Values-Based Physical Education and Teacher Education in South Africa

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Abstract

This qualitative research presents PE (Physical Education) teacher training workshops (TTW) which were developed and evaluated through the teachers' feedback and reflections. Its goal was to create a PE programme enriched with the values of Olympism and Ubuntuism based on the idea that values-based education offers an investment in individual and societal improvement by implementing a values framework. Participatory action research was used to determine how data was collected, analysed, and presented on an ongoing, cyclical basis. The theoretical perspectives of the experiential learning theory and the cooperative learning theory were applied to teaching PE during the in-service physical education TTW. Ten PE teachers from five schools in the Tshwane District of South Africa participated as they best informed the research question and enhanced their understanding of the phenomenon under study.

The TTW assisted in building and supporting PE pedagogical knowledge as teachers critically reflected on the diversity and inclusivity of their PE class context. An examination of the wide variety of teaching strategies, specifically used during teachable moments, that were employed throughout this study could be linked to the clarification of the values of Olympism and Ubuntuism. This research developed material for PE, which underpins the set of values of Olympism and Ubuntuism as core values that were modeled by teachers and guided their work. The TTW in a values-based PE programme builds and supports the teachers' pedagogical knowledge to plan, deliver and access quality PE. Participatory action research and its reflective practice positively influenced the teachers' PE practice as it assisted the researchers and the participating teachers in a collective, self-reflective, inquiry.

Keywords: Intermediate Phase, Olympism, Physical Education, Teacher Education, Ubuntuism, Values-Based Education

Introduction and Background

In their *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa, 2011-2025: Technical Report*, the Department of Education (2002) alluded to a global degeneration in morals manifest in such vices as teenage pregnancy, violence, family disintegration, and drug abuse. Other scholars have also noted a severe decline in values in many societies and among the young (Dev, 2017; Veugelers, 2011). International research conducted by United Nations Children' Fund (UNICEF) has described the 'changing ecology of childhood[1],' whereby the lives of young people in developed countries are shaped by forces that do not necessarily assist them in learning and applying values that optimize their personal lives and the prosocial behaviors critical in navigating the complexity of the contemporary global world (Fraillon, 2004). Values-Based education is offered when people are educated about aspects determining their behavior (Thomas, 2016). It is a way of conceptualizing education that places the search for meaning and purpose at the heart of the educational process and is central to creating a values-based learning community that fosters positive relationships and quality education (ALIVE, 2007). Hawkes (2011) states that values-based education is far more than a process of instilling values in learners. It is concerned with the very meaning and purpose of education; it is a statement about the quality of education that can be achieved and the impact that this can have on society and the world.

Physical education (PE) can be used as the platform to teach values as it offers a balanced methodology to educate the child holistically, which is consistent with the educational mission of schools globally (Ennis, 2010). Holistic development refers to the approach to child development that simultaneously addresses the physical, emotional, relational, intellectual, and spiritual aspects of a child's life. The holistic development approach is essential because children learn different skills at different stages, e.g., walking, talking, and fine motor skills (Lindon & Brodie, 2016). A quality PE curriculum provides learning opportunities for physical activity, appropriate instruction, challenging and meaningful content, learner and curriculum assessment, as well as the employment of qualified PE teachers. The United Nations

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[1] Child ecology is a branch of human ecology that deals with the interaction of children with their environment in life, including human relationships, particularly in terms of their growth and development (Kobayashi, 1993).

Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) commitment to PE has been affirmed in recent years with the identification of quality PE policy development and guidelines as one of three core priorities for the Intergovernmental Committee for PE and Sport (CIGEPS) and through the endorsement of the International Position Statement on PE of the International Council of Sport Science and PE (ICSSPE). The policymakers' guidelines set benchmarks for meeting minimum standards for offering PE, providing quality PE, and ensuring quality PE teacher education (UNESCO, 2015).

The focus of this study was values-based PE in the intermediate phase (generally learners aged 10-12 years) in the Tshwane district of South Africa. PE in this phase is offered as a study area within the subject of Life Skills and has 3 interrelated study areas, namely, personal and social well-being, PE, and creative arts (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement, 2011). The subject's aims are that a learner should be able to nurture positive attitudes and values while participating in PE, gather experiences, and develop holistically regardless of his/her conditions (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement, 2011). This view is shared by the European Commission (2013) research report:

> PE in school is not about teaching and learning different physical activities and sports skills. PE, physical activities, and sports should function more as a means to develop other personal traits; for example, the ability and desire to move, the importance of values, and the development of a sense of community through rhythm and movement (Toriola, Amusa, Patriksson & Kougioumtzis, 2010).

