

**Cardiff School of Sport**  
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	<b>Introduction and literature review (25%)</b>  To include: outline of context (theoretical/conceptual/applied) for the question; analysis of findings of previous related research including gaps in the literature and relevant contributions; logical flow to, and clear presentation of the research problem/ question; an indication of any research expectations, (i.e., hypotheses if applicable).		
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**CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY**  
**Prifysgol Fetropolitan Caerdydd**

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**THE PREVALENCE OF HIGH QUALITY PE IN**  
**SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND WHAT FACTORS**  
**MAY HAVE INFLUENCE**

**Dissertation submitted under the discipline of**  
**PEDAGOGY**

**Emily Mitchell**  
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**THE PREVALENCE OF HIGH QUALITY PE IN  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND WHAT FACTORS  
MAY HAVE INFLUENCE**

# Cardiff Metropolitan University Prifysgol Fetropolitan Caerdydd

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

HQPE- High Quality Physical Education

NCPE- National Curriculum for Physical Education

HD- Heads of Department

PA- Physical Activity

P1- Participant One

P2- Participant Two

P3- Participant Three

P4- Participant Four

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## **ABSTRACT**

Research highlights the value of PE in schools and the need for high quality PE is well recognised by sports educators and the government. Although the value of this is prevalent, research has found barriers in delivering high quality consistently across schools. The present study aims to explore further into the prevalence of high quality PE in Secondary Schools in South Wales, highlighting areas of success and discussing barriers that may have influence on the delivery of high quality PE.

In order to discuss these issues and collate data, semi structured interviews with four experiences, male and female Heads of Departments took place. The research took on a qualitative design approach through means of an inductive analysis.

From this, four key themes emerged these being, barriers in delivering high quality PE split into time constraints and facilities/funding, health fitness and well being and finally support from key stakeholders in helping to deliver high quality.

The results highlighted areas of particular success as well as barriers to preventing high quality from being achieved. The findings of the study suggested that these barriers need to be considered further when trying to ensure that high quality PE is being delivered to all learners within secondary schools and could promote further research into how these barriers can be overcome.

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This introductory chapter aims to provide the reader with an outline of the study, discussing some background in relation to the importance of physical activity and education, the background of the National Curriculum for Physical Education (NCPE) and its aims, as well as discussing barriers to achieving high quality. The chapter will also include the studies aims and objectives and also a synopsis of content in each chapter.

### **1.1 Background**

Challenges to the health and well-being of individuals throughout the world have brought new attention to the importance of physical education and physical activity (Edginton, 2013). Considering the well established benefits of physical activity and the generational decrease in activity associated with adolescence, the promotion of physical activity during this period of time has emerged as an important educational and public health objective (Lubans et al., (2011). The estimated cost of the health implications associated with physical inactivity in Wales is about £650 million a year (National Assembly for Wales, 2013). (Marona and Colella, 2012) suggested that, school could be an important social context for the health promotion program implementation and the most suitable environment for each student to develop the knowledge, behaviours, and motor skills necessary to acquire and maintain a physically active lifestyle.

From the increasing demands for improved physical activity and physical education, the National Curriculum for Physical Education (NCPE) was introduced in 2002. It stated that schools must work to reduce environmental and social barriers to inclusion and offer opportunities for all learners to achieve their full potential in preparation for further learning and life. Estyn, inspectors for Wales (2012) added that P.E should 'provide suitable opportunities for pupils to keep physically active and engage in sustained physical activity.

In 2003, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) published 'Learning through PE and Sport' with its aims to increase high quality P.E and school sports. The (DCMS) set out basic principles for high quality, encouraging schools to evaluate high quality in their own departments and set out aims and objectives for schools and clubs to help them achieve this. See (Appendix A). The consensus from such reports suggest that HQPE should be pushed throughout the NCPE at every given opportunity, in order to improve standards of PE and further develop the learning.

Although the importance for high quality is valued, studies show that this notion is not always achieved across all secondary schools in the UK. Some studies highlight a number of barriers that maybe preventing HQPE from being delivered. (Barroso et al., 2005) study revealed a number of factors to be major obstacles in delivering high quality. Such barriers need to be taken in consideration when discussing the level at which young people are receiving HQPE in Secondary schools.

## **1.2 Rationale**

The rationale for the study comes from the desire to explore such barriers further and contribute to research that examines the prevalence of HQPE in Secondary schools. The background of physical education, NCPE aims and objectives of achieving HQPE provide the basis in which this research study will build on. The study will strive to gain a better understanding of whether or not the aims of HQPE are being achieved in Secondary school in South Wales and to what extent, also exploring barriers in achieving this.

There is little research into how this notion of HQPE is delivered, especially throughout secondary schools. Reviews of PE in schools such as the (Estyn Report, 2012) give recommendations to schools on how to improve standards and also highlight areas of success in schools, however little discuss the reasoning behind these findings. The present study may encourage other research on HQPE to be carried out as a result.

### **1.3 Aims and Objectives**

The present study aims to take a deeper look into the deliverance of HQPE in some secondary schools across the South Wales area. It strives to explore the characteristics of HQPE and to what extent these are being covered in schools, also highlighting potential barriers that Head of Departments for P.E are faced with.

To allow for the study to explore these topics, open ended, semi- structured interviews will be carried out with four Heads of Department for P.E across their schools in the South Wales area. The teachers will be of current post for a minimum of ten years to ensure that they have a wealth of experience in their field.

Findings of the study may offer up useful information for not only researchers, but those involved in the physical education domain. It will explore the barriers of delivering HQPE, and may help scope future government initiatives or decisions made by local authorities, in regards to providing the best quality physical education in its secondary schools.

### **1.4 Outline of the study**

#### **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This chapter will include a review of the literature that relates to the present study. It will aim to cover the background of health fitness and well being, discuss the importance of physical education and why this is relevant within schools, outline the aims of the NCPE, explore deeper into the research that surrounds HQPE and finally present an overview of the existing literature that highlights barriers teachers face in achieving HQPE. The chapter concludes by summarising the focus of the study.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

This chapter will include a justification of the chosen research design and the method used to collate the data, I present here a rationale for employing the chosen qualitative technique of semi-structured interviews (Gratton and Jones, 2012). The chapter will then move on to discuss ethical issues that relate to the study (Ryen, 2008), further discussing validity and reliability and how this was ensured. Having justified this process, the chapter will move on to discuss participants (n=4) and how these were appropriately chosen for the study. A description of the process of data collection will then commence, moving onto discussing the chosen data analysis technique and how this helped to draw up key themes. Finally, highlighting the limitations of the methodology and what affect this may have had on the study.

### **Chapter 4: Results and Discussion**

This chapter will discuss the key themes that were drawn out in the data analysis. The data analysis presented the following key themes: barriers in delivering HQPE (time constraints/ facilities and funding, health fitness and well being, and support from key stakeholders. By drawing together and discussing opinions will also demonstrate how participants may share similar views, or even contradict each other on various issues in regards to HQPE in their school. Their responses will help to reinforce developing concerns that may be preventing HQPE being consistently delivered to pupils, and also highlight areas of HQPE that are being delivered particularly well.

### **Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations**

This final chapter will aim to draw together key findings of the study in order for conclusions to be made in regards to areas of success in delivery HQPE and the barriers teachers face. Furthermore, the findings will allow for suggestions and recommendations to be made to improve HQPE within secondary schools and highlight areas for future development.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the existing research that surrounds high quality physical education within schools, and what barriers teachers are faced with when delivering this across secondary schools in South Wales. To begin, the chapter will aim to take a broader look at the health, fitness and well being domain specifically in relation to young people and it's relevance within schools, then moving on to discuss the importance of physical education, the aims of the NCPE, explore the notion of high quality and the existing barriers teachers face when aiming to deliver this within their school.

