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PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: HAVE WE COME FULL CIRCLE?

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ABSTRACT

Physical Education (PE) in South Africa has been on the receiving end of curriculum reform with far-reaching consequences. Prior to 1994, PE existed as a stand-alone school subject. In 1997, PE was reduced to a learning outcome of a new learning area titled, Life Orientation, within the new curriculum, Curriculum 2005. Shortly thereafter, a Revised National Curriculum Statement (R-NCS) was established. A second revision of the curriculum followed in 2009, resulting in Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements for each subject. The purpose of this article is to outline the historical development of Physical Education as subject/partial-subject in South Africa from before 1994 until the present, with regard to the content, state and status and teacher training. The actual implementation, as well as the proposed reinstatement of PE as a stand-alone subject, are addressed, in order to attempt elucidation of the question: "Have we come full circle?"

Key words: Physical Education; South Africa; Curriculum; Subject status; Implementation.

INTRODUCTION

Physical Education (PE) as school subject may have come full circle in South Africa over the past three decades. 'Full circle' in this instance means that, three decades ago, it was a stand-alone subject in the school curriculum, which was integrated into the learning area Life Orientation (LO) since 1997. Now calls have been made to have it reinstated as a stand-alone subject again.

Pangrazi (2007) alleges that the pursuit of a lifelong physically active and healthy life originates in the PE class. The school is considered the ideal environment to provide the most effective structure and opportunity for all children to learn and develop movement skills, attitudes, knowledge and understanding of the benefits of lifelong participation in physical activity and sport (Green & Collins, 2008; Hardman, 2010; Trost & van der Mars, 2010; Van der Merwe, 2011; Van Deventer, 2012; Balyi, 2013; Discovery, 2014).

Comprehensive research has been done on PE in respect of the perceptions of teachers and learners (Prinsloo, 2007; Amusa & Toriola, 2008; Frantz, 2008), the role in schools (Hendricks,

2004), problems and challenges (Du Toit, *et al*., 2007), status (Rooth, 2005; Van Deventer, 2011), and implementation (Van der Merwe, 2011; Perry *et al*., 2012; Van Deventer, 2012), of PE in South Africa.

This study attempted to analyse this seemingly circular road of PE in South African school curricula and broader society and the challenges it faces. The historical development of the PE curriculum in South Africa from 1994 to date will be outlined, illuminating three periods: before 1994, the era of Curriculum 2005 (C2005), and the current National Curriculum Statement, referred to as the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). A brief overview of the content, state and status of the subject at the time, and the implications with regard to teacher training of each period will be highlighted. The current situation in South Africa with regard to challenges concerning implementation of the LO curriculum will also receive attention.

PERIOD 1: PE CURRICULUM BEFORE 1994

Prior to 1994, the National Department of Education (DoE) of the National Party Government controlled education. Pelser (1989) points out that PE was taught to boys and girls separately and the syllabi differed. Mabumo (2014) confirms that PE was recognised as an approved subject, but the separate education departments of the Houses of Parliament approached this differently. In the House of Assembly, each Provincial DoE had its own specific syllabus functional to its own needs while two PE periods a week were allocated for all grades in accordance with the curriculum (Pelser, 1989). Although it was a compulsory subject from Grade 1 to12 before 1994, many schools either did not implement it as such or started phasing it out because of staff implications, a shortage of equipment and facilities, or allocating less time on the timetable to PE in favour of 'more important subjects' such as Mathematics and Science (Van der Merwe, 2011).

Content

A differentiation between the syllabi of boys and girls existed, with the programme for boys mainly focusing on sporting activities, while that of the girls consisted of both sport and independent activities (Pelser, 1989). The programme for boys was divided into the following phases: Junior Primary, Senior Primary, Junior Secondary and Senior Secondary (Pelser, 1989).

