CHAPTER 6

Global Insights and Support

Abstract This chapter shares a deeper analysis of insights from the UK case study research, which indicated that partnership complexities were minimised when the relationships were developed over a sustained period of time, where genuine trust is built between stakeholders and not forced. Furthermore, when learning created through partnerships were perceived as relevant by all stakeholders, there was some form of funding, and teacher educators were confident and competent with the children aged 5–11 years. These insights were supported by recent shifts in teacher education. Hence, the global insights offered timely support and direction for the 'Best Start' programme.

This international case study investigated quality Initial Teacher Education (ITE) (physical education) also referred to as Quality Physical Education Teacher Education (QPETE). The ITE programme was identified as having strong partnerships with local schools by England's Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and external examiners which were evidenced during data collection. A deeper intention of the case study was to explore partnerships for possible 'hybrid space' course features.

T. Lynch, *The Future of Health, Wellbeing and Physical Education*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-31667-3_6

Global Insights

Data suggest that it is a strong possibility that a hybrid space exists within this UK ITE physical education (PE) course. However, determining a definite answer and the degree to which a hybrid space appears would require longer time and research into the case study. What can be determined is that if the course has not yet developed a hybrid space, they certainly appear to be in the process of creating one (cf. Fig. 4.1). Nonetheless, the Bachelor of Education (BEd) primary Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) course is evidenced as being high quality according to students, unique by lecturers, coherent and best practice by external examiners, popular amongst prospective students, and 'Outstanding' as perceived by Ofsted.

One recurring enabler of hybrid space features was previous teaching experience of teacher educators. This is supported by Murray who states that English teacher education primary courses consist of teacher educators from teaching backgrounds (2010). Toni and Laura perceived themselves as teachers and the pre-service teachers as teachers (with a specialisation in PE). What this enables is an environment where the majority of stakeholders are on an equal status; as teachers. This was observed by the natural and comfortable disposition teacher educators had around the school, and reciprocally, teachers and staff had with them. Hence, within this case study, previous teaching experience did seem significant in integrating various teacher educator roles and establishing sustaining partnerships.

Darling-Hammond (2006) identifies three common elements in successful programmes/courses where the theory meets the practice, for which data in this case study evidence all three and offer significant insights.

1. Coherence and integration
   The course work "is carefully sequenced based on a strong theory of learning to teach; courses are designed to intersect with each other, are aggregated into a well-understood landscape of learning, and are tightly interwoven with the advisement process and students' work in schools" (Darling-Hammond 2006, p. 7). The teacher educators deliberately adopted responsibility in providing the pre-service teachers with practical and theoretical preparation which was specifically tailored to the individual module for that semester and the context for the partnering school/s. Furthermore, the teacher educators "supervise

and advise teacher candidates and sometimes even teach children and teachers in placement schools, bringing together these disparate course elements through an integration of roles" (Darling-Hammond 2006, p. 7).

2. Extensive, well-supervised clinical experience linked to course work using pedagogies that link theory and practice
   The pre-service teachers participate in practical and real experiences with course work and are, therefore, better able to understand theory, apply the concepts, and support student learning (Baumgartner et al. 2002; Denton 1982). As argued by Darling-Hammond; "no amount of course work can, by itself, counteract the powerful experiential lessons that shape what teachers actually do" (2006, p. 9). The teacher educators were experienced teachers which resulted in confidence and competence. They were in a familiar environment in schools and enjoyed their time amongst other educators.
3. New relationships with schools
   Relationships involve unique partnership contexts, challenges, and tensions (Martin et al. 2011). Darling-Hammond suggests that "universities must engage ever more closely with schools in a mutual transformation agenda, with all of the struggle and messiness that implies" (2006, p. 3). The messiness did seem to be limited by the teacher educators and their ability to perceive themselves as teachers, which immediately enabled egalitarianism. The hall being situated away from the university also assisted in a third space, place of meeting. Finally, the Teaching Assistant's role was to liaise amongst the schools, which covered the administration burden. This enabled Toni and Laura to focus on teaching and enabled the partnerships to be manageable. Therefore, it could be argued that a "non hierarchical interplay between academic, practitioner and community expertise" (Zeichner 2010, p. 89), that is a 'hybrid space' was created by the teacher educators Toni and Laura, with the assistance of the Teaching Assistant.

