

A Review Analysis on  
Understanding of Philosophical Community of Inquiry Across the  
Physical and Dance Education Disciplines

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**Abstract**

The community of inquiry serves as a frame work for teaching and learning. The existing problem indicates that community of inquiry research in physical and dance education is almost absent in the literature and a very small amount of consideration is paid to this educational discipline in comparison to overly dedicated efforts in other areas. The total of 28 relevant documents were identified and considered for this review after assessing significant amount of published texts. The purpose of this review is to understand the philosophical aspects of physical and dance education with respect to community of inquiry. This review starts with perspectives of theoretical framework and divides to, A) philosophy of physical and dance education and B) areas within sports and physical education with concentration in philosophical concepts and training. The identifying gap in adequate research tries to answer Q1) how physical and dance education teachers contribute to community of inquiry. The categories provide a theoretical framework for future studies.

**Keywords-** *Physical education, Dance, Philosophy, Community of inquiry.*

**Introduction**

The holistic of physical and dance education from theory to practice in addition to educating the whole child is diminishing. In an era where focus on academic achievements are elevated, concentration on physical and dance education which is the knowledge formation of mind and body is decreased. With the Lipman's reflective educational paradigm, teachers stir students mind to think about the world in which communities of inquiry can occur. Aristotle's practical view was monism where mind and body distinction is physicalism when information which is mind is embedded in matter. The entire sports organization at any level views the connections of mind and body.

In physical education programs students realize that the bodies go through different experiences and bodies becomes a place where children can recognize an enjoyable way to express and perceive particular feelings or mental states. Children may distinguish themselves to have high abilities in the social or other domains but low abilities in the field of athletics (Abdi & Juniu, 2014). Teaching interpersonal skills involving groups of children in situations such as teams, friends, and recreational settings serve as a primary socializing agent. Engaging in sports and physical activities are social movements which increase the bodily awareness abilities. As a result of this presentation the audience will reflect and explore ways in which teachers of physical and dance education implement philosophical concept of community of inquiry and many times unknowingly.

The concept of physical literacy is relatively new and it has existed for about 40 years. Whitehead (2001), a British philosopher, has spent most of the last 30 years looking to define physical literacy and its impact on the philosophical concept of physical literacy in the extensive body of work which defines literacy in terms of; 1) physical competencies, 2) the ability to read and respond to the environment and to others in interaction, 3) the ability to use the body as an instrument of expression/ communication, and 4) the ability to articulate/ demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding of health.

### **Perspective(s) of theoretical framework**

#### **A) Philosophy in physical and dance education.**

Around the world teacher education, including physical education teacher education remains highly content focused (Apple, 2000). Scholars in physical education (O'Sullivan, Siedentop, & Locke, 1992) in addition to education (McAllister & Irvine, 2000) have indicated the limited opportunities for the discussion of citizenship education, democratic practices, and

critical pedagogy. It is argued that if we wish to understand philosophies of physical education, then we must study them not as abstract philosophical systems of ideas, but rather as practical, everyday philosophies which provide practical guides to action as well as a justification for those actions (Green, 1998).

From different types of movement, humans unquestionably stem pleasurable physical sensations. Yet, there is a silence around the subject in the literature on human movement (Booth, 2009). Philosophical debate is opened up about the meaning of physical education (Reid, 1996). Attempting in making a case Reid (1996) continues that a misguided rely upon a dualistic view of human beings as mind and body is the major weaknesses of the standard approach to defining physical education.

The center of dance aesthetics is the apparent fact that human movement in all its contexts can be read and appreciated, just because it is human (Sparshott, 2004). The ancient Greeks considered dance to be one of their most important arts, and Plato was no exception. Plato's writings, which include some of the earliest Greek theoretical literature on music and dance, have permanently influenced Western cultures (Pont, 2008). Basic to philosophical capability is understanding dance art as it is actually practiced and appreciated and its complexity as a performing art form is recognized in using unique human bodies as instruments (Van Camp, 1982).

If dance is considered in context of actual world always bears a power to become rather than it already is, then dance is neither expressive of an already existing life, nor a pure act that is self-sufficient and self-constituting. Fairly, dance is a confrontation with life as a plane of open and divergent becomings (Colebrook, 2005).

B) Areas within sports and physical education with concentration in philosophical concepts

and training.

There are three major areas within sports, physical and dance education which conjoin with philosophical ethics. This section examines, 1) competitive characteristics of sport, 2) sportsmanship and 3) gender equality. Many issues presented in ethical side of sport, both professional and amateur are at the forefront of social issues in sports, race and ethnicity either at high school or changing mascot are significant topics in any discussion of the sports ethics. Gender equity and rights, drug testing, violence, athletic eligibility all present serious issues for debates on sports ethics at any level. U.S. Collegiate sports are fraught with ethical issues ranging from the illegal payment of student-athletes to agent regulation, low student-athlete graduation rates, and violence (Sheth & Babiak, 2010).