Svendsen (2020) argues that PE modules be mandatory for all pre-service teacher education programmes. These programmes should allow teachers to understand the critical role and contribution of motivated and enthusiastic teachers of PE. All in-service and pre-service classroom teachers should engage further in PE-related content by engaging with the school curriculum.

One significant factor potentially impeding learning in South Africa is the school curriculum (MacDonald, 2014; Burnett, 2020). Throughout the curriculum reform in South Africa post-1994, a critical aspect neglected was the in-service training of South African teachers (Motshekga, 2009). Additionally, the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement identified factors that could impede learning, including the content, language, classroom organization, pedagogy, the pace of teaching, and time available to complete curriculum, teaching, learning, and assessment (Department of Education, 2001). Pedagogy entails

teaching styles, teaching theory, feedback, and assessment. Based upon this description of pedagogy and the different aspects of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement, the research question the researchers were interested in was how teacher training workshops (TTW) in a values-based PE programme builds and supports PE pedagogical knowledge.

Career-long engagement in quality PE professional development should recognize that PE knowledge is complex as it involves multi-dimensional content and the challenge of teaching this content to a diverse classroom (Svendsen, 2020). In responding to the diversity of learner needs in the South African classroom, it is imperative to ensure differentiation in curriculum delivery to enable access to learning for all learners. Engagement in career-long professional learning is, therefore, a professional responsibility.

For teachers to develop or improve their PE pedagogy, systematic and sustained self-educating activities are needed to gain new forms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. This approach has been referred to as adult education (Merriam & Brockett, 2011). Knowles (1970, 1980) defined adult education as a process of self-directed inquiry. Several components are essential to instruction rooted in adult education: experiential learning, self-directed learning, learner engagement, and transformative learning. The theoretical framework of this study consists of Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory and the cooperative learning theory (Slavin, 1983). The experiential learning theory was implemented during the TTW, where learning that involves acquiring abstract concepts can be flexibly applied in various situations. During the TTW, participating teachers were encouraged to imitate the experiential learning theory when implementing what they had learned. The experiential learning theory could be used by participating teachers to critically evaluate the learning provision typically available to learners and to develop additional appropriate learning opportunities.

Olympism is a philosophy of life exalting and combining the qualities of body, will, and mind in a balanced whole, blending sport with culture and education. Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy of effort, the educational value of a good example, social responsibility, and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles (Olympic Charter, 2019). The values of Olympism (Table 1) underpin the Olympic and Paralympic Games. *Ubuntuism,* as a philosophical view, means "the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity" (Official Ubuntu documentation, 2013). While addressing lesson content that is infused with the values of Olympism and *Ubuntuism* in a context-specific learning situation based on Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory, learners should be invited throughout the lesson to reflect, analyze, and discuss concerns with their peers (Spacey,

2017; Bunting, 2006; Kolb, 1984).   Olympism and *Ubuntuism*, both ideologies, can be understood as a complementary values framework since both views are concerned with humankind's development and humanity's oneness. The values, as seen in table 1, can unite physical activity, sport, and humanism, and together can result in a values-based framework fit for a PE programme in South Africa.

Table 1: Values Framework

Olympic values	Paralympic values	Ubuntu values	
Excellence Respect Friendship	Determination Inspiration Courage Equality	Survival Solidarity Sharing Dignity	Compassion Communalism Respect Love

The theoretical framework of this study also consists of the cooperative learning theory (Slavin, 1983). Cooperative learning is an inclusive name for various teaching strategies and theories that share key attributes relating to teaching (Metzler, 2017). A point of primary importance is that team members (as in sports) work together to achieve a common goal. The learners and the teacher form part of a team within a classroom setting. Cooperative learning can accommodate teacher and learner differences in the classroom, learner achievement gains, and equity in teaching instruction. Cooperative learning is significant in the South African learning environment as learning is no longer subject matter-based but encompasses learning about diverse cultures, competencies, languages, religious beliefs, and various perspectives gained through collaborative work teams and social groups. Despite a history of conflict based on forms of diversity, within the South African context, diversity should be understood as equal rights for all; every individual is unique and individual differences should be recognized. These different forms of diversity may include race, language, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies (Westwood, 2018). What each teacher brings to the PE experience in value, qualifications, and perceptions of PE is also different. Diversity in the classroom, teams and social groups promotes social learning outcomes within cooperative learning.

Schools can become the center of the community and cultural life, playing a crucial role in promoting personal values that, in turn, filter through, establishing the regeneration of the ethical fiber of society. By incorporating a values framework of Olympism and *Ubuntuism* in

PE, learners can participate peacefully in physical activities, respecting and celebrating diversity within their classroom. The TTW for PE teachers can give rise to a values framework of Olympism and *Ubuntuism*, which can apply to the learners both on the field of play and in everyday life. Implementing the TTW in South African schools can create more active and fulfilled young people resulting in a positive societal change.

