

Policy briefs drawn from two studies of occupational study students on Participation of learners in extra-mural activities in a low-income primary school

October 2013

Nomfundo Gabela: Schools Sport Policy for Public Schools in South Africa (2009)	p 1
Ashleigh Whittle: School Sports Policy for South African Schools (DBE, 2011)	p 7
Zoe Moosmann: What role can extra mural programs play in enhancing leisure participation of children in low socio economic areas?	P11
Salome Nkoane: the importance of extra mural activity programmes	P15
Nthabiseng Dlula: School Sport Policy (2009)	P19



The UCT Knowledge Co-op facilitated this collaborative project.

This report is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike license:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.5/za/deed.en>

POLICY BRIEF (2013)

Schools Sport Policy For Public Schools in South
Africa (2009)



Nomfundo Gabela (gblmfu001)

Occupational therapy Student 4th year

Executive Summary:

Learners engagement in extramural activities form part of the learners occupation of learning. Therefore it is important to provide opportunities for the learners to participate effectively within this occupation. The policy brief will highlight the issues that have risen during an undergraduate research study conducted in low socio-economic primary school regarding extramural activity participation. It was revealed from the study that learners are still experiencing restrains on developing their potential due to the structures and contextual factors of the existing extramural programmes. Furthermore, it will highlight the interest of occupational therapy regarding this issue. This brief is targeted to the Department of Sport and Recreation and the Department of Education as the Schools Sport Policy (2009) have highlighted these departments to be the key role players in providing learners with opportunities and infrastructures to participate in extramural activities.

Problem statement:

There are limited opportunities for the learners to develop skills and abilities pertaining to their chosen extramural activities due to lack of competitive participation and limited time frame to engage in these activities. This is an issue as learners are experiencing occupational injustice as they are being deprived of the opportunities thus restraining learners' potential development. In addition within the Schools Sport Policy (2009) the role players who should be providing these opportunities are stated, but due to lack of implementation of this policy learner's skills and abilities have been limited.

2013-10-15

Background:

Problem background

An undergraduate qualitative research study was conducted in a public low socio-economic primary school in the Western Cape Province within the Cape Town Metropolitan. This study aimed to identify factors that contribute to learners' reluctant participation in extramural activities, and the findings were grouped to categories and formulated a theme in order to describe learners' reluctant participation. One category "restrains on potential" was chosen, within this category it was discovered from the learners that there are restrains on the learners' skills and capacity development within extramural activities provided at school. It was discovered that there was a limited time period for learners to engage in extramural activities as they only get four weeks to participate in one extramural activity which happens once a week. In addition, there was a lack of competitive participation within the extramural activities provided at school.

Policy background: School Sport Policy

The purpose of this policy is to regulate the implementation of school sport consistently for all learners, irrespective of ability, across all schools in an age appropriate way based on the principle of equity. This policy state that The Department of Basic Education, Sport and Recreation South Africa and their provincial counterparts as well as other strategic partners must consider available human, physical and financial resources and pool these together for successful sport programmes to be implemented collaboratively.

Advantages of the policy

This policy is a South African Policy thus very relevant and appropriate for the South African context and schools. This policy highlights the importance of extramural activities. In addition it put an emphasis on that this extramural activities shall form part of a holistic education at schools and that all schools must have compulsory extramural programmes.

Policy gaps

The school has a compulsory programme and all learners are participating but learners are not benefiting from participating because the structure of programmes. The policy states that Department of Education shall mobilise resources to ensure the provision of sport infrastructure and equipment for schools. In addition provincial sport and recreation departments should ensure implementation of intra-school, inter-school, extra-school, extramural and co-curricular activities to provide competitive participation and these programmes should be monitored, evaluated and reviewed to all schools including monitoring programmes structures. This policy is not fully implemented as learners are participating in extramural activities but have limited opportunities to further develop their skills. Therefore if these identified departments could monitor and evaluate programmes at schools they would have identified this gap between the policy and its implementation. In addition these departments have not fully played a role as some of the programmes lack competitive participation which is identified as critical to learners according to the Schools Sport Policy (2009). This policy states that schools shall allocate time for extramurals; this has been implemented at the school where the study was conducted,

however due to tight schedules of the education departments there is limited time allocated to extramural activities. Thus, the department of education should consider extramural activities as part of the holistic education as mentioned by the policy to allow learners prolonged periods to participate in extramural activities.

