

Effects of Occupational Socialization on a Class with a Coaching Oriented Teacher

Dr. Andrew Young
Oakwood University
Assistant Professor
Health and Exercise Science
7000 Adventist Blvd NW, Huntsville, AL 35896
United States of America

The purpose of this study was to explain Calvin's* understanding and implementation of PSI based on his occupational socialization. The findings of this research study are considerably contrary with most of the research articles that have used occupational socialization. Unlike the research study conducted by Hannon et al. (2008), the implementation of the PSI instructional model seemed to achieve success for both the students and their teacher, this study showed some points of disconnect between the students and their teacher.

Acculturation

Like previous research studied on occupational socialization, this teacher wanted to become a PE teacher because he "has always liked playing sports." Because Calvin attended a small private school with limited extracurricular activities as a child, he did not play organized sports until he reached college where he played on the school's basketball team for four years. Although he had limited opportunities to play organized sports during his middle and high school years, Calvin believed that not playing organized sports at an early age did not hinder him from loving to play sports. His elementary and middle school PE teacher was not a certified teacher and mentioned that most of their PE time was actually "recess." When asked who had the biggest influence on him becoming a PE teacher, Calvin mentioned that his high school PE teacher and coaches were his biggest influence. He said,

My PE teacher in high school was my biggest influence only because he did fine with doing PE but he didn't like athletics per se. My actual coaches that coached me in basketball or any other sport baseball or whatever they had a bigger influence because they taught me the intricacies of sports and how to learn it and then play it and teach it um so I think I got a big influence from my coaches that actually coached me more so then my PE teacher even though he helped a lot. (Personal communication, January 20, 2015)

Professional Socialization

Calvin attended a college that he believes prepared him well for teaching in the area of physical education. This program was at a traditional four-year private institution that had a small cohort of students enrolled in their health and physical education program. Although the college provided coursework over a four-year period, there were very limited opportunities for the students to participate in engaged teaching practicums and student development programs to aid them in becoming good teachers. When asked if he believed his college prepared him for teaching in the classroom, he stated,

I think, uh, the teachers I had prepared us to know and understand sports and activities and with the education...like I said, taking those classes actually helped with the management of the students, uh, it taught you the different educational backgrounds of students. It taught you the different problems the students may have and in turn teaches you how to work around the issues and work around the problems and work with each student and not teach generally but work with each student to figure out their teaching or learning style and be able to help them. (Personal communication, January 20, 2015)

Also, this program did not incorporate different instructional models other than the traditional style of teaching. Calvin was very positive that his institution had equipped him with the tools he needed to be successful in the classroom.

Organizational Socialization

The school where Calvin was employed had two PE teachers who worked separately from each other, only concerning themselves with the classes they each taught. Calvin's teaching responsibilities were the middle and high school students, while the other PE teacher was responsible for the elementary students. Calvin's teaching and student learning opportunities seemed to operate within a weak coaching-oriented traditional style of teaching (Matanin & Collier, 2003). In other words, Calvin entered PE because of a desire to coach and play sports, and his teaching reflected these values: "The experiences with my coaches inspired me to coach and teach kids because I knew I was good at sports." It was Lawson (1983a, Syrmpas, & Digelidis, 2014) who suggested that coaching-oriented teachers whose PETE programs had little to no effect on them were more likely not to use effective teaching practices and would subject themselves to a low quality of teaching PE. Although Calvin was participating in a professional development program throughout the duration of the PSI unit, he was reluctant to make drastic changes to his teaching style and consistently reverted back to his style of teaching.

Support from the principal and other members of the administration team concerning Calvin's classes seemed to be present as long as the activities did not become a "financial burden."

Yes, I have the support as long as I have the facilities to do the activities; um, with implementing different activities for the school I think they are ok with almost anything as long as it's not financially a burden for the school so any activity that is feasible along those lines, you know, is not a problem as long as the insurance liability isn't great then doing the activity should be ok. (Personal communication, January 20, 2015)

Calvin also stated, "they don't know anything about PE and as long as I keep the kids safe and they are not getting in trouble, I don't think they care." Neither the principal nor any administrators came to see what was going on in the classroom during the time of this research.

