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Lynch, TJ

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What has changed since the 1992 Senate Inquiry into Physical and Sport Education? An Evaluation of school responses within three Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE) primary schools

Timothy Lynch - Australian Catholic University/Brisbane Catholic Education, Queensland, Australia

In 1992 a Senate Inquiry into the state of Physical Education and Sport within Australian Education systems was conducted by the Federal Government after claims that the Physical Education (PE) key learning area was in crisis. This was regarded as the most significant review in the history of Physical Education (Kirk, 1998). The Inquiry identified problems with resources, time allocation and the quality in which it was being delivered. Since the Senate Inquiry, detailed Health and Physical Education (HPE) curriculum documents have been developed and implemented which in Queensland replaced the outdated 1972 PE syllabus. This study found that within three Brisbane Catholic Education primary schools, strategies used to combat problems identified by the Senate Inquiry increased the success of HPE syllabus implementation for the physical activity strand. Furthermore, when the syllabus was successfully implemented there was an increase in student interest towards physical activities.

Introduction

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the PE school curriculum within Australian schools was considered to have been in crisis (Tinning, Kirk, Evans & Glover, 1994), a crisis was evident in physical education in Queensland schools as well (Walmsley, 1998). 'In-house' discussions of crisis at PE conferences and in journals led to a Senate Inquiry into Physical and Sport Education (Commonwealth of Australia, 1992). The findings in the report by the Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Recreation and the Arts (Commonwealth of Australia, 1992) confirmed the 'in-house' discussions of crisis.

Reasons for the decline in PE, from evidence presented to the inquiry included:

- a squeeze on subjects such as physical education due to the crowded curriculum;
- including physical education in health education;
- no coherent physical education policy and a lack of agreed outcomes for physical education;
- devolving decision-making to school councils;
- a reduction in the number of physical education specialists;
- a lack of education department support for teachers supervising physical education, and
- confusion between physical education and other sporting programs such as Aussie sport (Swabey, Carlson & Kirk, 1998, p.4).

The report by the Senate Standing Committee on

Environment, Recreation and the Arts (Commonwealth of Australia, 1992) recommended that as a matter of priority, detailed written curriculum policies be developed for PE. The Senate Inquiry coincided with the development of eight Key learning Area National Statement and Profiles, which resulted in PE curriculum being represented by the Health and Physical Education broad area of learning. This policy document replaced the outdated PE primary syllabus written in 1972.

The Queensland School Curriculum Council (QSCC) was established in 1997 to oversee the development of the Years 1-10 curriculum materials for each of the eight key learning areas (Dinan-Thompson, 1998). The 1999 Queensland HPE syllabus for the first time was developed collaboratively by the three schooling systems within Queensland: Education Queensland (EQ), the Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) and the Association of Independent Schools of Queensland (AISQ). There are presently thirteen Religious Education Curriculum Officers/ Moderators employed by Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE, 2006a) to support schools during the School Curriculum Renewal period but no Curriculum Officers for the HPE key learning area.

The crisis in Australian PE was believed to have had a cultural meaning (Tinning & Fitzclarence, 1992). The HPE syllabus adopted a socio-cultural approach to learning which recognizes that students are influenced by different physical, social, cultural, political, economic and environmental forces (Dann, 1999). The socio-cultural approach is

underpinned by social justice principles of diversity, equity and supportive environments (QSCC, 1999).

PE within the Queensland HPE syllabus is represented by the strand: developing concepts and skills for physical activity. The other strands include: promoting the health of individuals and communities; and enhancing personal development. PE teachers are required to have the knowledge and understanding of a socio-cultural approach, of various pedagogies that can achieve this in PE lessons and awareness of when to choose the most appropriate pedagogical approach for particular PE learning experiences (Tinning, 1999). Often this entails favouring critical, socially just pedagogies over the traditional dominant scientific and performance-oriented pedagogies. Teachers need to be educated and trained to use socio-critical pedagogies (Tinning, 2004), which will consequently develop teacher confidence and PE program delivery (Morgan & Bourke, 2005).

