Physical Education and Health
Global Perspectives and Best Practice

edited by
Ming-Kai Chin
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Over the past decades, professionals worldwide have addressed issues related to physical education and health by highlighting the unique benefits of movement and physical activity for the overall development of children and youth. Many international surveys were conducted, World Summits on Physical Education (1999 and 2005) were organized by the International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE), and World Conferences of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS 1976, 1988, 1999, 2004, and 2013) were held under the auspices of UNESCO. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) supported comparative studies on the state and status of physical education worldwide and included sessions on physical education in various international conferences that brought together experts from different professional backgrounds.

The general consensus is that in terms of both quantity and quality, the provision of health and physical education programs needs to be improved.

This new book edited by Ming-Kai Chin and Christopher Edginton can serve as an excellent resource to better understand the current situation and successful practice in 40 countries from all continents. Scholars from different regions share their knowledge and their views on how to improve physical education and health programs in school settings. Moreover, they provide insight into the challenges they face in their respective countries. Among the key issues are the preparation of teachers and the implementation of physical education lessons in accordance with legal prescriptive and statutory policies.

Although in most countries physical education is part of the school curriculum, lessons are not given, thus leading to a reduced experience of physical activity for children and youth.

The practice of a physically active lifestyle in combination with healthy nutrition, however, needs to be started in early childhood. Therefore, ensuring that all children engage in regular physical activity is crucial, and the schools are the only place where all children can be reached.

The Berlin Agenda for Action for Government Ministers (1999) states:

Quality Physical Education is the most effective and inclusive means of providing all children, whatever their ability/disability, sex, age, cultural, race/ethnicity, religious or social background, with the skills, attitudes, values, knowledge and understanding for life long participation in physical activity and sport…and is the only school subject whose primary focus is on the body, physical activity, physical development and health.

The relevance of physical literacy and health-based physical education, as well as a balanced use of information and communication technologies (ICT), is highlighted in several chapters in this book, and this clearly indicates the future direction of physical and health education that scholars, researchers and educators need to take.

The analysis of several authors shows the importance of developing closer links between school settings and the community. Some countries have greatly progressed in developing educational networks in which physical activity, sports, and health play important roles.

The Global Forum for Physical Education Pedagogy in 2010 and 2012 offered excellent forums to discuss these issues, and the next Global Forum in 2014 will be another opportunity for an exchange of knowledge and experiences. This time discussions can be based on this new publication, Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice.
I wish to congratulate Editors Ming-Kai Chin and Christopher Edginton for compiling this important resource book and the scholars for their contributions to this publication. May the readers benefit from new insights and be empowered in their efforts and work in the field of physical education and health.

Gudrun Doll-Tepper
Professor
Freie Universität Berlin
Former President
International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education
Vice-President
German Olympic Sports Confederation
Chairperson
German Olympic Academy
In today’s modern society, sports and physical activity serve the purpose of building a healthy body and mind. Sports and physical activity in the post-modern era contribute not only to maintaining a healthy body and mind, but also to awakening one’s full potential for a better life. The positive effects of sports and physical activities in our lives have been affirmatively acknowledged in a greater fashion than ever before and have been considered as a major cultural asset in many societies. This phenomenon is commonly observable worldwide regardless of the existing differences in social, cultural, political, and economic patterns.

A rise in the positive affirmation of sports and physical activity has affected and brought change to the position of physical education and youth sports. Physical education and youth sports no longer remain as a mere education for the “physical,” but serve to advance individuals to develop other abilities such as cognitive and social skills. This holistic approach to physical education and youth sports creates the opportunity and potential for children and youth to initiate sports for life. Consequently, physical education has the potential to affect one’s quality of life by cultivating a healthy body and mind.

Correspondingly, at this point in time, reexamining the goals, objectives, and content of physical education and youth sports worldwide is a necessity. The reassessment will essentially provide an opportunity to reevaluate the current constructed sports culture and accordingly provide new directions for physical education and youth sports that reflect current times. Coincidentally, Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice introduces physical education and youth sports from 40 countries. These chapters provide an analysis of various perspectives and approaches to physical education and youth sports from each of the 40 countries, and from these diverse viewpoints, I identified three main factors.

First, many countries are apparently in a transitional period from sports skills-oriented physical education programs to health-oriented objectives. It has been considered that this change of perspective was occurring only in countries concerned with overcoming obesity and overweight to improve the health of children and youth. However, Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice illustrates that this concern is no longer limited to certain countries, but to the majority of countries. Therefore, physical education and youth sports now require educators that have knowledge beyond sports and physical activities that is based in new educational practices.

Second, the change of view in physical education and youth sports is reflected in new and renewed policies. The chapters introduce the active change and involvement of policy makers to pursue and improve physical education and youth sports according to more contemporary goals and objectives. Such goals and objectives encourage participants in physical education and youth sports programs to pursue sports for life. This factor illuminates that policy makers play a vital role in creating and providing the environment in which these ends can be achieved. In some countries, the benefit of the school–community cooperation model to physical education and youth sports is now more formally emphasized.

Third, the need and importance of gathering and sharing knowledge of physical education and youth sports of other countries other than one’s own is highlighted. Globalization emphasizes that we can improve together by learning from each other from the past and present for a stronger future in physical education and youth sports. Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice shares this worldwide knowledge.