Challenges for hybrid spaces identified by the teacher educators included a general lack of understanding amongst educationalists (generalist classroom teachers) of the importance of PE. However, while this was a challenge, it was also a 'strength' in the partnerships, enabling the teachers and children to perceive the learning opportunities as meaningful and worthwhile. Hence, the collaborations promoted 'health literacy' within communities; advocated enjoyment associated with learning in,

through, and about movement; and enabled equity in education (Lynch 2013c). Finally, the course had been generously funded in the past which Zeichner (2010) contends, most good examples of hybrid spaces are supported with external funding in some way.

Deeper Contextual Insights

The general purpose of this study was to give insights into various dynamics of this award-winning programme. Careful analysis of data and further reflection suggest that the community connections do offer strong possibilities for programme/course quality improvement, and therefore, a strengths-based approach in Health and Physical Education is conceivable (Macdonald 2013). There are, at times, difficulties in this process (Douglas 2014); however, complexities appear to be minimised when the relationships are developed over a sustained period of time, where trust is built between stakeholders and not forced. Strength of partnerships is increased when the university lecturers are experienced, successful teachers and school leaders with the ability to act as hybrid teacher educators.

Within this context, the course was developmentally appropriate for teaching children PE in the primary school and, therefore, perceived as very relevant by all stakeholders. It also appeared to supplement and extend the various schools' PE learning opportunities and not saturate or compete with existing curriculum. Head Teachers had an important role in leading and determining the PE implementation within their school, deciding how this would be enacted and by whom. Finally, funding was made available for this course and was a necessary ingredient for initiating and maintaining partnerships. Zeichner (2010) states that most good examples of hybrid space partnerships are supported with external funding in some way.

Such partnerships may involve a change in beliefs for some teacher educators, often those who are perceived as theoretical experts. Furthermore, a hybrid space may be a foreign teaching and learning process for some, only familiar with the 'application of theory' model. It is commonly acknowledged that partnerships are also socially complex. However, education departments globally are advocating the change in efforts to strengthen teacher education. This shift has appeared to be problematic for many teacher educators as they are not familiar with the process and there is limited research into PETE. Hence, this research is significant as it explores a successful BEd Primary PETE course in England and "takes into account

the settings where teacher education learning happens" (Douglas 2014, p. 6). Through sharing the data gathered—regarding course partners and roles, the perceived university benefits, university challenges, and identification of hybrid space features—this study contributes to the knowledge within this field.

The findings did suggest within this context that there were connections between having teacher educators with teaching experience in primary schools and the partnerships established. The teacher educators were also confident and competent with the children aged 5–11 years and felt comfortable working in, with, and amongst primary school educators and communities. The various stakeholders perceived themselves as 'teachers' working together in the best interest of the children.

The findings of this UK research into a successful ITE PE primary education course enabled global insights for the 'Best Start' Gippsland initiative. It offered a guiding framework for continued efforts towards course improvement and stronger partnerships.

Support

The international research into 'How are primary education Health and Physical Education (HPE) teachers best prepared?' offered support for the development of partnerships for the health, wellbeing, and physical education (HW & PE) project, 'Best Start: A community collaborative approach to lifelong health and wellness'. The recent national curriculum reform in Australia emphasised the importance of the key learning area HPE to:

> provide ongoing, developmentally appropriate opportunities for students to practise and apply the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to maintain and enhance their own and others' health and wellbeing. (ACARA 2012, p. 4).

Therefore, it is axiomatic and essential for pre-service teachers to be prepared to do this.

A decline in opportunities for quality HPE in Australian schools was identified as a major problem in the Senate Inquiry 20 years ago. Furthermore, "suitably qualified physical education teachers were not being employed to teach physical education and school sport to all children" (Commonwealth of Australia 1992, p. xiv). It can be argued that this is still a major problem in Australia as no course designed to develop

generalist primary classroom teachers with a specialisation in HPE could be identified at the time the research was conducted. This is a major structural flaw which evidences a top-down approach to curriculum delivery rather than a bottom-up that is often espoused by literature and education departments. This explains such questioning as "who is teaching HPE, and who is deemed competent to teach HPE in schools" (Dinan-Thompson 2009, p. 48).