The design of the syllabus had been thorough, affording students every chance of success in HPE within each schooling system. The implementation process was the responsibility of each of the three individual schooling systems and in this they differed (Dinan-Thompson, 1998), allowing for various methods of re-interpreting and re-contextualising the text (Codd, 1988; Glover, 2001). It is the implementation that can determine the ultimate success or failure of a policy (Schneider, 1982).

In 1999 the HPE syllabus was the first outcome-based syllabus that BCE implemented (BCE, 1999). Schools had available to them initial in-service packages, sourcebook materials from the Queensland School Curriculum Council (QSCC) as well as general professional development (BCE, 1999). The implementation phase had ceased by the end of 2001. There have been no HPE Curriculum Officers (BCE, 2006b; BCE, personal communication, 2003), nor any HPE professional development within BCE schools since the implementation support ceased and it is unlikely that there will be direct support to schools in HPE in the foreseeable future (BCE, 1999; BCE, personal communication, 2003).

There is growing concern over students' sedentary behaviour in Queensland schools, the Queensland Government launched the *Get Active Queensland Children and Young People Strategy* in October, 2003 (Mackenroth, 2004), as part of helping to address growing levels of childhood obesity (Mackenroth, 2004, p.1). In June 2004, another program, *Building a Healthy, Active Australia* was launched by the Australian Federal Government with a similar aim to address declining activity. The Government is allocating \$116 million dollars towards this program over the four year period, 2005-2008 (Howard, 2004). Catholic schools educate approximately one in five school students in Australia (Australian Education Union, 2003; MCEETYA, 1995) and therefore influence a large percentage of Australian school students.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the problems identified by the 1992 Senate Inquiry into Physical and Sport Education, are a concern within three Brisbane Catholic Education primary schools, after the implementation of the 1999 HPE curriculum documents.

Research Design

The purpose of this research study was to explore PE practice within three BCE primary schools of varying

enrolment numbers. Within the constructionist paradigm, an interpretivist study was conducted and more specifically the interpretivist study employed symbolic interactionism.

The methodology chosen to construct meanings through capturing the context of each school was 'evaluative' and 'multiple' case study (Merriam, 1998). The sites for the three case studies involved: one small sized BCE primary school (less than 200 students); one medium sized BCE primary school (200 - 400 students); and one large sized BCE primary school (over 400 students). The three case studies were selected as representative of their different demographics, pertaining to their size as measured by enrolment numbers, their geographic location and their socio-economic status.

The methods engaged so as to enable precision of details within the chosen theoretical framework were interviews: semi-structured and focus group, reflective journal, observations and document analysis. The participants were teachers and students from the respective schools.

Analysis of Data

An interpretivist data analysis strategy employed to illuminate each story/ case study for the purpose of this research study was narrative/ descriptive analysis.

Each individual case was analysed using Wellington's (2000) simplified version of the 'Constant Comparative Method for Analysing Qualitative Data' (Figure 1) and was described. Cross-case analysis was presented at the end of the analysis of each case. Repeating the same analysis process, Wellington's stages (Figure 1) were used to analyse the data across the case studies. All data findings, of individual case study schools and cross-case analysis were reported using a narrative/ descriptive report (Table 1).

