Editors’ Notes

We have been making a concerted effort to expand the conversation in the field of Sport Culture/Sport Pedagogy as well as to increase the international involvement in the Journal of Teaching in Physical Education. We believe there is a need to increase the conversation worldwide in order to work together to improve and increase physical education, physical activity, and sport experiences for all children and youth.

This second issue of 2014 includes papers that may be considered using the following categorization: (a) one instrument validation paper; (b) two context specific papers from our colleagues in China and Hong Kong; (c) three papers related to student motivation and/or attitude; and (d) a final paper on recess physical activity choices.

In paper one, authors Linda Pannekoek, Jan Piek and Martin Hagger (Australia) used a mixed methods approach in order to determine of usefulness of the Perceived Locus of Causality Scale (PLOC) for a pre-adolescent sample in Physical Education settings (C-PLOC). Previously, the validity of the PLOC scores had been evaluated in children aged 11 years and older (Wang, Hagger, & Liu, 2009). The current validation study targeted the PLOC’s suitability for use in 9 to 12 year old Physical Education students. Authors used several rounds of interviews to assess age appropriate changes to the items. Validation of the instrument and five factor structure based on Self-Determination Theory (i.e., external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, intrinsic motivation, and amotivation) was assessed using reliability analysis and Confirmatory Factor Analysis with 429 children (ages 9-12). Initial findings suggest that the C-PLOC may be suitable to assess motivation in children 9-12 years old in Physical Education settings. The authors also suggest that future studies are needed to reconsider the C-PLOC’s identified regulation subscale.

Two of the papers in this issue include participants from China. In “University Students’ Attitudes Toward Physical Education”, authors Fengjuan Li (Liaoning, China), Junjun Chen (Hong Kong), and Miles Baker (New Zealand), guided by theories of self-perception, social development and motivation, explore just under a thousand Chinese university students’ attitudes toward Physical Education across four universities. In order to learn more about university students’ attitudes, authors underwent a rigorous process to develop a new survey instrument, “Students’ Attitudes Toward Physical Education (SATPE)”, that is culturally relevant. The instrument validation supported the five-factor structure of the instrument including: (a) physical fitness; (b) self-actualization and social development; (c) Physical Education curriculum; (d) Physical Education teachers, and (e) Physical Education teaching.

Universities in China have a compulsory two-hour Physical Education class that meets once per week for all university students during their first two years of study. The Physical Education class may include a variety of sports but each semester the class covers one sport or physical activity (e.g., basketball, table tennis, tennis, volleyball, soccer, track and field, martial arts, aerobics, swimming, skating, artistic gymnastics, or badminton). Among the interesting findings, Li et al. reported...
a significant moderate association between the students’ overall attitude toward Physical Education and their current physical activity/sport participation levels. There was also a small positive association reported between student attitudes and their intended lifelong participation in physical activity outside of school. Further, authors reported a significant positive and moderate association between students’ attitudes and their Physical Education academic achievement.

Teaching Perspectives of 272 Chinese Teachers and their compatibility with the goals of the Physical Education curriculum were studied in the second manuscript from Lijuan Wang (China), Amy Sau-ching Ha (Hong Kong NIL) and Xu Wen (China). Dr. Wang’s et al.’s inquiry was framed using Pratt et al.’s (2001) framework for understanding teaching perspectives (i.e., an interrelated set of beliefs, intentions and actions with a relationship to teachers and learning outcomes), namely, Transmission, Apprenticeship, Developmental, Nurturing, and Social Reform. This is a critical study since The Chinese Ministry of Education implemented a new curriculum for Physical Education and Health Education in 2002. The new curriculum targets a safe and healthy lifestyle for students along with motor competencies, sports participation, and social adaptability. Rooted in the new curriculum is a significant pedagogical shift from using a transmission orientation toward a constructivist orientation. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the compatibility of teachers’ perspectives on teaching with the National Curriculum in China. Results indicated that many of the teachers had one dominant perspective (nurturing). The authors found that that teachers were less concerned with collective social change (social reform) and learners’ thinking (developmental) that may be necessary for the diffusion of the curricular innovation (National curriculum). The authors were not particularly surprised about the strong nurturing perspectives among the Physical Educators studied in China. The influence of the Confucian culture places a high value on hard work, effort and personal achievement. Authors’ insights suggest that social reform and social justice issues may need to become more prominent in teacher education and professional development efforts in order to increase fidelity to the National Curriculum.

