

A PARADIGM SHIFT IN LIFE ORIENTATION: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Despite all the benefits associated with participation in physical activity, Physical Education (PE) as a school subject and school sport seems to continue to loose ground in a growing number of countries. It seems that there has been little consensus regarding the distinctive characteristics of PE as an educational experience, since the professional PE community is still in disagreement over the mission of PE. The profession has failed to articulate PE in terms which are readily understandable to parents, politicians and children. This article focuses on defining PE and making a case for a paradigm shift in Life Orientation (LO) in the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). Since the 1880s a number of developments regarding PE syllabi were experienced in South Africa (SA). The current emphasis in LO within the South African context is on integration, personalisation, social justice and equity. To make a case for a paradigm shift in LO towards a practical approach is not a difficult task. The benefits of such a paradigm shift can range from education and economy to safe and healthy cities. However, these benefits will not develop automatically. In keeping with the ethos and philosophy of holistic education and international and African trends regarding the use of the term PE, a case is made for a paradigm shift towards Physical and Health Education in Life Orientation (PHELO). The methodology consists of a literature review in the field of education, PE and policy development. The research can be typified within the qualitative-interpretative paradigm. Although a number of developments have recently taken place in SA regarding the provision of PE, it is concluded that not enough was practically done to better the lives of young people. Over the years SA has lost many young talented sports people due to a maladjusted system. Is this to be perpetuated?

Key words: Physical Education; Life Orientation; Education; Developing Countries.

INTRODUCTION

It is well researched and advocated that numerous benefits are associated with regular participation in physical activity (PA). During the 20th century major progress was made regarding public health and medicine (Telama, 2002). However, health for all, like sport for all, remains out of reach for the majority of the world's people (Darlison, 2001). Apart from childhood health, the lack of PA holds negative consequences for a number of important outcomes, from examination scores to retention rates to the quality of the school environment to equity (Kidd, 2003; Bailey 2004).

In 1996, inactivity and obesity were identified by the Surgeon General's Report (SGR) as the main contributors to the health status of individuals living in the United States (US) (Lambert, 1999; Siedentop, 1999; Feingold, 2002). The SGR made it clear that the health benefits of participation in PA are not limited to adults (Burgeson et al., 2003) and that positive adult

lifestyle behaviours have significant links to influences and experiences during the childhood years (Emmel, 2001; Hills, 2001; Kidd, 2001; Feingold, 2002; Hardman, 2002; Schantz, 2002; Telama, 2002; Amusa & Toriola, 2003; Chernushenko, 2003; Stegeman, 2003; Bailey, 2004).

The first South African democratic Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (SAYRBS) was conducted in 2002 by the Medical Research Council (MRC). In each province, 23 schools were identified and 10 699 learners from grade 8, 9, 10 and 11 participated in the survey. According to the survey 37.5% learners, more girls (43.0%) than boys (30.5%), do not participate in any form of PA. Significantly more Coloured learners (45.6%) do not participate in any form of PA in comparison to Black (34.1%) and White learners (33.0%). The data suggests that more than a third (37.5%) of the learners nationally does not participate in sufficient PA to achieve health benefits (DoH, 2003a).

Nationally 25.9% of the learners, with no significant differences between boys and girls, state that they do not want to participate in PA. Significantly more Coloured (35.3%) than Black learners (25.1%) indicated that they do not want to participate in PA. In terms of sedentary behaviour, 25.2% of the learners watch television or videos or play computer games for more than three hours per day. In comparison to White learners (20.4%) significantly more Coloured learners (29.6%) watch television or videos or play computer games for more than three hours per day. In SA, as in the rest of the world, physical inactivity is becoming a serious public health problem (DoH, 2003a).

