

EUPEA/UNESCO Seminar on Quality Physical Education

Report – Paris, April 4th 2014

Marcos Onofre, Martin Holzweg, Rose-Marie Repond, Ruedi Schmid, & Claude Scheuer

Background

Quality in Physical Education (QPE) is one of the major areas of interest of EUPEA. Thus, the monitoring of the Quality in Physical Education in Europe is of high relevance. After having investigated the possibility to establish a project of an Observatory for QPE in Europe to study the conditions of the implementation of Physical Education (PE) and School Sport (SS) and to obtain evident support to develop proposals related to the reality of PE and SS on national, regional and European levels, EUPEA decided to consider this project as a priority. Therefore it is needed to identify indicators for QPE, as well as to provide a systematic process of data collection and analysis as well as the logistic, e.g. human resources and facilities, needed to assure this process.

As QPE is a broad discussed topic, there are several inspiring sources about QPE indicators.

- Literature review on categories of QPE indicators
- Former EUPEA experience in European PE surveys
- Statements from significant PE organizations
- Former experience from national associations
- The deliberations from the EUPEA/UNESCO Seminar on QPE

Conceptual framework

In general, a lot of factors can have an impact on QPE. The following categories generally structure the different factors (Scheuer & Holzweg, 2014):

- Quality aspects in relation with input or human resources can be summarized under the category *Structure*;
- Quality aspects linked to the context and to the process are overlapping and can be brought together under the category *Process*.
- Quality aspects focused on outcomes or output and on objectives could be outlined as *Product*.

These three different dimensions of QPE factors – structure quality, process quality and product quality – can impact on different levels of the educational system: the system level (or macro-level), the school level (or meso-level), and the classroom level (or micro-level). At these three different levels, indicators represent structural conditions, process elements or products of these processes. Generally, structural aspects of QPE are situated mainly on the system and on the school level, whilst process aspects have

their strongest impact on the school and classroom level. Finally, product quality can have implications on any of the three levels.

Furthermore, analyses of QPE can be undertaken from different perspectives, depending on which stakeholder or group of experts in the field of PE is looking at QPE. So it can be expected, that practitioners have a more practical perspective on implications on the classroom level. Lobby groups that advocate for PE – as e. g. PE Teacher Associations – would take over a more political perspective, whilst the scientific community will look at QPE from a scientific perspective.

Former EUPEA documents and experience in European PE surveys

EUPEA has published several documents over the years that are more or less related to WPE. The EUPEA Declaration of Madrid “No Education without Physical Education” from 1991 gives a broad overview of different topics considered to be essential for QPE. The EUPEA “Code of Ethics & Good Practice Guide for Physical Education”, the “EUPEA Principles” as well as the EUPEA “Physical Education Guidelines” are more specific and deal with different aspects of QPE (EUPEA, 1991; EUPEA, 2002; EUPEA, n. d., a; EUPEA, n. d., b). In the following are outlined on different levels the main relevant statements in these documents:

System/school level

- There should be teachers well qualified in PE at all levels of the education system and there should be compulsory Continuing Professional Development for those teachers
- All teachers of physical education should have an applied knowledge of First Aid
- Physical education is an integral part of education from kindergarten and throughout the education system.
- Promote a broad and balanced physical education curriculum that encompasses the skills, knowledge and understanding to ensure that children and young people are physically educated.
- Secure the appropriate time, resources and learning environments in order to deliver high quality physical education in schools

Classroom level

- Teachers must understand the emotional, social, physical and personal needs of young people
- The stages of development of children should guide the types of activity provided and teachers should have the ability to respond positively to the individual needs of each child
- Teachers should have a sound understanding of the importance of enhancing self-esteem for young people and should seek to develop positive and healthy relationships with and between the children in their care.
- Children’s physical education and physical activity should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere
- All children should be treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of age, ability, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion

Besides this, EUPEA published several research articles, that also dealt with aspects of QPE (Fisher, Repond, & Diniz, 2011; Onofre et al., 2012a; Onofre et al., 2012b; Holzweg, et al., 2013a; Holzweg, et al., 2013b; Marques et al., 2014; Scheuer & Holzweg, 2014). The main findings in these publications can be summarized as follows.

