



PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN USA, USSR AND UK

INTRODUCTION

Professional preparation is indeed a complex and dynamic process because it involves a number of interacting elements, which change in time. The professional preparation in physical education, with the focus on the relation between the very dynamic labour market and the required competence of the professionals to deal with the associated demands has become one of the major objectives. There is no doubt that the professional preparation must not aim to train professionals to merely repeat means for solving practical problems, but professionals with the capacity to repeat the process of solving problems. Consequently, professional preparation programs need to be formative instead of informative and prepare professionals capable of using scientific thinking and method to solve practical problems of intervention.

In the United State, the profession of divinity, law and medicine were at the forefront during its origin. These three fields have long been recognized as mature profession and preparation for practice in this field has recently been focused.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

From the late 1700's to the mid-1800's, three nations—Germany, Sweden, and England— Influenced the early development of physical education in the United States. The 1800's were an important time for the inclusion of physical education in schools across America. The Round Hill School, a private school established in 1823 in Northampton, Massachusetts, was the first to include physical education as an integral part of the curriculum. Physical education was not offered in the public schools until 1855. In 1866 California became the first state to pass a law requiring twice-per-day exercise periods in public schools.

DEVELOPMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Catherine Beecher, Dio Lewis, Edward Hitchcock, and Dudley Allen Sargent, were the early leaders in physical education. In the profession's early years, between 1855 and 1900, there were several debates, referred to as the Battle of the Systems, regarding which system (American, Swedish, German, or English) could best provide a national physical education program for America. During the 1890s traditional education was challenged by John Dewey and his colleagues, whose educational reforms led to the expansion of the "three R's" to include physical education. It was also during this time that several normal schools were established. All of these schools offered a strong

background in the sciences that included courses in anatomy and physiology, with many of the early professionals holding medical degrees.

In 1893 Thomas Wood stated that "the great thought of physical education is not the education of the physical nature, but the relation of physical training to complete education, and then the effort to make the physical contribute its full share to the life of the individual". During the early twentieth century, several educational psychologists, including Dewey, Stanley G. Hall, and Edward Thorndike, supported the important role of children's play in a child's ability to learn. In line with the work of Wood in physical education, and the theoretical work of prominent educational psychologists, *The New Physical Education* was published in 1927 by Wood and Rosalind Cassidy, who advocated education through the physical.

SCHOOL-BASED PHYSICAL EDUCATION

School-based physical education's history goes all the way back to Greece in 386 B.C. at Plato's school, named simply Akademia, or "The Academy." The Greek philosopher well understood the importance of physical fitness. Of course, American physical education has come a long way since—but we owe our physical education system to Greece and many other countries, from which we've derived the system we use now. According to the United States government, the goal of physical education in American schools is "to develop physically educated individuals who have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity." Interestingly, the driver behind the establishment of the physical education system in America was war—in short, the fitness of soldiers in combat became a country-wide priority. After the end of the American Civil War, school systems implemented physical education programs and enacted laws that would make the inclusion of physical education programs compulsory in all public schools.

After World War I ended, distressing overall health statistics revealed that one-third of all drafted recruits in the U.S. military were not physically fit for combat. The government interceded and passed legislation intended to advance the quality of physical education classes throughout the country. During World War II physical education programs became more common for men and women due to the physical fitness that was required in military service and for manual labour jobs. Following World War II, as a response to an inquiry that concluded that the men rejected from the American military draft during World War II were unfit for service due to childhood malnutrition, the Roosevelt administration introduced the National School Lunch Program, intended to improve the nutrition of American school children.

In 1975, the United States House of Representatives amended the Federal Education Act in order to lift gender discrimination in school physical education programs. This granted girls and women new opportunities to participate and compete in athletic programs in high school and college. Currently, according to the United States President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition, 95% of high schools and 84% of middle schools require physical education. However, only 69% of elementary schools do so. 38 of 50 states now require or encourage districts and schools to follow physical education standards based on the National Standards for Physical Education.

The current standards of U.S. physical education involve:

- a. Competency in motor skills and movement patterns.
- b. Understanding of movement concepts.
- c. Participates regularly in physical activity.
- d. Achieves and maintains health-related fitness.
- e. Responsible behaviour in physical activity settings.
- f. Values physical activity.