In 1997, the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP) in the US outlined a comprehensive approach to promote physical activity through schools (Lambert, 1999; Siedentop 1999; Burgeson *et al.*, 2003). These initiatives include quality daily PE; classroom health education that compliments PE by equipping learners with the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain physically active lifestyles; and to access and participate in extra-curricular PA programmes, including intramural activities, physical activity clubs and interscholastic sport (Emmel, 2001; Hills, 2001; Kidd, 2001; Burgeson *et al.*, 2003).

It is argued, however, by Siedentop (1999) and Feingold (2002) that the adoption of a physically active lifestyle during childhood is unlikely solely through intervention in school PE classes. What is needed is an organised effort within schools, communities and governmental agencies (Feingold, 2002). Darlison (2001) and Hardman (2002), however, believe that schools provide the main and often the only access to quality instruction in sport and other physical activities to the majority of young people. Today fewer children are able to play games in non-school settings due to a combination of economic pressures, parental concerns for safety and many other barriers of access (De Klerk, 2002; Stegeman, 2003; Bailey, 2004). Thus, removing PE from the school curricula may negatively impact on PA participation in out-of-school and beyond school settings. Consequently the changes in participation patterns poses threats to the sport-for-all mass participation movement, elite sport and, above all, to the health and general well-being of a nation.

Schools are responsible to educate children regarding healthy lifestyles. Unfortunately, the downscaling of PE and the concomitant decline in extra-curricular sport activities in South African schools is a reality (De Klerk, 2002; Hendricks, 2004). As Hendricks (2004: 14) puts it:

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.

A further analysis of these attributions on a global level reveals that it seems as if there has been little consensus regarding the distinctive characteristics of PE as an educational experience (Klein, 2003; Talbot, 2003), since the professional PE community is still in disagreement over what the mission of PE should be (Crum, 2003). The profession has failed to articulate PE in terms which are readily understandable to politicians, parents and children (Talbot, 2003). In the same sense Naul (2003: 35) argues that: There appears to be no ready, general consensus of the meaning of the term, the function and range of concepts of physical education.

Wilcox (1998: 108) believes that PE lacks cultural relevance in contemporary society. Within a contested array of missions such as health, sport skills, sport science and outdoor recreation we have lost “cultural authority”, i.e. . . . anyone and everyone knows about PE. However it must be remembered that PE curricula are structured through the interests, values and aspirations of individuals and groups charged with the authority to design it. Apart from being a theoretical and a social construct it is also a political construct (Kirk, 2003; Klein, 2003). PE is not a politically neutral activity (Fisher, 2003) for its subject status is essentially finalised by political interests (Klein, 2003).

In a technological era with the emphasis on science and mathematics, PE seems to be losing ground in a growing number of countries (Hardman & Marshall, 2001; Hardman, 2003; Klein, 2003). The demotion of PE within education seems to be because other subjects came up with better arguments and can justify their existence more convincingly. Now more than ever there is indeed good reason to justify PE, but it seems that the subject did not present the justification convincingly enough to persuade the politicians and decision makers of its indispensability (Brettschneider, 2001) at the time. Educational transformation in SA is a reality and the prevailing political agenda determines what is worthwhile in PE, how it should be taught, who else should be involved, other than teachers and schools and the way it should be evaluated (Fisher, 2003).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem focuses on defining and relating PE to Life Orientation (LO) in an attempt to make a paradigm shift regarding the teaching of school physical activity in the South African context.

METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted by means of a literature study in the field of education, PE and policy development. The research method used is a qualitative-interpretative approach and the outcome of the analysis is potentially the emergence of a new paradigm.

DEFINING QUALITY PHYSICAL EDUCATION

In pre-apartheid SA and as early as in the 1880s, PE was primarily concerned with education in movement. The approach applied movement as the medium and the body as the instrument for guiding the learner as a total being. Through the process learning to move, learning about physical activities and educating through participation in physical activities was accomplished (Figure 1) (Katzenellenbogen, 1993; Kirk *et al.*, 1999; Van Deventer, 2002).