Foreword

Tae Won Jun
Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice also provides insights into physical education and youth sports best practices from countries throughout the world. The book documents and illustrates the present physical education and youth sports stance, as well as future directions, and offers explanations that detail the relationship of physical education and youth sports to social development. Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice reveals information from the past for understanding the present and for aiding the future development of physical education and youth sports. Last, I express my deepest gratitude to the contributors in this book, who will help policy makers, administrators, and teachers shape the future practice of physical education and health around the world.

Tae Won Jun
Professor and Chair
Department of Physical Education
Seoul National University
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Founding President
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Continents, countries, and communities coalesce in the publication of Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice. Pivotal to this publication are new ways of thinking, creating, and being, redefining the relation of the individual to school and community. Built upon the traditions of the past, physical education and health merge in a framework supported and sustained through built-in community infrastructure. Technology encourages PE to think and move forward within this larger context.

To think that technology is not a critical component in our perception of health and wellness, the linking role of PE, and even the participation in physical activity is antiquated at best and irresponsible at worst. Technology is often viewed in physical education circles as “the enemy” leading to more sedentary lifestyles, which in turn lead to increases in the rate of obesity and diabetes. However, technology can play a constructive role as well, increasing access to new forms of physical activity based on traditional dances, martial arts, and sports. We can say to our children with endless repetition, “Exercise and play more, watch what you eat,” but to drive the message home we must utilize what they already have at their disposal: smartphones, iPads, and computers. Play has always been at the core of a healthy childhood. However, we must recognize that today’s generation plays and creates in entirely different ways due to technology. It is a generation of choice, and we must provide opportunities to exercise and play on demand, in any setting.

In cities and countries around the globe, a new generation is being born into a world where technology is omnipresent. Youth are connecting and socializing instantaneously through technology, playing games, and creating new forms of expression. Recently, I watched a young child newly forming words marvel at a turn-off, turn-on heat-radiating, temperature-regulating fireplace (itself a wonder). When asked, “Is this magic?” he confidently replied, “No, remote.” Technology renders instant access, comprehension, and knowledge, enabling communication at unprecedented speed with unparalleled potential. Technology has the power to transform our behavior and activity as well as the ability to track and measure our preferences and performance.

At this critical apex, we are uniquely positioned to follow the Coordinated School Health Model to link health, education, and communities to change direction and lives for the better. A child needs to feel safe and be healthy to be primed for learning and knowledge retention. Corporations, professional sports teams, hospitals, health agencies, recreation facilities, and service providers are joining forces to disseminate health practices customized to the unique needs of each individual community. Through this collaborative and comprehensive approach, the effectiveness of the message is maximized and future health care and safety costs are minimized. Community stakeholders are afforded the valued position of educating the future workforce while promoting individual and community wellness.

Through technology we may visually and virtually share best practices of school and community to transform thought, shape policy, and find curative solutions. The Global Forum on Physical Education Pedagogy gathers scholars, physical and health educators, and industry leaders worldwide to stimulate new ways of thinking informed by established practice. The forum showcases school and community best practices in real time for real solutions.

In today’s modern world, we would do well to remind ourselves of the wisdom of the ancients: that what impacts the individual imprints the greater community at large. Technology instantly connects us to vistas unimagined, allowing the free flow of information and ideas.
regardless of geographical boundaries or cultural differences. For centuries, sports and the arts have introduced and connected cultures, resulting in a global cultural exchange. Today, technology allows this cultural exchange on a level unimaginable just a generation ago. Children are introduced to new sports and cultures by watching athletes compete at the highest levels during The Olympics, World Cup, and World Series. A virtual global city-state is a by-product of technology, binding people together to work toward common goals.

I would like to thank Dr. Ming-Kai Chin and Dr. Christopher Edginton for their inspired vision of a Global Forum and for their efforts to support and strengthen their original intention of building a Global Health Network. With their commitment to build upon a rock solid foundation, the Network continues to grow by leaps and bounds, testimony to their integrity and industry esteem. The publication of Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice is illustrative of their comprehensive editorial skills, and the book will serve as a valued resource for educators, government agencies, and health practitioners worldwide.

My heartfelt thanks to all of the contributors of this book for their shared expertise, innovative thinking, deep listening skills, comprehension marked by protracted reach, and collaborative approach. Mostly I am grateful to all for standing up and speaking out for children and communities around the globe.

Thomas Root  
Founder/CEO  
HOPSports, Inc.  
USA
Preface

Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice is one of the major outcomes of the Global Forum for Physical Education Pedagogy (GoFPEP). GoFPEP was initially established to serve as a think tank and to shape and reveal critical issues related to health and physical education pedagogy and the preparation of health and physical education teachers. As GoFPEP has evolved, it has repositioned itself as a social movement that is dedicated to networking educators, professors, researchers, government officials, and individuals from the corporate world in order to promote collective action aimed at addressing contemporary issues related to health and physical education.

Drawing together global scholars, researchers, and practitioners, Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice provides a review and analysis of new direction in physical education and health worldwide. The book offers descriptive information regarding contemporary practices, models, and challenges facing the physical education and health profession globally. It is hoped that the book will offer a basis to inform and improve current practices throughout the world. Over 100 authors from across the globe have contributed chapters examining the history, status, and future direction of health and physical education pedagogy in their respective countries.

