

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CROATIAN AND ENGLISH COMPULSORY TEACHING OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUMS

Dora Šek, Boris Neljak, Vilko Petrić and Lovro Štefan

Faculty of Kinesiology, University of Zagreb, Croatia

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Abstract

The main objective of this study was determining the basic differences between the Croatian and English compulsory teaching physical education curriculums. Variables consisted of Plan and programme for primary school – physical education, which represented Croatian curricula and National curricula of England. The main research method that has been used is content analysis method. Another used method is Chi-square test and all data were presented strictly in quantitative values. Results showed statistical differences between compulsory physical education duration ($p < 0,05$) between Croatia and England. Also, there were statistical differences between kinanthropological, educational and upbringing-related guidelines ($p < 0,05$) in both countries. Based on obtained results, to standardise educational curricula for physical education, in the first plan, construct and physical education system must be better organized, well-prescribed and systematized with other countries.

Key words: curriculum, educational system, physical education time allocation, goals, learning outcomes

Introduction

In general, physical education is comprised of different spectres of initiatives, impacts and development with previous adopted and adapted by national systems. When we talk about general physical education state in Europe and the world, there are three sub-organisation models of each school system: centralized, semi centralized and decentralized. Semi centralized model is the equivalent of political system where performed fund of hours within the plan and programme are determined by the local government. It is necessary to emphasize that the level of their independence is based on general legal provisions of each country. When country apparatus defines fund of plan and programme hours for each subject and when lesson themes have been defined for all lesson topics, than it comes to centralized system of schooling, like in Croatia. Along with that, basic plan and programme of each county is curricula and it prescribes: school duration on some school levels, goals and tasks of education, ways to evaluate student's work, basic postulates of educational work, along with outcomes and competencies of each student. This sentence confirms the study of Hardman (2008), where dominant participation in physical education from early ages was extremely important for regular motor development of students, and in that way represented the main segment of creating optimal development of conditional abilities during most sensitive years of growing and maturing. When access to physical education topics ends to early, children start to exclude themselves from any kind of physical education activities (Hardman and Marshall, 2006). With the further examination of findings, variations in time distribution implementation of physical education were identified (Hardman and Marshall, 2008).

Weekly distribution of physical education implementation in European Union countries is 109 minutes (with variations between 30 and 240 minutes) in primary and 101 minutes (with variations between 45 and 240 minutes) in secondary schools.

Furthermore, following the results conducted in England (Norman and Black, 1984), it was concluded that 33% of primary and secondary schools gave 2 hours of physical education, using topics which didn't include sport, while 35% of primary and 50% of secondary schools gave equally amount of time teaching physical education, within sport was included. In England, terrifying data showed that 77% of primary and secondary school respected minimum of compulsory conditions of physical education implementation (Chadderton, 1982). Material conditions led to unexpected costs, that were predicted for year 2002 to £2 billion annually (Kelso, 2002) and were caused by sedentary way of life and cessation of doing physical activity. Related to that, study of Fairclough and Stratton (2004) showed that, from total time of physical education class duration, medium to high work intensity among secondary school male students included 19,1% of the time, while this number was slightly higher among female students; 23,4%.

One of the basic segments of physical education in Croatia is a document under the name „National general curricula for pre-school education and general compulsory high-school education in Republic of Croatia“. Mentioned document has been active since 2010, and has been approved by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport. According to that, basic characteristic of that document is

focus on student's achievements, along with competencies, which must be gained during educational cycle (Tot, 2010). Basic purpose of physical education, besides conscious development of healthy way of life, is to adopt and perfect knowledge, skills and habits (Nok, 2010).

Also, Neljak et al. (2011) reported on a sample of 237 students of Technical high-school that competencies, like physical exercise impact on anthropological status; gaining healthy nutritional habits; ability to solve problems in urgent situations, were extremely important to every individual. Baranović et al. (2004) presented results, in which physical education was the most interested to students population. On the other hand, only 10% of all students had preparations for physical education classes more than 1 hour/week.