Hence, this study was completed in the UK, where a unique and highly successful course was identified for developing pre-service teachers' expertise in providing purposeful, relevant, and appropriate physical education for children in the primary age range. This achieves Webster's recommendation of "pre-service education of primary school teachers include mandatory units directly related to the content strands of the syllabus, with further opportunities for teachers to specialise in PE courses" (2001, p. 1). This study investigates how a role model UK primary education programme achieves this and in doing so advocates the purpose of the HPE learning area in Australia "to offer experiential learning, with a curriculum that is relevant, engaging, contemporary, physically active, enjoyable and developmentally appropriate." (ACARA 2012, p. 2). This PE purpose was accentuated through partnerships with local primary schools and optimised opportunities for pre-service teachers to work with children. As evidenced by the external examiner's report, this course is heightened by the teaching experience of the lecturers/tutors and the coherent and progressive design.

This study offered support for the development of partnerships in Gippsland, to best prepare teachers to implement developmentally appropriate HPE experiences. To prepare generalist and specialist HPE teachers who are confident and component "to provide ongoing, developmentally appropriate opportunities" (ACARA 2012, p. 4) for children in schools so that they can "practise and apply the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to maintain and enhance their own and others' health and wellbeing" (ACARA 2012, p. 4). Such a primary course being offered by universities is in the best interest of children's health and wellbeing.

'Best Start' programme was endorsed internationally by the National Education Physical Education Teacher Education Advanced Standards (USA). The Advanced Standards document states, "This integration of content and pedagogical knowledge results in and contributes to the development, application and communication of a teacher candidate's PCK (pedagogical content knowledge), which, in turn, advances the can-

didate's expertise and enhances student learning" (National Association for Sport and Physical Education 2008, p. 2).

The research findings are underpinned by the Australian Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) report recommendations titled 'Action Now, Classroom Ready Teachers'. This report (cf. Chap. 2, p. 31) suggests a sense of urgency to lift quality of ITE: using evidence-based content and pedagogy that make a positive impact on the learning of students; to deliver integrated and structured professional experience throughout initial teacher education programmes through formalised partnership agreements with schools; furthermore, ensure that staffs delivering initial teacher education are appropriately qualified, with a proportion having contemporary school teaching experience (TEMAG 2014).

The research findings are also consistent with data gathered in relation to Australian school principals' perceptions about the preparation of primary health and physical education teachers (Lynch 2013d, 2015). This study investigated Primary School Principal's perceptions of a University Pre-service Teacher Education course where the graduate teacher is qualified as a generalist primary classroom teacher and a HPE specialist. Surveys were completed by 376 principal participants from a cross-section of Australian Government schools representing every state and territory, region and size. The study indicated two key findings:

1. Principals in Australian Government primary schools of various sizes and locations, strongly desire to have specialist HPE teachers in their schools.
2. Principals in Australian Government primary schools want HPE specialist teachers who are interested and passionate about working with primary aged children in, through and about HPE. Furthermore, HPE specialists who are able, willing, and qualified to teach as generalist classroom teachers (Lynch 2013d, p. v).

The research findings from the UK ITE PE programme also advocated the global Health Promoting Schools (HPS) framework. The concepts outlined in the national curriculum documents that laid the foundations for the 1999 Queensland HPE syllabus, and later, the 2013 Australian Curriculum (HPE), are closely aligned with the HPS principles (Centre for Primary Education 1998; Lynch 2013c). The Australian HPS Association was established in 1994 and HPS developed in Australia around the same

time as the development and implementation of the 1999 HPE curriculum documents.

> Health promoting schools are schools which display, in everything they say and do, support for and commitment to enhancing the emotional, social, physical, and moral wellbeing of all members of their school community. (Centre for Primary Education 1998, p. 2)

The HPS concept was developed to promote health in education (World Health Organisation 1996). The HPS Model encompasses programme implementation as it describes the broad, holistic framework for the implementation of health education beyond the boundaries of the classroom (Queensland Government 2003). It offers "a suitable approach because it encompasses a range of influences internal and external to the school environment" (O'Dea and Maloney 2000, p. 4). The HPS model comprises three overlapping elements: (1) curriculum, teaching, and learning; (2) school organization, ethos, and environment; and, (3) partnerships and services. The overlapping components "need to be considered as a whole rather than as separate entities" (Australian Health Promoting Schools Association 1996, p. 1).

Implementing across the three elements allows for a more comprehensive promotion of health (World Health Organisation 1994), and therefore, forms an ideal framework for the strands of HPE: enhancing personal development; developing the concepts and skills for physical activities; and promoting the health of individuals and communities (Queensland Government 2003).