In addition, Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice examines current best practice and future practices in the area of physical education and health pedagogy on a worldwide basis. The goal of the book is to draw together experts from throughout the world to offer an exposition of the history, current status of health and well-being, current practices and standards, unique curricular models and community programs, and future strategies. It is hoped by sharing such information that gains can be made in combating the universal problem of obesity and overweight and in strengthening health and physical education pedagogy as an important component of the school curriculum. Each chapter not only addresses practices in the K–12 school setting but also demonstrates applications that link programs to the community setting. The chapters are organized focusing on the following topics:

- **Introduction/Relevant Background Information** – Brief introductory paragraphs are included that provide an overview of the country being described in each chapter.
- **History** – A brief history of physical education practices in the country being described.
- **Current State of Well-Being of Children and Youth** – Each chapter describes the current state of obesity, fitness, and well-being of children and youth in relationship to health and physical education programs.
- **Current Practices/Standards** – Each chapter reviews the current practices/standards associated with the provision of health and physical education programs in the country.
- **Unique Curricular Models and Community Programs** – A description of unique curricular models and community programs linked to the school setting is found in each chapter.
- **Visions for the Future** – The GoFPEP Consensus Statement offers a vision of change. The authors were asked, “How might change manifest itself in their country? How will future strategies (e.g., the use of technology and the pedagogy to support its use) evolve and impact teacher preparation, teacher–student learning engagement, and the structure of classrooms in the future?”
- **Summary** – Concluding comments summarizing the findings of each author are included.
Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice brings together 109 distinguished educators and scholars representing 67 universities, institutions, and schools from 40 countries. Authors from the following countries are represented in the book: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, Ukraine, United States, and Venezuela. The authors were carefully selected for their expertise and knowledge of physical education and health in their respective countries. Their contributions have been reviewed through a blind review process and edited in order to ensure that each chapter was organized and presented consistent with the editors’ guidelines.

The book has been endorsed by 80 renowned universities and international and national associations in physical education, health, and sports science. Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice draws together global scholars, researchers, and practitioners to provide a review and analysis of new directions in physical education and health worldwide. The book offers descriptive information regarding contemporary practices, models, and challenges facing the physical education and health profession globally. This exchange will provide a basis to inform and improve current practices throughout the world. Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice represents the most up-to-date and diverse collection of information focused on physical education and health pedagogy assembled in one document.
Acknowledgments

We would like to thank all of our colleagues who contributed to making *Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice* a reality. First, we would like to thank Tom Root, CEO and Founder of HOPSports. Tom provided financial support to the Global Forum for Physical Education Pedagogy (GoFPEP) and actively participated in our events. Without his commitment to the project and his continued endorsement for our efforts, we would have been unable to move the project forward. Also, we would like to thank Cindy Sisson Hensley, former president of HOPSports and current senior advisor to the National Foundation on Fitness, Sports, and Nutrition. Cindy’s contagious enthusiasm propelled us on when we needed encouragement. We would also like to thank Beth Kirkpatrick. Beth has been a great contributor to our efforts and has championed our projects over the years.

In particular, we would like to thank those who have contributed to the development of the Global Forum for Physical Education Pedagogy. John Stevens, Superintendent, and Cass Murra, Assistant Superintendent, Grundy Center Community Schools, were actively involved in the planning and implementation of GoFPEP 2010. Prof. Dr. Roland Naul of the Willibald Gebhardt Research Institute in Germany was instrumental in formulating and staging the program in 2012 in Velen, Germany. As we move forward to GoFPEP 2014, Prof. Dr. Hans de Ridder, North-West University (NWU) – Potchefstroom Campus, South Africa, has taken a major leadership role in organizing this event. We appreciate and value their efforts and continued participation in GoFPEP.

No doubt, the contributing authors and coauthors to *Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice* deserve a great deal of credit. We subjected each of these individuals to a rigorous review process in terms of not only the content of their presentations but also the formatting of the book. For internal consistency, we worked with each of the authors and coauthors to ensure that appropriate subject matter was addressed and the length of each of the various sections within the chapters was relevantly consistent. We greatly appreciate the individual attention paid by each and every one of the authors and coauthors to the exacting demands that we placed upon them. All were incredibly responsive and supportive, and we thank them, although they are too numerous to list.

The editors would like to acknowledge and thank the efforts of those who were involved in providing a review of chapters within the book. These individuals include Branislav Antala (Slovakia), Michal Bronikowski (Poland), Ian Culpan (New Zealand), Giyasettin Demirhan (Turkey), Hans de Ridder (South Africa), Govindasamy Balasekaran (Singapore), Steve Georgakis (Australia), Luminita Georgescu (Romania), Kim Graber (USA), Martin Holzweg (South Africa), Oleksandr Krasilshchikov (Malaysia), Suzanne Lundvall (Sweden), Dario Novak (Croatia), Antonin Rychtecky (Czech Republic), Peter Schantz (Sweden), Claude Scheuer (Luxembourg), Eng-Hoe Wee (Malaysia), Kristine De Martelaer (Belgium), Len Almond (UK), Marc Cloes (Belgium), and Brandon Shaw (South Africa). Also, we have been very fortunate to receive the endorsement of 80 renowned universities and international and national associations in physical education, health, and sports science. We wish to thank them for their confidence and commitment to this endeavor.