In South Africa, where learners' physical activity and fitness levels are declining (Stroebel et al., 2019), the effective implementation of PE by trained PE teachers can positively influence learners. As pointed out by various scholars, the need for in-service PE teacher development is one possibility to counter the detrimental effect of a lack of trained PE teachers on the effective implementation of PE (Du Toit, 2019; Stroebel et al., 2019; Van Deventer, 2012). The findings from this values-based study and teacher education are significant, as there is a limited number of investigations that have examined how PE teachers can facilitate the development of values in learners participating in PE (Camiré, Trudel & Forneris, 2011; Mouratidou, Goutza & Chatzopoulos, 2007; Vidoni & Ward, 2009). Particularly in a South African context, specialized in-service teacher training about values-based PE could contribute to practice by meeting the aim of the subject Life Skills, which is contributing to equipping learners with the knowledge, skills, and values that assist them in achieving their complete physical, intellectual, personal, emotional, and social potential (Department of Education, 2011).

Methodology

Using a qualitative approach based on a constructivist paradigm, one's understanding of cultures, beliefs, values, and human experiences can be investigated. It also enables one to develop and reflect on the knowledge that describes these experiences (Holloway & Galvin, 2016; Munhall, 2012; Wuest, 2012; Creswell & Clark, 2017). Ten PE teachers, with differences in gender, age, language, and ethnicity, from five different schools in the Tshwane district, South Africa, located in various socio-economic areas, voluntarily participated and responded to questions that enhanced their understanding of the phenomenon under study. The participants were all employees of South African public Primary Schools employees, teaching PE to the intermediate phase at their respective schools. Purposeful sampling documented unique and diverse variations that have emerged in adapting to different conditions and identified important common patterns that cut across variations (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan & Hoagwood, 2015). As Patton (2014) identified, typical case sampling sought information-rich cases from specifically chosen intermediate phase teachers currently teaching

PE at their school were studied in depth. The purpose was to describe and illustrate what is typical to those unfamiliar with the setting, not to make generalized statements about the experiences of all participants (Patton, 2014). Sampling different individuals and schools were meant to maximize the similarities and differences in information.

Participatory action research aspects, which included the spiral model identified by Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon (2013), were integrated into this study. Early cycles in the spiral model were used to determine how to conduct later cycles. In the later cycles, interpretations developed in early cycles were tested, challenged, and refined (Mirra, Garcia & Morrell, 2017). The cyclic process is composed of planning for the TTW, taking action to present and implement the TTW, and fact-finding, observation, and reflection on the findings of the action. The process alternated between action and critical reflection. The spiral model allowed for constant testing of the theoretical framework against the essential responses of the participating teachers to see if the theories could withstand criticism.

Data collection occurred over ten weeks. Various methods were used: pre-TTW questionnaires, focus group interviews, observations, and reflections. The multiple methods used were to ensure the validity of the findings. Three TTW were conducted before, during, and at the end of the first school term. While presenting the TTW, the researchers applied the theoretical perspectives of Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory to teaching PE. The TTW in values-based PE was evaluated and developed through teacher feedback and reflections.

Before the start of the TTW, teachers completed the pre–TTW questionnaire. Demographic information of the participants and their respective schools was gleaned. The questionnaire assisted with the first planning cycle of the TTW as it informed us about the teachers' existing PE pedagogical knowledge before attending the TTW. During the TTW, researchers and participating teachers experimented and co-learned through participating in micro-lessons. We completed lesson plans and video recorded the lessons, which teachers could refer back to during the school term. Teachers were invited throughout lesson planning and implementation to reflect, analyze and discuss situations with one another. Peterson and Kolb (2017) emphasized that reflecting on, analyzing, and discussing cases form crucial parts of the learning process. Teachers were therefore encouraged to imitate the application of the experiential learning theory. The researchers once observed a values-based PE lesson for each teacher at their respective schools. An observation recording sheet helped with observations so that responses were consistent in using the observation criteria. The criteria focused on the

teachers' and learners' non-verbal behavior, location, environment, and general overview of the participating teachers' pedagogical performance and techniques.

Observation as a data collection method was a reliable and valid way to collect information. The researchers identified a set of specific criteria, through literature and the research question, that focused on the observations and interpretations in this particular set of criteria to be examined and used as a guideline as it provided more relevant information. After the lesson planning and implementation, the knowledge intervention allowed participating teachers to give feedback and reflect on the TTW in terms of the values of Olympism and *Ubuntuism*, the teachable moments during the delivery of values-based PE, and how to plan, deliver and assess values-based PE.

