

Taiwan 2019 – Quality Physical Education project informed by physical literacy.

Introduction

National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU) in Taipei, were leading a government project focusing on Quality Physical Education (QPE). They had received project funding to draw together a select group of 80 teachers to consider the future direction for physical education in the country. Nigel Green was invited back to Taiwan to work on the QPE project, following his successful visit in August 2018.



Project Description

Initially Nigel spent some time visiting schools, meeting the teachers and talking to the children to get a sense of what PE was currently like in Taiwan. Essentially, PE teachers had taught quite traditionally with a formal warm up, skill teaching followed by game activities if time permitted. There was a perception that the children had not been engaged with this approach, so the new approach became to make PE fun! Different activities being taught each week meant that the children did not get bored with one activity and playing lots of games allowed the children to manage their sessions based around game time. Increasingly, however, there had become a realisation that this approach limited learning and development; therefore a number of senior lecturers were looking for an alternative approach to teaching PE. It was timely that Nigel was able to present eight sessions on physical literacy during the August 2018 International Teachers Symposium and talk to the Senior Lecturers and teachers in between sessions. It became obvious that they were starting to consider if physical literacy could be the focus they were looking for to drive developments in PE. A number of students and lecturers were undertaking research into physical literacy and their increasing understanding of the concept supported a desire to pursue a physical literacy focus through PE.

Accessing funds from the government allowed the lead team to select 80 experienced and innovative teachers who they felt would be able to appreciate the concept and trial a modified approach to teaching PE. If successful, then this could be rolled out to other teachers and schools. An initial two-day workshop allowed the teachers to reflect on their current practice and then consider the philosophy, content, pedagogy and assessment related to a physical literacy approach to physical education.



Linked to the work with the teachers, there was a desire to share the concept with a wider audience and five keynote sessions were organised at various universities throughout the island, each attended by an average of 80 – 100 teachers, lecturers and students.

Impact

The presentations and related question and answer sessions provided rich discussions at each venue. A follow up session with the select teachers group allowed a consideration of the issues involved in moving the whole process forwards. There was a clear intention to maintain a focus on physical literacy in future developments within PE. The teachers who were involved with the workshops acknowledged a better understanding of physical literacy and have been working on the project to promote physical literacy through PE. The IPLA was invited back to continue this work, with Dwayne and Sonia Sheehan providing examples of best practice teaching for both primary and secondary aged children at sessions in April/May 2019. Dwayne also presented two keynote sessions at universities in Taiwan, Henry Chen attended the IPLA conference in Gloucester, UK, in June 2019 and shared the work they had been doing on the QPE project with the delegates at the conference. assessment related to a physical literacy approach to physical education.