In manuscript four, scholars from Spain and the UK, David Sanchez-Oliva, Pedro Antonio Sanchez-Miguel, Francisco Miguel Leo, Florence-Emilie Kinnafick (UK) and Tomás García-Calvo, have studied Spanish Secondary students’ physical activity intentions using a Self-Determination theory lens. Participants were Spanish students (N=1,692) ages 12-16 in their Physical Education classes from 32 secondary schools. Structural equation modeling results suggested that perception of basic psychological need (BPN) support from teachers predicted autonomous and controlled motivation through BPN satisfaction. Furthermore, autonomous motivation positively predicted enjoyment, perceived importance of Physical Education, and intention to participate in sport or physical activity outside of school, along with many other findings.

Sami Yli-Piipari (USA) and Juha Kokkonen (Finland) in manuscript five also studied student motivation using the Expectancy-Values Model as a framework with 763 Finnish elementary and secondary students (ages 11-12) who were followed across three years. Relationships among motivation, performance (Physical Education grades) and engagement (measured using the Finnish Version of the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory) in Physical Education were investigated using Structural Equation Modeling. Results suggested that expectancy beliefs and
intrinsic interest values were related to performance, whereas attainment values for girls and intrinsic interest value for boys facilitated their engagement. These gender differences were stable across time. This study supports the utility of the Expectancy-Values Model as a framework to better understand motivation and performance in Physical Education.

Secondary students’ attitudes toward fitness testing were studied in manuscript six, by Kevin Mercier and Stephen Silverman (USA). The authors used a recently validated instrument that had shown that it produced reliable and valid scores for measuring secondary school students’ attitudes toward fitness testing with 18 items covering four factors: cognitive, affective-enjoyment, affective-feelings and affective-teacher. Participants in the current study included 1,199 high school students (524 boys and 675 girls) from thirteen schools representing rural, suburban and urban communities and with diverse student backgrounds. Results showed that this diverse group of high school students had a slightly positive attitude toward fitness testing (e.g., $M=3.11$, $SD=.71$ on a 5-point Likert-type scale), with the cognitive factor and affect-enjoyment factor producing the highest and lowest mean scores respectively. Results support the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) and the dual-component view for measuring attitudes, which suggests that both cognition and affect lead to the development of attitudes. Boys had more positive attitudes than girls and student attitude toward fitness testing became less positive with age. The type of test taken also influenced student attitude (e.g., Fitnessgram test resulted in higher cognitive attitudes than the President’s Challenge).

The final manuscript by Megan Babkes Stellino and Christina Sinclair (USA) provides us with information about the specific types of activities that 3rd to 5th grade children choose to engage in during their discretionary time, in this case recess. In their study, guided by tenants of Self-Determination Theory, recess physical activity (RPA) was assessed using the Activities for Daily Living-Playground Participation (ADL-PP) Instrument (Watkinson et al., 2001). ADL-PP is a 39-item pictorial self-report instrument for children to indicate what activities they did at recess or during other playground accessible time periods by circling activities. Four activities was the average number of activities participated in during recess across six days. Girls reported participation in a higher mean number of activities each day as compared to boys. Frequently reported physical activity during recess included: run, talk with friends, kick a ball, jump, tag, throw a ball, and many others.

The Editors would like to suggest that we all consider designing studies that take our investigations further (e.g., beyond perceptions and beyond intentions) so that we are collecting evidence and measuring teacher and student perspectives, behaviors, and student learning outcomes. We also suggest a broader research agenda that includes positivist, interpretivist and social critical approaches in order to understand more about what is going on with Physical Education, physical activity, and sport experiences. That is, we are calling for a broader research agenda that may include quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods and not just different methods, but also different theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

Thank you for your support,
Pamela and Ben