

Purpose of Physical Education as Perceived by PE Students: The Goal Orientation Approach

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Abstract

The study examined the perceived purpose of physical education (PE) among (N=400) students in secondary schools in Tanzania (average age 17.1 years). Confirmatory factor analyses and reliability and correlation analyses supported the psychometric properties of the questionnaires. The results revealed that the perceived purpose of PE was conceptually related to how the students define success/failure in PE. Thus, how the purpose of PE was defined depended on whether the students focused on skill mastery, trying hard, and personal improvement (i.e. task orientation) or being better than other students and wanting to show that (i.e., ego orientation) or both. The results showed that task orientation related to the belief that PE develops lifetime skills and pro-social behaviours. On the other hand, ego-oriented students endorsed the view that PE was a means towards enhancing one's social status and teaching maladaptive behaviours. Conclusively, the findings validate in a cross-cultural context the arguments regarding the relationship between an individual's goals and world-view of the purpose of the activity. High ego-oriented students perceived enhancing their socio-economic status as the purpose of PE, thus providing no positive effects on motivation, and giving little support to the PE teachers to encourage the competitive ethos. To achieve morality and equality and make young people feel that physical activities should teach them to try their best, co-operate, obey the rules and authority, and become good citizens, then task-orientation among PE students should be fostered through systematic training by PE teachers.

Introduction

In recent years, diverse events have evoked a continuous and intense reappraisal of Physical Education (PE) in Tanzania. Constraints in the education sector, such as financial, social and educational problems facing students, compel experts in the field to examine more carefully the students' perceived purpose of education. In this broad context, PE has been reappraised and subjected to weighty pressures from both within and outside its own professional boundaries. At times, PE in schools has suffered due to political oversight and has been suspended for a period of time before being reintroduced (Azzah, 2010). In particular, between 2001 and 2010 PE was suspended from schools by the then Minister of Education and Culture (MoEC, 2001). The suspending of PE in primary and secondary schools before its reintroduction subject

recently has resulted in national consternation about its purpose. Recently, a PE curriculum has been developed from primary school through to high school (MoEVT, 2007). All of these influences and many others have raised continuing concern pertaining to a re-examination of the purpose of PE in schools. It is little wonder that physical educators, administrators and the public at large at times are confused about the major purpose of PE. Since its inception as a school programme in Tanzania, physical educators, individually and through their disciplines, have worked to promote a greater understanding of the purposes of PE. The term “physical education” goes beyond the more restricted, traditional conceptions (bodily training and movement) to include the broader and newer conceptions (personality education through movement and exercises).

Considering that PE is a fairly new subject in schools, curriculum developers and evaluators in Tanzania can benefit from the students’ views on the perceived purpose of PE (see Jewett, 1987). So far, no such study has been conducted using Tanzanian subjects in a situation in which the PE programme is growing and receiving much attention as a result of its introduction in schools at all levels. There is evidence that students and physical educators have different perceptions of the perceived purpose of PE (Ennis, 1985; Papaioannou & McDonald, 1993) in different countries (Speakman-Yeata, 1978). Due to the need to evaluate the PE curriculum and programmes, examining the purpose of PE as perceived by PE students is one step in that direction

The Motivation Perspective

Understanding the purpose of PE as perceived by PE students requires a theoretical perspective that is culturally sensitive. A great deal has been written and said about how motivation is central and universal in understanding why people become involved in a goal achievement situation such as physical education (see Roberts, 2001). Typically, motivation in the physical activity context refers to disposition, social variables, and/or cognitions that come into play when a person undertakes a task in which he or she is evaluated, or enters into competition with others, or attempts to attain some standard of excellence (e.g., see Roberts, 2001). Thus, from a social cognitive point of view, motivation may be defined as the organised patterning of at least one of three psychological constructs that energize, direct and regulate achievement behaviour in physical activity: personal goals, emotional arousal, and personal agency beliefs (Ford, 1992). Certainly, if you ask a group or class of students, who are participating in a PE lesson, why they behave the way they do, and what prompted them to be engaged in a goal achievement situation and what were the potential determinants of their participation in PE, everyone would come up with different reasons for doing so. For instance, several students may be impelled to perform the same task in the same way and with the same intensity for different reasons. Thus, using the motivation approach,

which is based on subjective assessment of the outcome by the participants depending on the goal of the action and the meaning of the context to the participant, is useful in examining the purpose of PE (Roberts, 2001; Maro, 2001).