Thus, the success key factor of any physical education program is ensuring that adequate time is devoted to physical education. Current recommendations are at least 150 minutes/week for elementary school and 225 minutes/week for middle school and high school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE SOVIET UNION

Because of its achievements in international sporting competitions, the U.S.S.R. holds a leading position in the international sports movement. In the socialist countries, especially the U.S.S.R., it is believed that elite athletics and mass participation in sport are compatible and complementary - one needs the other. Physical education in schools is an important part of the Soviet sports movement in as much as it encourages mass participation while facilitating the identification of athletic talent. The Soviet government places much importance on education and sport as two means of developing loyalty to the State and Party, and of developing such qualities as discipline and collectivism.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULUM

The Ministry of Education, the Committee of Physical Culture and Sport, the Central Committee of the Komsomol, and the Ministry of Health participate in planning and organizing physical education programs for students in general schools. Such programs seek to improve the health of the students by developing motor skills which would be useful in their daily lives, to encourage fitness and participation in sport, to raise the level of sports achievement, to instil moral and aesthetic values consistent with Communist ideology. Physical education is provided in various ways by the schools: regular classes which are included in the general education curriculum; recreational activities held during school hours; after-school recreational activities conducted within the school's general educational program; and athletic competitions and special events supervised by the school, in which participation is voluntary.

Physical education lessons are based on the requirements of the curriculum of Physical Culture for each school grade. The curriculum includes compulsory and, in later grades, elective physical education subjects to be used, depending on the qualifications of the teachers, the school's geographical location, the availability of suitable facilities and equipment, and so on. No elective subjects are offered in grades 1 to 4, whereas in the higher grades electives comprise about 10% of physical education classes.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND COMPETITION

The syllabus and class guides prescribed for physical education programs include suggestions for teachers. Teachers are advised to pay close attention to the body construction of the children. They are shown how to prevent injuries and given

necessary first aid information. Beginning with grade 4 physical education classes, children are prepared for the GTO and participate in trial competitions. Usually the literal meaning of the GTO is Ready for Labour and Defence of the USSR, generally abbreviated as **GTO** is the All-Union physical culture training programme, introduced in the USSR on March 11, 1931 on the initiative of the Komsomol.

This is not the sole purpose of physical education classes, but preparation for GTO makes up a large portion of the physical education program, and teachers are expected to prepare a certain percentage of students to become GTO badge holders. Athletic competitions constitute an important part of the physical education program and are used to improve the health and fitness of the students and, significantly, to develop such qualities as comradeship, collectivism, and team, class, and school spirit. To participate, students must have the permission of a physician; the competition site and sports equipment are inspected to prevent any harm or injury to the children. The highest level of competition for the general school students, however, is found at the U.S.S.R. School Games, which the press refers to as a "holiday of children's sport and a festival of friendship." During the competitions many boys and girls receive GTO badges and qualify for sports ratings. The 1964 Olympic high jump champion Valeriy Brumel and Vladimir Iashenko the world record holder in the high jump were discovered at school competitions, along with many other top Soviet athletes. These competitions help develop team spirit and friendship in the children, and can also be a means of judging the work of the physical education teachers.

SPECIAL SCHOOLS FOR SPORTS

Students who have exhibited a desire and talent for a sport may attend special sports institutions. There are boarding sport schools where children continue their general education and perfect their mastery of a particular sport under the guidance of well-qualified coaches. To be accepted at such a boarding school a young athlete must achieve at least 1st Junior ranking in his chosen sport according to the criteria employed in the All-Union Sport Classification system. Applicants are rigorously screened for admission. Room and board in these schools, as well as coaching fees and travel expenses to competitions, are paid by the State. Students in these schools study and practice their sport 6 days per week; other institutions for students who wish to be involved in high level sport are the children's sport schools. These schools are attended either in the afternoon or evenings. The local boards of education and sport societies usually operate such schools free of charge. The children are coached by professionally qualified instructors, in 1974 there were more than 4,600 children's sport schools in the U.S.S.R., with over 1.6 million children aged 9 to 14 years attending.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE UK

The history of physical education in England reveals influences variously shaped by military, political, economic, social, cultural, philosophical and pedagogical factors fostered either by individuals or institutions. Essentially, school physical education in England has evolved out of two traditions: organised games and competitive sports associated with Public Schools and physical training associated initially with military drill

and then Swedish therapeutic gymnastics in the Ling tradition in State Elementary Schools from 1871 onwards.