The first national syllabus for PE for girls was officially prescribed by all education departments following the publication thereof in 1972 (Nel *et al*., 1981). Hence, Nel *et al*. (1981) claim it represented a completely new approach and method of presentation of the subject. As indicated in the Free State Syllabus for Girls (Free State Education Department, 1986), the programme comprised four phases, namely the discovery phase, mastery phase, refinement phase and enrichment phase. The activities throughout the phases consisted of dance, gymnastics, games and water activities, distributed across the four school terms and linked to the seasons. The content of the programme for girls was also divided into the following components:

- The General Programme (Standards 1-3; currently Grades 3-5) encompassed the development of movement but no specialisation in movement activities took place. This programme served as the basis for movement divisions that followed from Standard 6 (currently Grade 8) onwards.
- The General/Specific Programme (Standards 4-7; currently Grades 6-9) included the expansion and continuation of the General Programme emphasising the improvement of execution capabilities and improvement of creativity in movement;
- The Specific Programme (Standards 8-10; currently Grades 10-12) contained a higher level of execution linked to knowledge. It also involved the introduction to a wide variety of movement and recreation opportunities (Free State Education Department, 1986).

Van der Merwe (2011) reports that formal apparatus gymnastic activities were regarded as high priority for both boys and girls, but teachers and learners perceived this as negative. Many schools did not have the appropriate facilities to present this form of gymnastics, and in other cases it was regarded as time-consuming and impractical, which led to the teachers simply ignoring that part of the syllabus and concentrating on 'easier' activities. Furthermore, many children excused themselves from the said activities because of a lack of self-confidence and not regarding themselves as 'gymnasts' (Van der Merwe, 2011).

These curricula were mainly applied in predominantly white schools and in only a few Indian, Coloured and Black schools. This implies that it was actually the former white schools that phased out PE as a school subject, as described earlier (Van Der Merwe, 1999). Although some schools maintained the 'status quo', others applied movement programmes presented by specialists from the private sector. Consequently, a vast number of learners were excluded because of the financial implications. The result was that PE teachers lost interest and accepted the fate that the subject was regarded as inferior. Therefore, learners were left simply to play games (Van der Merwe, 2011).

Teacher training

According to Van der Merwe (1999), preceding the curriculum changes in 1994, teacher-training colleges, amongst Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), provided specialist training for PE teachers. However, because of the restructuring of higher education and the phasing out of teacher-training colleges at the turn of the century, the succeeding period positioned PE as a discipline under pressure at HEIs (Van der Merwe, 2011).

PERIOD 2: CURRICULUM 2005

The period 1994-1999 was characterised by policy transformation processes (in terms of inter alia PE). After the 1994 election and the inauguration of the first democratic ANC Government in 1995, the new South African Schools Act was established in 1996 (DoE, 2000). Curriculum reform started in earnest in South Africa soon after this, and the first National Curriculum Statement called Curriculum 2005 (C2005) was introduced in 1997, based on the principles of Outcomes-based Education (OBE) (Van Deventer, 2000). For PE, the development was mostly driven by the National Education and Training Forum, which relied on input from interim provincial committees dealing with PE. The proposed PE policies that emerged led to the publication and implementation of Curriculum 2005 (C2005) (Cleophas, 2014).

School 'subjects' were replaced with 'learning areas', which led to the dawn of a new learning area called Life Orientation (LO) (Van Deventer, 2000). This drastic paradigm shift reduced PE from a stand-alone subject to one of eight learning outcomes in LO (Van Deventer & Van Niekerk, 2009). LO was introduced in different stages, starting with the General Education and Training Band, constituting Grades R to 9 (Department of Basic Education, 2009). Grades were divided into four phases: The Foundation Phase (Grade R - Reception Year, to Grade 3); the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6); the Senior Phase (Grades 7 to 9) and the Further Education and Training Phase (Grades 10 to 12). One period a week was allocated to LO, of which Specific Outcome 8, namely *Human movement and development*, formed only part (DoE, 1997).