Achievement Goals. Although various theories have been proposed to account for the motivational determinants of behaviour in youths (see Roberts, 1992), recent research based on the social cognitive perspective has focused on the goal achievement approach in understanding children's behaviour, cognitions and affective responses. The goal achievement orientation is the disposition that children (and adults) bring to PE and sports activities. Those who are mainly task-oriented will define success in terms of self-improvement, effort, co-operation, learning from their mistakes, and mastery of the task. Ego-oriented children, on the other hand, primarily define success in terms of winning (preferably with little effort) and showing a higher level of ability than others.

Of course, a person can possess both orientations to some extent (Fox, Goudas, Biddle, Duda, & Armstrong, 1994). The application of the goal achievement theory is supported by a growing body of research on education (Nicholls, Patashnik & Nolen, 1985), on sport (Duda, 1993; Roberts et al., 1995) and on PE (Papaioannou & McDonald, 1993; Papaioannou, 1998). However, the research on the relationship between goal perspectives and individual views regarding the purpose of PE is limited (Papaioannou, 1998), focusing basically on participants in American and European sport and PE (Duda et al., 1992). Thus, a study on the purpose of PE in the Tanzania context is required for the development of PE and sport that relates specifically to Tanzania.

Research has revealed that two major goal orientations take place in achievement situations such as in PE classes and the goal of the individual is a demonstration of ability. Thus, while it is clear that an individual wanting to achieve may have different goals, two main orientations have been identified, namely task and ego orientations (Roberts, 2001). These two orientations reflect the criteria individuals use to subjectively define success and failure in achievement situations such as PE classes (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Nicholls, 1989). Those wanting to achieve goals elicit qualitatively different patterns of involvement that have been associated with different beliefs about what constitutes success and different views concerning the purpose of involvement in PE (Nicholls, 1989; Papaioannou & McDonald, 1993). When an individual adopts a task-oriented goal, ability tends to become self-referenced, conceptualised as an effort where success and failure are judged on whether one is trying hard, and learning and understanding something more comprehensively. On the other hand, when an individual adopts an ego-oriented goal, perception of ability becomes other-referenced, with the main concern being to demonstrate normative ability and to avoid demonstrating comparative inability. With this goal, effort depends on the person's

ability and so he/she can only accomplish what is within his/her ability, which means that ability as capacity limits what effort can accomplish (Duda, 1992).

Thus, when an individual believes that ability or competence is demonstrated when mastery and learning are achieved having made a lot of effort, it means a state of involvement in the task exists. When the goal of the task is salient, an individual focuses on personal improvement to achieve greater competence in a subject, at which point an individual tries hard to learn and master new skills. In this regard, success is defined as personal progress, and mastery and achievement are seen as dependent on effort and the learning process is valued.

On the other hand, when an individual believes that ability or competence is demonstrated when more is achieved with less effort than others, it means an ego state of involvement exists. When the ego goal is salient people are concerned with how able they are relative to others. Their focus is to demonstrate greater ability by “beating” others, outperforming others or by achieving success with little effort. Thus, for an ego-oriented individual, success is defined as achieving a better performance than others and the major prerequisite of success is perceived as having greater ability. Therefore, individual achievement goals are driven by the person’s theory and conception of ability. People’s personal achievement goals in this case reflect their criteria for success, and are assumed to be linked to their world view on the purpose of education (Nicholls 1989; Nicholls, Patashnick & Nolen, 1985), of sport (Duda, 1989; Roberts et al., 1995), and of physical education (Papaioannou, 1992; 1994; Walling & Duda, 1995) in a conceptually coherent fashion.

On the whole, task-orientation has been associated with the belief that education is an end in itself. This means individuals should be socially committed and have a commitment to learning, understanding and mastering materials. Likewise in sport, task-orientation has been linked to the view that sport should foster honesty and respect, enhance one’s self-esteem, teach people to try their best, to co-operate and be good citizens. Also task-orientation has been linked to the purpose of PE, which is to promote mastery and co-operation (Papaioannou & McDonald, 1993). On the other hand, ego-orientation has been associated with the view that education is the means to another end, such as high socio-economic status and wealth. For students, this includes obtaining higher grades, showing superiority among peers, and admission to respectable higher-level schools. In PE, ego-orientation has been linked to the view that the purpose of PE is to enhance one’s social status (Papaioannou & McDonald, 1993).