In Europe can be identified a gap between the status quo and the desired situation in QPE. This can partly be explained by the different existing concepts of PE all over Europe. It begins with the subject not being compulsory in all levels and the average number of PE lessons a week – varying a lot from one country to another – being too low in most of the countries, whilst the number of students per class is consistently perceived as too high. Thus, it can be concluded, that there is a need for a revision of the general framework of the subject Physical Education in almost all European countries.

Statements from significant institutions about the indicators for QPE

Similar to EUPEA, there are several international inter-governmental bodies or non-governmental organizations that also deal with the topic of QPE.

In the frame of the follow-up of the MINEPS V world conference for Ministers responsible for Sports from 2013 organized by UNESCO (*United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization*) the Final Report on Expert Consultation (2013) considered the need of more indicators from the school and system levels of School PE (parents involvement, good practices, PE curricular syllabus, PETE, curricular assessment), as well as the development of a platform to share good practices.

The *EU Physical Activity Guidelines 2008* outline that efforts should be made to encourage schools to provide physical activities on a daily basis in all grades, inside or outside the curriculum. Enough time in the school schedule, reasonable class size, adequate facilities and equipment as well as well qualified teachers are a basic need for assuring QPE. Furthermore, QPE should be age-appropriate for all children and young people with regard to both instructions and content and should deliver opportunities for learning and success for all.

ICSSPE (International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education) stated the International Benchmarks for PE Systems (2010) with criteria to appreciate the PE system level of progress (maturity) and macro-, meso- and micro-indicators dimensions (Policy, Curriculum, Schools, Teacher and Learners).

AIESEP (Association International des Écoles Supérieures de Education Physique) reports on the specialist seminar in 2014 on the relationship between QPE and QPETE, norms for ITT and expertise for PE teacher educators, as well as universities/schools connections.

NASPE (American National Association for Sport and Physical Education), in 2011, stated the standards for the physical educated person and criteria or conditions to achieve these standards with opportunity to learn, appropriate instruction practice and student and program assessment.

Former experience from national associations

The perspective of several PE teacher associations on QPE expressed in different position statements, recommendations or policy documents has been analysed and discussed (Scheuer & Holzweg, 2014): United States: NASPE, National Association for Sports and Physical Education; Canada: PHE Canada, Physical & Health Education Canada; United Kingdom: afPE, Association for Physical Education; Germany: DSLV, Deutscher Sportlehrerverband (German PE Teacher Association); Ireland: IPPEA, Irish

Primary Physical Education Association (afPE, 2014; DOSB et al., 2009; IPPEA, 2010; NASPE, 2012; PHE Canada, n.d.).

In accord with the categories of QPE indicators identified in a literature review – Structure, Process and Product – a systematic analysis of selected documents issued by PE Teacher Associations presents the indicators described in the following.

Aspects of QPE that are in relation with the *Structure of PE* are mainly situated on the system and/or school level. The examined documents deal with aspects like mission of PE, instruction periods, PE teacher education, equipment and teacher/pupil ratio.

At the *Process level*, aspects influencing QPE are mainly situated on the classroom level. The examined documents deal on the system/school level with curriculums (both national and school curriculums) and leadership and management. On the classroom level, the documents refer on meaningful content, learning processes, teacher practices, physical activity levels and assessment.

At the moment, the reflections of PE teacher associations concerning QPE on the *Product level* are the system/school level and the classroom level, a few aspects in relation with outcome as well as monitoring and assessment are outlined.