The editors would like to thank Joe Bannon, Peter Bannon, Susan Davis, Amy Dagit, and Julie Schechter of Sagamore Publishing. Joe and Peter attended the Global Forum for Physical Education Pedagogy 2010 in Iowa to assist us in conceptualizing strategies for the dissemination of information and findings from the event. From our conversations, two major outcomes emerged. The first was the development of a new journal called *The Global Journal of Health and Physical Education Pedagogy*. This publication is now in its second volume and draws submissions and readership from throughout the world. Susan Davis served as director of development and production for the book.
and Amy Dagit offered her talent as the production coordinator. Julie Schechter was the book's graphic designer. We appreciate their thoughtful attention to this effort.

At the University of Northern Iowa, Sara Formanek served as the graduate assistant providing support to this project. Sara's excellent handling of the details of the effort enabled its smooth functioning. She was responsible for continuous communications and interactions with authors and compiling the chapters into a single document. We deeply appreciate Sara's contributions and value her support for the effort. Carol Bean provided clerical support along the way and was helpful to the project in numerous ways. In addition, we would like to thank Sherry Nuss. Sherry edited each of the chapters to ensure that they were uniform and consistent. We owe a great deal to Sherry and her editing skills and abilities.

We would also like to express our sincere thanks to our colleagues who have supported us in this endeavor and in other ways throughout our careers. In Asia, the editors would like to thank Tae Won Jun, Mario Imson, Jasson Chiang, Peter Chen, Chee Keong Chen, Shi-hui Chen, Mei-Sin-Tang, Magdalena Mo Ching Mok, Jeong-Myung Gim, Govindasamy Balasekaran, Kia Wang Phua, Gulshan Khanna, Oleksandr Krasilshchikov, and Yu-Hong Zheng. In other parts of the world, we would like to thank Gudrun Doll-Tepper, Herbert Haag, Luminita Georgescu, Ricardo Uvinha, Walter de Oliviera, Miklos Banhidi, Branislav Antala, Marc Cloes, Rosa López de D'Amico, Giyasettin Demirhan, Suzanne Lundvall, Peter Schantz, Dario Novak, Antonin Rychtecky, Grace Otinwa, Rose-Marie Repond, Brandon Shaw, Ina Shaw, Pilvikki Heikinrhe-Ohannson, Iridge Ahrabi-Fard, Stephen Kopecky, Larry Durstine, Kim Graber, Lisa Witherspoon, John Williams, Emily Jones, Rick Schupbach, Mark Strand, Jingzhen Yang, Jana Cummings, and Colleen Connors.

On a personal note, the senior editor would like to express his sincere devotion and appreciation to his wonderful wife, Bin Ruan. He would also like to express his thanks for the support provided to him by his family members, including his parents, brothers, and sisters. The junior editor would like to thank his wife, Susan, for her continuous support and his children, Carole and David, and his grandchildren, Hanna, Jacob, Joseph, and Lily.
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Abstract

Twenty-first century formal and informal learning environments found in schools and in the community must be crafted to inform, inspire, and transform individuals to enhance their lives, work, and play. The world is increasingly interconnected and such learning environments will, by necessity, require a more global perspective, yet will be required to be crafted in a fashion that is culturally and contextually relevant. Technology will provide a means to transport nearly instantaneously information from one part of the world to another. In this chapter focusing on the topic of physical education and health: practices around the world, several themes have been emphasized. Two of the most important topics are that of globalization and promoting best practice. Globalization refers to the connection of ideas, concepts, and thinking and is greatly influenced by the rapid transfer of information that occurs in our society today. Best practices are programs, processes, and/or procedures that continuously and regularly produce superior results. In addition, this chapter provides background information regarding obesity and overweight; school health and physical education curricular challenges; the importance of connecting to the community; technological applications; and an overview of the Global Forum for Physical Education Pedagogy (GoFPEP).

Keywords

Health, physical education, globalization, best practice, obesity, overweight, curriculum, community, technology, pedagogy, Global Forum for Physical Education Pedagogy (GoFPEP)
Introduction

Health and physical education programs throughout the world are challenged to provide meaningful and relevant learning experiences for children and youth. In the 21st century, learning strategies will be dramatically different, requiring children and youth to gain critical thinking and problem-solving skills; operate with agility and adaptability; effectively analyze information; communicate in various oral and written forms; reflect greater curiosity, imagination, and innovation in their thinking; and develop healthy active lifestyles (Gut, 2011; Kay & Greenhill, 2011).

As the world is ever changing, a broader global/international perspective of health and physical education pedagogy is needed. It is self-evident that we can and need to learn from one another from throughout the world. An increasingly globalized and technologically connected world culture enables outstanding professional practices in one part of the world to be reviewed and adopted locally where appropriate. Without question, knowledge of global/international practices can assist in advancing health and physical education pedagogy worldwide.

This edited book has emphasized two important subthemes: global perspectives and best practice. We live in a world today wherein we are increasingly connected with one another. Globalization has promoted a way of integrating ideas and concepts from throughout the world. Educational practices in one country, like other processes in business, government, or other venues, can be shared in another with adaptations to the local cultural context. Edginton and Chin (2012) wrote, “We can think of best practice as a program, process and/or procedure that continuously and regularly produces superior results when compared with other strategies” (p. i). In part, Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice has been a search for best practices in the area of physical education and health pedagogy.