Professional interest:

Occupational Therapist value occupation, occupation has been defined as the ordinary and familiar things that people do every day (Christiansend, Clark, Kielhofner & Rogers, 1995). Therefore learners engaging in extramural activities and it what they do daily, this is a concern for occupational therapist as this doing is very important for their development and health and wellbeing. This is why Wilcock (1998) describes occupation as synthesis of doing, being and becoming because learner's current doing which is participating in extramural activities, has an impact to who they become and the potential they develop during the synthesis. Thus our understanding of the impact of doing has on individuals' health well-being made the profession interested in this issue. As occupational therapist we value the capacity of a person to acquire skills, abilities and competencies, and value the contribution which occupations, activities and environment make to this process (Hagedorn, 1995). Therefore the profession is interested in how the environmental factors contribute to the development of the learners, as the environment cannot be separated from what the learners engage into. Policies are the high structures that mostly hinder learners development especially children as they do not form part of the decision making bodies, which may then lead to inappropriate planning and occupational injustice as learners occupational needs might not be met due to what they are provided with.

Recommendations:

- The DoE and Sport and recreation should consider implementing this policy by providing resources and opportunities for participation in low socio-economic primary schools
- The policies shall be made available to all the sectors and all individuals should be made aware of it
- The policy shall indicate step by step on how it should be implemented and give strategies to how the challenges can be overcome
- The policy must be adapted to make sure that schools in low socio-economic contexts also benefits from it, by recognising barriers and facilitators that could exist in these context

References:

Hagedorn R. (1995). Occupational Therapy: Perspectives and Processes. London Churchill Kingstone pg. 21-50



University of Cape Town

Policy Brief

Ashleigh Whittle (WHTASH002)

18 October 2013

Executive Summary

The purpose of this policy brief is to appraise The School Sports Policy for South African Schools (DBE, 2011) and the relation between this policy and research conducted into the factors influencing reluctant participation in extra-mural activities at a low-income primary school. Research concluded that the school focused on the number of activities that learners participated in, encouraging their involvement. Little emphasis was placed on how these learners participated, this led to reluctant participation. The audience for this policy brief are stakeholders within the Department of Basic Education and schools implementing extra-mural programmes. This policy brief recommends that the School Sports Policy (DBE, 2011) be revised in order to take into account the quality of learners' participation to ensure that all learners are able to experience the full benefits of enthusiastic extra-mural participation.

Statement of Issue

There is currently a gap in the Schools Sport Policy for South African Schools (DBE, 2011) as there is a limited focus on the quality of the learners' participation that are engaging in extra-mural activities. Rather, this policy emphasises the number of children participating and therefore, aiming for mass participation in extra-mural activities (DBE, 2011).

Background

The School Sports Policy for South African Schools (DBE, 2011) is governed by the South African Schools Act 84 (DoE, 1996). The policy aims to regulate the delivery of sport for all learners across all schools within South Africa (DBE, 2011). The policy advocates that the delivery of school sport should be age appropriate as well as grade appropriate and based on the principles of equity and access (DBE, 2011). The vision of this policy is a school sport environment that promotes healthy living and lifelong participation in a sporting culture (DBE, 2011). One of the missions of this policy is to offer sport programmes to all learners (DBE, 2011). Furthermore, the policy states that each school should have structured programmes for sport and mass participation in sport will be prioritised and implemented (DBE, 2011). Finally a principle underlying the School Sports Policy for South African Schools states that opportunities for sport participation should be made available throughout the year (DBE, 2011).

Research into the factors influencing reluctant participation in a compulsory extra-mural programme was conducted in a low-income primary school within the Cape Town

metropole. This research was conducted to understand the complex factors that influenced learners' reluctant participation in the context of a diverse compulsory extra-mural programme at a low-income school. Extra-mural activities can be defined as the establishment of activities as an extension of the school curriculum, most often after school (Penny & Harris, 1997). Reluctant participation was defined by the researchers as learners performing extra-mural activities in an unenthusiastic manner and attendance is not personally motivated as participation is compulsory.

The abovementioned highlights the gap in the existing policy as there is a focus on increasing participation levels in sport and extra-mural activities and therefore the policy is ensuring mass participation in these activities. However, the quality of this participation has not been considered in the policy. The significance of considering quality of participation includes that learners may not be receiving opportunities to experience optimal benefits associated with participation in extra-mural activities and therefore, these learners may not be afforded the chance to experience these benefits if quality of participation is not considered within the policy.