Based on obtained results from mentioned studies conducted in England and Croatia, the aim of the study was to evaluate, besides compulsory physical education duration, curricula goals, tasks of kinanthropological, education and upbringing-related guidelines, along with curricula topics within the physical education system.

Methods

Sample of entities in this study were published curricula of physical education in Croatia and England. All bases of data were searched in the library of Faculty of Kinesiology and Middlesex University from London in England, along with official pages of competent Ministries of each country.

Selection

There were total of seven curricula of physical education found in Croatia and two curricula in England. Based on criteria that some of them were published, six curricula were isolated in Croatia.

Next step was to pick those curricula strongly related to the compulsory physical education duration, which were currently active. After selection, in each country, one current curricula was chosen of each country.

1. Currently valid *Plan and programme for primary school – physical education*, published in „Croatian national education standard“, in Zagreb, August, 2006.

2. Currently valid *National curricula of England*, published on official pages of United Kingdom government (www.gov.uk) from the Department of education, in September, 2013.

Coding

Common components of previously mentioned curricula were: goal, tasks and topics. Based on those settings, goal of each programme was separated. Tasks were divided on kinanthropological, educational and upbringing-related guidelines (Neljak, 2013). Kinanthropological guideline was comprised of

permanent motor and functional ability transformations, along with morphological traits transformation. Educational guideline was comprised of those tasks which applied on theoretical and motor knowledge. Upbringing-related guideline was comprised of programme tasks which were connected towards creating positive values and physical exercise.

Statistical analysis

Leading methodology of this study was the analysis of content. The analysis of content was a quantity method that include and observe standard of objectivity and intersubjectivity, reliability, validity, generalization, repeatability and the possibility of testing hypotheses (Neuendorf, 2002). This method helped to identify, establish and classify basic constructs of each curricula as a subject of the study.

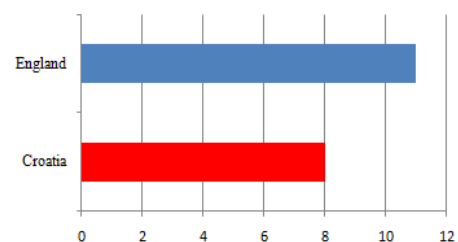
In that way, educational, kinanthropological and upbringing-related guidelines were presented, along with physical education topics of each curricula. To determine whether there were statistical correlations between variables, Chi-square test was used.

In this study, Chi-square test was used for two or more independent samples and obtained results would be presented as percentages and categories.

Results

Time duration of compulsory physical education

Graph 1, represented compulsory education duration in Croatia and England on statistical significant level ($p < 0,05$). In Croatia, compulsory physical education lasts 8 years, while in England 11 years.



Graph 1. *Time differences between physical education duration based on curricula*

Physical education goals

Every country has its own main goal of physical education curricula.

Physical education can't be directed towards on physical development only, but on social and emotional development, cognitive processes, motivational and moral concepts. Based on that, every country has to recognize physical, personal and social development (European Commission, 2013). Table 1. showed prescribed goals of educational area.

Table 1. Cited goals of subject's area

Country and curricula	Description
Croatia-National plan and programme for primary school-physical education (2006)	„Habilitate students for theoretical and motor knowledge application which allow single physical exercise towards better quality of life. In the same time changing traits and ability developments, thus directly providing of health, like irreplaceable factor of each human activities“
England-National curricula of England-physical education (2013)	„With high quality physical education timetable, encourage and motivate students for success in competitive sport and in other physical activities. Physical education gives students physical preparedness and safe, leading to improved and maintained health status. Possibility of competitions in sports activities encourages personality development and basic life values like respect and honour“

Curricula tasks of physical education

Curricula goals are oriented on skills, knowledge and abilities towards physical, personal and social development, with healthy way of life. According to Neljak (2013), physical education tasks comes from educational, kinanthropological and upbringing-related guidelines. Only with harmonized application of all guidelines, optimal development and perfecting abilities, knowledge and traits are achieved. Results in graph 2. represented differences of each guideline between Croatia and England. Statistical differences were observed in educational guideline (p=0,04), kinanthropological guideline (p=0,04) and upbringing-related guideline (p=0,02).

