



Analysis of Movement Activities Curriculum and Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals in Kenya

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Abstract

Research has shown that Physical education (PE) and sports programmes, currently referred to as Movement activities in the lower primary Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) in Kenya, impacts on the physical, mental, social and emotional growth of individuals. The programmes produce individuals who are competent, confident and endowed with knowledge, skills and attitudes for lifelong physical activity. To some extent, the programmes contribute to societal development, which leads to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The aim of the current analysis was to find the extent to which movement activities in CBC is geared towards the achievement of the SDGs using Posner's curriculum analysis framework. Research findings show that the curriculum is committed to achieving the SDGs for instance, good health and quality education. Maintaining the commitment and determination in implementing the movement activities curriculum will go a long way in actualizing the SDGs in Kenya.

Introduction

Sports and PE programmes have been recognized to have played a catalyst role in enhancing the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2000. The role of sport in advancing social progress has further been acknowledged in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN General Assembly (UNGA), 2015). The United Nations has continued to recognize, advocate and support the contribution of sports programmes as cost-effective and flexible tools for promoting peace and developmental objectives (UNOSDP, n.d; Lemke, 2016). While ACARA (2016), noted that PE is closely tied to the cognitive, socio-emotional and motor development of individuals, there is evidence to show that regular physical activity helps to address a variety of non-communicable diseases, for instance, obesity, heart diseases, diabetes and some forms of cancer (WHO, 2014). Macfadyen and Bailey (2002) further posit that PE teaches self-discipline, improves self-confidence and self-esteem, influences moral development, facilitates socialization, development of social skills and nurtures leadership skills. Physical activity also exerts a beneficial effect on several mental health outcomes such as improved cognitive performance (Hillman et al., 2008).

PE and sports programme is an essential component of quality education and an integral part of lifelong learning (United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force, 2005). It is the only subject in the school curriculum that provides learners with opportunities to learn motor skills, develop physical fitness and gain understanding about physical activity. It combines the body and physical competence with value-based learning and communication (UNESCO, 2015). The

United Nations Charter states that sport is a fundamental right for all since it is an essential element of any education system (UNESCO, 1978).

Despite the vital role that physical activity plays in the life of individuals, the provision of PE in schools has declined in a number of countries (United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force, 2005, Hardman, 2008). In the United Kingdom, PE is ineffectively delivered in primary schools (Griggs, 2012), while in some African countries, the status of PE is low and has been side-lined (Ajisafe, 1997). This is due to pressure for good academic performance, inadequate time allocation, poor state of learning facilities and equipment, lack of adequately trained teachers and poor attitudes from teachers, learners and parents towards PE (Hardman 2008; DiFiore, 2010). Similar challenges are experienced in Ghana and Nigeria (Ammah & Kwaw, 2005; Salokun, 2005). This situation reduces the quality of education and has negative future impacts on public health and health budgets (United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force, 2005).

PE in Kenya has been a compulsory subject at primary school, secondary school and teacher training colleges in both the 7-4-2-3 and 8-4-4 curriculum. However, over the years, Kenyan researchers have pointed out that PE as a subject in the school curriculum has not been emphasized as required (Muinu. 1986, Muindi, 1998 & Nyonje 2004). The studies reveal that the Kenyan education systems has been inclined to academic excellence at the expense of teaching some practical subjects such as PE. A major challenge of the 8-4-4 system is that it is too rigid, academic oriented and has limited opportunities to align basic education with learners' career interests, aptitudes and abilities. The limitations of the education systems have necessitated the new 2-6-3-3-3 curriculum reform.

The new curriculum dispensation is in line with the 2010 Kenya constitution, Vision 2030, the East African Community (EAC) Curriculum Harmonization Structures and Framework and the SDGs 2015. Based on the national needs assessment study in 2016, international best practices in education systems and curriculum reforms, and a desire to make learning more meaningful, The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) resolved to adopt a Competency-Based Approach (CBA) (RoK, 2017a). This curriculum emphasizes more on what learners are expected to do rather than focusing on what they are expected to know, and especially how best they can use their talents to make a living. The Constitution 2010 recognises play as a fundamental human right while the Vision 2030's social pillar addresses health issues which relate to physical activity. Thus, the Movement activities curriculum provides an avenue through which learners can participate in play and physical activity. This paper examines the extent to which Movement activities in competency-based curriculum contributes to the achievement of SDGs.

Literature on movement activities/PE and Sports and sustainable development goals

According to the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force (2005), PE and sports can serve as a catalyst for achieving 17 SDGs, directly through physical activity and indirectly by educating learners about the important developmental issues. For instance, framing the SDGs in a sports context facilitates access to groups of people that might have been difficult to engage with and raise difficult topics such as the sexual and reproductive health (Berry, 2017).