Professional Interest

Occupational therapists are interested in participation and engagement in various occupations as participation and engagement in personally meaningful occupations influences health and quality of life (Wilcock, 2006). Occupation can be defined as "the ordinary and familiar things people do every day" (Christiansen, Clark, Kielhofner & Rogers, 1995, p. 1015). Furthermore occupation can relate to "activities that take up time, energy and interest that people do in their everyday lives" (CAOT, 2007). Extra-mural activities encompass a large part of the engagement and participation of learners and therefore, form part of what learners do every day. Thus, learners' participation in extra-mural activities could be viewed as part of the occupation of learning and this is of interest to occupational therapists as these occupations could have influenced health and well-being (Law, 2002). The gap in the policy is of further interest to occupational therapists as this gap can hinder the optimisation of learners' engagement in the occupation of learning and extra-mural activities if there is no focus on the quality of learners' participation.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the School Sports Policy (DBE, 2011) be amended to include a focus on both quantity and quality of participation. The focus on quantity of participation will ensure that all learners are participating in extra-mural activities. However, once learners are participating in the activities, there should be a shift in the focus to quality of participation to ensure that learners are enthusiastically participating and therefore allowing the learners to experience the benefits of participating in extra-mural activities. Quality of participation manifests through manner in which learners are participating in the activities and therefore they may appear to be unenthusiastic and not intrinsically motivated to participate. Therefore, by becoming aware of this manifestation of quality of participation, educators and extra-mural teachers may be enabled to direct the focus of participation from quantity to quality. Furthermore, a focus on the quality of participation will encourage learners to continue participating in the activities without a compulsory extra-mural programme forcing participation. This will consequently, ensure that the vision of the policy is upheld and allow for lifelong participation in extra-mural and sporting activities.

References

- Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists. (2007). *Profile of occupational therapy practice in Canada*. Ottawa, ON: CAOT
- Christiansen, C.H., Clark, F., Kielhofner, G. & Rogers, J., 1995. Position Paper: Occupation. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 49, pp.1015 – 1018.
- Department of Basic Education (2011). *The school Sports Policy for South African Schools*. Government Gazette
- Department of Education (1996). *South African Schools Act*. Pretoria.
- Penny, D. & Harris, J. (1997). Extra-curricular physical education: more of the Same for the More Able. *Sport, Education and Society*, 2, 41 – 54.
- Wilcock, A. (2006). *An occupational perspective of health* (2nd ed.). Thorofare: Slack Inc.

What role can extra mural programs play in enhancing leisure participation of children in low socio economic areas?

Zoe Moosmann

“A child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child”

Section 28(2) of the RSA Constitution

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY TO DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION AND WESTERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE EXTRA MURAL EDUCATION PROJECT

Children living in socially impoverished areas of South Africa often have limited opportunities to become involved in leisure activities due to a lack of leisure resources within the environment¹. These children are at risk of experiencing leisure boredom which occurs when available leisure experiences are not sufficient to satisfy needs. Studies show that leisure boredom among youth in South Africa is high and is a significant motive for youth's binge drinking, drug use, gang behavior and dropping out of school.¹

Our core concern as occupational therapists is to advocate and facilitate the rights of all to meaningful occupation.²

According to Occupational Therapy science theory, our well-being is dependent on our ability to utilise and experience a wide range of age appropriate and balanced occupations.³

This link between participation in meaningful occupations and health and well-being has been acknowledged by the World Health Organisation (2002) which extended its definition of health to being a balance of physical, mental and social well-being attained through socially valued and individually meaningful occupation.⁴

Recreational and play opportunities are essential for children's development because it contributes to their cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being and allows them to practice and master a repertoire of skills needed for later childhood and adult life (Piaget, 1962).⁵

The Extra Mural Education Project (EMEP) in the Western Cape was developed in recognition of this principle. According to EMEP's director, Jonathan Gevisser, “When every child has regular access to well-organised and good quality play, arts and crafts, academic support, and health and well-being

support, as ongoing parts of their school life, then we safely can say that the building blocks of an holistic, child-friendly system is in place".⁶

Extra-murals are key to a balanced curriculum, a healthy lifestyle, an enhanced school experience and personal, social, and community development. They provide safe and healthy spaces and trigger positive change in young lives and in whole-school communities⁵. Studies show that extra-mural activities have a buffering effect against the adverse effects of growing up in low income and violent, at-risk communities, providing opportunities for positive development despite dire environmental situations. They should thus be seen as key sites for intervention for persons working with children in low income settings.⁷

In response to this, the Western Cape Department of Education acknowledged the need for planned, coordinated and consistent extra-mural activities in all schools as a way to involve learners in positive activities and to reduce their exposure to gangs, violence and criminal activities when they agreed to fund the Extra-Mural Education Project. EMEP's goal is to help South African schools develop into hubs of lifelong learning, recreation and support by offering extra mural programmes for children, youth and community members.

