

**The implementation of an Australian sports education
development strategy into a developing country**

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Certificate of Authenticity

I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not being currently submitted for any other degrees.

I certify that to the best of my knowledge any help received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in this thesis.

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Signature

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ABSTRACT

In 1994 the Papua New Guinea Sports Commission along with the Education Department and sporting bodies acknowledged the difficulties faced by physical education as part of the curriculum and took on the task of providing quality programming. The avenue for this came in the form of the Aussie Sport innovation program, with particular accent on the modified sports. There was a genuine desire to improve the quality of physical education that was been provided in the schools. Instead of targeting all school levels the community schools were the focus. Aussie Sport was the catalyst for this change and the Train The Trainers Workshop was the vehicle for the innovations implementation.

This study details the introduction of this Australian sports education strategy into Papua New Guinea, and examines whether a program that has been designed for one cultural and sociological environment can be successfully implemented into another. The deliverers of the workshop are examined as are the project coordinators. The course participants (the trainees) are investigated as are the community school students of two pilot schools. The implementation of the innovation is documented in these two schools and finally the trainees involved in the innovations delivery at these schools are surveyed in order to answer the research questions and put forward conclusions and recommendations.

This study, via an analysis of a train The Trainers Workshop and its implementation, investigated if it was possible for a program that has been conceived and developed in one cultural and sociological environment be successfully transposed and implemented into another. In this case the concept of Aussie Sport through its modified sports program into the developing context of Papua New Guinea.

Several questions were looked at when investigating this question. The areas of importance included the quality of instruction and the competency of the trainers, the characteristics of the target group who attended the workshop, the existing perceptions of community school children in relation to physical education and the overall concept of innovation and the Train The Trainers concept for implementation.

The sample that was used for this study consisted of the program coordinators and the expatriate trainers, the trainees who attended the workshop and the community school students at two of the pilot schools.

The research found that even though the Train The Trainers was successful, the implementation of the sport program into the two community schools that were studied was not. The workshop was favourable, the project had support from the PNG Education department, the PNG Sports Commission, and its sponsor Coca-Cola Amatil, yet it failed in the case studies examined.

Reasons for this include the short time span given to learn a completely new task which lead to inadequate preparation and lack of staff commitment. The lack of support, assistance and encouragement, not only from peers, but also the initiators of the program were strong factors in the failure of the implementation of the innovation. The trainees felt alone and insecure, leading to lack of confidence and overall commitment. There was a fear of admitting failure and a facade was established. Added to these factors is the lack of recognition of the process and components of innovation itself. Innovation is a total process that is ongoing and requires constant change and adjustment. Often it is easier to revert back to old habits and modes of behaviour in which one feels secure.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is organised into four chapters. The first chapter following this introduction is the review of literature, the second chapter is the methodology, the third chapter is a statement and analysis of results and this is followed by the final chapter which details the summary and conclusions to the study. This section introduces the investigation by identifying the purpose and nature of the study and details the theoretical stance and framework that it is to be viewed from. The study details the implementation of a sports education innovation into a developing country. It is a descriptive and evaluative study of such an innovation, the first of its kind in physical education into Papua New Guinea. In determining the analysis of the innovation the research objective is to determine if a program designed for one cultural and sociological environment can be successfully implemented into another.

The nature of the problem

Physical education programs are challenged by the needs of youth in a changing environment. It is necessary that curricula integrate social change with discovering ways to motivate youth to develop life-long physical activity habits. Papua New Guinea has tried to achieve this goal by adopting an Australian sports education strategy.

Evidence suggests that no matter what the cultural context, physical activities were and are, a valued part of the societies known to mankind. The Greeks seemed to be the early leaders in such thought and from that time the physical, emotional, social and spiritual benefits to individuals and society at large has been well documented throughout the world.

Developing countries are no exception and in this case Papua New Guinea is the example. Unfortunately the "laissez-faire" attitude which has been adopted towards physical education and sport development in the country has resulted in a system poorly equipped to meet the needs of all Papua New Guineans. Particularly since independence in 1975 physical education and sport development has been ill prepared to adapt to many of the changes and developments that have occurred. Changing social and economic conditions are making it increasingly difficult for all Papua New Guineans to simply go out and play the sport of their choice with disregard for economic circumstances, social position or geographic location. The picture in the school setting is equally ineffectual with many students receiving no physical education at all and those that are, been subjected to 'sport afternoons'. In PNG the terms physical education and sport education have become synonymous with each other.

In recognition of such factors the PNG governments over the last decade in particular have seen a need to develop policies and programs which are appropriate and effective. In relation to curriculum programming a cabinet decision in 1984 made physical education a compulsory subject, but years later little remains of this ideal. It was not until 1994 that the Papua New Guinea Sports Commission and the Department of Education took this problem on board and targeted children's sport. In February of the same year two experts representing Aussie Sport International visited PNG for a preliminary planning meeting. As such the sport education strategy of Aussie Sport with the accent on modified sports was to be taken on board and trialed as a pilot project. An innovation such as this tries to bring about desired changes.

PNG has created a social environment that is supportive of educational innovations and many have been introduced. In PNG the problems associated with educational change have been well recognised and it is now thought that the trialing of an innovation through a pilot project is of utmost importance. It is also understood that additional staff and extensive in-servicing is imperative as is the factor that for the innovation to be successful it must be capable of being implemented by the *average* teacher, not just the exceptional ones.

Physical education in PNG has struggled to maintain its place in the curriculum and there is an inordinate lack of teachers that are available to deliver programs in the schools. Fortunately the country is committed to re-training and in-servicing and has made some commitment to such via adult training programs. Innovation as part of this construct can not be seen in isolation and many factors and relationships need to be considered. Some of these include: how the education system works, philosophical and historical perspective's, relationships between schools, teachers, administrators, gender issues, economics and politics, geographical location, social background, the provision of facilities and personnel. Any innovation is part of the wider picture and development in the country.