Motivational Climate. The goal orientation theory considers an individual’s goal perspective in a particular setting as a function of dispositional (personal) and

situational factors (Maehr & Braskamp, 1986). The situational factors can cause the adoption of a particular goal by emphasising one of the two conceptions of ability. The performance climate is more likely to be generated when tasks incorporate normative ability, interpersonal competition or comparisons. If PE students are rewarded for performing better, then winning is stressed and mistakes are treated not as part of learning but negatively. This indicates a performance climate. The mastery climate, on the other hand, is more likely to be generated in contexts that emphasise the learning process, investment and progress. The mastery climate thus refers to a situation in which PE students are guided towards self-reference and are rewarded for trying (Ames, 1992).

As the motivational climate is regarded as a situation-induced one, directing the goals of action, it can affect the salience of specific goals (Ames, 1992). For example, childhood socialisation and the motivational climate created by a teacher can shape an individual's dispositional goal-orientation. Indeed, childhood socialisation has been found to have an impact on cognitive, affective and behavioural outcomes that affect the motivation of an individual participating in a physical activity (Ames, 1992). Consequently, goal orientations may relate to the motivational climate to which individuals are exposed in achievement contexts, and so the purpose of PE as perceived by adolescents can be determined from the goal-orientation perspective (Papaioannou & McDonald, 1993). Therefore, how a PE teacher shapes the environment through the teaching method and feedback is reflected in the students' perceptions of the purpose of the activity, and their perceptions and subjective experiences constitute an important factor in determining whether their involvement in PE activities will be task or ego oriented. Because PE is a valued subject in the school context, the goal perspective plays a major role in directing students towards adopting views and beliefs regarding the purpose of PE. Certainly, PE plays a major role in directing students towards acquiring a lifetime desire for a physically active lifestyle.

In fact, beliefs and views on the purpose of PE as well as an evaluation of the likely outcomes are governed by both the students' dispositional perspectives (task/ego) and the influence of the teacher through the motivational climate (mastery/performance). Papaioannou (1995) argued that if a PE teacher pays attention to whether students' skills are improving and whether he or she is satisfied when students are trying hard, the students will learn something new and their skills will improve. The teacher thus makes sure that the students progressively acquire new skills while acknowledging that students' mistakes are an integral part of learning. In such a scenario, the students are likely to perceive a mastery climate. In contrast, if a PE teacher only attends to and rewards the best performers, he or she encourages the students to outperform their mates. The teacher here only praises students when they outperform others, and boosts

inter-personal comparison and competition among the students. In this scenario, the PE students are likely to perceive the climate as performance-oriented. Hence, the role of the PE teacher is influential because the motivational climate created through his or her method of teaching, as well as the rewarding and evaluation system, has a great impact on how PE students perceive the purpose of PE.

Because the perceptions of an individual student are central in the motivational climate and the perceived purpose of PE, it is important to consider individual perceptions. In addition, the climate characteristics of the PE class may be uniform but each individual student makes use of his or her perception to influence his or her motivational outcomes in that climate. It is thus vital that the level of analysis is based on the individual and not the whole class. Recent research on sports has established that the perception of the mastery climate was associated with the view that the purpose of sports was to teach lifetime skills. This was also positively related to task orientation. In fact, the perceptions of the performance climate were positively linked to the view that the purpose of sport is to enhance one's social standing (Ommundsen et al., 1998; Seifriz et al., 1992).

The goal achievement theory thus predicts that there is a link between an individual's achievement goals his/her perception of the motivational climate in that achievement setting (Maehr & Braskamp, 1986). The motivational climate contributes to shaping the dispositional goal orientation by giving more significance to certain criteria that define success (e.g., winning versus improving). Specifically, this situational climate can affect the salience of specific goals and influence the adoption of either task or ego goals. Consequently, goal orientation may be related to the characteristics of the motivational climate surrounding the students (Nicholls, 1989; Ames & Archer, 1988). In short, there is compatibility between the perception of success and failure emphasised by the social environment and the personal theories of achievement that an individual will hold in that achievement setting. Indeed, research on sport has indicated that the perception of the mastery climate is linked to high task-orientation, whereas the perception of the performance climate is associated with high ego-orientation (Roberts & Ommundsen, 1996; Seifriz, Duda & Chi, 1992).