Data analysis took place throughout the data collection process through inductive analysis and constant comparison. This provided ongoing intervention. The textual, graphical, and audio data were transcribed and analyzed using ATLAS software. Ti (Version 8, 2020). Five interrelated themes were identified across the data set. Only two themes relating to the PE TTW and the TTW building and supporting PE pedagogical knowledge will be presented and discussed in the section to follow.

Discussion

Using the action research spiral model (Kemmis, McTaggart & Nixon, 2014), the pre-TTW questionnaires assisted with the first planning cycle of the TTW as this elicited information about the teachers' existing PE pedagogical knowledge. Some significant findings indicated that generalist classroom teachers conduct PE without receiving PE teacher training (Hardman et al., 2013) and that very few PE professional development opportunities are available. Sloan (2010) supports the need for the progressive development of PE-specific knowledge. He states that this progression has the potential to build confidence and increase personal enjoyment of teaching PE. Clear and measurable links between the nature of teachers' professional development and its specific impact on learning outcomes are obvious (McRae, Ainsworth, Groves, Rowland & Zbar, 2001; Guskey & Sparks, 2004). The consideration of the approach to formal PE teacher education for this study was essential to build and support values-based PE pedagogical knowledge for the diverse group of participating teachers. The pre-TTW questionnaires provided relevant information and contextual knowledge relating to the TTW and teachers' ability to apply this to their practice.

Teachers' PE pedagogy is shaped by their own PE experiences and watching other teachers teach (Lamb, Lane & Aldous, 2013). Challenges arise when young teachers are qualified in a field of study other than PE and are inexperienced in their PE teaching. The importance of in-service teacher education, specifically for values-based PE, is highlighted in the findings of this study and corresponds to Cleophas's (2014) statement that teachers teaching PE do not receive appropriate teacher education to become qualified specialists in PE. A self-taught PE teacher lacks a systematic approach to teacher education. Formal learning occurs within a structured system like the TTW (Ennis, 2016).

According to the spiral model, the next cycle of action and observation was guided by engaging with the experiences and history of the participating PE teachers. The discussion of the findings that appear next is from the data collected and analyzed from the focus group interviews, observations, and reflections. The TTW addressed delivering a values-based PE programme aligned with the first-term intermediate phase PE curriculum as required by the South African Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (2011). The goals of the TTW conducted for this study were mainly to build and support PE pedagogical knowledge for delivering PE. The objectives of the TTW are outlined below:

- Convey the purpose of values-based education.

- Explain Olympism and *Ubuntuism*.

- Teach PE in real-life environments while modeling quality PE pedagogy.

- Understand how to plan, deliver, and assess PE.

- Equip learners, regardless of their socio-economic background, race, gender, or physical or intellectual abilities, with knowledge, skills, and values necessary for self-fulfillment and meaningful participation in society as free country citizens (South African National Curriculum Statement purpose).

PE teachers needed to be acquainted with frameworks of action that enabled them to inquire and actualize pedagogical knowledge that directly affected purposes, thoughts, and practices (Stolz & Pill, 2016). The TTW built and supported PE pedagogy as teachers consciously attempted to use various teaching strategies and theories when implementing the values-based PE programme. The variety of teaching strategies is undoubtedly a critical factor in developing values. One of the participating teachers recognized a change in her teaching style to co-learning with her learners. Learners, in turn, took responsibility for experimenting

with values during PE. The teacher further explained that she has benefited from the TTW as she re-evaluated her PE pedagogical knowledge and changed to a more learner-centered approach; she said:

> *How I approached warm-up in my PE lessons changed slightly. The warm-up included all the learners and created the atmosphere for the whole lesson; I realized that it should be more playful and fun for the learners. My approach changed to a less structured, less performance-driven, and less demanding one. Incorporating the learners in the lesson, taking responsibility for their learning, and guiding themselves benefited my practice as it was not just a teacher says, learner do atmosphere.*

Using Mosston's spectrum of teaching strategies (Mosston, 1966) meant teachers relied on a favorite style of teaching based on their values and experiences, individual differences, and the uniqueness of learners, even though learners learn in different ways. Learners from different cultural backgrounds enter PE with varying experiences of movement and motivation levels. Effective teachers will use a variety of strategies throughout a lesson. PE teachers should familiarize themselves with various teaching strategies and models to teach PE, develop their epistemology of practice, and be able to give a principled account of what they are doing and provide a rationale for using a specific teaching strategy or model (Usher, Edwards & De Meyrick, 2015). Examining the wide variety of teaching strategies employed throughout this study could be linked to the clarification of values-based PE. Some teaching strategies were better suited to some lesson themes than others. The most fundamental design component for all teaching models is the learning theory or theoretical framework on which it is based.