A study conducted on children attending a low socio economic school that was running an extra mural activity programme initiated by EMEP showed that all the children participated in a significantly large amount of diverse activities and reported high levels of enjoyment from these activities. This illustrates the effectiveness of an initiative such as EMEP in increasing children's participation opportunities.

Policy

According to Article 31 of the 1989 International Convention on the Rights of the Child – of which South Africa is a signatory – States Parties must recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

This principle was fundamental in informing Section 6(2)(e) of South Africa's Children's Act of 2005, which states: "All proceedings, actions or decisions in a matter concerning a child must recognise a child's need for development and to engage in play and other recreational activities appropriate to the child's age"

However, South Africa, in its 2012 assessment of meeting Article 31 obligations, reported to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child that, “In order for this right to be realised, there needs to be provision of adequate facilities, resources and opportunities for children to play and engage in recreational activities by local government and other key role players and there are still vast inequalities in the availability of, and access to these facilities.” The report expanded its description of these inequalities by mentioning how children in wealthier urban areas enjoyed better access to facilities compared with their poor urban and rural counterparts.

According to EMEP Director, Jonathan Gevisser, these inequalities cannot be remedied as there is no policy in place. There are only “internal circulars which are periodically sent to districts” to promote best practice. However, without policy, there is no budget allocation and no implementation plan – both crucial for prioritising the right of all children to recreational opportunities.

EMEP found that although the Education Department initially prioritised the need for initiatives to promote recreational participation of children from low income communities, the department retracted this support when it decided to prioritise academic support to increase literacy and numeracy skills of learners instead of offering a more holistic approach.

Based on the benefits of initiatives such as EMEP in enhancing participation in leisure activities of children in low socio-economic communities, these recommendations are made:

Recommendations:

- To actively implement Article 31 of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- To actively implement Section 6(2)(e) of South Africa’s Children’s Act;
- To formally recognise that extra-mural provision can make a major contribution to effective schooling;
- By recognizing that every school-aged child has an entitlement to experience learning and development above and beyond an academic classroom and making it a fundamental right and responsibility of every school to provide extra mural activities;
- To test ways to optimize school times and services so that extra mural space and time are included in the standard curriculum or school day;
- By providing resources on a fair and equitable basis amongst schools so that every child has the right to participate;

- By promoting partnerships between schools and other stakeholder groups (e.g. youth / volunteer / community organisations, governmental departments, and employers) as the basis for a more imaginative provision of recreational opportunities and to draw in wherever possible, material and human resources from the local community.
- To encourage all schools to recognize extra-mural activities as central to their values, mission/ethos, plans, and effectiveness and as a fundamental means of releasing the potential of every child

References

- Denault, A. S., & Poulin, F. (2012). Peer group deviancy in organized activities and youths' problem behaviours. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science/Revue canadienne des sciences du comportement*, 44(2), 83.
- Flisher, A. J., & Chalton, D. O. (1995). High-school dropouts in a working-class South African community: selected characteristics and risk-taking behaviour. *Journal of Adolescence*, 18(1), 105-121.
- Galvaan, R. (2012). Occupational Choice: The Significance of Socio-Economic and Political Factors. *Occupational science: Society, inclusion, participation*, 152-162.
- Gevisser, Jonathan. EMEP director, as quoted from interview on 13 October 2013
- Mahoney, J. L., & Stattin, H. (2000). Leisure activities and adolescent antisocial behavior: The role of structure and social context. *Journal of adolescence*, 23(2), 113-127.
- Piaget, J. (1962). *Play, dreams and imitation* (Vol. 24). New York: Norton.
- Townsend, E., & Wilcock, A. (2004). Occupational justice. *Introduction to occupation: The art and science of living*, 243-273.
- Ward, C. L., & Bakhuis, K. (2010). Intervening in children's involvement in gangs: Views of Cape Town's young people. *Children & Society*, 24(1), 50-62.
- Wegner, L., & Magner, I. (2002). Is leisure an occupational concern? Understanding leisure in adolescents. In *13th World Congress of Occupational Therapists*.
- Wegner, L., Flisher, A. J., Chikobvu, P., Lombard, C., & King, G. (2008). Leisure boredom and high school dropout in Cape Town, South Africa. *Journal of adolescence*, 31(3), 421-431.
- Wilcock, A. A. (1998). Reflections on doing, being, and becoming. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy/Revue Canadienne D'Ergothérapie*.
- World Health Organization. (2002). *World Health Report 2002: World Health Report: Reducing Risks to Health Noncommunicable Diseases*. World Health Organization.
- Ziervogel, C. F., Ahmed, N., & Flisher, A. J., & Robertson, BA (1998). Alcohol misuse in South African male adolescents: A qualitative investigation. *International Journal of Community Health Education*, 17, 25-41.