#### **2.1 Health, fitness and well being**

(Bouchard et al., 2012, p.14) defined health related fitness as 'those components of fitness that are affected favourably or unfavourably by habitual physical activity habits that relate to health status'. Furthermore, physical inactivity has been identified as a major risk factor for coronary heart disease, as well as being associated with premature mortality and obesity (Bailey et al., 2009). In the past thirty years childhood obesity has more than tripled. (Milne, 2013) proclaimed that thirty-three percent of children are now considered to be overweight or obese. The World Health Organisation gives recommendations that children should partake in one hour of moderate exercise five times a week. (Welsh Government, 2011) found that in Wales, only 52 per cent of secondary school children take part in these recommended guidelines.

As a result of such worrying statistics, the benefits of leading a healthy and active lifestyle are widely promoted and the relationship between physical education and health is hardly a newfound relationship. (NCPE, p.12) defines health fitness and well being activities as 'activities that are non-competitive forms of exercise and chosen for what they contribute to general health, fitness goals and feelings of well-being.'

In an analysis of findings from Ofsted inspection in regards to health related learning within the PE curriculum, (Bailey et al., 2009, p.90) revealed that 'the PE profession addresses some areas but there are areas for improvement'. These included addressing safety issues, explaining exercise effects, understanding health benefits and promoting activity. The statistics of sedentary lifestyles in Wales demonstrates the increasing need for children to receive more stimulating PE in school.

## **2.2 Physical education and the aims of the NCPE**

It has been suggested that given the rising health risks associated with obesity in children, and a growing need for all children to be more physically active, the need for high quality physical education programs that can document effectiveness and achieve stated goals has never been greater, (Kelly 2012). This again supported in (Xiao *et al.*, 2000) who suggested that the only real consistent opportunity that is there for young people to take part and engage in physical activity, is through our schools, regardless of any economic status, religion, locality or sex. The school environment can represent itself as a major influence in getting children to achieve such targets throughout PE lessons and schools sports. Schools have been identified as central institutions for the promotion of physical activity among youth (Lubans et al., 2011). This supported in (Marona and Colella, 2012) who said that, school could be an important social context for the health promotion program implementation and the most suitable environment for each student to develop the knowledge, behaviours, and motor skills necessary to acquire and maintain a physically active lifestyle. As highlighted in the (NCPE), physical education has been proven to continuously improve the overall well being of children, keeping them more switched on in classes, helping to develop their leadership, communication, confident and many others. It was said that, today the strength of nations are not judged by their wealth or even military might but the position on which they are placed in the world of sport, this is one main reason why physical education should be given proper

attention (Orunaboka et al., 1994). If taught well, participation in games enables students to improve their fitness, learn new skills, cooperate with teammates, and challenge their intellect by solving problems of strategy and tactics (Singleton, 2010). Furthermore, Sallis and McKenzie (as cited in Wallhead and Buckworth, 2004) argued that positive student motivation in physical education could influence children to adopt physically active lifestyles as adults. In contrast to this, (Wallhead and Buckworth, 2004) said that, physical education may indeed be a powerful factor in determining youth physical activity, but the causal linkage between students experience and attitudes toward physical education and their adoption of a physically active lifestyle has yet to be determined. As a result of the clear importance of physical education in schools the NCPE was set up in 1992.

The National Curriculum for Physical Education (NCPE) was introduced in England in September 1992, (Harris, 1994). Since then, the NCPE has been revised three times, in 1995 by (Department for Education (DfE), 1999 by (Department for Education and Employment/ Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (DfEE/QCA), and 2007 by (QCA). 'These changes resulted in significant changes to curriculum requirements' (Capel et al., 2010, p.197). The four 'key concepts' put forward by the NCPE are to ensure that all pupils:

- develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities
- are physically active for sustained periods of time
- engage in competitive sports and activities
- lead healthy, active lives.

The NCPE recognise the importance of physical education to a child's education and development and suggest that the framework should also provide the basis for making effective progress in skills such as, developing thinking, communication, developing ICT and numbers.

(Capel et al., 2010, p.198) also said that 'through the range of experiences that physical education offers, they learn how to be effective in competitive, creative and challenging situations.'

### **2.3 High Quality Physical Education (HQPE)**

In 2003, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) published 'Learning through PE and Sport' with its aims to increase high quality P.E and school sports. (See Appendix A). HQPE should be an aspiration for all schools and considered to be important for many reasons, not least because it may help young people to make informed lifestyle choices and encourage lifelong participation in physical activity (Kirk, 2005). The NCPE not only aims to develop student's competency in a range of skills, but also to increase their confidence, as well as developing them personally and socially. However, for these aims to be achieved in schools it is important for teachers to deliver high quality lessons and to consider the aims of high quality set out by the (DfES) and the (DCMS).

Furthermore, the implementation of Physical Education and School Sport (PESS) has had further impact on improving standards in PE. (Estyn Inspectorate for schools across Wales Physical Education in Secondary Schools Inspection Report, 2012) highlighted that, the Physical Education and School Sport (PESS) initiative has had a significant impact on improving the quality of teaching and raising standards, particularly in stimulating creative and adventurous activities in many schools. Moreover, the introduction of the 5x60 initiative in Wales has had a positive impact on increasing physical activity levels amongst school children. The 5x60 initiative is a £4.9m Welsh Government funded program and aims to increase the number of secondary age pupils taking part in sport or physical activity for 60 minutes, at least five times a week. (Hardman, 2012) suggested that when access to PE programmes ends at an earlier age, pupils are vulnerable to disengaging from physical activity with a consequence that they do not continue with it in later life. Therefore this could suggest that having such initiatives to promote physical activity and increase participation in extra curricular activities, could encourage more young people to maintain these levels after leaving school.

Although in recent years funding for increasing participation in sport have been supported by the Welsh government and ways of improving the

quality of PE have been suggested by 'Learning through PE and Sport' (DFeS) and (DCMS), many sports educators have raised concern in achieving the aims of HQPE practically within schools.

## **2.4 Barriers in delivering HQPE**

It becomes questionable as to why such an important subject can often slip under the carpet within our education system (Waddington, 1997). A number of studies have looked into the barriers of delivering HQPE in schools and found a number of causes. For example (Barroso et al., 2005), where the purpose of the study was to describe the barriers to quality PE curriculum, their paper reported, large class size, low priority relative to other academic subjects, inadequate financial resources, and inadequate indoor and/or outdoor facilities to be major obstacles. Other studies also found that the lack of facilities affected learners (Davison, 2009).

Furthermore, (Barroso et al., 2005) found that respondents stressed that PE needs to become a higher priority for school staff, other teachers, the school principal, school districts, and parents. This supported in Mawer (as cited in Rainer et al., 2012) who suggested that it is the responsibility of the head teacher to provide leadership and management for curriculum areas, create the vision and make that vision reality through development of appropriate school policy, employment of appropriate staff, facility development, management of the finances and allocation of time to curriculum subject areas. This could suggest that support from key stakeholders within the school environment could have an affect on the quality of PE being delivered.

In some cases, physical education as an academic discipline is being shortened in the amount and length of time students are in physical education class, or are being reduced in the number of days during the week that the

students meet with a qualified physical educator (Barney et al., 2009). 'Linked to this are concerns over the low level of moderate to vigorous physical activity during PE lessons, although it is known that intervention studies have successfully shown that PE can be made more active for pupils, teachers can

make the difference to the amount of activity achieved during lessons.' (Bailey et al., 2009, p.90). In addition, another possible barrier in achieving HQPE maybe revealed in the findings of (Harris, 1994) whereby there was much variation across schools with respect to physical education curriculum time. The results from the study confirmed that the time allocation for physical education has steadily declined over the past few decades.