It can be concluded, that the contributions of PE teacher associations to the general discussion on QPE focus on two perspectives. On one hand, it is the strong ask for securing the perquisites for QPE on a structural level, which points out the political perspective that PE teacher associations overtake by advocating for QPE and PE in general. On the other side, PE teacher associations provide many statements that impact on the process level. These statements inform mainly about learning processes and teacher practices and can be situated on the classroom level. What is discussed less are factors on the product level in relation with concrete outcomes of PE in relation with monitoring and assessment. But also issues about actual relevant topics like school development and management seem at the moment not to be in the focus of discussions about QPE.

The EUPEA/UNESCO Seminar on QPE

The EUPEA/UNESCO Seminar in Paris in 2014 was a way to obtain a bottom-up and professional perspective design on the Quality PE indicators, once the main former suggestions were stated on a top-down view, namely from academics and formal organizations. During the seminar on QPE organized by EUPEA in cooperation with the French PE Teacher Association SNEP and UNESCO, discussions in workshops organized as focus groups were conducted. 74 participants in five focus groups involving 8 to 12 seminar participants from EUPEA affiliated associations represented as well as institutions from 18 countries discussed possible indicators for QPE. Those discussions were held in two periods of two hours and were led by discussion facilitators from the board of EUPEA. In each group, one facilitator managed the discussion whilst another one took the field notes from the participants' testimonies.

The discussed question posed and mediated was the following: *“What are the main indicators for Quality of Physical Education?”* The final reports with the field notes and the participants' statements were carefully read and resubmitted to the confirmation from the informants. The corpus of the field notes – integrated in a table based on a matrix with the QPE categories Structure, Process and Product – was compiled by one researcher and submitted to an inductive thematic content analysis. The results of the content analysis were submitted and critically appreciated by the group facilitators. Finally, some adjustments were decided by the majority of the facilitators.

After the inductive analysis of the content and the adjustments established by the group facilitators, several categories for structuring QPE were reached. These categories have been listed and give a systemic view on indicators for QPE, forming thus the basis for the outcome of the seminar with regard to QPE.

Seminar outcome

- 1. Quality of Physical Education (QPE) must be conceived as a multi-systemic phenomena implying the consideration of the following levels: structure, process and product**
- 2. At the structure level QPE must be represented by:**
 - a. The use of systematic School PE advocacy for the society in general, policymakers (government, parliament, political parties), head teachers or school principals (each school, principals' associations), parents (individually, parents' associations)
 - b. The formal clarification of the PE conceptual orientation including together the ideas of the inclusive learning skills and learning to learn, within a positive ambiance, in order to promote physical literacy and a healthy lifestyle based on physical activity and sport life-long
 - c. The physical and emotional secureness of the school and its surroundings
 - d. The existence of motivated and qualified/competent PE teachers (attending specific training in a PE teaching master degree),
 - e. PETE that follow clear rules for ITT qualification (including the practicum and probationary training) and that promote the integration between CPD (Life-long learning programs) and the structured careers development
- 3. At the process level QPE needs to be characterized by:**
 - a. The presence of formal curricula proposals, offering content diversity (including expressive activities), matching the local cultural interesting, based on teachers' collegiality in decision-making
 - b. PE lessons oriented to improve: a positive learning environment, the students' understanding, the challenge for all students and the learners' autonomy and responsibility
 - c. The PE delivered school must be autonomously and regularly evaluated involving as participants the teachers and the students, focused on the appreciation of the learning outcomes, and the teachers evaluation
- 4. At the product level QPE will be represented by:**
 - a. The existence of formal and systematic PE learning assessment, including physical Fitness and Values, mainly developed in a formative way, focused on PE Competencies, grading the learning gains, assuring its meaningfulness