A decorative graphic consisting of three blue circles of varying sizes and two thin blue lines. One line starts from the top left and passes through the center of the largest circle. The other line starts from the top right and passes through the center of the medium-sized circle. A third, larger circle is partially visible at the bottom right corner.

**POLICY BRIEF
(2013)**

**Salome Nkoane
SLMNKO002**

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this document is to alert The Department of Basic Education of the importance of extra mural activity programmes that cater for the consumers of those programmes, the learners. It is from the National level of the South African government that the recognition for all children to participate in sports in the schools they attend was communicated with the public through the Draft school sport policy for public schools in South Africa in 2009.

The recommendation made here is that two tools, The Children's Assessment of Participation and Enjoyment (**CAPE**) and the Preferences for Activities of Children (**PAC**), be included in the admissions process of children into school. The use of these tools will not be to determine where or not the school can admit the child, but rather to work towards including their activity interests in the programs that already exist or negotiating the activities with the child.

Statement of the Issue/Problem:

Research done in 2013 by students from the University of Cape Town revealed that at the school sampled, there is a mismatch between extra-mural activities offered in their extra-mural programme and the interests of the pupils. The fact that the system at the school works in a fashion that the activities offered are those that educators feel equipped and skilled enough to facilitate to others may be the main factor to this point.

Educators were not aware of the activities that the pupils would like to engage in and this research opened theirs. Admittedly, some of the activities they prefer are not contextually viable to the school and the environment.

The research unveiled the pupils' preferred activities by use of two tools which were developed to assess activity participation of children and adolescents, The Children's Assessment of Participation and Enjoyment (**CAPE**) and the Preferences for Activities of Children (**PAC**).

Background:

Draft school sport policy for public schools in South Africa is a collaborative document by the Departments of Basic Education and Sports and Recreation which places emphasis on the importance of participating in sports at school level. Under its Mission, one of the points found there is "To promote Physical Education, as well as recreational and extramural school sport activities". It is this aspect of the document that relates to the one side of activity participation and an important one to child development, physical development.

For development to occur successfully, ideally, a child should be exposed to different activities that promote different aspects of development. For example, playing soccer promotes development in Gross motor coordination development, proprioception and learning to distribute weight in stressful conditions. Sport also breaks social boundaries, all participants become one or on the same level on the fields and in gear. Our former president himself, Nelson Mandela, used the nature of sports to bring the nation together when he entered into presidential office in 1994, by using the Rugby World Cup 1995.

This is ideal for a child whose activity of choice is playing whatever sport is on offer. For the next child who would rather be doing arts, this document forces the activity onto them and therefore taking away their right to making their own choices. Some children's personalities do not fit those of being in shared spaces or they become further withdrawn than they already are.

A child participating in activities that they do not prefer does not develop to their full potential, the possibility of the mastering the activity and doing the activity with attached meaning.

Under its principles, the document states that "each school shall have a structured programme for recreational school sport. Relevant games and activities that promote mass participation shall be identified, prioritised and implemented". It also goes to say that "all learners shall participate in these activities on an on-going basis. Recreational school sport activities involving learners from different schools may be organised by school governing bodies of the schools concerned. All school sport programmes must aim to enrich the curriculum at both GET and FET Phases".

This section seeks to initiate relevant sports programmes that are compulsory in schools and maintaining those that exist already in some schools. The question in this regard is what methods will be used by the school governing body to identify sports that are relevant without boxing out learners who do not place interest in sports or cannot participate in sporting activities offered at the school due to health reasons or otherwise? The reason for asking this question is that it is important to acknowledge that learners are unique and not all of them can be generalized into the categories that already exist. It is also important to take into consideration, the affordability of accommodating some of the sports and the availability of resources, human and otherwise.