The psychomotor domain in the above-mentioned approach (to move) refers to active participation to perform and master movement, the cognitive domain (about movement) refers to gaining and applying knowledge and understanding of physical activities, while the affective and social domains (through participation) symbolise developing personal and cultural meaning (values) in the life of the individual learner (Katzenellenbogen, 1993; Van Deventer, 2002).

In the school curriculum only PE addresses physical movement with the specific goal of preparing learners to actively develop their physicality for participation in movement forms that are part of the movement culture of society. Through participation in PE learners can extract personal meaning through their experiences as an integrated person and a social human being. Physical Education therefore allowed opportunity for the learner (Katzenellenbogen, 1993: 2):

- to develop movement and physical competence in a wide range of physical endeavours;
- to experience the personal meaning, social and health benefits of participation in various physical activities;
- to cope with the demands of creative, challenging, co-operative and competitive processes of participation in physical activities;
- to establish self-esteem, physical confidence and a positive body image;
- to shape an ethic for positive personal, interpersonal and social behaviour as a participant in or as an observer of physical activities;
- to develop an aesthetic awareness, understanding/knowledge and appreciation of the beauty and efficiency of human movement and the physical environment;
- to engender a sense of responsibility for maintaining a physically active and balanced personal lifestyle of lifelong participation as an investment for physical well-being and total health.

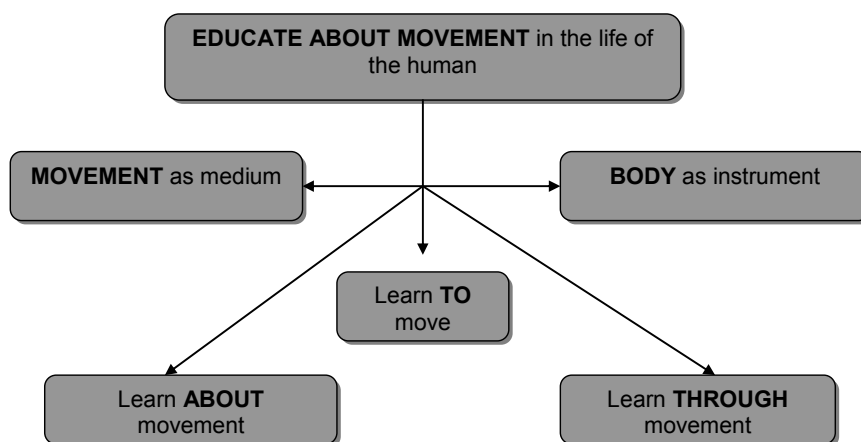


FIGURE 1: RATIONALE AND BROAD AIMS OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION
(Source: Katzenellenbogen, 1993: 1)

This interpretation and practice of PE provided learners the opportunity to learn psychomotor skills in order to contribute towards discovering and developing their potential. In the process they could relate the educational experience to their total being and moral character at their present stage of development and ultimately to their role in society. Closely aligned to the general aim of education, the specific outcome envisaged for PE in this context is to develop (Katzenellenbogen, 1993: 3):

An informed and movement educated person with a physically active and healthy lifestyle who can function effectively with self-fulfilment, independence and responsibility towards self, others and the environment within the scope of the norms/values and expectations of a democratic society.

Quality signifies status and excellence. The aforementioned discussion on PE can be referred to as the what?, how? and why? to teach. Being awarded status in the education system is often based on the acceptability of the values associated with broad, unique content and aims, effective and formative programmes and the actuality and merit of the outcomes envisaged (What? How? Why?). It is necessary to establish what determines the quality of a learning area or subject in order to be included in the curriculum. Excellence is dependent on the expertise available (trained specialists) to operate the system, sufficient time allocation, frequency (scheduling) and the availability of the necessary facilities (Who? When? Where?) (Van Deventer, 2002: 103).