United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace UNOSDP (n.d), posits that, sports can be used as a platform to campaign for socio-economic progress by raising funds to alleviate poverty (SDG goal 1) through employment. For instance, Lengo football academy in Tanzania has educational sponsorship programmes for players and further provides their families with capital to start business (Strauss, 2016).

UNOSDP (n.d) postulates that, sport-based initiatives can create awareness, mobilize resources and the public towards ending hunger (SDG goal 2). For instance, The Jack Brewer Foundation (JBF Worldwide) provides relief to communities suffering from extreme poverty and hunger, using sport as its catalyst. The Foundation mobilizes professional athletes to bring awareness and recognition to the issues of hunger and food insecurity (Brewer, 2016).

Regular physical activity reduces the risks of non-communicable diseases and enhances psychological and social health (Lindsey and Chapman (2017). Kaufman, Spencer and Ross (2013) found that sport-based initiatives contribute to AIDS prevention by providing knowledge on appropriate condom use and reduces mental health problems (Biddle & Asare, 2011). For instance, the Alfred Polo Foundation in Kenya uses sports events to change the lives of youth by educating them on the dangers of drugs and drugs abuse, environmental conservation and peace (Owori, 2016) thus addressing SDG goal 3 (good health).

Lemke (2016) portends that sport provides lifelong learning and alternative education for children who can not attend school. Sport enhances lifelong physical literacy (Lindsey & Chapman, 2017) and exposes students to key values including teamwork, discipline, tolerance, respect of rules and fair play. These skills are essential for participation in professional life and community activities. For instance, since 2012, UNOSDP has been using sports to run a Youth Leadership Programme (YLP) with the aim of empowering young leaders from disadvantaged communities. In Kenya, the Mathare Youth Sports Association (MUSA) brings together street and slum children through an extensive health educational programme thus enhancing the achievement of SDG goal 4 (quality education).

Lemke (2016) stresses that sport encourages balanced participation thus promoting gender equality (SDG goal 5). Sport can help women and girls demonstrate their talents and achievements to society by using their skills and abilities. For example, the Diyar Consortium project in Palestine established a sports centre which provides women with an opportunity to participate in sport, learn transferable skills and gain knowledge for employment (Lindsey & Chapman, 2017).

Lindsey and Chapman (2017) and World Economic Forum (2009) reveal that sport has been recognised as one of the industries that supports economic growth (SDG goal 8). Sports generate various economic activities which include spectator costs; facility construction; equipment and clothing manufacturing; media and sponsorship; events, travel and tourism, and employment. Besides production of sporting goods, Mwisuka, Njororai and Onywera (2003) pointed out that, there are employment opportunities in Kenya's private and public sectors for various cadres of sports personnel.

Lemke (2016) argues that, sport can be used as a tool for the prevention of conflict and the promotion of long-lasting peace (SDG goal 16), since sport and its universality has the ability to transcend cultures. Sen (2011) points out that the high profile of sport athletes, teams and events gives them significant symbolic status with respect to the promotion of peace, inclusion and social cohesion. For instance, the Tegla Loroupe Peace Run in Kenya has been used to promote peace. Sport provides powerful partner and stakeholder networks for sustainable development (SDG goal 17). It brings together governments, donors, NGOs, sports organizations, private sector, academia and media as experienced during the Olympic.

McIntyre (2012) analysis study of the Ontario Health and Physical Education Curriculum centred on health; Kilborn, Lorusso, and Francis (2015) analysis study of Canadian physical education curriculum looked at instructional time allocations, aim statements, organizing categories and learning outcomes while Thomson and Robertson (2014) analysis study

analysed policies. This analysis study looked at the contribution of the movement activities curriculum towards the achievement of the SDGs.

Mwisuka et al. (2003) study on contribution of sports to national development in Kenya found that, there is a positive relationship between sports and socio-economic, political and cultural development in Kenya. The study did not address the SDGs and thus the need to analyse the Movement activities curriculum to examine the extent to which it contributes to the achievement of SDGs

Methods

The method used in this study was qualitative approach where CBC design for Movement activities was analysed using Posner's curriculum analysis framework. This curriculum analysis framework poses four sets of questions, that is, curriculum documentation and origins, curriculum proper, curriculum in use and curriculum critique (Posner, 2004). Curriculum documentation and origins looks at the factors and histories behind curriculum development and revision. Curriculum proper looks at the purposes and the content while curriculum in use is concerned with the implementation process. The curriculum critique discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum.

Results and Discussion

Movement activities curriculum documentation and origins, and SDGs

The study examined the political, economic and social problems that prompted the reforms and the perspectives represented by the curriculum. The curriculum was developed by KICD and is guided by the Basic Education Curriculum Framework (BECF). The framework was informed by findings of a needs assessment study carried out in 2016, international best practices in education systems and curriculum reforms and a desire to make learning more meaningful. The BECF is based on pillars which are anchored on values and are supported by theoretical approaches and guiding principles (RoK, 2017 a, UNESCO/IBE, 2017). The Framework is expected to catalyse the achievement of Vision 2030 and thus, it endeavours to guide and ensure learners are equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values to achieve the nation's social, economic, and political aspirations. UNESCO/IBE (2017) points out that these curriculum reforms provide an excellent opportunity to align learning outcomes to the SDGs.