Several significant developments worldwide have contributed to the timeliness of this publication. First, conscientiousness of the interconnectedness of physical education and health educators is growing on a worldwide basis. Increasingly, technology provides opportunities to share information and to establish networks with our colleagues throughout the world. What constitutes best practice in one country may be adapted easily in a culturally relevant context in another country. Second, obesity and overweight are being acknowledged as a worldwide epidemic. More obese and overweight individuals live in the world than malnourished individuals, creating serious challenges to the health of individuals and to the health care system (Sanders, Baum, Benos, & Legge, 2011). Health care costs are escalating, and unless preventive health care measures are undertaken, there will continue to be a threat to the health and well-being of individuals worldwide (Cecchini et al., 2010; Wang, McPherson, Marsh, Gortmaker, & Brown, 2011). Third, the provision of physical education programs as a part of the school curriculum is diminishing on a worldwide basis (Hardman, 2011; Hardman & Marshall, 2000, 2009). At the time when the health and well-being of children and youth is being challenged, sources and solutions to such concerns are being eliminated from the basic school curriculum.

This chapter is subdivided into seven subsections. The first deals with the phenomena of globalization and the universal connectivity that now exists throughout the world. The second section focuses on the topic of best practice, providing a definition and three-step process for validating best practices in programs, processes, and/or procedures related to health and physical education pedagogy. The third section discusses the prevalence of obesity and overweight and its worldwide implications. The fourth section focuses on the topic of the challenges faced in planning and implementing the school health and physical education curriculum. Connecting health and physical education to the community is the next section discussed. This is followed by a section focused on the application of technology in physical education and health.
Globalization

It is often said that increasingly we live in a globally or universally connected world. What happens in one part of the world has the direct potential to significantly impact other areas. For example, 7.1 billion people live on planet Earth today (Livi-Bacci, 2012). Of great interest are the number of cell phones that nearly complement this growth-oriented population. In fact, it is increasing so much that, as Silicon India recently reported, the number of active cell phones will reach 7.3 billion by 2014 (Pramis, 2013). Truly, we live in a universally connected world.

The idea of globalization was first advanced in 1983 by American economist and Harvard University professor Theodore Levitt and refers to the idea where people, countries, and economies are interdependent and connected (Tedlow & Abdelal, 2004). Initially, the idea of globalization was spread through the expansion of business enterprises on a worldwide basis. The concept was originally shaped by the process of colonization and industrialization in the 19th century and focused primarily on economic transaction.

Today, globalization also involves the connection of ideas, concepts, and thinking. Furthermore, globalization impacts individual and cultural identity. A rapid transfer of information is occurring as a result of the use of Internet and other forms of technology. Ideas, perspectives, attitudes, images, and other phenomena such as fashion, music, art, and other ways in which individuals express their identity are increasingly subject to the processes of globalization. Globalization is reflected in the spread of popular culture via the mass media and even more so today through the connectivity brought about as a result of the Internet and the application of social media (Castells, 2011). Moreover, social connections are increasingly influenced by the processes of globalization. Social connections and rewards are governed through the process of “social structuring,” which draws individuals into a more personalized form of interaction on a large scale.

In education, the increasing connection of learning resources, environments, and experiences is leading to a global learning ecosystem. Mass teaching platforms are revolutionizing education. Such teaching platforms are providing greater accessibility to knowledge, information, and the learning of skills and are spanning international boundaries (Quinton, 2012). A global open learning system is emerging that will lead to the unraveling of traditional top-down frameworks of authority, knowledge, and power. Thus, as individuals at the local level are able to connect with one another sharing best practices, education will be rethought, reformed, and renewed globally.

Promoting Best Practice

As noted, a major theme of this book is to accentuate and emphasize the importance of best practice in the crafting of learning environments in the area of health and physical education. Edginton and Chin (2012) wrote,

[in order] for health and physical education programs to effectively inspire, motivate and prepare learners for the 21st Century, it will be incumbent for those who design and facilitate the creation and delivery of learning environments to gain knowledge of programs that have demonstrated superior results. (p. i)
Introduction

Such programs reflect best practice and, in general, are a “program, process, and/or procedure that continuously and regularly produces superior results when compared with other strategies” (Edginton & Chin, 2012, p. i).

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2003, 2011), best practices can be validated through a three-step process:

1. **Identification of a Promising Practice.** The first step in the process involves identifying a program activity or strategy that has emerged within an institution and shows promise for becoming a best practice with long-term sustainable impact.

2. **Field-Tested Best Practice.** The next step in the process is to demonstrate that the program activity or strategy has produced successful outcomes and has been supported to some degree by subjective and/or objective data analysis.

3. **Research-Validated Best Practice.** The final step is to validate a practice using various measures including (1) demonstration of positive outcomes, (2) confirmation in a study using an experimental or quasi-experimental design, (3) publication in a peer-reviewed journal or professional publication, and (4) the creation of resources and quality assurance procedures.

The literature points to the need for the identification and validation of best field-based practices. A gap exists between what occurs in the field and what is studied in the laboratory. This gap has produced a disconnect that impacts the preparation of physical education and health teachers and the provision of more effective forms of health and physical education pedagogy (Burgeson, Wechsler, Brener, Young, & Spain, 2001). As the body of profession knowledge is, in fact, a blend of practice and theory, it is important to reveal best practices for this information base to advance effectively.