Quality PE would thus, it seems, depend very much on what, how, why, who, when and where. What is being taught, how, why, when and by whom, will contribute more to the quality than where (Van Deventer, 2002). Quality PE is dependent on qualified PE specialists, rather than on equipment and facilities (Burnett, 2000; Solomons, 2001; Talbot, 2001).

THE PAST STATE AND STATUS OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

It is believed that the models on which South African PE and sports programmes were based reflected the political bias of the regime in power yet interestingly also espoused the bastions

of British colonial thought. The same can be said about the PE and sports programmes introduced to Africa by Britain, France, Belgium, Portugal and Spain under colonial rule (Amusa, 1999). Until 1940 the official PE programmes (separate programmes for boys and girls) were adapted from the British syllabus of 1909 (Nel, in Van der Merwe, 1999: 7) with some German and Dutch influences being included in the 1930s and American trends in the 1950s and 1960s. In 1942 the National Advisory Council for Physical Education (NACPE) published a self-designed national programme for PE (Van der Merwe, 1999) which was mainly intended for former White schools.

In 1972, an innovative national PE syllabus for girls was introduced to all the racially differentiated schools which were compiled by a committee of women representing the former White, Coloured, Indian and Black education departments. This was a noteworthy achievement considering the politics of that period. A national PE syllabus for boys followed in 1976.

From the 1970s onwards, the above-mentioned programmes were implemented and the status of PE gained recognition in all but the former Black schools which were by far in the majority. This was due to the lack of legislation and consequently a significant imbalance in the preparation and development of Black teachers. When more teacher training institutions were opened, PE was not offered in the teacher upgrade and/or new training courses. Where teachers could they offered access to sports they knew best and where interest in sports evolved physical exercise drills were presented in so-called physical training (PT) classes. A factor that caused much frustration and tension during the 1980s was the fact that former White schools had more and better facilities than the schools of all other ethnic groups. The policy of segregation gave rise to poor funding in these schools (Walter, 1994).

In SA by the latter half of the 1980s problems that were experienced in so far as the delivery of PE escalated, such as declining time allocation due to the emphasis on other academic subjects, the uninformed view that extra-curricular sport could replace PE, a move away from specialist training for elementary school teachers and the academic discipline (theory) and the profession (practice) moving further apart. This has created situations where PE, organised sport, facilities and equipment have become practically non-existent in most schools that previously had programmes. This situation is still part of the contemporary reality in South African schools (Van Deventer, 1999; Hardman & Marshall, 2001).

THE PRESENT STATE AND STATUS OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The present poor state and status of PE as a school subject, can to some extent, be ascribed to the disparities of the past, as well as to the priorities necessary in the transformation processes within the South African education system. The introduction of Curriculum 2005 in 1997, based on the principles of Outcomes Based Education (OBE), was met with much scepticism. Educational transformation has put schools under enormous pressure and rationalisation has compelled school governing bodies (SGBs) to reassess and seriously consider non-examination subjects, like PE (Lion-Cachet, 1997; Van Deventer, 1998/99; Hendricks, 2004).

The lack of vision with regard to the optimal utilisation of PE by the Department of Education (DoE) is frustrating to those who recognise the potential of PE as a learning area on its own (Hendricks, 2004). In the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) PE has not been allocated the status of a learning area or a subject. In the General Education and Training (GET) Band (Grades R-9) that consists of eight learning areas, PE has the status of a focus, *physical*

development and movement, along with four other foci namely, health promotion, social development, personal development and orientation to the world of work as part of the learning area, LO (DoE, 2002b).

In the Further Education and Training (FET) Band (Grades 10-12) LO is a fundamental subject with four foci, personal development, citizenship education, careers and career choices and *recreation and physical well-being* which resembles PE (DoE, 2003c; DoE, 2007). These focus areas are interesting and very diverse, yet can be integrated into rich, meaningful experiences in the hands of competent, experienced content-rich teachers.