References

- Association for Physical Education (2014). *Quality of Teaching*. Retrieved from www.afpe.org.uk/images/stories/afPE_-_Quality_of_Teaching.pdf.
- Bundesamt für Sport [Federal office for sports] (2010). *qims.ch – Implementierung eines nationalen Instruments zur Qualitätsbetrachtung im Sportunterricht*. [qims.ch – Implementation of a national instrument for quality inspection in physical education]. BASPO: Magglingen.
- Deutscher Olympischer SportBund (DOSB), Deutscher Sportlehrerverband (DSLVB) & Deutsche Vereinigung für Sportwissenschaft (dvs) [German Olympic Sports Alliance, German PE Teacher Association & German Association for Sports Science] (2009). *Memorandum on Physical Education and School Sports*. DOSB: Frankfurt am Main.
- European Physical Education Association (1991). *Declaration of Madrid “No Education without Physical Education” 27th of October 1991, amended 10 November 2011 in Brussels by the “add that” points*. Retrieved from www.eupea.com/public/uploads/files/documents/Declaration%20Madrid%201991%20-%20add%20that%20Brussels%202011.pdf.
- European Physical Education Association (EUPEA) (2002). *Code of Ethics & Good Practice Guide for Physical Education*. Retrieved from <http://www.eupea.com/nl/x/223/publications--documents>.
- European Physical Education Association (n. d.; a). *EUPEA Principles*. Retrieved from eupea.com/public/uploads/files/documents/EUPEAprinciples.pdf.
- European Physical Education Association (n. d.; b). *Physical Education Guidelines*. Retrieved from www.eupea.com/public/uploads/files/documents/EUPEA%20Physical%20Education%2010%20guidelines.pdf.
- Fisher, R., Repond, R.-M., & Diniz, J. (2011). A physically educated person. In: Hardman K, Green K (eds) *Contemporary Issues in Physical Education: International Perspectives*. Meyer & Meyer Sport, Mainhead, pp 69-89.
- Holzweg, M., Onofre, M., Repond; R.-M., & Scheuer, C. (2013a). Physical education and school sport in Europe. *International Sport Studies*, vol. 35, 2, pp. 47-55 .
- Holzweg, M., Onofre, M., Repond, R.-M., & Scheuer, C. (2013b). Schulsport in Europa aus Perspektive des Europäischen Sportlehrerverbands (EUPEA). *Sportunterricht*. 62, 229-234.
- Irish Primary Physical Education Association (2010). *Quality Physical Education in the Irish Primary School Context*. Retrieved from www.irishprimarype.com/forms/QualityPE.pdf.
- Marques, A., Holzweg, M., Scheuer, C., Repond, R.- M., Correia, C., Espírito Santo, R., & Onofre, M. (2014). Extracurricular sports in European schools: A descriptive study. *International Sports Studies*, 36(1), 63-70.
- National Association for Sport and Physical Education (2011). *Physical education is critical to educating the whole child* [Position statement]. Retrieved from www.shapeamerica.org/advocacy/positionstatements/pe/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&pageid=4650.

- National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) (n. d.). *Key points of Quality Physical Education*. Retrieved from http://www.shapeamerica.org/publications/resources/teachingtools/qualitype/qpe_keypoints.cfm.
- Onofre, M., Marques, A., Moreira, R., Holzweg, M., Repond, R.-M., & Scheuer, C. (2012a). Physical education and sport in Europe: From individual reality to collective desirability (Part 1). *International Journal of Physical Education*, 49 (2), 17-31.
- Onofre, M., Marques, A., Moreira, R., Holzweg, M., Repond, R.-M., & Scheuer, C. (2012b). Physical education and sport in Europe: From individual reality to collective desirability (Part 2). *International Journal of Physical Education*, 49 (3), 31-35.
- Physical & Health Education Canada (PHE Canada) (n. d.). *What is the relationship between Physical Education and Physical Literacy?* Retrieved from www.phecanada.ca/sites/default/files/PL_and_PE.pdf.
- Scheuer, C., & Holzweg, M. (2014). Quality in physical education: an overview from the perspective of physical education teacher associations. In C. Scheuer, B. Antala, & M. Holzweg, *Physical Education: Quality in Management and Teaching* (pp. 62-71). Logos: Berlin.