Korthagen (2001) affirmed, “There is a gap between theory and practice and that this impacts on teacher education in a significant fashion” (p. 1). He noted that there is an equity as abstract knowledge is considered to be of greater importance and standing than the demonstration of skills and information, especially when reflecting outstanding performance. In teacher education, it has been thought that students should gain a theoretical perspective first and then apply such an understanding to the classroom setting. However, is there an alternative? Should practice precede theory, not the reverse? Korthagen and Kessels (1999) argued that the “technical-rational model” of teacher education separates the theoretical information from its connection to practice. Furthermore, they noted that models of teacher education should find ways to more effectively embed practice within theory. The imposition of top-down standards and guidelines often fails to account for the exciting developments that are occurring at local levels. Such models of best practice should offer a framework for the development of these standards. Too often, the development of standards and guidelines framed by experts lacks grounding in actual practice. *Physical Education and Health: Global Perspectives and Best Practice* has been crafted to discover and reveal successful practices that are being implemented in the field.

**Obesity and Overweight: A Worldwide Epidemic**

The incidence of obesity and overweight has reached epidemic proportions on a global basis (Hossain, Kawar, & Nahas, 2007; Lobstein, 2011). As children and youth represent the largest portion of the world’s population today and in the history of humankind (Government of Canada, 2012), they are particularly susceptible to the consequences of obesity and overweight
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(Gupta, Goel, Shah, & Misra, 2012). Often, the diets of young children are processed foods that are high in fat, sugar, and sodium (Chopra, Galbraith, & Darnton-Hill, 2002; Kleiman, Ng, & Popkin, 2012). To address issues related to obesity and overweight, programs in schools and found in community life need to be developed that reinforce a child’s interest in making physical activity a lifelong pursuit. Also, increased screen time plays a role in promoting physical inactivity. Watching television or videos, playing video games, and using computers also contribute to diminished physical activity (McCormack, Giles-Corti, Timperio, Wood, & Villanueva, 2011). The promotion of healthy active lifestyles in a holistic fashion is essential in promoting the welfare of children and youth. The entire community needs to be involved in order to address such concerns. For example, policies aimed at promoting the development of both social and physical environments can greatly influence the formulation of positive attitudes and behaviors that advance healthy, active lifestyles for children and youth, as well as adults (Gupta et al., 2010; Sallis, Floyd, Rodriguez, & Saelens, 2012; Wridt, 2010).

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations, has focused the attention of the world on the need to address the increased incidence of noncommunicable diseases, including the prevalence of cardiovascular disease, stroke, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, and diabetes. In an address offered to members of the UN General Assembly on September 19, 2011, Ki-moon discussed the impact of noncommunicable diseases and strategies for addressing such challenges. He emphasized the importance of regular exercise, a nutritious diet, improving eating habits, limiting alcohol consumption, reduction of stress, and the cessation of smoking as important ways to address the rising tide of these types of diseases. This was only the second time in UN’s history that the Secretary General addressed this body on a health-related issue.

Social marketing programs may stem the tide of obesity and overweight in the same fashion that tobacco has been diminished in select countries on a worldwide basis (Wakefield, Loken, & Hornik, 2010). If this is to be in the near future, then the importance of encouraging individuals to move with opportunities for moderate to vigorous levels of physical activity must be reemphasized and encouraged as both a short-term strategy and a long-term strategy (Chin, Edginton, Fleming, Flack, & Ruan, 2013). According to the Mayo Clinic (2011), physical activity provides a pathway for individuals “to feel better, have more energy and perhaps even live longer” (para. 1). Furthermore, physical activity can enhance one’s health by improving cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition, as well as by promoting greater agility, coordination, speed, power, and reaction time (Corbin, Lindsey, Welk, & Corbin, 2010; Hoeger & Hoeger, 2010). Edginton and Chin (2013) wrote that we must rediscover the joy that comes from physical activity and noted that “…we must find a way to provide greater meaningfulness, relevancy, and, in fact, joy through physical activity in the lives of individuals” (p. ii).

In addition to addressing the needs of individuals to engage in physical activity, there is also a pressing need for individuals to understand and more effectively monitor their nutritional habits. Diet, along with the lag or reduction of physical activity, has also contributed significantly to the epidemic of obesity and overweight (Sallis & Glanz, 2009). Assessing research, the World Health Organization (WHO, 2013) offers guidelines regarding human nutrient requirements. They report that “nutritional problems in adolescents start during childhood and continue into adult life” (para. 2). WHO has established standards including recommended daily allowances and tolerable intake allowances for essential nutrients.
Introduction

School Health and Physical Education: A Challenged Curriculum

At the same time obesity and overweight is rising, school health and physical education programs are diminishing. Edginton (2007) asked the question, has physical education failed? Clearly, the amount of time dedicated to physical education has been diminished in school curricula throughout the world. Hardman and Marshall (2000, 2009) noted that physical education programs are being deemphasized. Perhaps a greater emphasis placed on accountability and high-stakes testing has resulted in a reduction in coursework related to health and physical education (Edginton, Chin, & Naul, 2012). On the other hand, physical education curricula may lack currency and are mainly offered in an irrelevant fashion, failing to inspire and motivate young people.