As a result of existing findings, the aim of the present study will explore these barriers further and investigate the prevalence of HQPE in Secondary schools in South Wales.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

The aim of the study was to investigate the prevalence of high quality PE in Secondary schools in South Wales and to what factors has influence on these standards. The study also looked into the aims of high quality PE and whether these were being delivered within schools, questioning whether or not the implementation of these aims were successful and to what factors had influence on how well these were being delivered to pupils. (Gratton and Jones, 2012) said that there are a number of ways to classify research, depending upon the purpose of the research, the data that is collected and how such data is analysed. They highlighted that four general types of research exists, these being, exploratory, descriptive, explanatory and predictive.

The present study aimed to carry out research under the domain of both descriptive and explanatory research, focusing on issues and phenomenons in relation to what's happening and to what extent. This chapter will comprise of a number of sections which will aim to discuss the justification of the study, methods used, the validity and reliability, ethical consideration, sample size, procedure, data analysis and finally limitations of the methodology.

#### **3.1 Justification for Design**

As the study aimed to explore opinions of how HQPE is being delivered and look further into the barriers to this, it was essential that in depth information was to be gathered form participant so ensure that suitable conclusions could be drawn. Therefore, after consideration of whether a qualitative or quantitative design was to be used, one of a qualitative approach was most appropriate. (Gratton and Jones, 2012) stated that qualitative approach aims to 'capture meanings or qualities that are not quantifiable, such as feelings, thoughts, experiences, that are those concepts associated with interpretative approaches.' (Ekland et al., 2011) also said that

qualitative researchers can work around situational constraints and changes in available affordances while still obtaining detailed, useful information to address a given research question. There are a number of qualitative research techniques that can be used, (Hemphill et al., 2012) suggested that qualitative data typically comes from fieldwork and can be classified into three basic methodological forms: (a) interview, (b) observation, and (c) document analysis.

### **3.2 Method**

From analysing the various techniques that could be used, it was important to choose a method that would allow for the most descriptive data to be collected. As a result, the data collection would be carried out by means of interviews, Kvale (as cited in Cohen et al., 2000) says that the use of interviews in research marks a move away from seeing human subjects as simply manipulable and data as somehow external to individuals, and more towards regarding knowledge as generated between humans, often through conversation. (Gratton and Jones, 2012) supports this by stating that interviews enable participants to talk about their own experiences in their own words, and allow them to elaborate on any areas of particular interest or importance. A semi structured interview guide approach was also chosen. By carrying out a semi structured interview process would allow the interviewer to decide the sequence of questions by bouncing off opinions/ answers received by the participant, giving opportunity for the interview to remain fairly conversational and flow naturally, as a result increasing the comprehensiveness of the data collected.

From this, a suitable interview guide was comprised covering questions in relation to HQPE aims, to what extent these are being achieved and the factors that may prevent this. All questions were open ended and prompts were also noted in case participants were to go off topic or struggle with answering. See (Appendix B). (Cohen et al., 2000) advises to use open ended questions whereby you require, qualitative data, you unsure of the likely responses, response are likely to be complex, the respondents own words are important.

After a suitable method for the study was chosen, it was important to consider the relevant ethical issues that the study would be faced with.

### **3.3 Ethical Considerations**

Ryen (as cited in Seale et al., 2008, p.219) suggested three main issues frequently rose in the Western ethical research, these being 'codes and consent, confidentiality and trust'. The present study adopted these codes and consents by means of consent forms and information sheets given to participants before the interview, explaining the nature of the study, confidentiality and declaring that they could withdraw at any time, see (Appendix C and D).

In regards to confidentiality (Silverman, 2010, p.155) suggested that the researcher takes 'steps to ensure that research data and its sources remain confidential unless participants have consented to their disclosure'.

### **3.4 Validity and Reliability**

In any research, validity is a key component in ensuring the reliability of a study, when using a qualitative approach this 'validity' is often referred to as trustworthiness. This supported in (Pitney, 2004) who suggested that, the traditional quality criteria of reliability and validity used with quantitative methods may be inappropriate for use with qualitative methods, in fact qualitative researchers tend to use different terminology relating to producing a 'trustworthy' study. There are many ways in establishing trustworthiness, one way in which this was developed within the present study was ensuring a positive relationship between the researcher and participant was maintained, if participants were relaxed and trusted the researcher, this allowed for better quality information as teachers didn't feel the need to hold back in their answers. Trustworthiness was also established through consent forms and information sheets, this confirmed to participants that anonymity was carried throughout the study. See (Appendix C and D).

All interviews were recorded using a Dictaphone and also on personal phone for back up purposes, notes were also taken during interview to highlight any changes in behaviour, body language or attitudes of the teachers.

### **3.5 Pilot Study**

A pilot study was also carried out before final interviews took place, this ensured that all questions asked are relevant and align with the aims and objectives of the study, increasing the level of trustworthiness. According to (Gratton and Jones, 2011), a pilot study is vital and refers to a small scale administration of the survey interview prior to the administration. This process allows for a 'dry run' checking that the sequence of questions flow, is clear and understandable and provides an opportunity for any irrelevant questions to be removed from interview guide.

### **3.6 Sample**

The samples were chosen by considering knowledge and experience, availability and the geographic of schools. Sample size is important for statistical power, but also increases the representativeness of the target population (Page, 2012). The sample for this study involved 4 heads of department (HD) of Physical Education from separate comprehensive schools both male and female, 2 male, 2 female. Both male and female participants were used to consider any conflicting attitudes/ opinions between different genders, and whether or not this demonstrates any potential correlations or relationships that gender may have upon the way in which HQPE is delivered in schools.

The object of using a small sample size is that detailed information can be drawn in from the participants in order to proceed with an in depth evaluation of findings and will be able to notice any conflicting opinions or correlations between the research. (Cohen et al., 2000) stated that the correct sample size depends on the purpose of the study and the nature of the population under scrutiny.

(Cohen et al., 2000) also went on to say that in a qualitative style of research it is more likely that the sample size will be small. The sample involved HD's who have been at their current role for at least 2 years, this is to ensure that information, opinions and viewpoints gathered from participants are authentic and have derived only from personal experience and knowledge gained from their role as teacher.

### **3.7 Procedure**

The process will begin by liaising with a number of Heads of Department from numerous schools via email/ telephone briefly explaining about the research and what the intentions are. An information sheet was formalised and dispersed to heads of department for PE across a number of schools, inviting them to take part in the study (See Appendix D). Communication with staff was ongoing and the first four HD's to get back, were then selected and asked whether or not they would be interested in becoming a participant. If so, consent forms were given to participants to fill out and retrieve back, these forms would check for participants understanding of the aims and objectives of the study, it would state that they would not be under any agreement to answer questions which they were not comfortable with and any information given would not be published. Personal information was to be kept completely confidential throughout the write up of the study and answers given in the interview would only be used for analysis and to draw upon conclusions.

A time and place was agreed with participants, the interviews themselves aimed to last for around 30 minutes and ideally performed within a quiet comfortable setting i.e. empty classroom. This ensured that the participants were as relaxed as possible and the interview could be carried out without any interruption from external influences.

The interview began by asking fairly generic questions to the participant to build a rapport with them and develop the trustworthiness between interviewer and participant. As the interview continued to progress, the questions then moved onto relevant topics in the form of open ended style questions.

After completion of the interview, teachers were made aware that the interviews would be transcribed just as they had said and were reminded of their rights. Interviews were listened to carefully a number of times and transcribed accordingly, allow data analysis to then take place in an inductive manner.