Several studies have examined the relationship between goal orientation and the perceived purpose of education, sport and recently physical education (Nicholls, 1989; Roberts et al., 1995; Roberts & Ommundsen 1996; Duda 1989, 1992; Papaioannou & McDonald, 1993). There is a need, therefore, to examine the goal orientations (task and ego goals) and the motivational climates (mastery and performance climates) created by PE teachers and to relate these to the views pertaining to the purpose of PE in the Tanzanian context. There is also a need to consider the fact that varying degrees of task

and ego can be found within the same person (Nicholls, 1989; Roberts et al., 1996). There is also a need to examine their impact on the beliefs and views on the purpose of PE. As childhood socialisation and experiences in PE classes are instrumental in a student's development, parents, teachers or coaches play a major role in shaping the dispositional goal orientation. Therefore, it is important to examine the purpose of PE within cross-cultural contexts, as different cultures differ in their criteria for defining success and failure (Maehr & Nicholls, 1980).

Aim of the study. The purpose of the present study was to examine the purpose of PE using the goal achievement approach. In this regard, we extended the studies of Nicholls et al., 1985; Duda, 1989; Duda et al., 1992; Roberts et al., 1995 and Papaioannou & McDonald, 1993 to investigate the pertinence of goal achievement and the motivational climate to students' views on the purpose of PE in the African cultural context. Because individuals are assumed to have both goals (task and ego) in varying degrees, we examined different combinations, such as high or low for both goals, as well as high in one and low in the other.

Congruent with Roberts et al., (1995) and Papaioannou & McDonald (1993), we expected that a firm belief in PE as a means to achieving status and recognition was associated more with the perception of the performance climate and strong ego-orientation. In contrast, we associated a firm belief in social responsibility and lifetime skills with the perception of the mastery climate and strong task-orientation, irrespective of the level of ego orientation.

We examined the above hypothesised relationships in the Tanzanian PE context, in which lessons were partly organised in games-like activities (Ndee, 1993). The students had increased awareness of task and ego orientations as well as mastery and performance climates due to exposure to these lessons.

Method

Participants and procedures

The participants were Tanzanian PE students taking part in co-educational PE classes in secondary schools. These participants constituted 400 PE students (221 males and 179 females) ranging in age from 14 to 23 (mean= 17. 21, SD=1.69). In this study, a PE student refers to a learner who has been voluntarily enrolled in PE classes for at least two years and who actively participated in sports and physical activities during this study. The age of 14 and older represents the age at which students of sports and physical education will have accumulated enough experience to enable them to continue with sports and physical activities (Telama, Laakso & Yang, 1994). The schools

where the student participants came from are located in semi-urban, middle-class areas in Dar es Salaam city. After informed consent was obtained, we visited the classes to recruit the student respondents who had agreed to participate on a voluntary basis. The participation instructions underscored the need for honesty, and assured the participants that their responses would be treated confidentially. Also explained was the fact that there were no right or wrong answers when responding to the questions in the questionnaire. With permission from the heads of schools granted, the students responded to the questionnaire in group settings. To obtain a representative sample, the schools were selected at random with a sample taken from each of these schools. All the 400 participants selected to take part in the study returned the questionnaire.

Measures

Information from the participants was obtained using the said questionnaires, which consisted of three scales measuring the perception of the students concerning the purpose of PE, as well as their disposition, goal orientation, and perception of the teacher-initiated motivational climate. In addition, two background variables were included, that is, their age and gender.