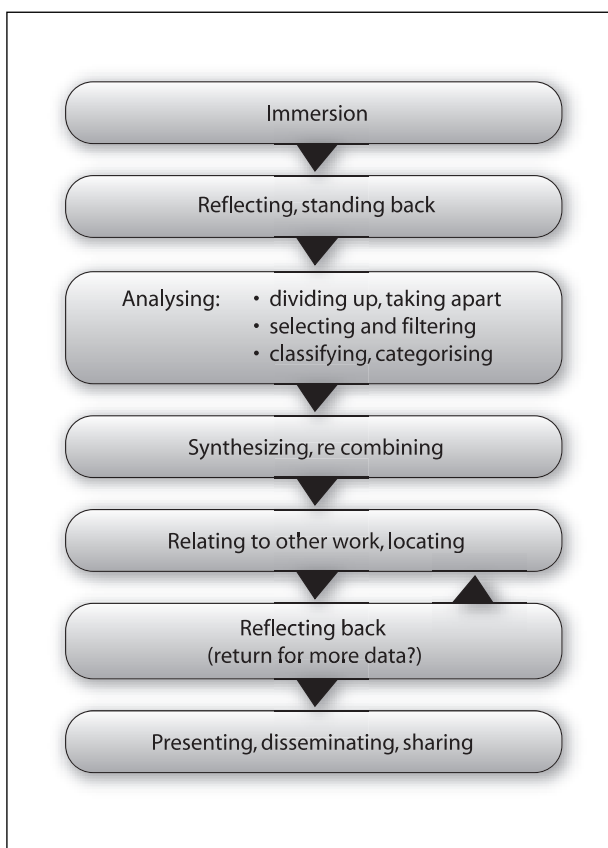


Figure 1: General stages in making sense of qualitative data (Wellington, 2000, p.141).

Stage 1	Analysis of data for each case study/school using Wellington's table of analysis.
Stage 2	Narrative/Descriptive report given as an analysis for each case study.
Stage 3	Cross case analysis again using Wellington's table of analysis. This time analyzing whole stories or story sections.
Stage 4	Narrative/Descriptive report given for cross case study analysis.

Table 1: Process of data analysis.

Units of meaning were formed, coded, and categorised with other similar units. Table 2 illustrates a copy of a coded semi-structured interview transcript.

The process of analysis formed an audit trail and is diagrammatically represented in Figure 2 for students' perceptions.

Process of Analysis

What are the children's perceptions of PE?

Stage 1: Data Generation, display and reflection.	
Participants	Data Generating Strategies
Students	Questionnaire Focus Group Interview Observations of lessons Reflective Journal
HPE specialist teacher/ HPE lead teacher Classroom teachers	Semi-structured Interview Observations of lessons
Stage 2: Data coding and distillation.	
<i>Themes from data gathered.</i>	
- Lunch-time activities	- Favourite learning area
- Outside of school activities	- PE enjoyment
- Sports covered at school	- What happens in PE lessons
- HPE exercise book	- Issues of inclusiveness
- Special equipment	- Participation
- PE value	- Promotion of healthy living
- Student interest	- Skill & movement ability & competence
- Favourite activities & games in PE	
Stage 3: Generation of key themes.	
<i>Data themes from stage 2 categorised.</i>	
- Student enjoyment in PE	- Student PE participation
- Value of PE	- Promotion of healthy living
- Skill & movement ability & competence	
Stage 4: Story report and conclusions	
There appeared to be a direct relationship between student enjoyment and interest, and the quality that the strand 'developing concepts and skills for physical activity' was implemented. When students were given opportunities to develop fundamental locomotor, non-locomotor and manipulative skills, they generally were more confident and enjoyed physical activities. Students shared that physical activities helped release stress, enhanced motivation, increased self-esteem, team work and concentration rates.	

Figure 2: Description of data analysis for children's perception of PE.

	Interview Transcript	Coding
I	What do you like about the Health & PE syllabus?	
P	Because I haven't had that much experience with it I don't know it that well so it's hard to say what I like and what I don't like – what I have seen of it I like the way that it's set out because it's fairly easy to follow, easy to read and I just like the way it's set out and structured.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher familiarity with syllabus • Teacher confidence & knowledge • Syllabus likes & dislikes

Table 2: Coding of interview transcript.

Presentation of findings

Summary of Case Study One school (less than 200 students)

Case Study One school teacher participants were all experienced teachers, each with at least ten years teaching experience. None of the teacher participants had specialist training in PE and only one had received professional development in the 1999 Queensland HPE syllabus.