Professional Interest:

The proposal from the departments of basic education and sports and recreation aims at making participating in sports inclusive to all persons; those in disadvantaged areas, with disabilities and those who are under resourced financially and otherwise. It is a good initiative considering that sports have social characteristics that enforce the participants to interact, but as schools, you have the responsibility of the wellbeing of more than those children. The school has the responsibility of the entire school population and participation

is vital, especially because extra mural activity participation promotes for learners to be confident in themselves and excel academically, which what schools strive for.

Using the CAPE/PAC allows the school, teachers and all other personnel involved in the offering of extra mural activities to spot what gaps there are in the program. With the help of a professional in the participation in activities, the school will be able to reach as many students as possible while maximising on the resources available to them.

Occupational Therapists concern themselves with participation in meaningful activities especially since participation in extra-mural activities have been seen to reduce the rate at which students drop out of school and increase academic achievement.

Recommendation

Occupational Therapists are quipped to interpret the proposed tools and also plan programmes that are beneficial to an organization both in human resources and financial resources. It is therefore vital that in conjunction with the sports programmes at schools, the two Departments concerned take it into consideration, allocating qualified Occupational Therapists to work with schools to formulate programmes that are focused on both the needs of the school, the departments and the children.

This function of the Occupational Therapist will be mainly beneficial to the schools and the Departments when the use of the CAPE/PAC and other tools similar to them are introduced into the admissions process in South African schools. The introduction of these tools and those like them should not determine academic admission to the school, but rather they would serve as a point of reference when planning for accommodative extra-mural programmes in schools.

Works Cited

Department of Basic Education, & Department of Sports and Recreation. (2009, June 30). School Sport Policy Draft. *Draft School Sport Policy For Public Schools In South Africa*. Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa: Department of Education.

Dlula, N., Moosmann, Z., Nkoane, S., Ntshengulana, K., & Vimbani, A. (2013). *A profile of extra-mural activity participation of grade 4 - 7 learners who attend a low income school located in the Western Cape Education Department Metropole East*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town.

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

POLICY BRIEF (2013)

Schools Sport Policy For Public Schools in South
Africa (2009)

nomfundo

9/7/2013

Executive summary

This policy brief is in response to the School Sport Policy (2009) which was generated by the Department of Basic Education and the Department of Sports and Recreation of the Republic of South Africa. It is intended for the abovementioned departments as well as any non-governmental organisations working with schools to promote extra-mural activities.

The purpose of this brief is to advise recommendations to the existing School Sport Policy (2009) which considers sport as the main extra-mural activity with which to achieve participation for all South African learners. However, this view does not consider differences and the fact that sport is not preferred by all learners. Furthermore, this brief will: bring to the attention of the above-mentioned bodies the importance of providing a range of extra-mural activities within a low income school, and highlight the main point discussed in an undergraduate research study that showed the value of providing a diverse range of extra-mural activities in order to spark the interest of learners (Dlula, Moosmann, Nkoane, Ntshengulana, & Vimbani, 2013). Moreover, this brief will also advocate for the need of extra-mural specific policies within the education system in South Africa.

It is recommended that the School Sport policy not only focus on sports as the only physical extra-mural activity with which to meet its aim to create a world leading school community. Furthermore, the policy makers are encouraged to take into account that not all learners prefer sport activities; however, they should not be deprived from making a contribution to the schooling community by not being provided with other types of extra-mural activities to participate in and possibly develop from.

Statement of the Issue/Problem

The School Sport policy (2009) refers to formal sports as the main physical activity with which it aims to “promote peace, democracy, prosperity and productivity for *all* South African learners through healthy life-practices and lifelong participation” (School Sport policy, 2009). This view is only exclusive to those learners who have a preference for formal sport activities, and it excludes learners who have an interest in informal activities, therefore not encouraging prosperity and productivity in *all* South African learners.

Background

The White Paper on Sport and Recreation for the Republic of South Africa (2012) refers to both sports and recreational activities as physical activities.

Dlula et.al. (2013) conducted a survey based study that explored the extra-mural activity participation of learners in a low income school in the South Metropole education district of Cape Town, using the Children's Activity Participation and Enjoyment (CAPE), and the Preference of Activities for Children (PAC). This study highlighted that learners in the grade 4-7 engaged in the physical and recreational activities provided at the school and reported. However, when scoring preference, the learners indicated a high preference towards social activities (Dlula et. al, 2013).