The study found that the movement activities curriculum (RoK, 2017 b) does not highlight the origins of the curriculum in the introduction which would provide a link to its contributions of SDGs. However, the theoretical approach supporting the curriculum, Dewey's Social Constructivism Theory is highlighted in the essence statement. This theory posits that learning should be experiential and participatory thus equipping the learners with the skills needed in the 21st century.

Movement activities curriculum proper and the SDGs

The curriculum proper was concerned with the purpose and content of the Movement activities curriculum. The Movement activities curriculum design stipulates the vision of the curriculum reforms which is to enable every citizen to become an engaged, empowered and ethical citizen while the mission is to nurture learner's potential (RoK, 2017b). It also contains the National goals of education in Kenya and the general learning outcomes for the Early Years Education (EYE). The vision, mission, the national goals and the general learning outcomes of EYES are in line with the SDGs goal 1 (no poverty), goal 2 (zero hunger), goal 8 (decent work and economic growth) and goal 10 (peace, justice and strong institutions) as they strive to empower

learners cognitively, socially, physically, technologically, economically, morally and spiritually, thus enabling them fight poverty, hunger, engage in meaningful economic activities and live in harmony with others.

The movement activities learning outcomes aim at equipping learners with knowledge to enable them create movement activities, observe rules and safety; skills to enable them express themselves and develop self-confidence; and attitudes to enable them to appreciate own and others movement activities. Achievement of these learning outcomes would contribute to SDG goal 4 (quality education) which in turn would result in the achievement of other SDGs such as goal 8 (decent work and economic growth).

The Movement activities curriculum offers a variety of skills to give learners opportunities to identify their talents and potentials. The skills offered are the precursor patterns of the more specialized, complex skills used in organised and non-organised games, sports and recreational activities. The skills presented in Table 1 include basic motor skills, swimming and gymnastics.

Table 1. Strands and sub-strands in the movement activities curriculum design Grade 1, 2 and

3

Grade	Basic motor skills: locomotor skills	Basic motor skills: non-locomotor skills	Basic motor skills: manipulative skills	Swimming	Gymnastics
Grade 1	-Walking -Running -Jumping for height	-Bending and curling -Stretching	-overarm throw -catching	Water safety -pool rules -Personal flotation devices Basic water skills -exhaling in water -seeing in water -mushroom float -sculling (standing position)	Static balance -single leg balance -T-balance Thestar (Straddle balance) Dynamic balance -egg roll -bear roll
Grade 2	Locomotor skills	Non-locomotor skills	Manipulative skills	Swimming	Gymnastics
	-Hopping -Leaping -Jumping for distance	-Pulling and pushing -Turning	-Kicking -Stopping	Water safety -Signs of drowning -Rescuing a drowning person Basic water skills -Treading water -Horizontal float (back front) -Basic glides: sliding in water	Static balance -Back-to-Back balance -Wheelbarrow balance Dynamic balance -Forward roll -Wheelbarrow walk
Grade 3	Locomotor skills	Non-locomotor skills	Manipulative skills	Swimming	Gymnastics
	-Skipping -Dodging -Gallop -Sliding	-Twisting	-Striking -Punting -Dribbling	Water safety -Heat escape lessening position (H.E.L.P) Basic water skills -Arm action in water: front crawl	Static balance -V balance -Beam balance -Crab stand balance Dynamic balance -Crab walk

				Kicking in water (leg action) -Float: starfish float	-Backward roll
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Source: (RoK, 2017b).

The Movement activities curriculum skill content aims at enhancing physical literacy, that is, develop a learner’s physical competence, movement knowledge, safety, and the capacity to use these skills to perform in a wide range of activities. Lindsey and Chapman (2017) stress that, participating in sports can make a substantial contribution to reducing physical inactivity, preventing associated non-communicable diseases, and improving health and well-being. This contributes to SDG goal 3 (good health) and goal 8 (economic growth). UN Inter-Agency Task Force (2005) argues that, a physically active population is healthier, thus improves the productivity of the workforce and increases economic output.

The Movement activities curriculum is learner-centred and adaptive to the changing needs of learners, teachers and society. This implies that learners can acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes to solve situations they encounter in everyday life. Seven core competencies that learners are expected to develop are; Communication and collaboration, Critical thinking and problem solving, Creativity and imagination, Citizenship, Self-efficacy, Digital literacy and Learning to learn (RoK, 2017a, RoK, 2017b). The movement activities curriculum design Grade 1-3, provides the core competencies in every sub-strand. This implies that movement activities will inculcate lifelong values in learners thus contributing to SDG goal 4 (quality education). United Nations Human Development Report (UNDP) (2002) states that sport can enable one to build capabilities of leading a long and healthy life, be knowledgeable, be able to access resources needed for a decent standard of living and be able to participate in the life of the community.