Teachers imitated the experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984) when implementing what they had learned at the TTW. The experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984) assists with an educational strategy to respond to social issues in the PE classroom. With an innovative experiential learning theory (Koh, Ong & Camiré, 2016; Camiré, Trudel & Bernard, 2013), a qualified PE teacher could deliver a quality PE programme infused with values (UNESCO, 2015) by addressing diversity and inclusivity in the classroom and by providing an opportunity for each learner to be successfully introduced to values-based education and the purpose thereof (Çetin, 2016). One teacher explained:

> *Values-based PE is a new approach for me. One's framework of PE teaching is within the school in which one is employed. It is more challenging because there are limited in-service professional development opportunities for PE teacher education. What you*

did during your schooling years also contributes to this framework. During the TTW and support during the quarter, it was very nice to experiment and learn from different colleagues regarding values-based education. We learned from each other, especially challenges of teaching values and diversity.

The cooperative learning theory can accommodate individual differences in the classroom, learner achievement gains, and equity in instruction. Furthermore, social and personal development contribute to the popularity of cooperative learning (Dyson & Casey, 2016). The framework of the experiential learning theory and the cooperative learning theory complemented this study, as it contributed to the diverse group of teachers critically evaluating their diverse PE practices. One teacher mentioned:

I like the fact that it feels like we somehow are going back to the basics of teaching PE, just engaging and experimenting spontaneously in physical activity without any expectations that the child might feel pressured to achieve (performance-driven). The social interaction between learners and teachers creates learning potential. The values had different meanings for different learners, and appreciation for each value differed for each learner. The best part is that diversity was celebrated.

The high level of engagement between teachers during the focus group interviews made the TTW meaningful; the observations and the reflections of the researchers indicated that the teachers were gaining new knowledge on how to equip learners with knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary for self-fulfilment and meaningful participation in society.

During the PE lesson observations, teachers extensively engaged, through teaching strategies, in identifying teachable moments. The role of the teacher is to observe the learners during physical activity and identify examples and teachable moments of both negative and positive behavior (Stidder & Hayes, 2016). The potential in identifying the teachable moments within the values-based PE lesson is to teach and discuss values explicitly. A teacher reflected on his experience of a teachable moment:

After the learners understand Olympism and Ubuntuism, it makes it easier to point out the values within the philosophies. During a physical activity in a lesson, when a learner is not putting in any effort in the activity, the teacher can mention, remember to excel, which is an Olympic value; you need to put in the work.

The TTW supported PE pedagogy as teachers consciously attempted to use various teaching styles and theories when deliberately teaching values. The participating teachers did

not force the values of Olympism and *Ubuntuism* upon the learners. Still, learners found meaning in experiencing values, as the teachers pointed out, questioning, probing, assessing, and reflecting during teachable moments. The planning of the PE lessons involved choosing physical activities that would facilitate teachable moments. During the learner-centered lessons, the teacher needed to highlight the moments when values were noticeable. At the same time, the learners explored those situations where behaviors were linked to the values of Olympism and *Ubuntuism*. A teacher shared her experience:

> *Teachable moments were assisted by incorporating a weekly value. The learners knew what was expected of them, and it seemed as if the learners were more relaxed they were less anxious because it was not a formal setting (like assessment or performance-driven activities) where they had to behave a certain way; everybody felt included while they were playing a game and the physical activities were fun. The learners seemed more susceptible to the values framework during a teachable moment. The learners were more themselves in PE; it seemed like you can approach them more especially with such a personal construct as their values or their perception of values.*

Teachable moments provided prime learning opportunities for teaching values by reflecting on significant situations in each PE lesson. An excellent learning opportunity was during a lesson observed by the researchers; the learners were choosing teams and expressing equality, compassion, and respect. Observations and evaluations have shown that teachable moments happen when responsibility has been delegated to the learners, with minimal teacher intervention (Stidder & Hayes, 2011).

Participatory action research and its reflective practice positively influenced the teachers' PE practice as it assisted the researchers and the participating teachers in a collective, self-reflective inquiry. Good examples of cooperative learning were portrayed amongst the teachers as they all worked to achieve a common goal. The teachers stated:

> *We need to reflect with people of our sort. We get to share different ideas about PE and how to go about challenges and create opportunities.*

Most teachers had a relatively good understanding of PE pedagogical knowledge underpinning the curriculum but required support in improving their reflective practice. One teacher reflected:

> *It is important to be more reflective in my practice; this way, I would know for sure what needs to be adjusted in my PE teaching.*

This participatory action research was concerned with social change that embodied the belief that by pooling knowledge to define a problem, the problem can be resolved (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). The participants worked collaboratively to solve the problems in their PE practices thereby developing their PE pedagogical knowledge so that they can be identified as professional PE teachers. One teacher reflected:

> There is a need for TTW like this to help us teach better and to try different ways to teach PE. To be on par with PE teaching in South Africa and the world schools. To learn together as PE teachers."

