

Project / Dissertation Proposal

Summary purpose of the investigation (100 words max)
The purpose of this investigation is to discover pre-service teacher's ideas and beliefs of what they deem physical education to be and to subsequently explore the patterns, themes and discourses that develop through their answers. The patterns, themes and discourses that emerge will serve to show the difference in opinions from person to person and the most common ideologies across the participant, as well as the difficulty that comes with defining physical education, subsequently teaching physical education effectively and what the main aims and objectives should be.
Introduction and Supporting literature (Include references but these are not included in the word count) (400 words)
Physical education has long been a difficult subject to define due to the high number of different approaches and themes that are associated, such as sport, health and education. Each educator that has to teach physical education, whether a specialist in the subject or a generalist teacher, will have their own views and beliefs on what they perceive physical education to be and what outcomes it should achieve. Because definitions reflect the purposes of the writer, physical education will come with a wide variety of definitions that are dependent on the individual's perceptions and beliefs of physical education. In two separate writings, Kirk has enforced this idea that physical education is a complex subject and is extremely difficult to define. Kirk (2010) believed that 'physical education is defined by what is said, done and written in its name' and he furthered this when saying 'Physical education is a socially constructed activity which is informed by, and informs wider physical culture. Individual experiences of physical education as well as messages from wider physical culture, shape understandings of the nature and purpose of physical education, where physical education is defined by what is done in its name' (Kirk, 2010). Interpreting Kirk's words, he is saying that there are many factors influencing individual's perceptions

of physical education, ranging from their own personal experiences to the physical culture in which they have lived in. Due to this, it makes defining physical education extremely difficult and causes confusion and misconceptions about what it is that physical education should achieve and what it is that physical education should be. ‘Historically there have been two strands in what is called physical education: sports and health’ (McNamee, 2005) and this viewpoint is consistent with physical education themes and trends worldwide (Coulter and Chroinin, 2013; Macdonald *et al.*, 2005; Capel and Blair, 2007; Green, 2008). As McNamee claims, sports and health ideologies are very dominant within physical education, this can be supported by numerous physical education leaders (Penney, 1998; Kirk, 1999; Penney and Evans, 1999; Green, 2008; Coulter and Chroinin, 2013). This is a continuing process even today, as most individual’s perceptions and understanding of physical education are developed through their own personal experiences of sport, physical education and physical activity (Garrett and Wrench, 2008) and this then leads to these ideologies being replicated in future years.

As Haydn-Davies (2012) rightly points out ‘there is still no consistent agreement within, or between, theory or practice as to what is trying to be achieved.’ Penney and Chandler (2000) back up Haydn-Davies’ when expressing concern that many physical educators will agree on what physical education is ‘*not*’, however, the topic of the core aims of the subject remain an area of apparent tension.

These issues have seen attempts to alter the way in which physical education is viewed through the introduction of a National Curriculum for Physical Education (NCPE), the idea of instructional models (Metzler, 2005), which grew from the sport education model (Siedentop, 1994) and most recently the concept of physical literacy (Whitehead, 2010). Despite the fact that these efforts have been made to create appropriate and necessary change, it has been widely recognised that the practical teaching of physical education has seen little change (Evans *et al.*, 1997; Penney and Harris, 1998; Kirk, 2010; Capel and Whitehead, 2013).

Methodology (Include details of how you will collect any relevant data / information) (400 words)

This research project will be using a sample of 60 participants, split between two groups, that are pre-service teachers at the University of Wales, Trinity Saint

David. To collect the data, the participants will be asked to partake in a 10-minute writing task (Coulter and Chroinin, 2013) where they will be asked the question 'What is Physical Education?'. During this process, no added information will be given, nor any guidelines or guidance as it is important that all answers recorded are purely individual and the participants were under no influence to give certain answers.

The answers given will be recorded via paper form or electronically and all data shall be returned to myself. Participants who choose to complete the task on paper will be asked to return the paper to myself once finished and those who choose to complete the task electronically will be asked to forward their answers via email. Once all data has been collected I can then analyse the data as appropriate.