Perception of Success Questionnaire

To assess the task and ego orientations in the domain of PE, the Perception of Success Questionnaire (POSQ) was deployed. The POSQ has been developed as sport-specific measure of task and ego perspectives (Roberts & Balague, 1989, 1991) and has been found to be both reliable and valid in relation to American and European adolescents. To make the scale suitable for PE students, simple modifications were necessary, e.g., the word sport was replaced by physical education (PE). When completing the POSQ, the students were requested to consider when they felt most successful during PE and respond to 12 items, six (6) reflecting task and six (6) reflecting ego orientations. When completing the POSQ, the participants were requested to respond to the statement, "When participating in PE classes, I feel most successful when..." Responses were indicated on a 5-point Likert-scale (from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree).

Teacher-Initiated Motivational Climate in Physical education Questionnaire

To measure the students' perceptions of the motivational climate in PE, the Teacher Initiated Motivational Climate in Sport Questionnaire (TIMCPEQ) was modified and used in this study (Papaioannou, 1994, 1998). The scale consists of 12 items, six (6) measuring the mastery climate and six (6) measuring the performance climate. The 12 items were answered following the statement, "In physical education..." and the responses were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). An example of mastery items is "the PE teacher pays attention to whether my skills are improving" and an example of performance items is, "The PE

teacher attends to the best performers only.” The mastery and performance subscales have been shown to have high internal reliability and relatively good factor structures (Papaioannou, 1994, 1998).

Purpose of Physical Education Questionnaire

Based on the studies by Duda (1989); Roberts et al., (1995), Ommundsen, Roberts and Kavussanu (1998), Roberts and Ommundsen (1996), the purpose of the sport questionnaire was modified to suit the objective of this study. Responses were made to the statement, “A very important thing that physical activity does for me ” and had to be indicated on a 5 –point Likert-type scale, from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1).

Results

Because POSQ in this study was used in a cross-cultural context, including an extensive double translation—back translation process, we conducted factor analyses (Principal components with both varimax and oblique rotations and the number of factors not specified). The aim was to ascertain whether structures similar to those observed in America and Europe would emerge in a Tanzanian sample. As expected, the principal components analysis of the POSQ items resulted in two factors with eigenvalues >1.00 , accounting for 40.5% of variance, reflecting a task goal perspective and ego goal perspective. An examination of the rotated factors matrix revealed clearly two sets of items conceptually congruent with the original POSQ scale. The first factor included six (6) items suggesting task orientation (Eigenvalues = 2.90, % of variance = 24.2) and the second factor consisted of six (6) items reflecting ego orientation (Eigenvalues = 1.96, % of variance = 16.3). The reliability of the task and ego scales was satisfactory ($\alpha = .68$ and $\alpha = .76$), respectively. The criteria for acceptance of the factors were eigenvalues greater than or equal to 1, a variance that was greater than or equal to 5% and a factor weight of 0.50 that represents a significant minimum loading for inclusion in a factor (Tabashnick & Fidell, 2001). Therefore, in a cross-cultural and separate study, the stability of the task and ego subscales has been confirmed. Because the interrelations between the task items and ego items were low ($r = 0.138$), the result of the orthogonal rotation was acceptable. The two scales thus are found to be appropriate to measure the goal orientation of PE students in Tanzania.

Motivational climate scale

Because the motivational climate scale was used in cross-cultural contexts, a factor analysis using the principle component method was conducted resulting in two factors with eigenvalue >1 and 38.9% of variance explained. Six items (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .67$) reflecting the mastery climate constituted the first factor and accounted for 21.8% of the

variance (eigenvalue 2.62). The second factor accounted for 17.1 % of the variance (eigenvalue =2.05) and comprised six items reflecting the performance climate.

Purpose of PE Questionnaire

A factor analysis was conducted on 13 items reflecting social status—social responsibility and lifetime-related reasons for taking part in PE. Orthogonal and oblique rotations produced three factors accounting for eigenvalue > 1 accounting for 56.1% of the variance. The first factor accounting for 30.2 % of the variance (eigenvalue 3.9) comprised five (5) items (loadings ranging from .67 to .81) reflecting a belief that taking part in PE enhances one’s social status (for example “makes me look and feel important in front of other people”) (Cronbach’s alpha =. 80). The second subscale accounting for 15.8% of the variance (eigenvalue=2.1), consisting of five (5) items (loadings ranging from .60 to .77) focusing on social responsibility-related reasons for participation (e.g.,” teach to follow rules”) (Cronbach’s alpha .76). The last factor accounted for 10% of the variance (eigenvalue =1.3) and comprised three items reflecting the belief that taking part in PE contributes to good health and the development of lifetime skills (e.g., “develop increased awareness about health”)(Cronbach’s alpha, .65).