1. Competitive character of sports: The competitive nature of sport is undeniable. The debate persists in terms of what constitutes a quality sport experience and how competition should be endorsed in youth sport (Camiré, 2016). As children leave elementary school and become part of a bigger world which is competitive, teachers of elementary schools emphasize on cooperation however the competitive nature of sport appears sometimes before the middle school. Sports are a place where one's ethical values are exhibited, tested and learned. Most sports follow two basic structures; the intense involvement of body physically and intellectually. This intense involvement leads the individuals to whole person due to body and mind relationship, but merges with competitive situation where winning matters. Temptations are grabbed by opportunities such as; usage of Human Growth Hormones, intentionally injuring the opponent, intimidating toward the opponent when the referees are not watching, cheating or lying. This is where children need to be trained to take ethical stands consciously. When children are taught ethical fundamentals such as; fair play, teamwork and sportsmanship, it is possible to exhibit ethical

standpoint later on in life (Abdi et al., 2015). The competitiveness of sport hinder adolescents' ability for empathic concern but it demonstrates empathic concern as features of task orientation include supporting and caring for teammates (Ettekal, Ferris, Batanova, & Syer, 2016).

2. Sportsmanship: Albert Camus, who was an outstanding soccer player in his youth and a Nobel Prize winner for literature in 1957, once said, "I learned all I know about ethics through soccer" (Knopf, 1961). The ethical writings of the Ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) is relevance particularly to understand the meaning of sportsmanship. To achieve personal excellence Aristotle called "self-fulfillment" the purpose of ethical training that was to help human. Lack of sportsmanship skills in elementary school physical education is negatively affecting the physical activity level of many students (Shulman, 2013). Children need to investigate the moral theory which occupies sports. The gymnasium should be similar to a life task where a child needs to take responsibility. Eventually a child will experience unfair, inappropriate and disposition, but there is the experience of struggle for victory under the sportsmanship spirit which is honorable. Physical education teachers should train children to feel joy of victory by fairness. As the result, children will learn qualities such as; self-control, avoiding aggression, ethics, and respect to keep soul and mind admirable.

To win by cheating, or by disparaging an opponent's abilities, or by excessive violent acts, would not be a mark of a worthy character. This theory is known as "virtue ethics" and the concept of good sportsmanship is at its very heart." (Madigan, 2014). At a time when sportsmanship is taught, this moral quality will be firmly fixed with children all the way to adulthood.

Sportsmanship also affects parents' behavior which often is attached to experience of their children. Unruly parents' behavior and violent confrontations at youth sporting events have

become increasingly frequent (Ford, Jubenville, & Phillips, 2012). Two of the most common behaviors by parents observed at games are yelling at children and parents yelling at officials or coaches.

3. Gender Equality: Philosophers have developed three major positions concerning equal opportunity, but they have focused on fields in which the sexes are either known or assumed to have equal potentialities (English, 1978). Equality as a social justice issue is among the most intellectually challenges. Title IX, as it was affectionately known by any woman who had ever laced on a pair of sneakers, prohibited sex discrimination in any program or activity receiving federal funds (Olson, 2015). Promoting social justice and equality among biological diverse groups, apply beyond sports. Efforts to make sports a safe, inclusive, and respectful experience for athletes and coaches of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions span 35 years of individual acts of courage, as well as organizational projects focused on diversity and inclusion (Griffin, 2012).

As all physical education at public schools is co-educational, therefore both sexes can benefit from the participation. In addition, the value of sports for females should start before elementary school education. The little girls should understand and consider the great areas of athletic opportunities. Athletes of all kinds face difficult challenges in sport; however gender equality should not be one to confront the situation.

### **Literature Question**

Physical and dance educators are school or districts leaders in human kinetic. The teachers are also stewards in ethics, a role that is not recognized by other educators or non-educators. What both groups merely know is that through verbal and non-verbal movement based activities, community of inquiry is formed and examined to guide ethical responsibilities

and universal values.

**Q1)** How physical and dance education teachers contribute to community of inquiry?

In New Jersey, physical education teachers hold at least a 4-year degree and a teaching certification in physical education. If a 4-year degree is not pursued in physical education pre-service teachers are required to obtain a post bachelor teaching certification or a Master of teaching in Arts. Both graduate work should lead into a teaching certification.