Content

Even though the learning areas varied in each phase, LO was one of the learning areas that were incorporated into all phases and were compulsory for all Grade R to Grade 12 learners. Each learning area had specific outcomes, assessment criteria and range statements. The learning area of LO contained eight specific learning outcomes, of which *Human movement and development* was one. With regard to Learning Outcome 8, the specific outcome stated, "to evaluate and participate in activities that demonstrate effective human movement and development" (DoE, 1997:237). The content in the Foundation Phase covered movements and movement variations, individually and in groups. The Intermediate Phase content comprised competence in specialised movement, mastery of skills and participation in group activities. In the Senior Phase, the content focused on skills to perform movement activities involving manipulation of objects and developing a movement repertoire (DoE, 1997).

State and status

Unfortunately, there were several adverse implications for LO and PE during this period. Van der Merwe (2011) claims that LO teachers loathed presenting PE. The children were reluctant to participate and the public regarded it as a waste of time and money. However, he implies that the mentioned stakeholders were thoroughly aware of the benefits of PE and physical activity for children.

Based on the aforementioned, the authors agree with Van der Merwe (2011) that a major challenge for LO was the prejudices that existed about the non-examinable status of its previous constituent subjects such as School Guidance, PE, Religious Education and Youth Preparedness. Moreover, it was the subject that was neglected most in order to allocate more time to externally quality assured subjects such as Mathematics, Science and Languages, which explained why children perceived LO as insignificant (Du Toit *et al*., 2007; Van der Merwe, 2011). Justifiably, this resulted in a negative impact on the status of PE during this period.

Teacher training

The training of teachers in the principles of OBE was done mainly via the various Provincial Departments of Education and not at HEIs (Van Deventer, 2011). According to Jansen and Taylor (2003), the Government's decision to close down the 120 teacher-training colleges during this period contributed to a negative attitude towards education as profession. They further suggested that a rationalisation process aggravated the situation, contributing to a loss

of nearly 16 000 educators, of which the majority were teachers with vital skills and experience (Jansen & Taylor, 2003).

By early 2002, the report of the task team reviewing the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement had identified inherent flaws in C2005, based on the major complaints and challenges encountered since its introduction. To address the shortcomings of C2005, a Revised National Curriculum Statement (R-NCS) was completed in 2002 and scheduled for implementation in January 2004 (DBE, 2009). Increased pressure from both the health sector and the new government system emphasised the necessity for the subsequent modifications (DoE, 2000).

Despite declining teacher-training opportunities in PE, the reinstatement of PE as a learning outcome of LO in the R-NCS continued and was completed in 2008 and the final phase was implemented in Grade 12 (Van der Merwe, 2011).

PERIOD 3: CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT POLICY STATEMENT

In 2009, a Ministerial Task Team was appointed to review the Revised National Curriculum Statement (R-NCS) (Grades R to 12). Following this, a Ministerial Project Committee developed the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) for each subject in the R-NCS, with the aim to improve the R-NCS's performance (DBE, 2010b). In the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), the study areas known as Life Skills (in the Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase), and Life Orientation (in the Senior Phase and FET Phase) were aimed at guiding and preparing learners for life and its possibilities, including equipping learners for meaningful and successful living in a rapidly changing and transforming society (Van Deventer, 2011). With regard to the Foundation Phase, six hours were allocated to Life Skills (LS) per week, of which two hours were allocated to PE and Movement (DBE, 2011b). In the Intermediate Phase (Grade 4 to 6), two hours per week were allocated to LO and in the Senior Phase (Grade 7 to 9) 2¼ hours per week allocated to LO. The PE outcome is assigned 40 minutes of this time, which converts roughly into one period per week for both phases (Department of Education, 2008). In the Further Education and Training Phase (FET) (Grade 10 to 12), two hours per week are allocated for LO, and 60 minutes of this time are assigned to PE, which convert to 50% of the time per week (DoE, 2008).

Content

The subject Life Skills aims to develop learners through an array of diverse, but interrelated study areas, such as Beginning Knowledge, Personal and Social Well-being, Physical Education and Creative Arts (DBE, 2011b). The content for the Personal and Social Well-being and Physical Education study areas addressed in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-6) relates to that in Life Skills in the Foundation Phase (Grade R-3) and LO in the Senior (Grades 7-9) and Further Education and Training Phases (Grade 10-12). The intention of PE in the Foundation Phase is to allow learners to enjoy the health benefits of exercise and develop social skills through participation in PE (DBE, 2011b). In the Intermediate Phase, PE targets the development of learners' physical well-being and knowledge of movement and safety. Through engagement, learners will develop motor skills and participate in a variety of physical activities (DBE, 2011c).