Through using this method, the data collected will be individual perceptions and should provide information that will allow me to analyse any trends or patterns that occur and the most common ideologies of physical education.

When partaking in the task, participants will be able to complete the task at the same time, however they will be asked not to confer with other participants regarding any answers so as to ensure that answers are personal and under no influence from others.

There will be a 10-minute time limit for this task, however, if participants feel as though they have completed the task they can leave before the time limit.

Due to this research study being a qualitative study, the data collected will provide key answers in relation to the aims of this project as it will provide discourses and themes within their answers through key words that can be categorised.

To analyse the data collected, the answers from the writing task will be transferred and coded into the nVivo software, where key words will be identified and categorised, therefore allowing for discourses to be emphasised and explored.

Data Analysis (Explain the nature of data collected and how you are going to analyse it) (300 words)

To analyse the data collected during this study I will be using a 10-minute writing task. I will be using the nVivo software which will allow me to code the individual answers and I will be using a thematic analysis method. This method of data

analysis involves recording and identifying passages of text that are linked via a common theme or idea allowing for key words to be categorised.

To code the answers, I will be selecting key words from the text and recording the number of times each of the key words appears in the writings, not the number of participants who have used the word, for example, the word sport could be referenced 45 times within 20 participants writings. These key words will then be assigned to single or multiple categories that they are deemed to suitable for, for example, words such as healthy, obesity, fit or fitness would be coded to the category of health. The use of larger categories, sub categories and individual key words allows for trends and patterns to be discovered and further explored. After the initial categorisations, the data will be further analysed to check and ensure the consistency of the categories and the coding.

After the data has been coded, it will be re-read and decided whether it can be coded into an existing category or a new category.

The data collected from this study should begin to show the more dominant ideologies of physical education, in relation to the subjects involved and should present some key themes that will be further explored through the article.

Ethical considerations (Describe how you are going to manage issues regarding use of human subjects- esp U18's, confidentiality, personal safety, etc) (300 words)- *include an ethic form in the appendix*

The main ethical considerations that need to be addressed for this research project would be participation consent regarding the partaking of the research study and the use of their answers given. Before any research is undertaken, an ethics form (appendix A) will be completed by myself, detailing the number of participants required for the study, any age range if necessary and the gender of the participants.

By completing the ethics form, I am consenting that my research study will in no way affect any of the participants physically or mentally.

The participants in the study will be required to fill in a consent form (appendix B), explaining that, if signed, they are giving permission for their answers to be used within this study. It will also make clear that, if for any reason they choose not to

participate or would not like their answers used, they can withdraw from the study and request for their answers to be left out of the research article. In addition to the consent form, I will also ask for verbal consent before completing any research. Although participants may be required to e-mail their results, all will remain anonymous in relation to their answers being presented within the research article. To ensure complete fairness and individuality in answers, participants will be asked to not confer with each other or discuss ideas in any form. This is required so that each answer is personal and no influence or manipulation has occurred. Once all data has been collected, it will be personally analysed by myself ensuring that there is no bias or manipulation of the data.

All data collected will be protected through the following of the guidelines set out in the Data Protection Act (1998) (appendix C).

External guidelines or approval (state any pre-conditions that need to be met prior to starting the research).

Prior to beginning this research project, I will need to discuss and arrange appropriate times to carry out my project. I will be collecting the data in two sessions, due to using two different pre-service teacher groups. As previously mentioned, all participants will be asked for verbal consent in addition to written consent before taking part in the study.

Proposed Timetable for Completion:

- ▶ ASAP – Complete ethics form for the study.
- ▶ October – Submit Dissertation Proposal.
- ▶ By Christmas break – Completed literature review, discuss with appropriate lecturers about arranging for students to complete the writing task, become familiar with the coding software ready for data analysis.
- ▶ Mid-February – Collected all necessary data and compile results and begin to analyse the results.
- ▶ April – Completed Dissertation and submitted.

Word Count: 1,605 words.

Reference List

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