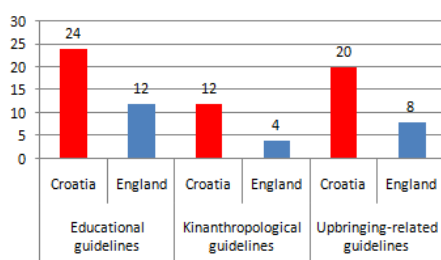


Figure 2. Differences between each guideline in both England and Croatia

Curricula topics of physical education

Results from graph 3. showed distribution of physical education topics in Croatia and England. From the obtained results, topics like „track and field“, „dance“, „games“ and „gymnastics“ had the highest values, both in Croatia and England, while England had better developed topics like „health and fitness“, „activities in nature“ and „swimming“.

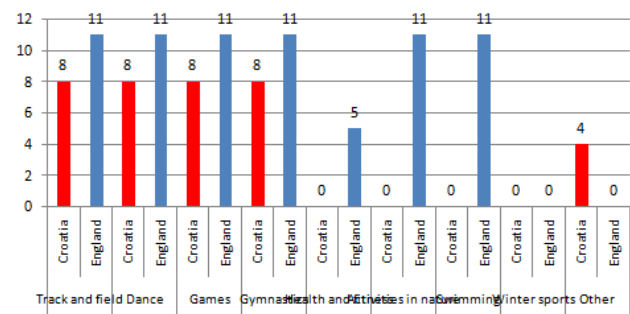


Figure 3. Differences between physical education topics in Croatia and England

Discussion

According to report of European Commission in 2013., compulsory physical education duration in primary and secondary schools was prescribed by National education system of every country. In England, compulsory physical education duration was obligatory in primary and secondary school, while in Croatia, only primary 8-year education was obligatory. Students included in obligatory system of physical education, when they turned 7 years old, and their obligatory education finished when they were 15. In England, compulsory physical education performed 11 years. In that way, obligatory education started in the age of 5, till the age of 15 (Neljak, 2013). Based on that, Republic of Croatia deviated from the European average, which was 12 years (Hardman, 2008). Basic general goal of physical education in Republic of Croatia was oriented towards creating habits for regular whole-life exercise, while in England on success and achievements, along with developing characteristics and positive life values through sport and other competitions. From the cited goals of physical education area, health status was primary goal of both curricula. So, it could be concluded that improving and maintaining favorable health status represents basic postulate for achieving other goal components. If primary component was satisfied, health status was defined as affordable. In that way, later specification of goal components was not necessary any more, according to regular and organized physical activity. Observing the obtained results, essence of educational guideline referred to gaining wide spectrum of basic and specific kinesiological theoretical and prescribed motor knowledge, as specific postulate of achieving purpose of physical education. According to Neljak (2013), if basic theoretical knowledge was not established, student couldn't be prepared for independent physical exercise. Also, for effective physical activity implementation, kinesiological and motor knowledge had to be on high level of learning. Results from graph 2. showed that number of educational tasks in Croatia exceeded the number of educational tasks in England for 50% (p=0,04). Quantitatively comparing, kinanthropological guideline was more represented in curricula of Croatia, where their number was 12, compared to England with 8. Also, kinanthropological guidelines