PSI Unit: Cafeteria Approach

Calvin demonstrated what was considered by Curtner-Smith (2008) as a cafeteria approach to the PSI unit. Within the cafeteria approach, only portions of an instructional model are used to teach the students the units. Calvin, choosing only to use certain portions of the PSI unit, used more of a traditional style of teaching where the teacher dictated how, when, and what would be taught during the lesson which is not the goal of the PSI instructional model. Each day the students were brought together at the beginning of class and were informed of the day's activity. Then, Calvin split the students into groups of two working together on the chosen day's activity. Each student was given his or her own workbook to record their results and for opportunities of advancement through the workbooks at their own pace. This, however, was not the case. When the workbooks were collected, many sections of the books were not completed but students were told to move ahead in the workbook to keep up with the rest of the class. This chosen method of implementation of the PSI curriculum by Calvin did not allow a majority of the students the opportunity to master the skills needed to be effective participants within the instructional model. When asked how he would explain the PSI instructional model and how he understands the operation functions of the model to be, Calvin stated,

It gives the students authority...in other words...to go at their own pace. Some definitely go further ahead than others, some are willing; some are enthusiastic about it because they don't have to wait for the whole class to reach a certain point. You know, they can progress as they feel. And half and half, a lot of the kids that were able to go ahead enjoyed it. And the kids that didn't go ahead is because they were playing around mainly, but once they started getting into it they felt or they saw the ownership of it and wanted to do it. Basically it's a book that they are reading through and if they understand and they finish each point at their own pace then they can move on and not have to wait for the teacher to say ok we are changing activities we are moving onto another activity. You know. They can move on as they grasp and finish their activity. (Formal interview, February 3, 2015)

He did state that he "likes the idea of the instructional model [and] did not believe the student could handle learning on their own." The teacher also mentioned this is the best way for his students because they like being with each other and not separate.

If you separate them they will not participate in class at all. They want to stay together as well. Everybody likes most of them like to do what everybody else is doing so I think it was more of them than me that wanted to keep it together, they want to stay together and do what each other is doing and they want to progress in the same way. The ones that realized that I can get this and they can do this and wanted to get better go ahead. (Formal interview, February 3, 2015)

Although Calvin did not incorporate a full version of the PSI instructional model unit, there were some positive developments that were discovered. When asked if he saw any improvements in his students during the implementation of the badminton unit, he articulated his answer in a way a teacher who used a full version of the model would.

I saw improvements in the students that had desire to learn um if I'm teaching a class the regular normal way they everybody usually does it um the kids that have interest they want to do more but they can't because everybody else has to be on the same page basically so it slows their process down but within this model if they had the interest and they had the knowledge of activity they can move on faster to the next activity to the next activity before the rest of them and the rest of them wouldn't miss out or their grades wouldn't get hurt because they were moving slower, it would just be where they are, how they did, and where they finished and it would go according to that instead of it being everybody's in the same boat gotta grade everybody on the same quote unquote curve for what they are doing. (Formal interview, March 10, 2015)

For clarification, Calvin was asked to give a specific example of a student who he felt improved:

Um I had a girl that in the very beginning couldn't hit the birdie for any reason at all um but they went through the video they saw how to hit it, they saw the progression of the swing demonstrated a couple of times, re-demonstrated another couple of times and then was finally able to catch on to be able to serve and in turn being able to serve helped her to figure out how to forehand drives and everything else because she grasps one thing. Within that grasping it, it became something that she wanted to do because it wasn't hard it was just something that she just had to get done first and then after she got it done then she was able to do a lot more and get better at it. (Formal interview, March 10, 2015)

Calvin did show some signs of wanting to incorporate new teaching style. When asked if he felt the instructional model had enhanced or changed his teaching, it was confirmed that possible teaching and instructional habits could be given a chance if tried again.