The reflective process shed light on situations that helped the teachers re-conceptualize their overall practices. The collaboration of teachers in this participatory action research made teachers aware of their reflective practice, being responsive to the diverse learning needs of the learners and advancing their PE knowledge base. One teacher reflected during a focus-group interview:

> I often think about assessment. I see some of you are performance-driven within your school environment. Suppose one can deviate away from a rubric because a very rigid rubric can limit the teacher. Sometimes it feels like one is excluding learners because they have never played the game before or that they are very weak (skill related), and they are assessed on norms as standards thought out by someone/the average of the previous grade, as there are no norms and standards for PE in South Africa.

As a group, we reflected on how to overcome the limitations set by the assessment-focused curriculum; teachers should provide a wide variety of physical activities while remaining focused on skill development, enjoyment, and values such as excellence, respect, friendship, determination, inspiration, courage, equality, communalism, compassion, dignity, love, solidarity, survival, and sharing.

There was also an impact on the learners' PE learning environment, which was the key to successfully carrying out the TTW. A teacher explained what happened in his PE lesson:

> My environment changed as the focus was on what is important in today's society, the values we would like each learner to live by, and how to communicate/teach them to the learners. Each learner interpreted the PE lesson and what I said during the lesson in their way (differentiation). I needed to be specific in my language use and instruction so that it facilitated clear learning of a specific value so that it meets the outcomes of the lesson.

The cyclical action research process has allowed for learning, developing, acting, and critically reflecting on concrete experiences to provide increased understanding and new knowledge about PE teaching. Campbell, McNamara, and Gilroy (2003) believe both participatory action research and reflective methods are vital to the professional development of teachers, as reflective practice and participatory action research will improve teaching practices in significant ways. This investigation focused on the involvement of PE teachers with the problems in their classrooms. This research's primary goal was the in-service training and development of PE teachers rather than the acquisition of general knowledge in the field of education (McAteer, 2013).

Social media and online platforms supported the implementation phase of the TTW. The collaboration between the participating teachers increased to a much higher level than expected. The participants shared photos and ideas; they communicated what was challenging and how they felt. It was a platform entirely driven by the participants. The 21st-century technology provided efficacy for teachers in charge of their professional development. Another online platform (Dropbox) was created for all participants to access content supporting their PE pedagogical knowledge. This was a means for continued support to teachers to avoid their feelings of isolation when teaching at their respective schools. The handing over of just a manual is not practical, as supported by McEvilly et al. (2013), who cautioned against the "training trap" where continuous professional development programmes are often a once-off occasion accompanied by a manual.

The Dropbox folder included PE resources, lesson plans, lesson video examples, and the TTW training manual. Armour (2017) argues that effective continuous professional development should consider the dynamic nature of contemporary PE, and hence, teachers' digital technologies should be prominent. Laureano, Konukman, Gümüşdağ, Erdoğan, Yu, and Çekin (2014) concur that using technology such as websites could also keep parents informed about PE developments and parental support. Furthermore, the participating PE teachers felt that the availability and ease of accessibility of lesson plans and examples were of great value and should be available to all teachers in South Africa. One teacher explained how the lesson plan benefited him:

The availability of the values-based PE lesson plans was of great help. Teachers (outside and within your school) have different names for games. To summarise the lesson and how to incorporate values, a demonstration or drawing helped greatly in the lesson plan. Everyone has their game name and variation – this helped to bring

variation into the old school games I have been teaching for many years. Maintaining your identity within your classes is nice – it is okay to call a game with a different name and rules/variations. One just needs to communicate with the learners, and it needs to be clear what is expected from them (the learners).

One idea led to the creation of a Facebook page called PE South Africa, designed as a resource tool with values-based PE content and ideas about activities that are easily accessible. The social media platform is open to the PE community, nationally and internationally, to post their thoughts, links to information, or find valuable PE information. Connecting with colleagues in the PE field worldwide gives instant access to a tremendous amount of helpful information (Catapano, 2016). Teachers can learn first-hand from experts in PE and get up-to-the-minute information on the latest trends in education, specifically PE.