Movement activities curriculum in use and the SDGs

The curriculum in use is related to how teachers interpret and put the curriculum into operation. The movements activities curriculum design Grade 1, 2 and 3 has learning experiences and key inquiry questions that promote differentiated learning and provide opportunities for learners to excel. It emphasizes use of technology in the learning process in each of the sub-strand. For instance, Grade 1 suggests that learners should observe the overarm throw in the you tube using digital devices such as mobile phones. Grade 2 suggests that, learners should watch a video clip of people treading in water. This promotes technological progress and innovation in the learning process and contributes to SDG goal 9 (industrial innovation).

The Movement activities curriculum provides links to other learning areas such as Language, Hygiene and Nutrition, Environmental and Mathematics activities in all the Grades. This cross-disciplinary approach exposes learners to balanced and holistic learning. For, instance, in Grade 2, learners could sing songs related to the water theme in environmental activities. This leads to achievement of SDGs as learners are sensitized on various concepts such as environmental issues which are raised in goal 13 (climate action), goal 14 (life below water) and goal 15 (life on land).

The Movement activities curriculum incorporates pertinent and contemporary issues (PCIs) in every sub-strand in Grade 1, 2 and 3. The PCIs are grouped in six broad areas: Global citizenship; Health education; Life skills and values education; Education for sustainable development; Learner support programmes; Community Service Learning and parental engagement. These PCIs reflect emerging issues in the society which are related to the SDGs. Such as goal 3(good health) and goal 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions). For example,

on health education, learners are taught on HIV and AIDS and the need to report to the teacher when cuts and wounds occur during play. On global citizenship, sport is a key component of social life, directly engaging communities. It brings people together in a fun and participatory way. It helps create social relationships, build connections and improve communication between individuals and groups (UNInter-Agency Task Force, 2005).

The Movement activities curriculum Grade 1, 2, and 3, incorporates values which should be inculcated in learners as they learn values such as; love, respect, responsibility, unity, peace, patriotism, social justice and integrity. For instance, in Grade 1, during the learning of the basic movement running skill, learners are expected to exhibit responsible behaviour that respects self and others by displaying values such as respect, integrity and responsibility. This implies that movement activities can contribute to achievement of SDG goal 1 (no poverty) as it teaches core principles such as tolerance, cooperation, respect and values. UN Inter-Agency Task Force (2005) posits that PE provides a forum to learn skills such as discipline, confidence and leadership which results in life skills. The nurturing of positive values and attitudes also provides a good foundation for the role sports plays in promoting a fair and just society (goal 16) as the values are similar to the values taught in peace education to resolve and prevent conflict and create conditions conducive to peace (UNICEF, 1999). According to UN Inter-Agency Task Force (2005), sports cut across barriers that divide societies, making it a powerful tool to support conflict prevention and peace-building efforts.

The Movement activities curriculum Grade 1, 2 and 3, also includes community service learning and non-formal activities that should be provided by teachers and parents. This enables learners to apply their knowledge and skills while addressing needs in the community. This enriches their learning experience and enhance their social skills, analytical ability, civic and ethical responsibility, self-efficacy, and career development. (UNESCO/IBE, 2017). For instance, in Grade 1, learners could be involved in cleaning the environment around the home, school and community, visit the aged, participate in tree planting, improvise play items and donate them to children's homes. In Grade 2, learners could visit water bodies in their community, watch a football at the stadium, join a swimming gala, perform gymnastics displays during school cultural days. In Grade 3, learners could assist in daily chores at home, take part in Freedom from Hunger Walk, visit a nearby school for a friendly match and visit their community chief to learn about his responsibilities in the community. These activities can lead to achievement of SDGs 2 (Zero hunger) as movement – based activities such as participation in Freedom from Hunger Walk can create awareness, mobilize resources and learners towards ending hunger.

Movement activities curriculum critique and the SDGs

The competencies stipulated in the curriculum, the learning experiences, the key inquiry questions, the links to values, PCIs, other learning areas, the community learning and non-formal activities provide an avenue for linking the learning process to the achievement of SDGs. However, the curriculum design needs to highlight varied issues to be tackled in the education for sustainable development PCI to guide teachers adequately

Conclusion

The findings show that the movement activities curriculum design has content and learning experiences that can contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. To enhance the contribution of the design to the achievement of SDGs, curriculum developers may need to spelt out the relationship between movement activities and SDGs in the design and provide more content under the education for sustainable development PCIs link.

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