Let's see enhanced or changed, um, changed a little. I would prefer to give students more ability to move on their own throughout the activity instead of having to wait um because you have different ranges of knowledge and activity or skill and activity so if they're able to move on and it be label because within this one you have to um do certain activities that label each thing that you do and as you see the progression you can move onto the next thing so if I can see that in every activity that we're doing, then I don't have to just base it on one thing that they are doing in class each day. I can see the activity in the book, I can see the progression of it and I can see what they are doing in class to see if that progression was true or false so it would help to see that and not just go off of each day-to-day. (Formal interview, March 10, 2015)

Although Calvin was not successful in implementing the PSI instructional model, his reaction to the aftermath perhaps suggests that he may be willing to do things differently if given another chance. The data that was collected and coded showed that the teacher of this study (Calvin) had a difficult time making changes from his preferred teaching method to use of the PSI instructional model. Based on data collected, the method in which Calvin chose to implement the PSI instructional model was a "cafeteria" approach.

The data collected through the formal and informal interviews, along with the field notes recorded, would suggest Calvin would be considered what Lawson (1983a, 1983b) describes, a coaching-oriented type of teacher. Coaching-oriented type teachers are teachers who were drawn to the physical education profession from either their experience in extracurricular sports or the will to want to coach extracurricular sports and use physical education as a possible avenue toward a coaching career. All of the class sessions were taught in a manner that would suggest the students were a part of a team. The flow and temperament of the class were controlled and instructed by Calvin. There were also suggestions from the stimulated recall interviews and informal interviews of class exclusion. A majority of Calvin's instruction time was spent with the more athletic students of the class.

When asked during a stimulated recall interview as to why he was not giving a particular student any help and why majority of his time was spent with another student, Calvin responded,

I spent most of my time with Johnny because I can see that Johnny has a lot of potential and I know if I just help him with just one or two things then, he is going to be good. On the other hand, I can't work with Jill. She has no hope. It does not matter how many times I show her what to do, she is just not going to get it. So I choose to teach the students who will give their all and who want to learn how to play. (Formal interview, March 10, 2015)

The finding of this study seems to suggest that Calvin may be only concerned teaching those students who are athletically endowed and not spending as much time teaching students who are challenged athletically. Not only was this noticed through the numerous methods of data collection, but there were signs that some of the students noticed who and what type of students were getting the attention of the teacher. While recording observation notes, one female student replied this way to another student when they had a question to ask, "I hate asking him questions. He acts as if he does not see my hand up. I know he sees it. I bet he would answer Johnny's hand." When Calvin was asked about this response during one of the formal interviews, he laughed and said, "that girl is always making something bigger than what it is." He seems to believe that this type of response is normal behavior from this student.

*Calvin is a pseudonym for a coaching oriented middle-school physical education teacher, implementing the personalized system of instruction, instructional model.

References

- Curtner-Smith, M. D., Hastie, P. A., & Kinchin, G. D. (2008). Influence of occupational socialization on beginning teachers' interpretation and delivery of sport education. *Sport, Education and Society*, 13(1), 97-117.
- Hannon, J. C., Holt, B. J., & Hatten, J. D. (2008). Personalized system of instruction model: Teaching health-related fitness content in high school physical education. *Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, 2(2), 20-33.
- Lawson, H. A. (1983a). Toward a model of teacher socialization in physical education: the subjective warrant, recruitment, and teacher education (Part 1). *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 2, 3-16.
- Lawson, H. A. (1983b). Toward a model of teacher socialization in physical education: entry into schools, teachers' role orientations, and longevity in teaching (Part 2). *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 3, 3-15.
- Matanin, M., & Collier, C. (2003). Longitudinal analysis of preservice teachers' beliefs about teaching physical education. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 22(2), 153-168.
- Syrmpas, I., & Digelidis, N. (2014). Physical education student teachers' experiences with and perceptions of teaching styles. *Journal of Physical Education and Sport*, 14(1), 52.