In the early years classroom Kate (Pseudonym) demonstrated a limited understanding. When questioned about her engagement with the 1999 HPE syllabus she said that she "hasn't followed the syllabus as such". In the middle years classroom Jody (Pseudonym) confirmed that she doesn't have one in the classroom and that she "has definitely never seen one before". Kevin (Pseudonym), the upper year's classroom teacher and sports coordinator received professional development on the new HPE syllabus. Kevin found the support materials and modules to be "quite helpful for teaching, after supplementing and/or modifying".

The school did not have a specialist HPE teacher and classroom teachers were responsible for the implementation of all three strands of the syllabus. Kevin confirmed that there was no Whole School Program for any of the HPE strands (Table 3).

The Physical Activity strand was given the most consideration and time within Case Study One school. The early years' students stated that for PE they do "skipping and ball games every Friday". This was reinforced during the PE physical activities lesson observation. When questioned about a Perceptual Motor Program (PMP), Kate stated "There is nothing set, teachers do it themselves in the classroom, for example, brain gym." The early years' students did not mention that they covered any perceptual motor skills.

In the middle years Jody mentioned "the students have swimming, interschool sport, athletics and skipping". The upper school student participants stated that sports at school included "swimming; athletics: discus, shot put, long jump and relays; touch football, ball games, dancing and AFL football every second year". During the HPE physical activity lesson observation the upper school class were introduced to netball skills and a modified game of netball.

Kevin stated that to promote physical activity lessons, they have "whole school (including the pre-school) sessions concentrating on athletics, ball handling and ball skills". Using a reciprocal teaching approach an early year's child was taught by an upper year's student. However, Jody

	Case Study One	Case Study Two	Case Study Three
HPE specialist	No	✓	✓
HPE specialist in-serviced in syllabus	No	✓	No
Number of Classroom Teacher participants professionally developed in new syllabus	1	2	2
Clear knowledge of who is responsible for the different strands	✓	✓	No
No extra cost involved (paying other organisations to implement syllabus)	Extra cost	✓	Extra cost
Number of Classroom Teacher participants who evidenced HPE in book	1	2	0
Whole School Program	No	✓	No

Table 3: Summary of cross-case data analysis findings.

	Case Study One	Case Study Two	Case Study Three
Facilities and Space	Good	Poor	Very Good
Sporting Equipment	Sufficient	Good	Very Good
Teaching Resources (books, kits, videos)	Poor	Good	Very Good

Table 4: Comparison of Case Study School Resources and Facilities.

	Case Study One	Case Study Two	Case Study Three
Teachers' perception of students interest levels in PE	Medium	High	High
Number of students interviewed in each focus group	6	8	8
Number of Early Years student participants whose favourite subject was PE	0 (0%)	6 (75%)	0 (0%)
Number of Middle Years student participants whose favourite subject was PE	2 (33%)	3 (37.5%)	0 (0%)
Number of Upper Years student participants whose favourite subject was PE	0 (0%)	4 (50%)	0 (0%)
HPE specialist teacher	No	Yes	Yes

Table 5: Comparison of Case Study School Student Participants' Interest in PE.

questioned whether the older students were teaching their younger buddy students correctly?

Kate named the sports coordinator, Kevin, as the assigned PE teacher "with the role of looking after PE equipment". Kate added "we try to build up on the equipment but everything seems to go missing". Observations by the researcher found that physical activity equipment was sufficient. During the researcher's field visits and observations over a three month period it was noted that facilities were showing signs of neglect (Table 4). Teaching resources were limited to three HPE folders consisting of activities from the 'Daily Physical Education' Program (ACHPER, 1982).

Teachers shared that the students' had medium interest in physical activities, which was reinforced through observations and focus group interviews (Table 5). However, the teacher participants did not believe that the school was disadvantaged by not having a specialist PE teacher. Jody added, "I do value the swimming instructors" but concluded, "I prefer to have something else as release time." All student participants from the early, middle and upper years believed that PE was important.