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

After reviewing the transcripts a number of times, key themes starting to form in relation to the research question. These themes highlighted areas for discussion and also allowed for correlations and patterns to emerge in relation to the views and opinions expressed by the individual. As the layout of interview questions were structured into topics, this allowed the answers to be coded to ensure the findings were clear to the reader. (Gratton and Jones, 2010, p.240) stated that coding is the 'organisation of raw data into conceptual categories', and is 'the first stage to providing some form of logical structure to the data'. From this, key themes were easier to analyse and a clearer picture of the data could be drawn.

### **3.9 Limitations of Methodology**

On reflection, a limitation to the methodology may have been the sample size used. Although the small sample size allowed for information collected to be in depth and valuable to the study, the findings cannot be generalised across the whole of secondary schools across South Wales. The findings could only be applied to those schools in question and not predict the levels of HQPE across other schools, therefore this may have an effect on the impact the study has on research in the physical education domain.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This section will provide a critical analysis of the data collected from interviews with Heads of Department's for Physical Education, across 4 Comprehensive School's in the South Wales area. The aim of this chapter was to highlight areas of success in achieving HQPE and to also identify potential barriers in delivering this to its fullest. In order to collate this, the data underwent a critical analysis and was then categorised into three key themes. These three key themes represented themselves as the following:

- Barriers that teachers face in delivering HQPE (4.1)
- Support from key stakeholders in helping achieve HQPE (4.2)
- Health, Fitness and Well Being (4.3)

From highlighting these themes, a discussion then took place on the findings in order to gain a more in depth understanding as to what challenges Heads of Department for PE may face, as well as the areas of strength in regards to HQPE in their school.

#### **4.1 Barriers Teachers Face in Delivering HQPE**

All teachers that were interviewed for the study highlighted significant issues that were perceived as detrimental in regards to delivering HQPE in their schools. These issues were challenges that teachers faced daily and they believed strongly that these had a big impact on the quality of physical education their learners were receiving. In recent years, research in the PE domain supports these concerns that teachers have raised. Loss of time allocation in some cases because time is taken up by other competing prioritized subjects, lower importance of school PE in general, lack of official assessment, financial constraints, diversion of resources elsewhere, inadequate material resources, deficiencies in numbers of properly qualified personnel and attitudes of significant individuals such as head teachers (Hardman, 2008).

(Reiner et al., 2012) also found that, reasons provided by the head teachers for not meeting the two hour provision guideline focused on the demand on facilities, the staff pupil ratio, the fact that the timetabling of PE was left to the individual teacher's discretion and time available after concentrating on the 'core' subjects.

After analysing the data of the present study, two main barriers surfaced, these were, time constraints for staff (1.1.1) and facilities and funding (1.1.2).

#### **4.1.1 Time Constraints for Staff**

The Welsh Government's target for 2012 were for at least 90 per cent of secondary school aged children to participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity five times a week (National Assembly for Wales, 2013). Therefore it would seem important for schools to cover these targets as much as possible and make the most of the full hour they are given. However, when asking the participants whether they felt that this hour per lesson is sufficient, three out of four teachers agreed that the time they are given is simply not enough. Teachers expressed that their hour is more often than not cut down to around thirty-five minutes of teaching time, in which high quality P.E is aimed to be achieved. Most found this expectation un- realistic and went onto explain the major constraints in which they are dealt. Furthermore, they expressed that they feel teachers should be delegated more time with their pupils per lesson in order to draw more out of their students and increase physical activity time. The contribution of PE to total daily PA might be enlarged by not only increasing the relative amount of PA during PE lessons but also by increasing the amount of total PE lesson time (Ruch et al., 2012).

*Participant 3: I don't feel the hour is enough, you have got the changing, getting to resources sometimes so if were on the Astroturf it would take, you know you maybe cutting your lesson down to 30- 35 minutes sometimes which isn't enough time at all so that is something we struggle with, it definitely needs to be longer. Minimum is 5 hours a*

*week of exercise and their not getting that, so id say someone needs to take a look at that I think because it's so important for the boys to be getting their exercise in and an hour is simply not enough.*

As P3 states here, PE lessons are under more constraints than other theory based lessons. Pupils aren't just coming in and sitting at a desk, where teachers have opportunity to use the full hour of teaching time with their class. Three out of four participants all agreed that the major constraints they face are changing time and swapping over of lessons, travelling to facilities for example sports halls, gym and Astro turf. This impinges on the lesson time massively and majority of teachers said that their lessons are often only last around 35 minutes. This also cuts off the valid time that the children are engaged in moderate to high levels of activity. GOV UK gave recommended guidelines as to how much moderate to vigorous exercise young people should be engaging in per week and stated that, all children and young people should engage in moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity for at least 60 minutes and up to several hours every day ( GOV UK, physical activity guidelines).

*Participant 4: We're actually given 50 minutes in our school at KS3 and then obviously at GCSE they get additional lessons per week. I don't feel it's enough time at all, 2 hours is the minimum requirement and were below that requirement, that's purely down to timetabling by the time they get changed and from lesson to lesson. I think it's valuable for children to be able to do it but we haven't got it. I'd say they should at least be doing 5 hours of P.E a week. I know we've got the 5x60 initiative along with that but not everybody will go to that it's not compulsory, but they should be getting at least three hours a week at KS3.*

Worryingly, a teacher identifies here that they are below the minimum requirement per week and are not even given the full hour of lesson time and

only given fifty minutes due to the way in which then school has time timetabled the lessons. Given the amount of time children spend at school, schools are an important setting for physical activity and are recommended to provide children with at least 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily (Carlson et al., 2014). This suggests that there should be enough time in school to cover the physical activity requirements for young people and students should be given as much opportunity as possible. However, this contradicts what (Palmer and Bycura, 2014) said that, physical educators do not have enough time during school to directly increase PA to a level that will result in significant health benefits, which is why many schools and programs offering opportunities for students to be physically active beyond PE through before, during, and after-school programs. However, P4 notes here that although the 5x60 initiative is present in the school, those pupils who do not attend after school clubs etc are more than likely not getting their recommended hours in, a topic to challenged I believe. Even if all pupils did engage in the 5x60, would this be enough if their not partaking in the full our of proposed lesson time? Further evidence must be provided that physical education curricular programs can foster positive changes in student motivation toward physical activities, such that this motivation is a significant determinant of the students' participation in a more physically active lifestyle out of school (Wallhead and Buckworth, 2004).

Following from this, the question was asked as to how long they would like to see P.E lessons last if they were given the opportunity to change it. Again, three out of four teachers all agreed and said that they would like to see the lesson last for an hour and half. They explained that they would need this extra half an hour to allocate for changing in and out of kit and travelling to and from facilities e.g. sports halls. This would then leave them with a sufficient hour to fully engage in HQPE.

*Participant 2: I would love you know an hour and a half, I think then you would be banking on an hour of quality physical and learning time and I think that that's what the children need out of a lesson.*

Participant 3: *If I was able to develop a curriculum based around sport it would be a longer session, it would probably be an hour and a half I would say.*

The information gathered suggests that physical educators are faced with significant temporal constraints in lessons compared to other standardised subjects. The need for increased amounts of teaching time would allow them to deliver high quality lessons to children, which as discussed, cannot be delivered within the hour. With massive importance being placed upon making sure that young people have the opportunities in school to take part in high quality PE and sufficient physical activity time, it could be suggested that a review of the teaching time for PE is necessary.

#### **4.1.2 Facilities and Funding**

As of recent there have been big announcements in regards to primary school PE funding. In fact a 150 million pound funding boost is being administered to primary schools over the next two years for school sport and PE from the government (BBC Sport, 2013). With such emphasis being placed on primary school funding, could this mean secondary schools are falling by the waste side. Whereas before, funding and expertise filtered down to primaries through the SSPs and secondary schools, now primary schools will go it alone (SecEd, 2013). It also highlighted that this September will see the second anniversary of the day that £168 million a year in funding, which enabled every maintained school in the country to be part of a School Sports Partnership (SSP) ran out. When participants were asked if there are possible shortcomings or challenges their department face in delivery HQPE, all four teachers highlighted facilities and funding as a main barrier.