Doctoral research evaluating school responses to the introduction of the HPE curriculum in three case study schools (Lynch 2005) found that the degree the HPS framework was embedded within the learning setting correlated with the quality of teaching and learning experience offered:

> Case Study Two school severely lacked grassed areas and space, with the result that students had to have a split play time, allowing them just thirty minutes of play each school day. Their sporting equipment was in good order and supply, as too were their teaching resources which were held in the school library. To overcome the disadvantage of having a lack of space, Case Study Two school had developed partnerships and services as per the Health Promoting Schools Model (Australian Health Promoting Schools Association 1996). Case Study Two school had formed a strong partnership with the local Junior Rugby club, located approximately 400 metres

from the school. The upper school (Years Four–Seven) walked down to the rugby club most Tuesdays and Thursdays during their first and major break, because there they have more room to play various sports. The school used the rugby field for most Physical Education lessons for the students from Years Three to Seven, depending on the sporting facilities required for particular physical activity skills. The rugby park was also used for the AFL [Australian Football League] Auskick program that was conducted after school hours. The HPE program in Case Study Two school also used approximately twenty-five parent helpers for the Years One and Two Perceptual Motor Program. The HPS model endorses the implementation of Health Education beyond the boundaries of the classroom (Queensland Government 2003) and promotes the school/parent partnership in the development of children's activity levels (Medland and Taggart 1993). Ultimately the school/parent partnership further educates parents about the need for children to participate in physical activities as the parents have the primary responsibilities for instilling good health habits (Howard 2004). Using parent helpers in the Perceptual Motor Program also models for the children their parents being involved in physical activities (Saltmarsh 2001). (ie. Lynch, 2005, pp. 241-242).

Where as:

Case Study Three school had ample facilities and space, a wide range of sporting equipment and teaching resources. The school was located beside a large basketball stadium, however no partnerships had been formed or maintained between the two. There was a distinct lack of parent participation during organised physical activities in comparison to Case Study Two. (ie. Lynch, 2005, pp. 241-242).

Hence,

Of the three Case Study schools it appeared that only the Case Study Two school was implementing quality physical activity lessons on a regular basis. Only Case Study Two school had a whole school curriculum program which was developmentally appropriate and progressive, enabling immediate and lifelong benefits (Graham et al. 1998). Only Case Study Two school implemented a Perceptual Motor Program in the early years of the school which developed the locomotor skills of walking, running, hopping, vertical jumping, horizontal jumping, galloping, sliding, skipping, and leaping, and the manipulative skills of throwing, catching, dribbling, striking, kicking, and punting balls (Olrich 2002). Children do not acquire fundamental move-

> ment skills naturally; rather, they need to be provided with quality learning experiences to enable development (Doorn 1999).
>
> Only Case Study Two school lessons observed by the researcher actually confirmed the teacher participants' shared insights and evidenced their understanding of the socio-cultural approach, embedded in the HPE syllabus. This was evidenced through the promotion of social justice and equity principles, where the HPE specialist teacher structured and taught inclusive lessons which acknowledged student diversity and skill levels and created supportive learning environments (QSCC 1999). Such learning environments were created through the use of eclectic pedagogies. At times, a traditional dominant science pedagogy (Tinning 2004) was evidenced with emphasis placed on correct skills and movement techniques. This was achieved through demonstrations, cues, explanations, and by providing feedback to students. At other times, critical socially just pedagogies (Tinning 2004) were evidenced in a diverse range of sports and skills covered and implemented using several minor games simultaneously, enabling students maximum participation and involvement. (ie. Lynch, 2005, pp. 241-242).

The research findings and insights from the UK ITE case study were embedded within the HPS framework. Furthermore, when combined with the data gathered from Australian primary school principals and recent shifts in Teacher Education, such as the Victorian Government 'School Centres for Teaching Excellence' (SCTE) initiative, the global insights offered welcome and timely support along with direction for the 'Best Start' programme leader.

References

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. (2012). *Draft shape of the Australian curriculum: Health and physical education*. Retrieved from http://www.acara.edu.au/hpe.html

Australian Health Promoting Schools Association. (1996). The health promoting school framework. In Deakin University (Ed.), *The health promoting school—Reader* (pp. 1–7). Geelong, VIC: Deakin Print Services.

Baumgartner, F., Koerner, M., & Rust, F. (2002). Exploring roles in student teaching placements. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 29*, 35–58.

Centre for Primary Education. (1998). Health promoting schools. *The Primary Educator, 4*(5), 1–4.

Commonwealth of Australia. (1992). *Physical and sport education—A report by the senate standing committee on environment, recreation and the arts*. Canberra, ACT: Senate Printing Unit.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). Constructing 21st-century teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 57*, 1–15.