Life Orientation sets out to equip learners to lead a productive and meaningful life in a rapidly changing society (DoE 2003b). However, only 8% of the teaching time is allocated to LO in the Senior Phase of the GET (DoE, 2002a). In the FET, 72 hours are allocated for teaching LO in Grades 10 and 11 and 60 hours in Grade 12 which excludes internal examination periods (DoE, 2007).

In Grades 10 and 11, 60 minutes per week (36 hours) of contact time should be spent on Learning Outcome 3 (recreation and physical well-being), while in Grade 12, 60 minutes per week (30 hours) should be spend on contact time for Learning Outcome 3. The subject assessment guidelines for LO suggest that a fixed period per week should be dedicated to PE and that this period should be labelled PE on the school timetable (DoE, 2007).

The phrase, "Life Orientation", contains what it intends to do and that is to guide and prepare learners for life and its possibilities. Furthermore, LO attempts to equip learners for meaningful and successful living in a rapidly changing and transforming society. The focus of LO is life-in-society and it concerns itself with the social, personal, intellectual, emotional and physical development of learners. The significance of LO to the broader vision of education in SA is underscored by all the cardinal issues dealt with in LO (Rooth, 2005). The issue is not about the values of this new learning area/subject as much as it is about insufficient time to achieve the desired outcomes and inadequately specialised staff able to realise the challenges with and for their learners.

A CASE FOR A PARADIGM SHIFT

Prior to curriculum change, PE was often neglected and underrated and seen as an optional extra (Rooth, 2005). Education transformation in SA is a necessity, however, the marginalisation of PE shows that it still has not strategically seized its opportunities completely (Hendricks, 2004).

Why make a case for paradigm shift? The United Nations documents regarding the Millennium Development Goals and the World Sport Alliance refer to PE in their official documents. Internationally and in African countries where the school subject is presented it is known as PE. In official documents of the NCS (Grades R-12) no reference is made to PE. The subject assessment guidelines for LO in the FET Band emphasise the importance of PE for the first time by allocating 50% of the time to PE and indicating that this period should be labelled PE on the school timetable (DoE, 2007). This seems to be a move in the right direction for advocates of PE. The plea is for the DoE to come in line with international trends.

A revolutionary paradigm shift should have been made in PE during the education transformation process in SA. The subject matter, i.e. the actual commitment to movement as

outlined earlier in the article, within PE is an imperative in keeping with the ethos and philosophy of holistic education (Hendricks, 2004).

In the section that follows an attempt will be made to conjure a paradigm shift for PE within Life Orientation by concentrating on the concept of integration. Integration within and across learning areas is a main feature of the NCS (DoE, 2002b; DoE 2003b). In this article the focus will only be on integration within LO.

Within Life Orientation PE could be the main focal point integrating health promotion, social development and personal development in the GET Band and personal development and citizenship education in the FET Band. It is therefore recommended that LO be renamed Physical and Health Education in Life Orientation (PHELO). Life Orientation as defined in the NCS can remain as it is structured, but Physical and Health Education should be the point of departure in designing learning programmes with a holistic approach that integrates all human domains.

An important first step would be for all stakeholders to reach consensus about what such a learning area or subject should entail. It should be clear that the focus of PHELO should not merely be a combination of physical education, health education, guidance, life skills or HIV/Aids education. To assist teachers to accept and include all PHELO foci in their teaching, the focus areas that constitute PHELO need to be elucidated and seen as a whole and not as separate aspects (Rooth, 2005). In the following paragraphs an attempt will be made to elucidate the focus area of PHELO.