Building on the foundation laid in the previous phases, the focus in the Senior Phase is to provide opportunities for learners to demonstrate an understanding of and participate in activities that promote movement and physical development (DBE, 2010a). The outcome and content emphasis in the Further Education and Training Phase are to accumulate on the previous experiences to expose learners to an understanding of the value of regular participation in physical activity (DBE, 2010b). Generally, the activities cover participation in physical fitness, games, sport, and recreation (DBE, 2010b).

State and status

LO, and therefore PE, is the only subject in the CAPS that is not externally assessed or examined in Grade 12 at the final end-of-year examination (DoE, 2008). Five internal formal tasks add up to the total mark in Grades 10, 11 and 12. In Grade 12, four tasks, which consist of a written task, mid-year examination, a project and a Physical Education Task (PET) are set and assessed by the Life Orientation teacher. The focus of the practical assessment for the PET falls into two broad categories: participation; and movement performance (DBE, 2010b). The fifth task, the final examination, is set as a common paper at provincial level and is marked by the LO teacher at the different schools (DBE, 2010b). Consequently, the low status can be attributed partially to the distinctive assessment method and non-examination status with reference to the final end-of-year examination (Du Toit, *et al*., 2007).

Despite promising policy development in terms of CAPS, Jacobs (2011) argues that the practice of LO, and subsequently PE has not shown any marked improvement. She maintains that the theory of CAPS and the practice thereof are far removed from each other, which results in ineffectiveness and negative attitudes among both learners and teachers. Rooth (2005) reports that teaching LO seems to be a transitory duty that changes from year to year, which means that these substitute teachers cannot take ownership of LO. In view of this, Morgan and Bourke (2005) highlight that insufficient teacher training and unqualified staff have a detrimental influence on the quality of PE offerings. A study done by Prinsloo (2007), on the implementation of LO programmes in South African schools, affirms that being 'qualified' in LO ranges from attending a three-day HIV and AIDS course to a two-hour LO workshop, or being an ex-Guidance, ex-Religion Studies or ex-PE teacher. Both Christiaans (2006) and Prinsloo (2007) concur that both the choice of teachers assigned to LO and the reasoning underlying the choice have an effect on how the subject is perceived. Van der Merwe (2011) shares this view that unqualified teachers certainly do not benefit the status of the learning area. In addition, lack of facilities and equipment and insufficient support with regard to implementation decrease the position and status of the subject significantly (Van der Merwe, 2011).

Teacher training

Van Deventer (2011:828) claims, "The new CAPS policy does not permit HEI's to train teachers specifically for LS in the Foundation and Intermediate Phases because with all its broad topics LS does not constitute a specific discipline at HEIs". Thus, one can deduce that controversy exists regarding current teacher training and training recommended by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in 2009 (DBE, 2009). Proclamations such as "training for both Curriculum 2005 and the National Curriculum Statement was shown to be too

superficial and too generic", "training has also been decontextualised and unsupported", substantiate the necessity for subject-specific training (DBE, 2009:55).

CURRENT SITUATION

In 2011, the Memorandum of Understanding, signed by the Ministers of Basic Education and Sport and Recreation, committed the government to promoting mass participation and physical activities that are aimed at enriching the school curriculum. Furthermore, a commitment to deliver a sustainable integrated plan to provide school learners with the opportunity to take part in PE and organised sport through the creation of an accessible and implementable school sport-support system was made (DBE, 2011a:7). In addition, the DBE Action Plan 2014, which is part of the amendment of the NCS, indicates the facilitation of the implementation of PE in schools (DBE, 2009; DBE, 2011a). The National Sport and Recreation Plan (2012a) maintains that to maximise access to sport, recreation and PE in every school in South Africa, it is essential that skilled, qualified and active teachers support participants during all stages of their development (Balyi *et al*., 2013). This encompasses not only the re-introduction of PE as a curriculum subject/outcome with requisite time, but also assesses the capacity of educators to deliver PE and sport-specific training (Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2012a).