In the United Kingdom, Physical Education is compulsory in state schools until students reach the age of 16. That is, sports are compulsory for as long as formal education is mandated by law. Because there are many children who don't want to participate in Physical Education classes. Physical Education class is different from other classes because it involves what one does with one's body.

SHAPING TRADITIONS

Developments in sport as an important component of the physical education curriculum are inextricably linked with antecedents in English mainly Independent Boarding Schools in the 19th century. Initially sporting activity was encouraged to structure boys' leisure as an antidote to ill-discipline, immorality and general anti-social conduct, i.e. as a form of social control. This was an early indicator of one of the ascribed roles in present day society in school and out of school settings of sport being administered to assist in the resolution of anti-social behaviour.

THE EMERGENCE OF AN 'ENGLISH SYSTEM' AND CURRICULUM CHANGE

Diffusion of organised games and competitive sports throughout wider society was in part reinforced by the 1902 Education (Balfour) Act, which was responsible for the introduction of nation-wide State Secondary education. The Act facilitated a merging of the two 'traditions', for it was in Secondary Schools that the sport and games institutionalised in Independent Schools were more developmentally appropriate. The gradual pervasion of the Education System by Sport and Games was manifested in the government Board of Education's Supplementary Syllabus Handbook on Games in 1927 and the 1933 Syllabus of Physical Training for use in State Elementary Schools. The Board of Education Syllabi as well as showing a gradual decline in support for the Swedish system, reveal the changes in philosophy from a drill-based programme, mainly concerned with inculcating discipline and obedience, producing good posture and promoting fitness through exercise of muscles and joints to an 'English System'.

NATIONAL PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

After over a century of state-provided education, a government sponsored National Curriculum for children aged 5-16 was implemented in phases in England and Wales in 1989 with Physical Education introduced for the first time in its history as a statutorily required curriculum subject in 1992. Prior to this innovative government initiative, physical education in its various 'guises' was not a compulsory subject in the school curriculum rather it was generally practised. The National Curriculum was born out of then Labour Prime Minister, Jim Callaghan's inspired "Great Debate" and subsequent discussions of the late 1970s-1980s, highlighting the need for changes in how children should be educated. The resultant 1988 Education Reform Act embraced a package of changes in State education for children aged 5-16.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION, SCHOOL SPORT AND CREATING A SPORTING LEGACY

Central in the drive to build more sport into school curricula in the UK was the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) Strategy. Launched by the

Prime Minister in October 2002, the PESSCL Strategy was jointly delivered by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) as part of a shared Public Service Agreement. The Strategy was overseen by a Project Board comprising representatives from a broad range of central and local government, quasi-government and nongovernmental agencies and schools.

The Present Situation of a New National Physical Education Curriculum

In 2013, Government announced yet another new National Curriculum to be introduced in schools in 2014. Important features of the Curriculum embraces:

- Shorter Programmes of Study for ALL children to excel no matter what background.
- Subject content, what should be taught what pupils should know and be able to do.
- Allowance of maximum level of innovation at school level in developing content of Programmes of Study.
- Design of curriculum pathways that meet all learners' needs and interests.

CONCLUSION

From the late 1700's to the mid-1800's, three nations—Germany, Sweden, and England—influenced the early development of physical education in the United States. The 1800's were an important time for the inclusion of physical education in schools across America. Catherine Beecher, Dio Lewis, Edward Hitchcock, and Dudley Allen Sargent, were the early leaders in physical education. Likewise, in the socialist countries, especially the U.S.S.R., it is believed that elite athletics and mass participation in sport are compatible and complementary - one needs the other. Physical education in schools is an important part of the Soviet sports movement inasmuch as it encourages mass participation while facilitating the identification of athletic talent. On the other hand, the history of physical education in England reveals influences variously shaped by military, political, economic, social, cultural, philosophical and pedagogical factors fostered either by individuals or institutions.