Relationship between Goal Orientation, Perception of Climate and PE Purpose

Simple correlations were calculated between the means of two goal orientations, the two motivational climate and the three purposes of PE subscales. As Table 1 shows, a consistent pattern of relationships emerged:

Table 1: Correlations between goal perspectives, motivational climate and PE purpose

	Social status	Social responsibility	Lifetime skills
Task orientation	.181	.299**	.382**
Ego orientation	.294**	.020	.073
Mastery climate	.154	.210**	.326**
Performance climate	.335**	.170*	.130

** .p< 0.01, * .p<0.05; N=400

The results indicated that there was a stronger positive relationship between task orientation and the belief that PE should foster social responsibility and lifetime skills

than was found in the case of ego orientation and these two perceived PE purposes. By contrast, a stronger positive correlation was observed between ego orientation and the belief that PE should enhance one's social status than in the case of task orientation. The perception of the mastery climate was positively related to social responsibility and lifetime skills, while the perception of the performance climate was positively and strongly related to enhancing social status.

Canonical correlation analysis was employed to further determine the multivariate relationship between the two goal orientations, the two climate scales and the three purposes of PE subscales for all participants. Two significant canonical functions emerged (Wilk's Lambda .671; canonical correlations were .488 and .345 for functions 1 and 2, respectively). Table 2 shows that there was a high positive loading for task orientation and a low moderate loading for ego orientation in Function 1. This goal orientation was positively related to the perception of the mastery climate and moderately to the performance climate. In addition, this goal perspective was positively related to the view that PE should enhance one's social status, and positively related to the view that PE should foster social responsibility and increased awareness of health and lifetime skills. Canonical loadings in Function 2 indicated a predominantly high ego orientation. This high ego orientation related positively to the perception of the performance climate and was associated positively with the view that the purpose of PE was to enhance one's social status. The canonical coefficients indicate the contribution of the variables to the multivariate relationship between the variable sets. To be considered significant, dependent variables must load at least 0.30 on any one function (Tabashnick & Fidell, 2001).

Table 2. Canonical loadings: Goal orientation in PE and related perception of climate and purpose of PE

	Function 1	Function 2
Goal orientation		
Task	.975	-.218
Ego	.350	.937
Climate		
Mastery	.631	.025
Performance	.321	.657
Purpose of PE		
Status	.483	.654
Social responsibility	.588	-.250

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to examine the purpose of PE in the framework of goal orientation in the Tanzanian PE context. Because the instruments were used in this context for the first time, their reliability and validity are very important. The use of POSQ, TIMCPEQ and the purpose of the PE questionnaire translated into Swahili was supported by the psychometric analyses in this study. The factor structure of the POSQ and TIMCPEQ was presented in the results section. The results from the factor analysis of the purpose of PE scale revealed that feeling important in front of people, getting recognition for winning, getting an opportunity to be recognised as talented, and getting status and an opportunity to feel important, loaded into the same factor (social status). Furthermore, the results revealed that teaching to follow rules, respect authority, be socially responsible, co-operate, and develop socially-desirable conduct loaded into the same factor (social responsibility). The reason that these items loaded together and related to task orientation is obvious: co-operating, and taking responsibility in physical activity is a more productive way towards achieving mastery than individual effort. Finally, the results showed that views on increased control over one's body, developing increased awareness about health, and encouraging a lifetime desire for regular exercise confirmed the validity of applying the measures in a cross-cultural context. Having determined the structure of the Kiswahili version of the measures, we then determined the relationship between goal orientation and the perceived purpose of PE.

Goal orientation and the purpose of PE

Recently, cognitive theorists have argued that a variation in goal perspectives relates to how people behave, feel, and process competence in achievement contexts (Ames, 1984; Dweck & Elliot 1983; Maehr & Braskamp, 1986). This argument was taken a step further by Nicholls et al (1985) and Nicholls (1989), who proposed that an individual's goals are consistent with his or her views regarding the perceived purpose of the activity.