Participants believed healthy living was promoted through organisations visiting the school such as the Life Education van, Jump Rope For Heart, Dance Fever and through their sun safety rule 'No hat, No play'.

Summary of Case Study Two school (200 – 400 students)

Case Study Two school appeared to have a well-designed and implemented Physical Education curriculum program. The school had an experienced PE specialist teacher, providing each class with at least one forty minute lesson per week. All participants agreed that the HPE specialist was responsible for the Physical Activity strand of the program and the classroom teachers were responsible for the Health and Personal Development strands.

The teacher participants had received professional development to varying degrees in the 1999 HPE syllabus. In the early years Kim (Pseudonym) and in the middle years, Sean (Pseudonym) attended in-services. In the upper years, Lucy's dealings with the HPE syllabus were limited to university where she "did a health unit".

The HPE specialist is very familiar with the syllabus. In

1999-2001 he was a member of the BCE Health and Physical Education support network, assisting with the implementation of the new syllabus in the BCE system and he had a Masters in Education (Physical and Health Education) degree (Table 3).

The physical activities covered were numerous, wide in scope and variety, utilising the school's facilities and limited space to the optimum. The student participants from the early years' focus group mentioned that HPE physical activity lessons comprised learning how to run, running relays and athletics, swimming, balancing on the balance beam, learning how to throw underarm and overarm and how to catch, soccer skills, basketball, and dancing, skipping and playing Scarecrow Tiggly. The student participants from the middle years' and upper years' focus groups verified that their physical activity lessons were also comprehensive. According to an upper years' student participant the lessons normally began with a fun game: "Usually at the start, as a warm up" and the modified games are used as a culmination activity; "we just play them at the end after we've learnt the skills". Document analysis of the Physical Education Whole School Program which the specialist had designed at the beginning of the school year provided confirmation. The upper years' student participants stated that they enjoyed team sports "working together and good team spirit".

Sean shared that at school "space is at a real premium". The HPE specialist used a rugby ground which was four hundred metres from the school. According to Kim, the field enabled the students to "have a really good run and stretch their legs".

Equipment and resources were considered by the researcher and teacher participants as adequate. Sean shared; "What we've got in our sports shed would be typical of most primary schools."

Physical activities during breaks were promoted by distributing old equipment to each class, along with a large sport container in which to keep their equipment. Teacher resources for PE were also located in the library. Lucy said, "We have Jump Rope For Heart Kits and things like that."

Teachers shared that the students' had high interest in physical activities, which was reinforced through observations and focus group interviews (Table 5). In the early years, Kim said, "My students love it". Sean suggested that in the middle years the students' attitudes were "Really positive, really interested". Lucy, the upper years' teacher explained, "My class is always excited about PE, they can't wait to get out there. Even the non-sporty kids still enjoy getting out there because I believe it's not a threat to them."

Healthy living was further promoted by a school 'No hat-No play' sun safety rule, through a Walk to School Program, Inter-school sports, together with Auskick and lunch time touch football and netball competitions.

Summary of Case Study Three school (over 400 students)

Case Study Three school has a full-time HPE specialist teacher. The school has ample space, many facilities, sufficient equipment and modern resources (Table 4).

The four teacher participants had varying degrees of teaching experience and HPE syllabus professional development. The teacher participants who had begun teaching since 2001 were not as familiar with the syllabus. They had received no in-servicing within this learning area, and either indicated or demonstrated that they lacked con-

fidence implementing it. In the early years, Alicia (Pseudonym), who was in her third year of teaching, had received no in-services at school and did not study a HPE unit at university. She explained that her dealings with HPE "were quite slim actually because when I was going through Uni with Early Childhood it [HPE] was scrapped for us". When asked what she liked about the syllabus, Alicia replied, "I don't really know too much about it". The specialist HPE teacher was in her second year of teaching. Her claimed qualifications, a Bachelor of Physical Education Honours (Canada), were not evidenced within PE practice or by demonstrated knowledge. Her exposure to the 1999 HPE syllabus occurred initially in the HPE unit during her Masters studies (Australia). "I've had nothing to compare it to in the sense of any other syllabus, so this is the first one I've actually used". She disliked that it "can overlap and get a little confusing as the kids are progressing". She said, "You want to make sure that there is a steady incline upwards".