In an effort to improve learning, an inquiry needs to be constantly process by both students and teachers. According to Kennedy (2012), the revolution that Matthew Lipman inaugurated in educational theory and practice in his Philosophy for Children program has two dimensions. The first--introducing philosophy as a subject matter in the elementary school--is based on the assumption that childhood is an appropriate stage of life to read, think, and talk about philosophical issues like justice, friendship, what we mean by self, and so on. The second dimension is pedagogical which is the idea that a guided, open-structured, dialogical speech community which he called "community of philosophical inquiry". It is the most appropriate way to practice the philosophical curriculum that he had developed with students. In a study Gregory and Granger (2012), confirmed that to invite children to practice philosophy as ethical, aesthetic, political, and cultural criticism is, as David Kennedy argues, not only to change the nature of adult-child discourse within schools. It is also to change what counts as epistemological and authoritative privilege in the adult-child relationship, and in fact to change the school into a "miniature society of [an] adult-child collective."

The only official "model" for community of inquiry in philosophy for children is the one Lipman and Sharp developed (Lipman, 2003). Lipman describes the community of inquiry as having 5 stages:



1. *The offering of the text* [Students read or enact a philosophical story together.]
2. *The construction of the agenda* [Students raise questions prompted by the text and organize them into a discussion agenda.]
3. *Solidifying the community* [Students discuss their questions in a dialogue facilitated by an adult.]
4. *Using exercises and discussion plans* [The facilitator introduces relevant activities to deepen and expand the students' inquiry.]
5. *Encouraging further responses* [These include, e.g. students' self-assessment of philosophy practice, art projects and action projects.]

The physical and dance education classes are communities where children inquire through exploration; investigation, examination, review and analysis. Taken the critical words from both Dr. Kennedy's and Dr. Gregory's studies and 5 stages of Lipman/Sharp community of inquiry model, it is apparent that community of inquiry model is embedded within the everyday work of a physical and dance education teacher.

Lipman mentions reading a philosophical story but 'enact' is also disclosed. Through enacting in a large, free space children's ethics are tested. Physical education, sports and dance honor concepts such as dedication, team building, hard work, competition, and sportsmanship in hopes that eventually these skills transfer to personal lives. Confidence, moral development, and improved problem solving skills are social skills taught by physical and dance education teachers every day. When students are unaccompanied by others if they shake hands, choose own captain and refrain from choosing sides then good character traits are developed. Enacting is part of every day's physical and dance education class.

Many physical education programs do not follow a text book nevertheless teachers are

excellent in teaching the curriculum with no textbook and seeking external sources. Questions may be asked in physical and dance education classes but verbal discussions are rare.

Considering critical thinking as a skill that can analyze facts, produce and organize thoughts, protect ideas, contrasting capability, give suggestions, assess point of views and resolve problems (Chance, 1986); physical and dance education teachers develop a mindset to communicate effectively with others. Students with no dispositions have a tendency to lean too much on their teachers in order to get information, care, and guidance (King & Kitchener, 2004) therefore a physical and dance educator teacher tries to facilitate the class rather own it.

No place is better than physical and dance education class to learn *Justice, Friendship, Ethics, and Cultures*. Physical education class is a *Miniature society of [an] adult-child collective*. This society has injustice and unethical implications nevertheless children are taught based on Mathew Lipman's assumptions and implications (Lipman, 2009):

how judgment can be sharpened and strengthened;

how reasoning can be improved;

how conceptual analysis may be fostered;

how interpersonal communication may be perfected;

how engage in more effective deliberation;

how the inquiry process can be better taught to and by teachers.

- **Methods, techniques, or modes of inquiry.**

As this is a review favorably the research within the past five years were investigated to establish validity. Nevertheless as there are not equally studies conducted in this field therefore research longer than five years will be pulled in to this paper. The configuration strategy is to establish credibility to justify the argument through evidence.

- **Data sources** (for empirical studies) and/or bibliographical sources (for theoretical essays).

A significant amount of research was collected through credible sources such as peer reviewed research and articles. All sources were electronic through google, google scholar and roadrunner search.

- **Results and/or substantiated conclusions or warrants for arguments.**

This paper focused on philosophical community of inquiry within physical and dance education and argued that there is an existing community of inquiry within these programs at schools. By drawing the reliable sources it is clear for the reader and audience to understand and conclude the practical consumption of this filed.

- **Scientific or scholarly significance of the study or work.**

The most significant scholarly of this study is that the filed is unknown to many. There are more studies in art or music rather than physical and dance education. Education at schools is result of interdisciplinary of various areas however at the practice level, many teachers are able to identify the community of inquiry with exception of physical and dance teachers due to nature of non-verbal indication of the filed. .

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