To strengthen the above line of thinking, Morgan and Hansen (2013) claim that factors such as reduced time to implement meaningful lessons, insufficient equipment and low levels of expertise and confidence have led to current PE programmes (as part of LO) being pronounced by teachers as inadequate in achieving key syllabus outcomes. Similarly, Du Toit and Van der Merwe (2013) state that as for the pre-1994 curriculum, several schools failed to provide a well-organised PE programme. Moreover, in many school's facilities, apparatus and equipment were non-existent or in dismal condition, which complicated the situation even more. Despite that, the DoE contends that the lack of equipment and apparatus cannot be used as an excuse for failing to present the compulsory PE periods (Department of Education, 2008).

Although all schools do not have the necessary facilities, apparatus, equipment or person power to implement or present physical activities, it is recommended by the DBE (2008) that LO teachers are educated and trained to improvise equipment and apparatus to utilise during PE periods until it can be provided. With regard to time and proficiency, the DBEs Director of Safety, Enrichment and Sport in Education, Me Mabumo, commented on the two-hour time allocation per week for PE as part of LO at the 2014 'Designed to Move' Conference. She suggested that "if a teacher is not trained and does not know what to do, it is a waste of time. For a teacher who is trained and knows what to do, the time is not enough" (Mabumo, 2014). In addition, Du Toit *et al.* (2007) recommend that addressing practical and didactical improvising skills in PE seems to be paramount. Therefore, the need for the re-skilling of educators to deliver PE, and finally resourcing schools with the requisite PE equipment, cannot be emphasised enough (Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2012a).

Numerous deliberations took place during 2014 to drive the promotion of physical activity and 'sport for all' in South Africa. At the 2014 *South African Sport and Recreation Conference* (SASRECON), Gert Oosthuizen, the Deputy Minister of Sport, emphasised the importance of accessibility of PE and school sport for all children in South Africa in his keynote address (Oosthuizen, 2014). The *Designed to Move Initiative and Sport for Social Change Network*

hosted a national conference from 25 to 27 November 2014 with the main objective being to enhance recognition of the improvement of sport and physical activity among schoolchildren in selected communities in South Africa. Creating awareness and gaining a common understanding of the current South African situation of physical activity before, during and after school hours were prominent issues. A *Physical Education Consensus Group* was formed at the "Life through Movement" conference on 12 September 2014 to chart a national initiative for the reinstatement of PE in South African schools as an independent subject in the primary and secondary school curriculum. This initiative aims to structure a University Physical Education Forum to provide direction on research, resource development, education and training (Roux & Burnett, 2014).

CHALLENGES PE FACES

The difficulties that PE in South Africa experiences are not isolated problems. On the contrary, the problems seem universal, oscillating between challenges, such as low status, lack of facilities and apparatus, as well as inadequately qualified or unqualified teachers to present the subject (Van Deventer, 2004; Du Toit *et al*., 2007; Hardman, 2010; Lee & Cho, 2014). However, despite the proclaimed necessity and benefits of PE, as disclosed in the White Paper for Sport and Recreation of South Africa (2012b), these problems persist. Although PE in South Africa has undergone several changes over the past 20 years with regard to purpose and programme goals (Du Toit & Van Der Merwe, 2013), the status and delivery remained an obstacle. Gradually, the emphasis shifted from being an insignificant component of LO in C2005 to a reconstructed outcome as part of LO, leading to the subsequent proposed reintroduction of PE in the school curriculum as a stand-alone and compulsory subject (Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2012a). Such is the significance assigned to PE and sport that an appeal was made by Sport and Recreation South Africa to prioritise it to create a better future for the children of South Africa (Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2012a).