were much more detailed and well-established, while they were more general written in England. For example, in Croatia, general tasks of kinanthropological guideline were: (1) knowing the laws of growth and development of basic anthropological characteristics; (2) body composition evaluation and obesity prevention. Furthermore, tasks of the 3rd development period were: (1) ratio between adequate amount of muscle mass and fat mass by sing different kinesiological topics; (2) cardio respiratory development by preventing sedentary way of life, while in England, one of basic tasks of physical education was: (1) ability development for decoration in width variety of physical activities. Also, task for the Key Stage 1 in England was: (1) balance, agility and coordination development for usage the same in different kind of activities. based on this two examples, Croatian curricula was much more detailed and precisely written, than curricula from England. Upbringing-related guidelines, also like kinanthropological and educational guidelines, were well-established in the official document: "National plan and programme for primary school-physical education (2006)" used in compulsory physical education. Basic tasks of physical education were: (1) needs satisfaction for movement and encouraging independent doing of physical exercise; (2) developing and nurturing health habits; (3) promoting of general human values. In England, tasks of physical education represented: (1) habilitating students equally for participating in competitive and other exercise activities; (2) habilitating students for healthy and quality way of living. Based on more detailed presentation of educational and kinanthropological guidelines in Croatia, upbringing-related guidelines had also better understanding and explanation in Croatian curricula.

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As presented through graph 3., „track and field“, „dance“, „games“ and „gymnastics“ were the most represented topics in Croatia and England. For better understanding, those for topics were compulsory through whole 8 years of compulsory education (physical education) in Croatia and 11 years in England. „Activities in nature“ and „swimming“ were topics of English curricula for 11 years, while „health and fitness“ for only 4 years through compulsory education. It is necessary to integrate those topics into Croatian curricula. Topic „Other“ referred to combat structures, characteristic of Croatian curricula, applicable from 5th-8th grade of compulsory primary school education. Winter sports were not part of the curricula, neither in Croatia and England.

Conclusion

This paper represents the fact that most of the European countries consider physical education timetable compulsory subject and have integrated into the national curricula (Hardman, 2008). In England, compulsory physical education is conducted through whole primary and secondary education, which gives a lot of space to achieve and maintain fitness level. However, as mentioned before, English curricula is much more generally written, due to the system of schooling. Their curricula is based on decentralized system, which gives each school independence of creating individual modifications. Furthermore, physical education topics are established in ahead in Croatia, while in England, they are left to the teacher. All of this statements are referred on curricula changes where, in the first plan, construct and physical education system must be better organized, well-prescribed and systematized with other countries.

RAZLIKE IZMEĐU HRVATSKOG I ENGLSKOG OBAVEZNOG POUČAVANJA KURIKULUMA TJELESNOG ODGOJA

Sažetak

Glavni cilj ovog istraživanja je određivanje osnovnih razlika između hrvatskog i engleskog obaveznog poučavanja nastavnog plana tjelesnog odgoja. Varijable su se sastojale od Plana i programa za osnovnu školu - tjelesni odgoj, što je predstavljalo hrvatske nastavne planove i Državne nastavne planove Engleske. Glavna metoda istraživanja koja je bila korištena je metoda analize sadržaja. Još jedna korištena metoda je hi-kvadrat test i svi podaci su bili predstavljeni strogo u kvantitativnim vrijednostima. Rezultati su pokazali statističku razliku u trajanju obaveznog tjelesnog odgoja ($p < 0,05$) između Hrvatske i Engleske. Također, postojale su statističke razlike između kinantropoloških, obrazovnih i za odgoj vezanih smjernica ($p > 0,05$) u obje države. Zasnovano na prikupljenim rezultatima, u svrhu standardizacije obrazovnih nastavnih planova za tjelesni odgoj, u prvom planu nacrt i sustav tjelesnog odgoja moraju biti bolje organizirani, dobro propisani i sistematizirani s drugim državama.

Ključne riječi: nastavni plan, obrazovni sustav, raspodjela vremena tjelesnog odgoja, ciljevi, ishodi učenja,

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Correspondence to:

Vilko Petrić

University of Zagreb

Faculty of Kinesiology

10000 Zagreb, Horvaćanski zavoj 15, Croatia

Tel: 00 385 (0)1 36 58 666

E-mail: vilko.petric@kif.hr