As Bishop (1986) points out, any process of innovation will involve four major factors ; the change agent, the innovation, the user and time. In this study the change agent is the PNG Sports Commission / Education Department, the innovation is AUSSIE SPORT via the modified sport model, the user is the student via the school teacher and time is the duration of the pilot program from the Train The Trainers workshop in June 1994 to its implementation in the schools and its conclusion in November 1994.

The innovation process began with the dissatisfaction of physical education in the schools with the accent on the community schools. A solution was sought and acceptance given. The development and introduction of the innovation, Aussie Sport would then involve promoting awareness and interest, adjusting organisational procedures, provision of resources and training and monitoring and feedback procedures.

As Havelock and Huberman (1977) illustrate, for those designing and administering and advising on the program innovation generally they don't have to make very many changes themselves. It is the *others* who will have to modify their behaviours quite significantly eg. in this study the community school teachers, who had little previous or even gradual preparation. Most innovations require considerable change in the usual pattern of teacher behaviour. To break away from old behaviour patterns in which one feels secure takes time and can be difficult to attain. Often massive changes can be initiated very quickly but often the adoption of them is not a quick process and lacks stability and a sense of permanency

Purpose and nature of the study

This study intends to examine the introduction of a sport education innovation into Papua New Guinea via an exploration of the tool of the innovation process, the Train The Trainers workshop and then to examine two pilot schools in the program in one of the designated provinces. The study reviews the development and implementation of the pilot program from its inception in June 1994 to its conclusion in November of the same year. As this study takes place in the developing context of PNG several questions will be of significance.

The development and implementation of the program innovation adopted by the PNG Sports Commission and the Education Department are addressed. The origins, nature and evolution of this project are documented, and the analysis considers environmental, historical and socio political contexts of the innovation but focuses on the delivery catalyst, the Train The Trainers workshop and the data obtained during this week, its trainers and trainees to its impact in the community school situation.

To begin with the philosophical basis and conceptual thinking of physical education itself is important. Once traditional views have been established it is necessary to be aware of traditional views and habits in the area and where physical education sits in the educational arena. Secondly could the lack of qualified personnel be adequately catered for by providing a week long in-service course ? What would happen when these

teachers went back into the schools? Could an ideal formulated in a modern setting have relevance in a developing context where the illiteracy rate is over seventy percent and the highest in the Asia - Pacific region ?

Theoretical Stance

The history of physical education and its place in the educational arena can be characterised by ideological and philosophical shifts. It is well documented by researchers such as Siedentop, Mand and Taggart (1986), Lawson (1990) and Arnold (1979) that physical education can provide the individual with enormous benefits. These may manifest themselves in a variety of ways including health related factors, cooperation, self esteem development, skill acquisition, self realisation, social, emotional and intellectual development. The dominant curricular philosophy for the first half of the twentieth century emphasised education through the physical.

Fitzclarence (1987) notes that in the Australian setting the changing environment, both politically and socially, led to a dissolving of antiquated ideas. There was an infusion of new ideas and beliefs, an influx of overseas concepts, a change in pedagogical thought and a redefinition of physical education. These changes were evident throughout education and curriculum, with new practices and assumptions taking hold. As such it is evident that trends in education were manifested against the wider cultural backdrop.

Culture itself is linked to ideology and is inherent in the concepts of nationalism, religion, values and rituals. Siedentop (1994) when writing his belief statements incorporated in one of his points, that the values to be derived from physical education are appropriate to each gender regardless of economic or social status and educational attainment. If ones cultural setting is included in this, then the benefits of physical education should transcend all barriers and be in all school curricula and equally accessible to all students. The best scenario to achieve such an end is that physical education be taught by trained professionals.

Unfortunately in the developing world these ideals are seldom attained. In the case example of Papua New Guinea there has been an apparent lack of interest in and support for physical education as a school subject. The trained personnel to teach the subject are lacking, facilities are often inadequate, program development is basic, sport takes the place of physical education classes, credibility for the subject is extremely difficult in a nation where the literacy level is at thirty five percent, and apathetic teachers cloud the education system.

and documentary and background information are used. Case studies are used to portray the situation and as such illuminate the general principles made evident by the study.

As Bogdan and Biklen (1982) stress, the importance is not whether the piece of research is or is not absolutely qualitative, rather it is an issue of degree. There are several key factors which set it apart. The natural setting is the direct source of the data, the research is descriptive, the concern is with process rather than simply outcomes or products, and relationships accent the participant. As such this research uses the qualitative framework as its central focus but it does also include some quantitative data to illuminate certain focus questions.

Summary

This study will review the introduction and initial implementation of a sports education strategy (Aussie Sport) into the community schools in the Eastern Highlands province of Papua New Guinea. It will start with a review of relevant literature including a historical praxis of physical education, Aussie Sport ; its history and overall effectiveness, physical education in Papua New Guinea and an examination of adult training in developing countries.

The Train The Trainers workshop will be the case study examined as this was the catalyst for the introduction of Aussie Sport into PNG. This will include an analysis of the project coordinators, the project trainers, and the target group of the program, the trainees. Two further case studies will be detailed in examining two of the pilot community schools in the Eastern Highlands province. Student perceptions of physical education will be detailed and then observations will take place at the two schools in order to assess the programs implementation. Finally the trainees involved in the program implementation into their respective schools are surveyed in order to review the innovation. To conclude the study makes recommendations for further investigation.

A review of literature will follow this introduction and serve to develop the overall context of the study in order to give an understanding of the research questions involved.