Furthermore, the HPE specialist was asked whether or not they had a Whole School Program for HPE, with the interviewer explaining what was meant by the term, 'Whole School Program'. The answer, indirectly was 'no', but the HPE specialist teacher spoke of the benefits of having a whole school program. There was no policy or plan that teachers follow, nor explanations offered for teachers to know what is being taught.

During lesson observations one teaching strategy employed by the HPE specialist, was to send the students who were too slow at returning (by the count of three), during the 'Rats and Rabbits' game on a run around the courts. Using physical activity as a punishment was used during all year level lesson observations; early years, middle years and upper years. Furthermore, researcher observations discovered lower years', middle years' and upper years' students all practising soccer skills and then playing a modified soccer game. When questioned about what they do for PE, one early years' student explained the soccer activity that was observed by the researcher: "We have this team and we have to play soccer. We have red, blue, green and gold and people go on the team and then whoever gets a goal it is time out and then the other two teams get on and play."

The HPE specialist teaches every class in the school from Pre-school to Year Seven. Pre-school to Year Five have HPE for one hour a week and Year Six and Seven have it for only half of an hour. This is designed to accommodate teachers' release time.

In the middle years, Bianca (Pseudonym) and in the upper years, Veronica (Pseudonym) confirmed that in 1999 the staff had two to three one to two hour HPE syllabus in-services on pupil free days. Two teacher participants believed the HPE specialist was responsible for teaching all three strands, whereas the HPE specialist believed that she was responsible for only the Physical Activity strand. Alicia said: "She'll have her plan and we don't really see much of what goes on, but we just assume that she is getting through everything and gives us the results at the end of the year." Bianca added that the three strands are "basically left to the HPE teacher" and that Health and Personal Development is only incidentally covered in the classroom, "Not as a conscious effort". The HPE specialist stated that she was in charge of the Physical Activity strand only.

The student participants from the early years' focus group

reported that HPE lessons involved “running, jogging and having races, playing on the playground, skipping, playing games of soccer and throwing a tennis ball”. The HPE specialist teacher claimed that the early years’ children did the Perceptual Motor Program using a buddy system with older students, however no teachers or students could verify this. One boy explained what they usually do: “We play on the playground, then she blows the whistle and we go and line up in a boy and girl line and go and have a drink.” Alicia did share support, stating that the HPE specialist “takes them [early years students] up on the fort [adventure playground], so that’s kind of motor”. Furthermore, student participants from the middle years’ focus group mentioned that HPE rules include, “Don’t climb on the monkey bars the wrong way” and “Don’t climb up on the slide”.

The student participants from the upper years’ focus group explained that PE lessons involve “soccer and running, athletics: high jump; long jump; and shot put, basketball, and dodge ball”. They have swimming lessons, cross country and an athletics carnival, as well as inter-school sport in Term Two.

All teacher participants found the HPE learning area to be very valuable and students appeared to enjoy HPE physical activities. However, the students did not appear to be as interested in the key learning area as the teachers perceived them to be (Table 5).

The students believed that PE helped to reduce stress. The HPE specialist teacher and student participants believed that healthy living was promoted through visits from organizations such as Dance Fever and Jump Rope For Heart, and the school rule, ‘No hat, no play’. Teacher participants listed all three strands in the HPE syllabus as areas requiring attention.

Summary of Cross Case Analysis

While some similarities could be drawn, the data findings varied in many ways across the three Case Study schools. The degree of shift towards an inclusive, socially just PE curriculum promoted by the new syllabus related to students’ interest; teacher participants’ experience, knowledge and confidence within the HPE learning area; Case Study schools’ facilities, equipment and space; Case Study school partnerships and services made within the community; whether or not the Case Study school had a HPE specialist teacher; and if the school had implemented a whole school program for the PE key learning area (Table 3 & 4).