One of the reasons why the proposed reintroduction of PE is a focal point at present is the state of our children's health and physical activity. The Healthy Active Kids South Africa (HAKSA) Report Card examines the state of South African children's (6 to 18 years) health with particular reference to physical activity, healthy eating and maintaining a healthy weight (Discovery Vitality, 2014). Whilst healthy habits are endorsed, the information provides an evidence-based benchmark by means of a percentage of children achieving success. The overall score in 2014 with regard to physical activity and PE in schools was a D (20 to 39%) (Discovery Vitality, 2014). Keeping in mind that this indicates success with less than 40% of South Africa's children, it is an indisputable reason for concern. In view of that, the statement of Amusa and Toriola (2008) that PE as a school subject in South Africa generally has been neglected, misunderstood and regarded as inferior, rings true.

This bleak picture supports the disturbing tendency of the decline of PE and questions the actual implementation of the current CAPS curriculum. The HAKSA Report Card confirms that presently less than two-thirds of children participate in weekly PE classes! (Discovery Vitality, 2014). In urban primary schools, more than a third of 10-year-olds (34%) do not have PE during the week. Even though PE might be regarded as one of the 'best investments' for physical activity, if it is not implemented or executed, children will clearly not attain the benefits (Discovery Vitality, 2014). According to Pangrazi (2007), the pursuit of a lasting physically

active and healthy lifestyle originates in the PE class. Trost and Van Der Mars (2010) concur that school-based PE programmes have the potential to maximise opportunities for children experiencing barriers to engage in out-of-school physical activity programmes. Additionally, Balyi *et al*. (2013) affirm that it is the only environment where all children have the opportunity to develop fundamental movement skills, which are considered the building blocks for the learning of sport-specific skills.

Amidst all these challenges, the proposal of the reinstatement of PE in the school curriculum as a stand-alone and compulsory subject (Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2012a) surfaces yet again, highlighting the apparent circular road PE has travelled, as illustrated in Figure 1.

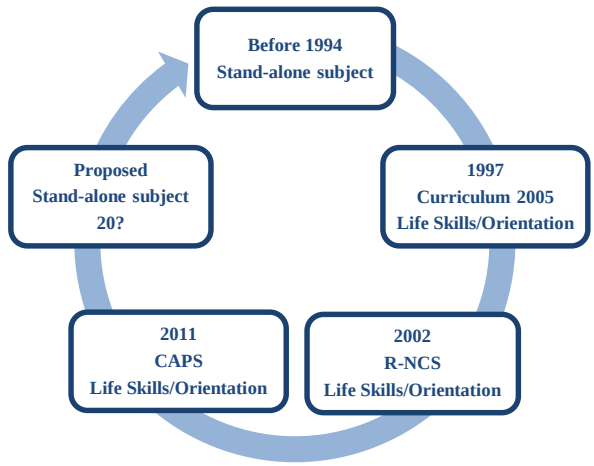

Figure 1. **CURRICULUM CHANGES**

DISCUSSION

Lambert (2014) suggests that the best way for the Government to promote physical activity for children is to prioritise the implementation of PE in schools. In order to realise this, capacity development through the training and support of educators is needed to match policy (Lambert, 2014). The proposal of Moss (2014) that a 'new generation' of PE teachers is needed to create a behaviour change in terms of physical activity and health, using technology to their advantage, should, therefore, be considered seriously.

Van der Merwe (2011) provides a novel perspective that has been overlooked throughout the process of curriculum change: the legal liability of the LO teacher who presents the PE learning outcome/topic. It is the only outcome where learners participate physically in a lesson environment. If any negligence can be proven in the case of injury, or inadequate safety measures transpire that could have been prevented by the teacher, serious implications and

consequences could ensue (Rossouw & Keet, 2011). The expectation that the PE teacher should possess the knowledge, skills and experience with regard to safety precautions, appropriate activities and supervision, should thus be seriously considered (Himberg *et al*., 2003). Additionally, Himberg *et al*. (2003) argue that in all probability teachers who do not meet the requirements, will avoid situations where they are at risk to be found negligent, adding to the number of reasons to circumvent the PE class. Ultimately, the opportunities for physical activity should not be jeopardised by the lack of safety procedures; essentially, it should be a priority.