Participant 1: *Facilities, massive! We have been working for a sports hall since I came here, 1998 when we actively started to raise funds. Been pushing the council to try various ways of getting a facility, we've*

*tried to put an Astroturf down as well again were against big financial barriers. The fact we haven't got those facilities and we are severally challenged when we are teaching and it can be really, really frustrating if you've got this weather which you can appreciate. The drainage is a problem especially, so were dictated to by the elements so if the weathers bad we've got real problems and you can see what the girls got to put up with, with that yard you know its not great.*

This suggests that although the school has made big efforts to fund raise for the last fourteen years to introduce new facilities such as the sports hall, their still against significant financial barriers. Now head teachers can decide what a "suitable" outdoor playing space might look like and while many school leaders will maintain their outdoor areas, there are concerns that balancing budgets and generating revenue might be just as big an influence on decisions as providing the best environment for children to play sport (SecEd, 2013).

The participant also shared that they share their current hall with other departments as well as, meetings and examinations and are therefore forced outside. Furthermore, they highlight that they struggle with drainage problems with outside facilities, so often when the weather is bad those facilities such as the yard and pitches, are in fact out of use. As they are dictated to by the elements, especially in regards to the boys football and girls netball pitch, this could be having an effect on the time spent participating in competitive activities and invasion games. These factors could be having a serious effect on the extent of pupils learning in regards to covering certain elements of the NCPE, especially in regards to adventurous and competitive activities.

*Participant 2: Probably our lack of equipment now in the modern era would be technology, we don't really stretch to that so we'd have to save for a long time to fund that. We've just bought a new iPad but other things have had to not be bought because of that so it's a fine line. You need the physical equipment like the badminton rackets and*

*so on at the expense of do we keep saving for an iPad so it's a very fine line and you know technology's moving very fast and technology in P.E is moving very fast and we don't feel like we are quite up there and were going to be left behind I think on high quality P.E soon unless we get that side sorted. I'd say more funding is needed for better facilities.*

Here the teacher implies that there is not only a problem with sporting facilities, but also a lack of ICT equipment and access to up to date technology. The NCPE states that 'In physical education, learners develop their ICT skills through their analysis of performance and data in order to improve their own and others' work'. It is vital that pupils are given this opportunity to evaluate their performances through means of technology, in order to gain a better understanding of ones own performance, compare themselves to a 'perfect model' and may possibly engage pupils even further in the learner process. Stidder and Capel (as cited in Capel and Whitehead, 2010, p.184) stated that providing pupils with hands on opportunities to use ICT can develop pupils existing knowledge and skills and enhance one's learning, skills learned can be transferred into other subjects.

*Participant 4: Yes, lack of ICT and facilities. The fitness room is an ongoing issue for me, there's only enough room in there for 20 pupils where classes are bigger than 20, so that has to work on a rotation basis. Lack of wifi in the sports hall, we've only just been connected to the school over the last 24 months, and we still can't access YouTube, you know getting the perfect model up showing the kids. Also because we're attached to a leisure centre there's certain things we can't put up display wise in the corridors, you know we could but they get vandalised. We're looking to have proper covers for them you know with the lock and key so we can put displays up, but again that costs money then which we don't have as we don't get much of a budget in the P.E department, or there certain things that take priority. So id say funding for more and better facilities is needed definitely.*

Again the teacher explains here the effect that lack of technology has on their school. They also go onto discuss that they struggle with space in their fitness room where classes often work on a rotational basis, as there isn't enough room for one class at a time. This could mean that pupils are missing out on

valid physical activity time and may result in pupils not hitting the recommended guidelines for PA, where the school day could be ample opportunities for such guidelines to be met. The teacher also explained that the staff struggle to promote achievements and show what's going on in different year groups due to their being no displays up in the sports hall which is where their department is based. The teacher again puts this down to a lack of funding in order to have sufficient covers for displays and as they don't receive much of a budget, they have to prioritise and spend elsewhere. Having colourful and aesthetically pleasing displays up may enhance the learning environment for pupils and give opportunity for the teachers to celebrate achievements of pupils and thus may encourage the development of high quality.

*Participant 3: I mean we have got sufficient facilities I have to say, but better equipment, more up to date technology would definitely allow us to deliver a better product, which they'd engage in more. More funding is needed and I think it would be nice to have that funding on a cyclical basis and maybe every 5 years to replace, replenish and renew because obviously we had a new school and we had lots of nice equipment but that was 12 years ago now so a lot of that equipment is out dated.*

All participants interviewed agreed that more funding and a bigger budget for their department is needed to offer better facilities for pupils and ultimately allow for higher quality lessons to be delivered. Even teachers who said that they had sufficient facilities went onto express that these facilities were in fact out of date and un- inspiring to pupils, if they had better equipment this may

result in more engaged, motivated students. One teacher even suggested introducing a 'replace, replenish, renew' scheme that could be offered to allow schools to remain up to date with ever increasing sporting trends and development in the latest equipment.

## **4.2 Support from Key Stakeholders in Helping Achieve HQPE**

It is not only down to the PE teachers themselves to ensure that HQPE is being delivered to pupils, the collaboration of various internal and external parties can all help to bring about a strong and successful PE department, which promotes the notion of HQPE. Whitehead and Pack (as cited in Capel and Whitehead, 2010, p.252) stated that the 'effective collaboration with colleagues from within the department and the school, as well as from outside the school, is a significant part of today's PE teachers role. Other staff, governors, local authorities and parents of the school are examples of these stakeholders which all play a role in helping to develop the success of PE'. The present study allowed for exploration into how well this support is being received and gave opportunity for a discussion as to what factors may have influence. After analysing the data the section was split into two themes, internal support (4.2.1) and external support (4.2.2).

### **4.2.1 Internal Support**

Whilst discussing with teachers the support received from within their school, they highlighted that the main pathways of this came from the head teachers and governors. All participants interviewed said that they received high levels of support from their head teacher, which can only be a positive finding of the study. They also suggested that this support from senior staff is fundamental in determining how much emphasis is placed on sport throughout the whole school and can often influence how effective the PE department is run, for example by setting targets and passing such key

information down through the hierarchy of staff. This supported by (Rainer et al., 2012) who suggested that the head teacher plays a fundamental role in the experience of PE delivery within their schools as well as the effective implementation of government initiatives.

*Participant 1: The Head teacher Mr Stone who had to retire through ill health was with us for 17 years was very, very sport orientated (chuckle) football, tennis. Whereas before, umm we had a Romanian*

*nun who didn't see the point of sport and I had a lot of battles with her didn't speak to her for nearly a year and a half and she upset a few governors as well with her attitude to PE she tried to take time of us and she was quite disrespectful to me in meetings err yeah she wouldn't allow me to put any photographs up or anything like that of the kids achievements and then David came about and said put whatever you want up and I said, great!*

The teacher here shows an example of how the head teacher can have a big influence on how strong PE is within a school. The teacher also went on to say that the previous head also tried to cut lesson time, which caused conflicts between governors and the staff. In contrast to this, the current head teacher who is very sports orientated allows the promotion of PE to be carried out as much as possible. From visiting the school to carry out the data analysis, nearly every wall space along the corridors were filled with pictures of current and former pupils who had achieved sporting success, as well as display cabinets and roll's of honour. The teacher explained that this enabled the children to see how important PE is in their school and how it helps to inspire their pupils to keep achieving. It was clear from visiting that the ethos of PE was extremely high. This could suggest that having that high level of support from such a key stakeholder can have a significant influence on the strength of a PE within a school.