Congruent with the previous research on education (Nicholls et al 1985; Thorkindsen 1988), in sport (Duda, 1989, Roberts et al., 1995; Duda et al., 1992) and in PE (Papaioannou & McDonald 1993), the perceived values and benefits of PE were conceptually related to how the students define success/failure in the achievement domain of PE (goal orientations) and the perception of the motivational climate created by the teacher. Specifically, the views of Tanzanian students on the purpose of PE were significantly predicated on whether they focused on skills mastery, trying hard and

personal improvement (i.e., task orientation), or being better than other students and wanting to show that (i.e., ego orientation), or both. This is in line with previous studies and adds further validity to the argument by Nicholls (1989) with regard to cross-cultural contexts.

As hypothesised earlier, the results showed that task orientation is related to the pro-social characteristics associated with taking part in PE. As a result, students who are highly task oriented tended to have the view that PE should inculcate the values of being socially responsible, co-operative and willing to follow rules and respect authority. Being highly task oriented was also related to the belief that PE cultivates lifetime skills such as health consciousness, and increases the probability that students will regularly participate in physical activity in their lifetime. Congruent with Duda (Duda, 1989; Duda et al., 1992), there was no relationship between task orientation and the view that the purpose of PE was to enhance one's social status.

On the other hand, the students who focused on the ego-oriented criteria to determine success and failure endorsed the view that PE was a means towards enhancing one's social status in the presence of others. As a result, ego-oriented students hold the view that PE should teach them to strive for socio-economic status by any means. These students value PE because it could help them appear important in the eyes of others, get recognition for winning and being talented, and enhance their social standing. In particular, when ego-orientation is emphasised in PE, it leads to a stronger belief in the fact that PE enhances one's social status and teaches students maladaptive behaviours. This shows that, within PE programmes, an emphasis on ego-orientation could lead to cheating, unsporting behaviour, e.g., injuring others on purpose to gain an advantage.

On the whole, the present findings may be interpreted within the goal achievement framework (Nicholls 1989) and support the cross-cultural context argument that different motivational views correspond to different world views. Furthermore, the findings support the previous studies (Duda 1989; Roberts et al 1995) on sport and (Papaioannou 1993) on PE. As students whose goals are highly task-oriented focus primarily on mastery and learning as an end in itself, and they take part in PE for the intrinsic rewards and values and pro-social elements, then one would expect task-oriented students to emphasise the socialising values of PE, such as lifelong interest in physical activity, health, serving society, loyalty, and pro-social attitudes and behaviours.

Similarly, as highly ego-oriented students hold the view that PE is a means to an end (superiority, status, recognition, etc), they would be expected to value winning as a criterion for success in PE and view PE as a means to demonstrate superior competence

to enhance their status in the presence of peers. Because it is the end that matters, these high ego students need to be aggressive, or even break the law to win at any cost, and so PE teach students to compete, be aggressive, and cheat where necessary if doing so would lead to winning, and sweep away other less endowed competitors.

For the newly re-established PE programmes in Tanzania with limited opportunities and resources, over-emphasising winning can lead to even more serious maladaptive behaviours. In such a context, it is not surprising to find participants in this study who endorsed both the task and ego orientations. This is understandable because, although it is important to focus on learning and understanding for its own sake, the limited resources and opportunities in their locale bring about the elements of competition and comparison. These limited resources and opportunities include furthering one's studies, career development, and stiff competition to play in the school team. Recognising that most of the schools had only a few balls (mostly one ball), one playground and severely limited PE equipment and other facilities, these findings are in line with the real situation. As a consequence, the PE students viewed the purpose of PE as both enhancing one's socio-status as well as fostering pro-social behaviours such as social responsibility, concern about health and developing lifetime skills.

Based on the theoretical perspectives of goal orientation (Nicholls, 1984a; 1984b) and related research, high task/low ego individuals will not be primarily concerned with outperforming others or being better than others because they do not process such capabilities in comparison to others. The positive relationship between high task/low ego should be expected because the purpose of PE is perceived to be an end in itself. High task/high ego individuals take part in PE as an end in itself as well as a means to another end, and so it is not unusual to find a positive relationship between both status and pro-social behaviour, such as social responsibility and lifetime health skills. As high task students focus their attention on the task and consider acquiring new skills, understanding and resolving problems as end in itself, they might take part in PE to acquire and enhance lifetime physical fitness skills and to improve their health.