A range of cognitive as well as movement competencies are required in learning TO move. To move implies to discover, master and refine performance of *fundamental* (natural/maturation) *movements* and a wide variety of *specific movement skills* and *movement forms* and to stimulate growth and develop the body through participation in physical activities. To enhance performance and to understand the performance, knowledge ABOUT movement, physiological, psychological, biomechanical and sociological knowledge must be integrated with the knowledge and practical experience of the activity. This implies knowledge and understanding (*cognitive*) of the body and physical activity and to develop positive behaviour by gaining personal meaning (*affective*: body image, self-image, enjoyment, lifestyle) (Katzenellenbogen, 1993; Kirk *et al.*, 1999; Talbot, 2001; Van Deventer, 2002).

By learning THROUGH movement, a whole range of social values and competencies, such as responsibility for one's own actions and caring for and supporting others can be learnt. This implies that the learner must develop social meaning (*social*: coping with co-operation, collaboration, competition) based on sound social and cultural values (Katzenellenbogen, 1993; Kirk *et al.*, 1999; Talbot, 2001; Van Deventer, 2002; Crum 2003).

Increased understanding and physical proficiency depends largely on learning in which physical activity is personalised. This implies that the learning experience should be personally meaningful to the learner. The process of personalisation entails (Kirk *et al.*, 1999: 8):

- finding links between what we already know, can do and/or making connections with new information and physical challenges encountered;
- selecting the most important knowledge from a range of new knowledge and attending to it;
- learning how to learn and growing in confidence from the learning experience;

- seeing and understanding relationships among local, national and global environments and adapting information to suit different contexts; and
- learning through critical reflection on one's experiences with others and alone.

Furthermore, social justice and equity should play a very important role in PHELO. In PHELO ways need to be found in which sport, exercise and PA can enhance the quality of life for people, for local communities and for society as a whole (Pangrazi & Darst, 1997; Kirk *et al.*, 1999; Darst & Pangarazi, 2002). In Apartheid SA sport has been used to discriminate unfairly against individuals and groups of people. School PHELO should empower learners with the necessary skills, knowledge, attitudes and values (SKAV) to make critical decisions regarding unjust and inequitable situations in sport, exercise and recreation and to come up with constructive responses (Kirk *et al.*, 1999).

However, it should be made clear that PHELO and school sport are not the same. Physical and Health Education in LO should be part of the formal education curriculum, while school sport is seen as an optional extra-curricular activity as stipulated by the DoE (DoE, 2002a). In the past school sport was seen as the extended curriculum of PE in that it relies on the SKAV developed in PE (Gilliver, 1999). The relationship between PE and sport are well established and strong. Although education has been a strong and influential patron of sport in providing the most comprehensive and effective structure for introducing learners to sport, it is not always recognised or valued as it should be (Talbot, 2001).

By virtue of PHELO all learners at schools can be introduced to the SKAV they require for participation in sport, dance and PA through PHELO. The provision of these SKAV cannot be found anywhere else, not even the most comprehensive community sports programme can achieve the same service for all children (Talbot, 2001).

The case for a paradigm shift relies heavily on PHELOs contribution to the holistic development of young people. Perhaps, most obviously is its contribution to healthy physical and all-round development. It is well-known that if PHELO is meaningful, fun and enjoyable young people develop positive self-esteem and self-confidence. These psychological traits are pre-requisites for resistance to the risk behaviours associated with school truancy, substance abuse, early sexual activity and delinquency. Additionally, PHELO can provide a balance in school systems which put great pressure on young people to achieve. Furthermore, in a social system in which young people are encouraged to judge other people, and themselves, by what they can buy and what they wear, rather than who they are, what they can do and how they relate to themselves and those around them, quality PHELO can offer further balance (Brettschneider, 2001; Talbot, 2001; Bailey, 2004).

There is a growing interest in the relationship between sport and learners' attitudes towards school. Unfortunately research is limited and mostly based on small-scaled studies or anecdotal evidence. However, some studies indicate positive outcomes regarding learner attendance following the introduction of sport based schemes. Other studies indicate that the availability of sporting activities make the school experience more attractive (Bailey, 2004). Talbot (2001:43) purports that:

...in schools with good quality programmes of Physical Education and school sport, students are less likely to be hostile to the school, less likely to truant and less likely to drop out of school early. In turn, there is a well-established relationship between early school drop-out, taunting and social exclusion.