Although all teachers interviewed agreed that they are supported well from their head teachers, nearly all of them expressed that this support isn't as well received from their governors. Most said that they would know where their governors are if they needed them but they would like to see stronger links and support in terms of fund raising and policy and practice.

*Participant 2: Right okay, we do have a governor link, but probably don't see them often, they dip in, and probably we approach the governors more than they approach us. I would love much better links with the governors and sort of policy and practice within the school yes.*

*Participant 4: I mean if I need something I know where to get them, but in terms of fund raising etc id like to see more from them.*

(The National Governors Association, 2011) says that the role of a governing body is that it appoints and performance manages the head teacher, agreeing the school improvement strategy which includes setting statutory targets with supporting budgets and staffing structures. By having improved links between departments and governors could help to set better targets for achievement and may allow for more effective allocation of funding and budgets.

#### **4.2.2 External Support**

The main area of received support teachers highlighted here was the support from local authorities. All participants said that they felt they are strongly supported and have good links with their local authorities, who under their many constraints, try to help with funding and sports development as much as possible.

*Participant 2: Local authority's id say very supportive we have our 5x60 officer, we've got great links with sports development, we have the Caerphilly School sport association where we can voice our opinions which is chaired by a Head teacher within the borough, so we are*

*listened to within the authority and there under so many constraints themselves but wherever and whenever possible they do support us.*

The teacher explains here that they have great links with their local authority and regular meetings where they have chance to voice their opinions and discuss current issues. All teachers interviewed shared the same opinion, expresses that their local authority is their main support system. Forging good links and lines of communication between schools and local authorities may allow staff to express any concerns and share ideas, encouraging authorities to consider introducing new schemes that may improve standards and potentially increase the budget the PE departments receive.

However in contrast to the opinions of these teachers, the (Estyn Report, 2012) found 'only a minority of local authorities provide good advisory support for physical education departments. In a significant minority of schools, the lack of strong advisory support narrows the context of professional dialogue and this can also prevent schools from observing good practice elsewhere.' From this report, they advised that local authorities should, 'improve support and advice for physical education practitioners and promote best practice'. This could suggest that these high levels of support mentioned, may not be consistent across the majority of local authorities in Wales?

### **4.3 Health, Fitness and Well Being**

Health, Fitness and Well Being in schools can be a big contributing factor in relation to achieving high quality. (Green, 2008, p.96) said that 'it is widely assumed that PE not only can but should play a central role in the promotion of health among young people'. With increase in levels of childhood obesity and sedentary lifestyles, an exploration into how well our secondary schools deliver this seemed appropriate. Therefore, in the present study, participants were asked as to how much emphasis they feel is placed upon this block within their curriculum.

Participant 1: *Definitely a big emphasis, Ill show you the booklet on the health and well being, that's run throughout the school, they have a battery of fitness tests throughout every year group. We're always pushing that, about diet through GCSE lessons, BTEC through the normal core lessons as well. We say to the kids, look you've got to make sure you do some form of exercise, cycling, recreational, swimming, walking umm competitive, so you keep doing something that going to keep you active keep your health and well being in check. I'd say that's promoted throughout the school in different subjects and the canteen, in fact the head of science is in charge of well being and the canteen diet so we do a lot of cross liaising work with them where we try and promote canteen healthy eating. The whole man approach, mind, body and spirit we've got to get that full spectrum not just the competitive element of sport. So we've got a big push on that but ill show you the booklets about that.*

The teacher here discusses that their school places a strong importance on health, fitness and well being and gave examples of how this is carried out throughout the school. All four teachers said that their school and department places a big emphasis on this block of work and try to promote this area as much as possible. They explained that this area of work is probably delivered the best across the curriculum and has a big influence in determining levels of HQPE. Although the schools expressed that they achieve high levels of this, some suggested that more emphasis is placed on the fitness element rather than health, fitness and well being as a whole. Harris (as cited in Green, 2008, p.101) stated that, health related exercise in PE continues to be dominated by an emphasis on fitness rather than exercise as a vehicle for health promotion. Here a teacher states that more emphasis needs to be placed on the health element and explains how they tend to take on the role of covering fitness more, leaving it up to personal and social education (PSE) lessons to cover health and well being.

Participant 2: *Um its highly up there, we had a discussion with sports Wales yesterday we tend to come down still on the fitness side of healthy and active lifestyle rather than the health aspect of it. We talk about the long term benefits of fitness, post sixteen making sure they carry on, how they can access physical activity after they have left school. Diet and nutrition and that side of healthy and active lifestyle comes in later in year 9 they have a unit there, smoking, drug abuse and so on comes in even later and tends to be dealt with more on the PSE side of things so we tend to take the fitness element and hope PSE covers the healthy lifestyle. I would say more emphasis is needed on the healthy lifestyle definitely.*

In regards to the promotion of health, fitness and well being throughout the whole school, most said this is done well. Majority of teachers said that the school helped to promote healthy and active lifestyles mainly through healthy eating. However findings from the (Estyn Report, 2012) found that most schools promote healthy lifestyles well, however few schools co-ordinate this work systematically enough across other subject areas. This could suggest that this needs to be pushed through more subjects and not just PE, in order to improve standards.

Although most said that health, fitness and well being is supported well by others, one teacher shared that 'healthy eating' is by no means encouraged by the school and when discussing the issue became angered as to why this isn't happening.

Participant 2: *We don't do healthy schools week like most of the schools across the country, on a healthy schools week we probably go to our primary schools and help them put more than we do in our own school. The school canteen by no means is providing our school with healthy options, they think they are but their not, the analysis from the kids and the staff is it's not good enough.*

There are however up and coming government policies which aim to improve standards of food served across all schools. The 'Independent School Food Plan' set up by the Department for Education has launched its public consultation on the revised school food standards and said that 'the revised school food standards are expected to be available from September 2014, but will likely not be in regulatory force until January 2015, to allow a transition period'. Although, it is questionable as to why not all schools offer healthy meals to pupils, this may relate back to the influence the head teacher has in supporting PE departments to achieve high quality. A teacher discusses here how the change in head teacher had a big influence on encouraging healthy eating.

*Participant 4: In terms of the school promoting it I'd say the last 24 months has been much better since we've had this new head teacher. I'd say the head teacher has a big influence and say on that and promoting healthy eating etc, because sometimes you can be fighting a losing battle, if your department is encouraging healthy eating and then the head is letting kids have access to junk which was what was happening before. But we have a much healthier school now.*

To summarise, the findings highlighted two main barriers in delivering HQPE, these being time constraints for staff as well as facilities and funding. Teachers highlighted their concerns in regards to the hour of class time and said that lessons are often cut down to 35- 40 minutes, due to factors such as changing in and out of kit and travelling to and from facilities. Furthermore, facilities and funding also represented itself as a concern. Teachers expressed that in some cases facilities were poor and often prevented certain sports being covered as well as liked. The teachers that said that they had sufficient facilities went on to state that these facilities were now out of date and in need of replenishment, which in turn would engage students and encourage the use of them more. In order for better facilities, teachers agreed that more funding is needed and higher budgets to be given to their department.

Another finding of the study was the prevalence of health, fitness and well being. It was found that this aim of HQPE was being delivered well across all schools interviewed and a big emphasis was placed on this block of work. However, although department seemed to cover this well, a stronger emphasis was seen to be placed of the fitness element and not as well covered in regards to healthy lifestyle. Furthermore, teachers some teachers highlighted that they would like 'health' to be promoted more throughout the whole school, for example with healthy school dinners. In most schools healthy meals were offered to pupils and this was encouraged by the whole school, however this wasn't consistent throughout all four schools.