Furthermore, task orientation has been implied as perfecting one's skills, or achieving mastery, and as expenditure of effort (Roberts, Treasure & Balague, 1998) and it has also been defined as improving one's personal mastery of a task (Duda, 1992). Thus, a high task-oriented student does not need to outperform others with little effort to achieve success. Therefore, task orientation can be associated with the view that taking part in PE teaches one to co-operate with others, be responsible, develop desirable social conduct while at the same time raising one's awareness about health and acquiring the desire to participate regularly in physical activities.

Consistent with the previous studies (Papaioannou, 1993), the results of this study showed a positive relationship between ego orientation and the view that PE should teach students to strive for socio-economic status by any means. Ego orientation in a particular domain is linked to the general belief that it is the end that matters and not the means. This implies that if one wants to be recognised for winning, get a chance to be recognised as talented, get an opportunity to feel important and get status in the school, then PE should teach and permit any means for achieving that end, such as aggression, cheating and breaking the rules.

For ego-oriented individuals, the tendency to evaluate their ability relative to those of others becomes more important than getting involved in the task for its own sake. Such individuals believe that success can be achieved through trying to beat others by demonstrating superior ability. On the whole, ego-oriented individuals view the purpose of PE as a means to another end such as enhancing one's status. This individual perceives getting recognition for being talented, having social standing in the school and an opportunity to feel important in front of peers as a salient outcome of taking part in PE. In order to meet these needs, ego-oriented students perceive that PE should teach people to be more competitive and cheat, or bend the rules whenever necessary. Furthermore, ego-oriented individuals think that a PE lesson should be easy, should have a hierarchical structure and provide opportunities for one to be recognised for outperforming others.

The fact that individuals in this study harboured both orientations at the same time and held both pro-social and "antisocial" views on the purpose of PE has significant implications for the previous studies (Bredemeier, 1985; Duda, 1989) that have bemoaned the competitive involvement of athletes in sports at academic institutions. Their misgivings were that such sports-oriented competitiveness teaches undesirable ways to achieve success in the face of fierce competition. Specifically, the findings in this study suggest that the PE context that emphasises winning at any costs, coupled with the hidden comparison and competition for the limited resources and opportunities, does not favour constructive youth development and long-term participation in PE and sports. Thus, rather than emphasising winning and the adoption of ego-orientation, PE teachers should instead concentrate their efforts and resources on emphasising making an improvement, trying hard, learning and understanding, and eventually the adoption of task orientation.

Conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to examine the purpose of PE based on the goal perspective in the Tanzanian cultural context. The study findings add further validity to

Nicholls' argument regarding the relationship between an individual's goals and world-views on the purpose of physical activity in cross-cultural contexts. As the high ego-oriented students perceived enhancing socio-economic status as the purpose of PE, thus providing no positive effects on motivation (Nicholls, 1989; Papaioannou, 1992), this finding gives little support to PE teachers to encourage the competitive ethos.

Extrapolating these findings to the real situation in Tanzania, if PE teachers want to counterbalance the comparison elements and competition for the limited resources and opportunities and want the PE students to participate in physical activities for their intrinsic benefits and to value lifetime participation, then promoting task orientation would be the best option. In addition, if PE teachers and coaches of adolescents' teams and clubs want young Tanzanians to feel that physical activities should teach them to try their best, co-operate, obey the rules and authority, and become good citizens, task orientation again offers that. Moreover, in the Tanzanian context, where there are big income and educational inequalities between the rich and poor, and between males and females, emphasising ego-orientation would simply aggravate the situation since over-emphasis on competition simply causes even more educational inequalities (Nicholls 1989). To achieve morality and equality among PE students, efforts should be made to stress personal improvement, the value of learning and the mastery of skills during PE lessons as ends in themselves.

Clearly, there is a need for further research to ascertain the contribution that all possible orthogonal goal achievement profiles make to individuals' perceived purpose of PE in the Tanzanian context. More importantly, there is a need for systematic training to be given to PE teachers and youth coaches in Tanzania on the strategies and instructional practices that foster the mastery climate in PE classes to enhance task orientation among PE students.

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