samir Amin (2006:4), Director of the Third World Forum, openly questions the hypocrisy of political powers and their hegemony in the UN, as they deliver development by standing united in their "fight against poverty". Kidd (2011) argues for the opening up of sport-for-development phenomena to address the educational needs of young people in local settings.

The *focus on youth* (male and female) and establishment of the Youth Olympic Games (YOG) in 2010, was expressed at the XIII Olympic Congress in Copenhagen as follows:

> The Olympic Movement must strive to extend its remit and to increase its influence with young people across the world, using sport as a catalyst for their education and development. (IOC, 2013b:56)

The IOC's focus on young people is motivated by both moral and commercial interests. The young market has to be captured as evidenced in the 2012 London's International Inspirations Project, the incorporation of social networking technologies and inclusion of BMX bicycle racing in the Olympic programme. Establishing the Youth Olympic Games as educational flagship initiative was a key drive by the IOC to reach out to young people globally (Chatziefstathiou, 2012a).

A youth strategy was approved by the IOC Executive in November 2011 with a vision to demonstrate the Olympic Movement's accountability for utilising sport as the service to children and youth through advocacy, activation and education. OlympAfrica Centre Programmes and the Sport for Hope Programme in Zambia in partnership with local sport clubs and schools fulfil such educational and development roles. In local contexts, NGOs deliver

sport-for-development programmes, provide sport participation opportunities, and life skill education that aim to address social issues (HIV/AIDS) and lifestyle disease profiles, such as obesity (IOC, 2013a).

At grassroots level, the coach plays a significant role in modelling and facilitating positive youth development (PYD), which entails a mentorship role and longitudinal involvement with participants (Camiré *et al*., 2014). Olympic education programmes implemented by volunteers or teachers, and sport-for-development programmes implemented by peer-educators facilitate the acquisition of life skills through a reciprocal social learning process.

Since the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games, host cities increasingly showcase *human legacy* profiles. The Sydney Games attracted international attention to human rights issues related to their indigenous populations and scrutiny of the nation's self-consciousness (Rowe, 2012). Although indigenous leaders endorsed the bid and gold medallist Cathy Freeman became a symbol of hope and freedom for the Aborigines, systemic dispossession continued to have lasting effects in marginalising indigenous populations (Lenskyi, 2002).

The historical significance of the 2004 Athens Olympic Games framed the historical roots and showcased the Hellenic heritage with educational programmes from 2005 to 2008, and was replaced by *kallipateira* (Aroni, 2013). Lessons addressed issues of human rights, diversity, multiculturalism and social solidarity. Brownell (2009) reflected on the promotion of national identity and patriotic education of the Chinese government through celebrated sport heroes. *Suzhi* (quality) education was enriched by the Olympic Education programme, which also contributed to the reconfiguration of Chinese national identity within a global context.

The 2012 London Olympics reached out to the youth of the world in an ambitious programme, International Inspirations, whereas the 2016 Rio Olympic education programme aimed at delivering access to sport participation to the most vulnerable children in the quest for social inclusion (Todt, 2015, 2016). Based on the *Get Set* programme of the 2012 London Olympics, Korea still has to integrate the values of Confucianism related to the virtues of humanism, justice, respect, wisdom and faith into their Olympic education programme (Hong, 2016). The fusion of sport-for-development and Olympic education programmes in developing context questions, the real and lasting effects on social exclusion and social vulnerability for marginalised populations (Sanford *et al*., 2006; Knijnik & Tavares, 2012).

It is necessary to utilise the event leverage potential in the broader development framework (Chalip, 2006). The UN's action plan, Agenda 21 and the IOC's focus on delivering on the SDGs (Agenda 2020) currently provide strategic direction for human legacy planning and implementation where Olympic education has a key role to play (Homma & Masumoto, 2013).

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

Conflicting paradigms of sport and formative education as envisaged by a fusion of physical, Olympism and value education require critical reflection and indigenised relevance. The question remains to what extent an integrated body of knowledge and fusion of value education would be able to deliver on the multi-levelled expectations of agencies with meaningful impacts on local communities, schools and individual learners. What are the implications of Olympism

education and sport-for-development for PE and school sport in South Africa? This question is posed at the beginning of the new curricula and practice developments where the National Department of Education, in partnership with SRSA, are searching for a cost-effective and innovative model. PE curricula could meaningfully benefit from the holistic, value-based approach advocated by Culpan (2015) who presented an integrated model for Olympism education located within the school sport and PE curriculum.

This offers a sound and relevant approach where the psychological, social and critical paradigms intersect for holistic and self-reflective learning. Global processes of commodification and heightened consumerism associated with such events, which are increasingly held in developing countries at high cost to its citizens, should be questioned. The unequal power relations and rhetoric of equality within competitive sports should also be scrutinised to ensure open access and sport for all, and not only for the highly talented (Chatziefstathiou, 2012b). South African learners should be exposed to a critical paradigm that questions human rights transgressions and the hidden agendas of powerful agents in global sports. Such a paradigm may produce critical voices and form an essential part in developing active citizenship (Darnell, 2010).

Foucauldian insights on new-liberal ideas and universal models of good governance should incorporate contextual and nuanced understandings where individuals engage in sports and physical activity for multiple reasons – from nation-building, active citizenship and social transformation to positive health and other psycho-social learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The democratisation of the Olympic movement and its reliance on strategic partnerships informs a Foucauldian perspective in explaining institutionalised power relations with the institutional centrality of the IOC within a complex web of stakeholder relationships. National governments and schools may claim ownership and agency with development programmes to counter neo-liberal ideas and content in opposition to indigenous knowledge. Thus, enriching PE curricula with value-based and Olympism or event-driven (Olympic) education in South African schools should be scrutinised and filtered for national and indigenous relevance.

In South Africa, schools are central to the delivery of value-based programmes, and due to the relative short time span of sport-legacy programmes, civic society agencies (NGOs) are the main implementing agencies. Such agencies are relatively easy to attract as implementing partners, yet they are highly dependent on external funds. Thus, this sector is highly donor-dependant and equipped for delivering narrow focused programmes on prioritised SDGs, such as gender empowerment or HIV/AIDS prevention (Coalter, 2013). Reconceptualising the UN-IOC partnership with cascading stakeholder re-positioning could bring synergies and bridge silo-delivery mechanisms for the inclusive delivery of quality physical and sport programmes, with Olympism education and/or Olympism education as the means.

The infusion of such educational content in the PE curriculum would provide learners with a body of knowledge that could foster critical thinking, bring the global to the local in debate and practice as sustainable mega sport event legacies. The following recommendations may contribute to a meaningful and impactful practice: (1) adapt social policies of SRSA and the

Department of Basic Education to ensure equal participation opportunities for all through quality, value-based PE programmes; (2) ensure that mega-event sport legacy programmes are absorbed by PE and school-based sport programmes within an educational framework (2022 Commonwealth Games educational programmes); (3) offer education and training material and courses for teachers and peer-educators to ensure quality programme implementation; and (4) form partnerships for optimal stakeholder alignment and coordinated implementation where the government sector takes the lead.

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