Lastly, support from key stakeholders was shown to have a big influence in helping PE departments achieve HQPE. Some teachers discussed the significant influence their head teacher has had on the quality of PE delivered and how this has varied from head teacher to head teacher. Although this has not always been the case, all teachers said that they are currently supported well by senior staff, but would like to see better links between their governors to help with fund raising etc. Schools also highlighted that support from their local authorities was very strong and found authorities to be a big help in striving to achieve high quality.

The concluding chapter will discuss these findings further, relating back to relevant research discussed in the literature review as well as offer recommendations for future research.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION**

Before beginning this study, the aims were to take a deeper look into the deliverance of HQPE in some secondary schools across the South Wales area, exploring the characteristics of HQPE and to what extent these are being covered in schools, also highlighting potential barriers that Head of Departments for P.E are faced with. The study adopted a qualitative research approach and interviewed four HD's of PE through 30 minute semi- structured interviews. This interview method allowed for a deep discussion into the aims of the study and rich data to be gathered from participants. The data was transcribed and coded and as a result highlighted three key themes, these being barriers in delivering HQPE (time constraints/ facilities and funding, health fitness and well being and support from key stakeholders in helping to achieve HQPE. A deep discussion then took place exploring these themes further, comparing data between different schools to allow for conclusions to be drawn. This chapter will discuss these key findings further relating back to relevant literature highlighted in the literature review and provide recommendations for future research.

#### **5.1 Barriers Teachers Face in Delivering HQPE**

Whilst discussing factors that may have influence on HQPE, two main barriers emerged, the first being facilities and funding. This represented itself as one of the main challenges teachers faced in delivery high quality PE to pupils and supports findings from (Harman, 2008) and (Barroso et al., 2005) study whereby facilities and equipment also caused concern. Teachers expressed that the quality of facilities were often poor or had to be shared with other parties, often resulting in lack of focus on certain elements of the NCPE, for example drainage problems on outdoor courts prevented the use of them in poor weather and therefore time spent on competitive activities decreased. In addition, even those who stated had sufficient facilities said that what they

have is out of date and uninspiring resulting in de motivated pupils. Furthermore, it appeared clear that funding was the cause of this problem, teachers discussed that in order for better and improved facilities, they would need a bigger budget allocation. Allowing for this would then enable pupils to take part in a wider variety of sports, a better working environment, and overall improve standards of HQPE.

The second barrier that was highlighted in the study was that of time constraints. Teachers expressed here their concerns over the amount of time they are given per session, they discussed that the hour was not enough time to deliver high quality lessons to pupils. The main constraints discussed were changing time and travelling to and from facilities, for example sports halls, AstroTurf's. Taking these constraints into consideration teachers said that they were left with only 35- 40 minutes of teaching time in which they could not achieve high quality. More importantly, as a result children were not achieving the recommended physical activity targets set out by the Welsh Assembly Government that aims to be achieved within school time. This supported (Palmer and Bycura, 2014) findings that physical educators do not have enough time during school to directly increase PA to a level that will result in significant health benefits. This also supports the findings of (Barney et al., 2009) who found that in some cases, physical education as an academic discipline is being shortened in the amount and length of time students are in physical education class, or are being reduced in the number of days during the week that the students meet with a qualified physical educator. These findings highlight areas of concern in regards to delivering HQPE and could offer schools, policy makers and possibly the government opportunity for further investigation to explore these issues.

## **5.2 Support from Key Stakeholders in helping achieve HQPE**

Further findings of the study included positive levels of support received from key stakeholders of PE departments. Teachers discussed that their departments were supported well by head teachers of their schools and local authorities. The findings would suggest that by forging these strong links

between schools and local authorities could allow staff to express concerns and share ideas. They also discussed that this support from the head teacher is fundamental in determining how much emphasis is placed on sport throughout the whole school and can often influence how effective the PE department is run, for example teachers discussed how different head teachers have had significant influences on the quality of PE. These findings support (Rainer et al., 2012) who suggested that the head teacher plays a fundamental role in the experience of PE delivery within their schools as well as the effective implementation of government initiatives. Although the main pathways of support were strong, results did show a lack of this support from governors of the school. Teachers stated that they would like to see much better links between their department and governors and more evidence of fund raising from them, setting higher standards to be achieved. This again could be an area for future development for schools to look at and by doing so, could result in higher standards of PE.

### **5.3 Health Fitness and Well Being**

In addition, another key finding was the prevalence of health, fitness and well being within PE lessons and the whole school. The promotion of physical fitness was found to be strong throughout all departments with big emphasis placed on the benefits of physical activity and encouraging pupils to participate in as much within school time as possible. The 5x60 initiative seemed to be successful in increasing participation and helped to promote physical fitness within the school. Although the focus on fitness was high, some teachers expressed concerns that not enough emphasis was placed on healthy lifestyle and diet, food options offered to pupils were unsatisfactory and the promotion of health was minimal throughout. This supported findings from the (Estyn Report, 2012) who found that most schools promote healthy lifestyles well, however few schools co-ordinate this work systematically enough across other subject areas. Again in an analysis of findings from Ofsted inspection in regards to health related learning within the PE curriculum, (Bailey et al., 2009, p.90) revealed that 'the PE profession

addresses some areas but there are areas for improvement’.

Findings suggest that PE departments may do all they can to promote health, fitness and well being within their school, but without the support from other internal parties this may result in PE department fighting a losing battle against tackling unhealthy behaviours.

#### **5.4 Limitations of the Study**

Although the present study offers contribution to the domain of HQPE and through identifying barriers, may challenge future research, if the study was to be repeated, certain measures would be modified. Although participants interviewed were highly experienced in their profession, these were not from a broad range of catchment areas across South Wales. It would have been beneficial to have interviewed heads of department from more catchment areas in order to make comparisons between counties and borough’s, to see whether or not there were any significant differences between them. If repeated the study would also have a bigger sample size, this would provide for a more in depth analysis and more conclusions to be drawn out.

#### **5.5 Areas for Future Research**

Although the aims of HQPE seemed to have a high prevalence in most schools, especially in regards to the promotion of health, PA and fitness, barriers did emerge that seemed to have a significant affect on the delivery of HQPE.

The research highlighted that time constraints were a big barrier in delivering HQPE. Research does support this, such as (Palmer and Bycura, 2014) and (Barney et al., 2009), however they do not highlight constraints such as changing time in lessons and travelling to and from facilities. In this study, these barriers seemed to have significant affect on teaching time and could therefore suggest that more research needs to be carried out to explore

this further and improve HQPE and PA levels amongst pupils. The research also revealed that although fitness and increasing PA was emphasised well, a healthy lifestyle wasn't promoted consistently across schools, with some schools receiving more support in promoting this than others. It may be beneficial to look at why this is the case, which may encourage new policies and guidelines to be introduced to all schools to ensure that all pupils have fair access to this.

From the findings of the present study it seems clear that more needs to be done to develop certain pedagogical practices. For this to come about barriers need to be considered in relation to the unique sector in which PE finds itself. The development of these practices could help to ensure that there is consistency in regards to the way in which the NCPE is delivered to pupils and ultimately learners will receive improved levels of HQPE within secondary schools across South Wales.

## **REFERENCE LIST**

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# **APPENDICES**

## **APPENDIX: A**

Copy of the outcomes of High Quality PE and sport  
(High Quality PE and Sport for Young People, DCMS PE/HQ, March 2004.)

What are the outcomes of high quality PE and sport?