In view of this, to assist schools to implement and sustain physical education programmes, competent educators should provide opportunities to enhance the physical education experience of children effectively in order to lay the foundation for leading active and healthy lifestyles (Frantz, 2008; Hardman, 2010; Rink *et al*., 2010). Perry *et al*. (2012) claim that teacher education is integral to quality physical education delivery. In addition, the facilitators must be able to harness resources effectively and with responsibility (Robson *et al*., 2013).

Although the situation in South Africa is unique with regard to the educational environment and the position of PE at present, both developing and developed countries encounter problems with the effective implementation of policy requirements of national curricula and government initiatives that aim to enhance the quality of PE (Du Toit *et al*., 2007; Rainer *et al*., 2012). The recurring theme seems to be that although the importance and benefits of PE are not denied, the delivery and implementation are frequently under suspicion.

Political rhetoric is a general phenomenon in South Africa, although little often materialises (Van Deventer, 2012). Policies, reports and action plans do not necessarily revert to action. Cleophas (2014:21) points out that "the solution to the problem of the apartheid legacy of educational inequality and the lack of purposeful PE participation opportunities" was the motivation for the positioning of PE within the LO learning area, as part of C2005. However, in due course, the DoE admitted, that the "new curriculum was never researched or properly trialled and there was inadequate preparation and consideration of whether teachers, pupils and the system in general were prepared for such a fundamental change over such a short space of time" (DBE, 2009:12). Cleophas (2014) emphasises that departmental officials were not pedagogically prepared for the implementation of LO either. He advances that the majority of South African schoolchildren had limited purposeful opportunity to participate in PE under the apartheid regime and still lacks access to meaningful PE, despite all the changes that have taken place (Cleophas, 2014). In view of this, if the total well-being of society, social transformation and mass participation in physical activity and lifetime activity is a serious matter for the South African government, transferring years of oratory into action is key.

Hardman (2010:15) believes that the "quality of delivery of the school physical education curriculum is fundamental to the future not only of the subject in schools, but also to the future of active life-styles over the full life-span, for the two are inextricably entwined". Quality PE was defined at the World Summit on Physical Education held in 1999 as "the most effective and inclusive means of providing all children … with the skills, attitudes, knowledge and understanding for lifelong participation in physical activity and sport" (Green & Collins, 2008: 226).

Notably, the proclamation of the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (2007) states that highly qualified physical education teachers are required to facilitate improved teaching practices and to strengthen the quality of physical education instruction. If this serves as the benchmark, the criticisms against C2005 and the R-NCS regarding teacher training are explicable. Accordingly, the DBE recognised that a wide variety of factors interacted to have an impact on the quality of the education system in South Africa. However, it affirmed that teachers' poor subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge were important contributors (Christiaans, 2006; DBE, 2009; Van Deventer & Van Niekerk, 2009; Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training, 2011).

CONCLUSION

It is evident that the changes to the PE curriculum from 1994 until present had a far-reaching impact on the state and status of PE. The implementation of the post-apartheid curriculum in schools and the delivery of PE suffered a major setback as a result. Therefore, the current proposal for the reintroduction of PE as a stand-alone subject in the curriculum (as was the case prior to 1994), should not be considered lightly, as it has extensive consequences. If PE receives the requisite time, the capacity of educators to deliver PE is improved and schools are provided with the essential PE equipment, it may lay the foundation for a significantly healthier population.

In conclusion, Lambert (2014) reiterated in her keynote address at the South African Sport and Recreation Conference in 2014 that the Scientific Advisory Board involved with the 2014 HAKSA Report shares a vision for the future of South African children. She would like to report that, amongst other outcomes, teachers have been provided with training and support to promote physical activity and to deliver PE appropriately in the curriculum. Should this become a reality and Physical Education is reinstated as a stand-alone subject in the school curriculum, in response to the copious pleas - South Africa would indeed "have come full circle".

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