The last cycle of the cyclic process occurred at the end of the TTW. The teachers reflected that they felt they had changed pedagogically and developed as practitioners, not only in terms of experimenting with different teaching strategies but mainly in terms of becoming more learner-centered by being more sensitized to their learners' interests and diversity. One teacher said:

The language you use for different age groups is important – younger learners might not understand a value like compassion or equity; you will first have to explain it to them, maybe in length; this can take up the time of your PE lesson. One has to take time to plan for the different audiences (different religions and cultures) and incorporate the values within the activities so that not much time is wasted in explaining but more in being physically active / physically learning.

Being responsive to the needs of different learners was an important outcome, considering teachers' deep involvement with the individual subjectivities of their context, and is a prerequisite for enacting effective teaching practices (O'Sullivan, 2013). Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experiences. Teachers perceived their involvement in the participatory action research process as beneficial for their professional development and self-directed learning. As reflected in the following finding, teachers often mentioned the need for content evaluation and re-planning based on their observations of the learners' behaviors and skills.

We covered a lot in the TTW within a short time. I think there are a lot of other aspects that one can address, and more TTW is for sure needed. I feel motivated to keep

incorporating the aspects of the TTW in my practice. I feel that values are very personal, so it is complex. One will only really know the severity of the complexity once you start teaching, and over time, these aspects can be addressed in continuous support sessions for teachers. This way, we will truly develop as professionals in values-based PE.

Researchers (Casey, Dyson, & Campbell, 2009) have shown that traditional formalized teacher education often makes a limited contribution to learning and does not necessarily meet the needs of the teachers. However, in a strategically structured TTW, the collaboration of the participating teachers at the TTW assisted in informal learning from one another. One teacher stated:

I liked that we were explained in theory and then implemented practically. The department obligates us to attend workshops. I am happy that I was able to apply my knowledge and then share it with others; we helped each other and engaged with each other.

Truesdale (2003) reveals valuable information about collaboration and the implementation process of new ideas learned through professional development. The collaborative nature of the TTW formed an integral part of belonging to a diverse professional community of PE teachers and the notion that being a learner is intimately tied to the whole business of being a PE teacher (Robinson, 2014). The need for belonging and learning from other PE teachers echoes *Ubuntuism*, as described by a Xhosa proverb: "Umuntu ngumuntu ngabanye abanutu" (I am because we are) (Mbigi, 1997). The participating PE teachers believed there was a need to change and update their practice. Although this was difficult initially, it was ultimately worthwhile to build and strengthen their professional identity as PE teachers. This need for belonging and identity was evident at the end of the TTW when teachers presented a logo they designed for the TTW. A professional identity for PE teachers can enable them to become increasingly effective advocates for their learners and the field of PE and to excel as professional physical educators. Excellence in the profession reflects Olympism, as the recently changed motto reads, "Citius, Altius, Fortius- Communis" (Faster, Higher, Stronger-Together) (International Olympic Committee, 2021) and invites teachers to excel following the Olympic spirit. Each teacher has the potential to make an impact on hundreds of thousands of learners. In other words, every PE teacher matters, and how teachers learn and excel through their careers should be of significant concern.

The TTW was a classroom-situated, context-based, learner-focused, improvement-oriented, and teacher-owned professional development opportunity. The objectives of the TTW were met. The participating teachers were actively involved in the learning process and could share ideas, knowledge, and experiences throughout the school term. These features match the elements or principles of professional development requirements (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Research also supports professional development opportunities that continue over an extended period (Guskey, 2014; Zepeda, 2012; Cooper, 2011; Wei et al., 2009; Petrie, 2009; Armour & Duncombe, 2004; Villegas-Reimers, 2003; Richardson, 2003). At the time of writing the application for the proposal for accreditation and approval of the TTW, continuous professional development for PE teachers is still being processed because of the workforce disruption in South Africa as an effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. A continuous professional development structure proposed by Armour and Mokoupoulo (2012) includes sustained and supplementary learning support that can be adapted to meet the local teachers' needs and desires. Armour (2017) contends that for continuous professional development to be effective, it should be relevant to contemporary challenges and addressed by attempting to bridge the gap between theory, research, and practice.

To bridge the gap between theory, research and practice, the researchers supported the participating teachers throughout the implementation phase, monitored the implementation by observing each teacher teach a values-based PE lesson, and reflected on the effectiveness of PE teaching and learning. Assisting the development of essential PE subject knowledge and related pedagogical skills by the teachers was the incorporation of theory, research, and practice, and the provision to the participating teachers of opportunities including of support, collaboration, and access to online platforms (Timperley, 2008; Edginton et al., 2010). Moreover, Thorburn et al. (2011) maintain that linking theory, research, and practice encourages a sense of improved competence. There are contradictions, however, as the support provided to teachers to adjust and develop new approaches to their contexts is often insufficient (Camburn & Han, 2015). This implies an opportunity for teachers to construct knowledge of their own by deconstruction, interpretation, and reconstruction when engaged in activities and social discourse within a particular context. In other words, knowledge is situated and is socially and culturally constructed (Rogoff, 1998; Bruner, 1996; Bruer, 1994; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989).