When schools and sports clubs are providing high quality PE and/ or sport, they see young people who:

1. Are committed to PE and sport and make them a central part of their lives- both in and out of school.
2. Know and understand what they are trying to achieve and how to go about it.
3. Understand that PE and sport are an important part of a healthy, active lifestyle.
4. Have the confidence to get involved in PE and sport.
5. Have the skills and control that they need to take part in PE and sport.
6. Willingly take part in a range of competitive, creative and challenge-type activities, both as individuals and as part of a team or group.
7. Think about what they are doing and make appropriate decisions for themselves.
8. Show a desire to improve and achieve in relation to their own abilities.
9. Have the stamina, suppleness and strength to keep going.
10. Enjoy PE, school and community sport.

## **APPENDIX: B**

### Interview Guide/Questions

Ok, so I'm just going to begin by explaining the purpose of my study to you... I'm interviewing you for research as part of my dissertation which is titled 'The prevalence of 'High Quality P.E' in secondary schools and to what factors may have influence.' The interview will be recorded as part of my data analysis and I'm looking to gain as much information from you as possible about a number of factors in regards to your P.E department and school. It is important to understand that there is no right or wrong answer and this is purely your opinion, anything you do say is completely confidential, and as you are a volunteering participant you may decline to answer any question you don't feel comfortable in answering and may withdraw from the interview at any stage.

Ok so now you have a better understanding, are there any questions you'd like to ask before we start?

Ok let's begin...

#### **Start recording...**

1) *Ok so if you could just state for me how long you've been teaching at secondary school level? - How long at this school?*

2) *Now if you could tell me what age group you're currently teaching?*

3) *Obviously you are given an hour to teach per class Do you feel that this hour is a sufficient amount of time to deliver quality lessons either practical or theory based?*

- If so could you explain pressures to me?

(By the time pupils are changed in/ out of kit, equipment is set up/ put away)

- If you had more time in an ideal world how long would you like to see a P.E session last?

4) *In your opinion, how do you feel your P.E department have been supported by these following factors such as...?*

- Local authority
- Meetings with governors
- Other schools in the borough

#### **In regards to your pupils,**

5) *Are there any pupils with learning difficulties/ disabilities in your classes?*

- Roughly how many per class?

- Do you feel enough support can be given to them with one teacher taking the class? (If so, how is this support given? If not, in an ideal world what sort of things do you think would improve this?)

- Is there any specialist equipment/ facilities you have to support their needs?

6) *If it's noticed that a pupil is excelling or demonstrated potential within a certain sport/ sports, are there any (next steps) your school/ department can provide to encourage the development of pupil, adherence and increase their desire to improve? For example...*

- Liaise with outside clubs/ schemes
- If one pupil achieves success through this system, could encourage more to follow suite?
- Talent Identification programmes? (Scouts come into school etc)

7) *What do you find are the most common reasons why pupils do not participate in lessons?*

- Gender (self image/ confidence, fashion, culture, social environment)
- Influential others (peers, parents, teachers)
- Previous experience of P.E in primary or previous school
- Feel that they want more choice of activities/ improved facilities
- Ethnicity
- Pupils attitudes (lack of interest, not bringing kit etc)
- Learning difficulties/ disabilities

8) *Do you or have you ever had the opportunity to ask the pupils themselves what they would like to see in their P.E lessons?*

- If so how did you carry this out?
- Do they have opportunity to try out/explore new sports (external workshops), organised day trips to try new sports?

9) *Would you say that the pupils of this school have many positive sporting role models which have come from this school?*

- Are pupils sporting achievements celebrated (bigged up) and valued by entire school/ staff?
- In the past have pupils had the opportunity to meet or speak to any well known sports people who have achieve big success? (Inspire, motivate pupils to achieve the best)

10) *Are pupils given opportunities in your lessons to analyse, evaluate and feedback on their own performance?*

- How is this carried out, give example if possible?
- How often? (Would you like to see it happen more?)

**Ok great, so moving away from discussing your pupils I'll now ask you some questions regarding teaching and relationships you maintain between external influences,**

11) *How much emphasis would you say is placed upon a 'healthy active lifestyle' / 'lifestyle management throughout the P.E lessons?*

- How is this demonstrated?
- Would you say more emphasis is needed on this area?
- Is the 'healthy lifestyle' promoted throughout the school? (Posters, school dinners)

12) *Are you aware of any possible challenges/ shortcomings if any, that your school or P.E department face, when it comes to delivering high quality P.E lessons consistently? What are the main factors that influence why HQPE is not always achieved?*

- Examples (could you explain more?)
- Pupils (behavioural problems, reliability of staff, volunteers, coaches)
- Lack of high quality equipment (facilities, funding from council, small budget)
- Communication difficulties (liaising with other schools to set up matches, tournaments etc)
- Maybe a lack of support from key stakeholders (parents, governors, senior staff)

13) *How effective would you say your school- club links are in working together to achieve high quality?*

- Examples of how they liaise?
- If effective, briefly explain the system you have between the school and outside clubs?
- If not that effective why? (Could this role be delegated to someone else to ease the strain on teacher, sports leader officer/ 5x60 officers?)

14) *How do you and your staff go about ensuring that a good teacher-school/ parent relationship is maintained?*

- How is this communicated? (Is this always achieved? Why/ Why not?)
- Are they made aware of school sporting success and achievements?
- Do you believe that this support from parents is key in forming a strong P.E department?

16) *Would you say this school hold a high ethos for P.E, is P.E a strong part of the schools identity and culture? ... Rate (mark) this on a scale from 1- 10 (ten being the highest)*

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1

5

10

Okay great so that's the end of the interview... Are there any other issues you would like to discuss or add to what has already been said?

Ok, thank you very much for your time and taking part.

## APPENDIX: C

### Example of Informed Consent Form



#### Voluntary Consent Form

The following interview will be used as part of data analysis for my dissertation. The study will undertake a critical analysis of the prevalence of 'High Quality P.E' in secondary schools and the factors that influence its delivery.

Approval and support for this study has been sought and received from Dr Neil James Hennessy PhD, Cardiff Metropolitan University.

'By undertaking this interview I am consenting to any information that I provide being used as part of this study. Anything I do say is completely confidential and as I am a volunteering participant I may decline to answer any question if I don't feel comfortable and withdraw from the interview at any stage'.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Gwynne', with a horizontal line underneath.

Dated: 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2014.

## **APPENDIX: D**

### Participant Information Sheet

**Research title: The prevalence of 'High Quality PE' in Secondary Schools in South Wales and to what factors have influence.**

This information sheet will inform you of the aims and objectives of the study and explain what would be required of you if you were to take part.

This study will aim to explore the prevalence of high quality PE across a number of Secondary Schools in the South Wales area. It will identify to what extent high quality is being delivered, what areas of high quality are being delivered particularly well, as well as exploring the barriers teachers face in delivering this consistently.

If you were to agree in taking part in the study, you would be interviewed by myself for around 20- 30 minutes discussing the various elements of High Quality PE, to what extent you think this is being delivered and any barriers you feel you face, remembering that there is no right or wrong answer and it would just be purely your opinion.

As a volunteering participant you are not subjected to answer any questions if you don't feel comfortable in answering and may withdraw from the interview process at any stage. Your identity would be kept anonymous throughout the entire study.

The interview will be recorded for data analysis purposes only, the information gathered will allow for analysis and discussion into how High Quality PE is delivered and further discuss the barriers teachers are faced with. Any results obtained can be shared with you if you wish and transcripts can be checked over by yourself at any time.

For more information or further queries you're welcome to contact me and I'll be happy to answer any questions:

Emily Mitchell  
[st20000457@cardiffmet.ac.uk](mailto:st20000457@cardiffmet.ac.uk)

**APPENDIX E:**

Letter of Ethics Approval

Date: 20/2/14

To: Emily Kate Mitchell

Project reference number: 254U

Your project was recommended for approval by myself as supervisor and formally approved at the Cardiff School of Sport Research Ethics Committee meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> May 2013.

Yours sincerely

Supervisor