Discussion

By the completion of the HPE curriculum documents implementation phase in 2001, it appears that not one of the Case Study schools was working from a school curriculum program for the HPE key learning area as envisaged by the Catholic employer, BCE. At the time of the data generating process for this research only one Case Study school, Case Study Two school, evidenced a HPE program for the Physical Activity strand.

Within the sample of three Case Study schools, the degree of implementation corresponded to the HPE specialist teacher’s degree of qualifications, knowledge and experience in the HPE learning area and of the 1999 syllabus documents, as well as the HPE specialist teacher’s ability to share this with colleagues. When one of these areas was lacking, as in Case Study Three school, teacher

participants could not come to a consensus as to who assumed teaching responsibility for each of the three syllabus strands.

It also appeared that experienced teachers were more confident and had a better understanding of the HPE syllabus than less experienced teachers, having been in-serviced in the HPE syllabus documents at the time of their release in 1999. It is through understanding various pedagogies and having an awareness of when to choose the most appropriate that enables quality PE delivery, therefore teachers need to be educated and trained to use socio-critical pedagogies (Tinning, 2004).

Teachers can be employed as HPE specialist teachers while not necessarily having specialist qualifications and therefore quality lessons are not always implemented, resulting in negative influences on students’ perceptions of physical activity (Table 5). Those not as familiar with the syllabus, indicated or demonstrated that they lacked confidence implementing it. This lack of confidence and knowledge appears to relate to inadequate PE teacher preparation and qualifications (Morgan & Bourke, 2005). Out of the three Case Study schools two employed a HPE specialist teacher, only one of whom had been in-serviced in the HPE 1999 syllabus. Paradoxically, the data suggests that the teacher with limited pedagogical knowledge in PE was employed in the only full time role in this study.

Data generated from the three BCE Case Study schools indicates that some schools rely on sporadic visitations from sporting organisations to implement the syllabus, often at additional cost to students. The Case Study school without a specialist HPE teacher was generally lacking PE resources and advocacy. Case Study Two school overcame their lack of space through developing partnerships and services within the community.

Since the end of 2001 there have no longer been any HPE Education Officers employed by BCE nor has there been any professional development within this key learning area, which helps explain why new teachers entering the BCE schooling system lack knowledge in and familiarity with the HPE 1999 documents. Case Study Two school appeared to have been the most successful school in syllabus implementation, mainly due to their experienced HPE specialist. While this indicated change within one school, without the support of BCE, systemic change will not happen (Fullan, 2001) as data generated from Case Study One and Three schools exemplifies.

Conclusion

The three Case Study schools appeared to be vulnerable to many of the factors that led to the decline in PE (Swabey, et al., 1998) as revealed in the report by the Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Recreation and the Arts (Commonwealth of Australia, 1992). In conclusion, the ‘reasons for the decline’ has been reviewed for the context of the three Case Study schools, using the data findings.

- **A squeeze on physical education due to the crowded curriculum.**

There is a squeeze on HPE due to the crowded curriculum and it appears that all three strands of HPE are suffering in schools without a HPE specialist teacher.

- **Incorporating physical education into health education**

It appeared that the Physical Activity strand of the HPE syllabus is the only strand that is consistently and purposefully allocated sufficient teaching time within the three case study schools. Communication within schools was a requirement for the three strands to be equitably represented.

- **No coherent physical education policy and a lack of agreed outcomes for physical education.**

This research study revealed that from the three Case Study schools only one school, Case Study Two, was implementing the HPE curriculum guided by a whole school curriculum program. Furthermore, this curriculum program was for only one of the three strands, Physical Activity. The whole school program had only been developed in the past two years and was designed by the newly appointed HPE specialist teacher. Therefore, at the completion of BCE's HPE syllabus implementation in 2001, it appears that none of the three Case Study schools were working from a school curriculum program for the HPE key learning area as envisaged by BCE. This suggests that the planned period of implementation (1999-2001) was not sufficient.