The importance of in-service teacher education, which involves active learning and reflection, is well established (Desimone, 2011; Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002), yet the initial

introduction of new ideas and practices is still presented to teachers using traditional approaches such as the transmission of information and observation of expert teachers with experienced classes. However, this does not consider the personal nature of professional development. Additionally, there is often an assumption that having engaged in professional development activities, teachers can simply replicate the practices they have been exposed to (Datnow, Hubbard, & Mehan, 2002). The expectation is that change in the teacher's approach will be rapid and universal. At the same time, there is substantial evidence to show that in-service teacher education is an ongoing process in which teachers adapt what they know to their specific context.

In comparison with the relatively brief period during the school term of presenting the TTW, teachers' career-long learning has received little attention in the PE profession in South Africa. When continuous professional development is done well, professional development can enhance teachers' career satisfaction and teaching confidence and improve teacher retention and the quality of PE teaching and learning. Continuous professional development is, fundamentally, about inspiring and sustaining teachers' professional curiosity and retaining enthusiasm for learning. The knowledge gap is not so much about knowing what good professional development looks like; it is about knowing how to get it rooted in the institutional structure of schools (MacNeil, 2004).

Conclusion and recommendations

In the institutional structure of South African schools, PE needs to be a stand-alone subject and not a study area within the subject of Life Skills. This can result in specific PE teacher education opportunities that can contribute to practice by building and supporting PE teachers' pedagogical knowledge. The TTW conveyed the purpose of values-based education within PE. Olympism and Ubuntuism were explained, and both philosophies' values were taught in real-life situations. Teachers were responsive to their learners to equip them as best they could with knowledge, skills, and values. The TTW in a values-based PE programme builds and supports the teachers' pedagogical knowledge to plan, deliver and access quality PE.

This research supports the call by the World Health Organization (WHO) (Hardman, 2011) for investment in teacher education (training and education occurring pre-service and in-service) for well-qualified educators and support for research to improve the effectiveness and quality of PE. The researchers are confident that this study can be replicated with PE teachers across South Africa and in other similar South African contexts and that the study will help

schools meet the educational goals set out in the National Curriculum Statement of South Africa related to teaching values to all school children. The guidelines for policymakers set out by UNESCO (2015), in partnership with others, UNICEF, the WHO, and the International Olympic Committee, call for action to ensure that quality PE is a core part of school curricula.

Policy and practice implications highlight the importance of in-service teacher education, specifically for PE. TTW in PE is recommended to be aligned and compared with the requirements of stakeholders responsible for awarding certification. A standardized skill development programme can ensure a continuous contribution to practice by improving, supporting, and promoting effective PE pedagogy for teachers, as there is an urgent need to develop capacity in the teaching force (Van der Berg, Taylor, Gustafsson, Spaull, & Armstrong, 2011). Furthermore, considering the UNESCO quality PE policy desk review revealed that the stipulated requirements for PE are not consistently implemented in all schools owing to a lack of appropriately qualified PE teachers (McLennan & Thompson, 2015), a standardized skill development programme will also contribute to closing the gap between policy and practice in the delivery of quality PE in South Africa

The accessibility of an online PE platform for all South African PE teachers would have benefited teaching PE during the COVID-19 pandemic. PE teachers faced a considerable challenge in teaching PE online, as school life has never returned to pre-pandemic norms. Support for PE pedagogical knowledge through an online platform can benefit teachers and learners.

Participatory action research and its reflective practice positively influenced the teachers' PE pedagogy as it assisted the researchers and the participating teachers in a collective, self-reflective inquiry. The experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1983) and the cooperative learning theory (Slavin, 1983) involved the acquisition of abstract concepts and were applied flexibly in various situations.

The values of Olympism and *Ubuntuism* united physical activity, sport, and humanism within this study and resulted in a values-based framework fit for a PE programme in South Africa. This study presented that schools can become the center of the community and cultural life in which they play a crucial role in promoting personal values that, in turn, filter through, establishing the regeneration of the ethical fiber of society. By incorporating a values framework of Olympism and *Ubuntuism* in PE, learners can participate peacefully in physical activities, respecting and celebrating diversity within their classroom. The values-based PE

TTW gave rise to a values framework of Olympism and *Ubuntuism*. Implementing teacher education on values-based PE in South African schools can create a positive change in society with more active and fulfilled young people.

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