School-based studies offer the most encouraging findings on the relationship between PA and social development. The results of these studies (Bailey, 2004) include improvements in moral reasoning, fair play and 'sportsmanship' and personal responsibility. It also seems that social skills and values develop most effectively when teachers focus on situations that arise naturally through activities, by asking questions to learners and by modelling appropriate responses through their own behaviour (Bailey, 2004: 4).

Violence among learners in South African schools is frequently being reported in the media and interestingly enough the violence is not limited to boys only. In many cases school girls are also involved. From the above-mentioned research (Brettschneider, 2001; Talbot, 2001; Bailey, 2004) it should be clear that PHELO could provide learners with alternatives to make the right decisions.

Globally, there is a reluctance to acknowledge the contribution that participation in PA can make to economic and social development (Kidd, 2001). However, it would be unwise not to pursue the positive benefits which PA can bring. Neglecting school PA programmes will prove more costly than providing it. It is strange that in the modern era, with modern diseases, we need strong economic arguments to turn the cynics and sceptics (Kidd, 2001; Bailey, 2004). Inactivity has devastating effects on the costs of health care and the general economy (Darlison, 2001; Hills, 2001; Feingold, 2002; Hardman, 2002).

Participation in sufficient PA can contribute to a learner's physical health, improve learning, social engagement and emotional health. These aspects contribute to the economic case that can be made for PA. Another economic case for PA can be made through safe communities and cities (Kidd, 2001). An important economic concern that is crucial for investment, the retention of a skilled and committed labour force and tourism, is the creation of safe and healthy cities. The harmonious development of children upon which so many other benefits depend is affected by the state in which our cities find themselves. On the other hand, children and youth are still more likely to be victims of crime rather than offenders. Safe cities and safe communities will thus not only reduce the number of young offenders, but also the number of young victims. An important part of community re-development and re-generation is sport and recreation programmes and facilities – the necessary complement to PHELO (Kidd, 2001).

In the community at large vandalism, mischief and petty crime, among other negative behaviours, decrease when children are engaged in activities that benefit their development (Kidd, 2001). People need to be educated to make use of these facilities. Without the necessary movement vocabulary or movement culture people may not become involved in any sport, physical activities and recreation (Crum, 2003). Such community programmes may strengthen community cohesion and a sense of belonging and also provide important opportunities for learning humanistic and social skills (Kidd, 2001). Kidd (2001: 99) purports that:

...the low cost of providing physical activity and recreation services for all children would easily be offset by the resulting enhanced community values, and the savings from policing and reduced crime.

It is clear that sport and PA have the potential to make a significant contribution to the education and development of children and young people in many ways (Bailey, 2004).

Teachers are powerful role models for children. The provision, career paths for and positioning of teachers with specialist expertise is a key feature in the model of success. Teachers need the confidence, knowledge and skills to teach PE. The consequences for learners who are exposed to teachers who do not have the necessary confidence, knowledge and skills are obvious (Talbot, 2001).

The true potential of any school subject exists in the values of educational systems and in the nature of the interactions between teachers and learners. The learning and development of children and young people are significantly influenced by the quality of the educational experience offered by schools (Bailey & Dismore, 2004).

The NCS functions as a guideline. The responsibility on interpretation and implementation lies with individual schools and teachers who now have more freedom in designing learning programmes (DoE, 2003b; DoE 2003c; Crum, 2003). In this regard Crum (2003: 59) states that teachers should develop into '*reflective professionals*' because of the high degree of autonomy that teachers have in a complex educational environment, which is in constant flux. Such professionals cannot rely on generalised rules for teaching behaviour (Crum 2003). Carreiro da Costa's (2003: 85) view is:

that the physical education teacher is [should be] a reflective professional, with deep scientific, pedagogical and technical knowledge, able to perform all the inherent tasks of teaching with autonomy and accountability, and act critically according to an explicit scheme of ethical and moral values.