School administrators evidently have not linked the increase in obesity and overweight to the diminishing of physical education programs (Edginton et al., 2012). Physical educators have failed to ensure that the linkage between their efforts in the classroom and the health and cognitive development of their students is understood. The responsibility rests directly on the shoulders of physical educators to ensure that the importance of their subject matter is understood and embraced as a part of their schools’ overall curriculum. Today, more than ever, the physical education curriculum needs to be linked to the overall well-being of children and youth as they matriculate through the curriculum. As has been noted, lessons learned at an early age carry into adult life.

Furthermore, the importance of physical activity as a way of creating greater attentiveness in the classroom has not been recognized. The opportunity for schools to provide Brain Breaks, which stimulate students and reenergize their efforts, has largely been ignored in the overall curriculum. Brain Breaks stimulate an individual’s potential to access and process new information (Davis et al., 2011; Hillman, Erickson, & Kramer, 2008; Ratey, 2008).

Connecting to the Community

Linkages to community-based organizations, agencies, and institutions are an essential component of the 21st century health and physical education curriculum (Pate et al., 2006; Sallis, Floyd, et al., 2012). Schools often work with community agencies in all sectors of society—private and commercial, nongovernmental and government organizations—to plan and develop programs on a cooperative basis. An important component in developing the joint use of resources is the establishment of a program of communication and interaction. As the joint use of resources implies a sharing of human fiscal and physical resources, it requires that the leaders of cooperating organizations develop close relationships and partnerships among people, agencies, and institutions. A key factor in building cooperative relationships is the importance of leadership that is willing to overcome issues related to territoriality, inertia, legal mandates, tradition, fear of the loss of power, feelings of ownership, the misunderstanding of programs, and others. Such cooperative activities improve the accessibility to programs and services, as well as areas and facilities.

Connecting to the community is important for several reasons. First, and perhaps most important, is that of suggested daily physical activity, school physical education programs may only provide between 8% and 11% required for students (Tudor-Locke, Lee, Morgan, Beighle, & Pangrazi, 2006). This means that other resources and programs during a child’s or adolescent’s leisure must be made available for individuals to gain necessary amounts of daily physical activity. Children and youth spend much of their leisure time engaging in sedentary activities such
as watching television, playing video games, or using their computers. The need for programs and areas and facilities that promote healthy, active lifestyles beyond the school setting and in the community is evident (Melkevik, Torsheim, Iannotti, & Wold, 2010).

The second reason is that community provides a rich base of resources that can be used to augment and support a school-based curriculum. Certainly, many unique areas and facilities are available that can be accessed by school-based physical education programs that may serve to enrich the overall offerings to students. Not all schools have all of the resources that are required for a fully developed physical education program, yet a community may be able to supply more opportunities to implement a fully developed curriculum.

Last, and also important, is the notion that individuals throughout their life span will spend more time engaging in physical activity in the community in their adulthood than when compared with their childhood or adolescence. Thus, it becomes important to introduce students to community-based resources that they may access during their life span, but especially after they depart from the school setting.

An excellent example of a cooperative relationship is one that has been established by the Baptist (Sha Tin Wai) Lui Ming Choi Primary School (LMC), Hong Kong, China (Chin, Edginton, & Tang, 2012; Chin, Yang, Edginton, Tang, & Phua, 2010). This primary school, with a strong desire to extend its resources, developed a unique partnership with a private swimming school to assist in the development of the facility. Following a successful fund-raising program that included parents and community members, $1.3 million USD was raised to build the facility. This public–private swimming pool development represents a historic first in Hong Kong and provided opportunities for students to gain valuable water safety skills and knowledge. This private–public model has now been extended to 10 additional schools in Hong Kong.

**Technology in Physical Education and Health Pedagogy**

Children born in the early part of this millennium are known as the “iGeneration” (Rosen, 2010, 2011). This group of individuals has access to forms of technology unheard of just two decades ago. Mears (2012) offered, “They have never known life without wireless high-speed internet connections, cellular phones with data connections, texting or video gaming consoles” (p. 2). He further noted, “Most are very familiar with technology interfaces, using apps and social media on a regular basis” (p. 2). The implications of such dramatic changes in access to technology among children and youth should be self-evident in all learning areas.

Applications in health and physical education pedagogy are available and can be applied to enrich and enhance curricular offerings in most school settings. Numerous technological applications focused on promoting physical activity and fitness are available and easily accessible. However, application of various technologies will require new student and teacher competencies and practices. Students will be required to demonstrate competency in basic motor skills and also competence in using technology. In addition, such technology will enable individuals to learn in a student-centered self-directed fashion; students will be required to gain greater time management skills in order to enable appropriate time on a task. Teachers will also be required to gain knowledge of contemporary, technology-based instructional strategies. Furthermore, teachers will need to gain a greater awareness of teaching strategies that support anytime, anywhere learning and leverage technological applications (Herring, Edginton, Geadelmann, & Chin, 2012, p. 22).