- **Devolving decision-making to school councils.**

BCE has mandated curriculum implementation and renewal in schools. As the implementation process involved penetration into schools, significant responsibility for this occurring rested with school principals and school administration who are very influential in the process of curriculum implementation (Medland & Taggart, 1993). The direct responsibility of a schools' administration is to support the development, implementation and monitoring of the curriculum (BCE, 2006c). Furthermore, school principals decide whether or not to employ a HPE specialist teacher, what qualifications and experience they require, and ultimately who that person will be.

- **A reduction in the number of physical education specialists.**

Not all BCE schools have a HPE physical education specialist teacher, such as Case Study One school in this study. Students from Case Study One school had lower levels of skill and movement development as a result. Also, schools that are fortunate enough to be able to employ a HPE specialist teacher are sometimes employing teachers who are neither qualified nor skilled to deliver quality learning experiences, as in Case Study Three school. Data generated suggests that lack of quality in delivery results in a lack of student interest.

- **A lack of education department, teacher education and employer support for teachers supervising physical education.**

Education department support for HPE appears to be lacking at professional experience level and at teacher education level. It is clear that many new graduates who have entered teaching over the last four years are not that familiar with the HPE syllabus. Some graduates are completing four year university Education degrees, not having studied any HPE units and then are given responsibility for teaching this key learning area to their classes.

Support and pressure does seem to be absent as the ratio of Curriculum Officers/ Moderators for Religious Education

compared to HPE (13:0) in BCE implies (BCE, 2006a).

- **Confusion between physical education with other sporting programs such as Aussie sport.**

Schools must be careful that they use sporting organizations as extensions to curriculum provision and not as a replacement for it (Emmel, 2004) as occurred previously with the Aussie Sport education program (Moore, 1994; Tinning, 1994). Case Study One and Three schools need to develop a PE curriculum program ready to replace such sporting organizations for there will come a time when they are no longer available. Employing qualified and enthusiastic HPE teachers will eliminate extra expense for schools' health promotion and physical activity programs.

The data generated within this research suggests that when the reasons for the decline in Physical Education and Sport offered by the Senate Inquiry in 1992 were strategically accounted for, the implementation of the HPE Queensland syllabus had a greater chance of success. Therefore, by addressing these issues, BCE could continue realisation of the implementation process. A correlation existed between successful implementation of the syllabus and increased student interest in physical activities. Hence, when teachers have been educated and trained to deliver quality PE learning experiences students appear to have a greater interest in physical activities. This has the potential to increase lifelong physical activity participation which may be associated to current obesity concerns. Therefore, it is in the Governments best interest to endorse placement of qualified and enthusiastic specialist PE teachers in all primary schools.

As the best time for children to learn and refine their motor skills is in the preschool and early primary school years, it appears that professional development needs to be addressed, especially with BCE introducing a Prep year in 2007.

This research suggests that not enough has changed in BCE since the 1992 Senate Inquiry into Physical and Sport Education. However, as this research study was only a small scale sample the data generated was limited by its nature. Hence, it is recommended that a large scale research project be conducted to ascertain verisimilitude of findings pertinent to other schools in BCE and in other education systems, within Queensland and nationally.

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Author Notes

Timothy Lynch has twelve years teaching experience and is presently HPE specialist and Year 7 classroom teacher at Our Lady of Dolours primary school within Brisbane Catholic Education. This is his fourth year working as a sessional lecturer to under-graduate and post-graduate tertiary students for both primary and secondary Health and Physical Education courses at Australian Catholic University, Brisbane. He was recently awarded a doctoral degree for his study involving an evaluation of the Health and Physical education curriculum within schools and was the recipient of the 2006 Australian Council for Health and Physical Education (ACHPER) Queensland Branch Teresa Carlson Award for his outstanding dedication to the teaching of HPE and promotion of its benefits within the community.



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