To assist teachers, visually attractive illustrated booklets should be compiled to indicate the links between the various constituents of PHELO and to briefly describe the focus areas so that they can be located within PHELO and understood as part of the whole (Rooth, 2005; Christiaans, 2006). Teacher guides for the development of learning programmes in the GET (DoE, 2003d) and the FET (DoE, 2005) are available. However, the paradigm shift in keeping with the ethos and philosophy of holistic education within PHELO as indicated by Hendricks (2004) is not visible in any of these teacher guides. The Learning Outcomes are not adequately integrated and are treated as separate entities.

Rooth (2005) believes that the 8% teaching time (approximately two hours per week) allocated to Life Orientation in the GET is fair if optimal use is made of the time by the schools. However, no real impact can be made if we want to teach skills, knowledge, attitudes and values imbedded in a holistic approach to the focus areas of PHELO. Not even the 50% provided for PE in Life Orientation in the FET is sufficient. The 50% time allocation implies an hour of PE per week in Grades 10-12.

To provide additional time for a holistic approach to PE in Life Orientation Rooth (2005) suggests that the school day could start 10 minutes earlier and end 10 minutes later to provide 20 minutes per day for PE. Africa (2006) on the other hand suggests that five minutes should be taken from each period which could provide time (depending on the number of periods per day) for PE. By realising the value that PHELO can add to the holistic development of the learner, the DoE should allocate PHELO the same teaching time on the timetable as for Mathematics and Languages. In the words of Rooth (2005: 310):

The holistic education of the learner, from a sociological, psychological and physical perspective contributes to the well-being of a knowledgeable and skilled citizenry, with the necessary values and attitudes to be life-long learners who successfully interact with the world in which they live.

CONCLUSIONS

For various reasons PE as a school subject has been marginalised within the education transformation that took place in SA. However, the integrated nature of PHELO whereby it can contribute to health promotion, social and personal development should provide the impetus that shows that it has a major role to play in modern education especially towards school ethos and discipline. For this reason a paradigm shift in LO is advocated.

It is necessary that school managers and teachers realise that a holistic approach towards teaching PHELO, leads to an integrated approach that touches all human domains such as the cognitive, affective and social domain and not only the psychomotor domain. With the emphasis on the 3 r's in education this is not always the case. The 4th r, which is recreation, is usually ignored by education policy makers. The above-mentioned aspects contribute to the economic case that can be made for PHELO, as well as safe communities, safe schools and safe cities. It is clear that PHELO and sport have the potential to make a significant contribution to the education and development of young people in many ways and therefore teachers, one of the most powerful groups of role models for children, need to be qualified to teach. Visually illustrated booklets to assist teachers can be compiled to indicate the links between the various constituents of PHELO and to briefly describe the focus areas so that they can be located within PHELO and understood as part of the whole.

For the interim phase, in-service training should be aimed at teachers who really have an interest in teaching PHELO and not merely any teacher who is available. Higher Education Institutions (HEI) or local communities could also assist schools in providing PHELO teachers (Rooth, 2005). By making use of service-learning, HEI's can train prospective teachers, parents, community volunteers, etc. to offer PHELO at these schools. The teaching time stipulated for Life Orientation in the NCS is not sufficient. In primary schools learners should at least experience PHELO every day for at least 30 minutes. In the secondary school learners should have PHELO for at least three times a week for at least 30 minutes.

Since 1994 many words have been spoken, but not much has been done regarding PA in the lives of young people. Over the years we have lost many young talented sports people due to a maladjusted system and currently education in SA is contributing to unhealthy communities. Hardman (2003: 30) is of the opinion that:

One answer is to accept the situation for what it is and suffer the consequences; the other is to confront the situations and address available options...

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