In their book *Contemporary Uses of Technology in K–12 Physical Education: Policy, Practice and Advocacy*, Sanders and Witherspoon (2012) have summarized important considerations that must be undertaken to use technology in physical education. They noted that (1) funding
for technology can be a challenge; (2) professional development to train physical educators in the use of technology is important; (3) a budget for classroom technology that includes physical education must be a priority; (4) policy for age-appropriate and safe use of technology in all physical education settings must be established; (5) regular updating of equipment must be included in the budget process; (6) university teacher preparation physical education programs must include technological applications; (7) technology should be used in the assessment process; and (8) technology should be used to share information with teachers, administrators, students, and parents. Technology holds promise for the way that students learn and also for the way in which teachers teach. Physical and health educators are challenged to become more responsive to a technology-driven environment that provides enhanced opportunities for learners well beyond the walls of the traditional classroom setting (Papastergiou, 2009).

**The Global Forum for Physical Education Pedagogy (GoFPEP)**

The Global Forum for Physical Education Pedagogy (GoFPEP) was established in 2010 to address issues emerging as a result of globalization, the explosion of knowledge, and changing demographics that influence health and physical education worldwide (Edginton & Chin, 2012). Edginton, Chin, Geadelmann, and Ahrabi-Fard (2011) offered that such challenges will require a more personalized or individualized connection between the learner and the teacher. In the future, the ability to think critically, problem solve, innovate, operate with agility and adaptability, and communicate effectively, as well as employ technology efficiently, will predominate the crafting of educational environments. Twenty-first century learning environments must include (1) increased capacity and efficiency to promote learning for a relatively large number of students at one time; (2) improved effectiveness by promoting deeper learning approaches and linkages to real-world settings; (3) accessibility by removing barriers; (4) generation of a competitive mind-set with greater choice and convenience for the student; (5) promotion of a resource-based emphasis that provides a more student-centered process; and (6) the enabling of a personal touch between students and teachers.

GoFPEP has framed itself as a social movement and seeks to network colleagues from around the world to advance 21st century health and physical education programs, as well as the way that teachers are prepared (Edginton et al., 2012). Originally established as a think tank, GoFPEP today is increasingly viewed as a social movement working to promote collective action focused on the social issues faced by physical education and health educators. Edginton et al. (2012) stated, GoFPEP is directed at bringing about social change to “create new ways of thinking, perspective and solutions to existing problems” (p. 34).

First implemented in Grundy Center, Iowa USA in 2010, GoFPEP 2010 was focused on the theme of “Revitalizing Health and Physical Education Through Technology.” This forum generated many outcomes including a consensus statement (Edginton et al., 2011), publications, and a book series. The event hosted 70 invited delegates from 30 countries. GoFPEP 2012 was held in Velen, Germany, as the Sportschloss Velen and was organized by the Willibald Gebhardt Research Institute. The theme of the second forum was “Revitalizing Health and Physical Education Through Community-Based Networking.” The primary outcome of this event was the crafting of strategies to greater promote community-based networking. GoFPEP 2012 was attended by 80 distinguished delegates from more than 50 countries and received from 50 national, continental, and global organizations. GoFPEP 2014 will be held at the North-West University – Potchefstroom Campus, South Africa. Over 100 invited experts from 60 countries have accepted invitations to participate in the event, and the forum has received endorsements
from 110 regional, national, and international organizations. The theme of this global forum, “Physical Education and Health: Promoting Global Best Practice,” is timely for the launching of this new book.

Summary

Health and physical education programs throughout the world are challenged to provide meaningful and relevant learning experiences for children and youth. As the world is ever changing, a broader global/international perspective of health and physical education pedagogy is needed. It is self-evident that we can and need to learn from one another from throughout the world. Increasingly, we live in a time where exchanges of information are instantaneous and models of best practice can be accessed through global networks designed to share such programs. The rapid movement of ideas, concepts, and successful models of best practice is a reality of living in a globalized society.

As the incidence of obesity and overweight continues to escalate on a worldwide basis, there is a need to seek out preventive strategies to address this challenge. Clearly, well-designed physical education programs that promote healthy, active living patterns throughout the life span can dramatically reduce obesity and overweight. If this problem is not addressed, the quality of one’s life will be dramatically impacted and, in fact, shortened. Health care costs will continue to rise and burden the economic well-being of individuals, communities, and nations as a whole.

School health and physical education curricula need to be rethought and refocused to promote new concepts that can be gained from understanding worldwide trends. Such practices need to be contextually framed to have the maximum impact at the local level. Furthermore, it is important for the school health and physical education curriculum to be linked to community resources. This is imperative to expand schools’ resource bases and also to situate learning in the actual environment where individuals spend their adult lives. Clearly, there is a need during children’s or adolescents’ school years to find ways to complement physical activity found in the school with opportunities in the community.

Technology will also play an important role in crafting the future health and physical education curriculum. Use of technology can make learning environments more engaging, dynamic, meaningful, and relevant for students. Furthermore, technology increases the opportunity for greater accountability by providing ways of measuring and monitoring individual gains. Technology can enable the personalization of an individual’s performance in such a way as to enable a more specific design of methods and lessons to suit his or her requirements.

Living, working, and playing in the 21st century will provide numerous challenges and opportunities. It will be necessary to reach out to colleagues from throughout the world to develop and adopt new strategies, methods, procedures, and programs to address emerging needs. In many respects, health and physical education pedagogy will have to be rethought and perhaps reinvented. The exploration of new and different models of best practice can serve as a starting point for the rejuvenation and renewal of health and physical education on a worldwide basis.

References


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