In their discussion, Dlula et. al (2013) stated that formal activities (sports in terms of the White paper, 2012) which are planned, goal-orientated activities featured less in the preference ratings of the learners (i.e. team sports). Informal activities represented as social and recreational activities in CAPE and PAC (recreational in terms of the White paper, 2012), which are frequently initiated by the children and require less to no planning, featured more in the preference ratings of the learners (i.e. doing puzzles, arts and crafts, going to themed parties and visiting).

The above mentioned clearly show a need to have a balanced extra-mural programme that promotes not only formal sporting activities, but also the passive and active recreational activities as these are less formal and children show more preference for them.

Occupational Therapy's interest in Extra-mural activities

The profession of occupation therapy aims to ensure all individuals have the opportunities, resources, privilege and rights to participate to their potential in their desired occupations (Wilcock, 2004). Therefore it is important to understand children's preferences for activity choices as well as factors which impact these choices, as children are more motivated to become involved in activities that are self-determined rather than being guided by those which are externally imposed. Furthermore, Occupational therapists realize that children, when given choices are able to make decisions that are internally motivated, which then bring meaning to the children, sparking more interest and engagement in their chosen

activities. When prescribed extra-murals do not cater for the different needs of children, this can lead to the marginalization of a certain group of learners that do not find interest in the formal sporting activities provided at the school. Cognitively, children in grades 4-7 are at the concrete operational period (Weiten, 2007). At this stage of development, they have acquired a cognitive capacity to have a choice on whether they want to engage in certain activities or choosing not to participate at all, giving their own reasons.

Pre-existing policies

Currently, South Africa does not have legislation and policies that make the provision of extra-mural curricula mandatory in all South African Public Schools. However, the following policies can be utilized to inform policy around extra-murals in schools: The United Nations (UN) Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace (2008) which defined sport, for the purposes of development, as ‘all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being and social interaction, such as play, recreation, organized or competitive sport, and indigenous sports and games’; The White Paper on Sports and Recreation for the Republic of South Africa (2012) which considers both sports and recreational activities to be physical activities. Furthermore, the White Paper (2012) divides recreation into: passive recreation which encompasses other areas such as arts and culture and is undertaken purely for fun and enjoyment, and active recreation which is undertaken for the purpose of fitness and fun, and is also a stepping stone towards formalized sports. It is important to note that the 2 policies, one international and the other national, describe physical activities as not only formal sport activities, but includes other activities which are not as formal as sport activities.

The Recommendation(s)

It is therefore recommended that the School Sport policy should adopt the view that the White Paper (2012) takes in terms of sports and recreation. This will help in terms of the provision of sports and recreational activities in schools which will be more inclusive of all the learners. The provision of both informal and formal activities will ensure that the policy caters to learners that have interest in sports activities, as well as learners that have an

interest in recreational activities. Only then will the policy actually be providing opportunities for prosperity and productivity to *all* South African learners.

Moreover, the paucity of legislature and policies which inform the provision of extra-mural in South African Public schools contributes to the lack of exposure to extra-murals in low income schools. It is therefore recommended that the Department of Education and Sports and Recreation collaborate to develop such policies so as to ensure that *all* learners have the opportunity to better themselves by engaging in extra-murals.

References

- Dlula, N., Moosmann, Z., Nkoane, S., Ntshengulana, K., & Vimbani, A. (2013). *A profile of extra-mural activity participation of grade 4 – 7 learners who attend a low income school located in the Western Cape Education Department Metropole South*. Cape Town: Unpublished thesis report: University of Cape Town.
- Group, S. f. (2008). *Sport for Development and Peace: Towards Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*. Beijing: UN.
- King, G. L. (2004). Children's Assessment of Participation and Enjoyment (CAPE) and Preferences For Activities of Children (PAC). *Development, 1*(33), 28-39.
- Recreation, D. o. (2012). *The White Paper on Sports and Recreation for the Republic of South Africa*. Pretoria: Department of Sports and Recreation.
- Sports, D. o. (2009). *Darft School Sport Policy for Public Schools in South Africa*. Pretoria: Department of Education.
- Wilcock, A. &. (2004). Occupational justice and client-centered practice: A dialogue in progress. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy, 75-87*.