Denton, J. J. (1982). Early field experience influence on performance in subsequent coursework. *Journal of Teacher Education, 33*(2), 19–23.

Dinan-Thompson, M. (2009). *Health and physical education: Issues for curriculum in Australia and New Zealand*. South Melbourne, VIC: Oxford University Press.

Doorn, P. (1999). Is your PDHPE program fundamentally sound? *Curriculum Support for Primary Teachers, 4*(3), 3–4.

Douglas, A. (2014). *Student teachers in school practice*. Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan.

Graham, G., Holt-Hale, S. A., & Parker, M. (1998). *Children moving—A reflective approach to teaching physical education* (4th ed.). Mountain View, CA: Mayfield.

Howard, J. (2004, June 29). *Building a healthy, active Australia*. Transcript of the launch by Prime Minister, John Howard. Launceston, Tasmania. Retrieved January 7, 2005, from Building a Healthy, Active Australia Launch Launceston, Tasmania Web site: www.pm.gov.au/news/speeches/speech961.html

Lynch, T. (2005). *An evaluation of school responses to the introduction of the Queensland 1999 health and physical education (HPE) syllabus and policy developments in three Brisbane Catholic primary schools* (Doctoral thesis, ACU National, Australia). Retrieved from http://dlibrary.acu.edu.au/digitaltheses/public/adt-acuvp96.04092006/02whole.pdf

Lynch, T. (2013c). School centers for teaching excellence (SCTE): Understanding new directions for schools and universities in health and physical education. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Health, Sport and Physical Education, 4*(3), 249–266. DOI:10.1080/18377122.2013.836770

Lynch, T. (2013d). *Summary report of key findings for Australian Government primary schools. How are primary Education, Health and Physical education (HPE) teacher's best prepared?* Retrieved from http://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/default-document-library/lynch_2013_preparation_of_primary_health__physical_education_teachers.pdf?sfvrsn=4

Lynch, T. (2015). Health and physical education (HPE): Implementation in primary schools. *International Journal of Educational Research, 70*(c), 88–100. doi:10.1016/j.ijer.2015.02.003.

Macdonald, D. (2013). The new Australian Health and Physical Education Curriculum: A case of/for gradualism in curriculum reform? *Asia-Pacific Journal of Health, Sport and Physical Education, 4*(2), 95–108.

Martin, S. D., Snow, J. L., & Franklin Torrez, C. A. (2011). Navigating the terrain of third space: Tensions with/in relationships in school-university partnerships. *Journal of Teacher Education, 62*(3), 299–311.

Medland, A., & Taggart, A. (1993, November). *The implementation of a health related fitness intervention: A case study of two primary schools.* Paper presented at the Australian Association for Research in Education Conference, Fremantle, WA.

Murray, J. (2010). Towards a new language of scholarship in teacher educators' professional learning? *Professional Development in Education, 36*(1–2), 197–209.

National Association for Sport and Physical Education. (2008). *Advanced standards for physical education.* Retrieved from http://www.shapeamerica.org/accreditation/upload/Advanced-2008-PETE-Standards.pdf

O'Dea, J., & Maloney, D. (2000). Preventing eating and body image problems in children and adolescents using the health promoting schools, framework. *Journal of School Health, 70*(1), 18–21.

Olrich, T. (2002). Assessing fundamental motor skills in the elementary school setting: Issues and solutions. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 73*(7), 26–32.

Queensland Government. (2003). *Get active Queensland, early childhood resources.* Brisbane, QLD: Queensland Government Printer.

Queensland School Curriculum Council. (1999). *Health and physical education initial in-service materials.* Brisbane, QLD: Publishing Services, Educational Queensland.

Saltmarsh, N. R. (2001, August 4). Fitness; better role models, community involvement could make obese kids fitter. *Health and Medicine Week,* 12–13. Atlanta.

Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG). (2014). *Action now: Classroom ready teachers.* Retrieved from http://www.studentsfirst.gov.au/teacher-education-ministerial-advisory-group

Tinning, R. (2004). Rethinking the preparation of HPE teachers: Ruminations on knowledge, identity, and ways of thinking. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, 32*(3), 241–253.

Webster, P. J. (2001). Teachers' perceptions of physical education within the k-6 personal development, health and physical education key learning area (Theses, University of Woollongong). Abstract retrieved June 28, 2004, from Informit database.

World Health Organisation. (1994). *Life skills education in schools-division of mental health.* Manila: Author.

World Health Organisation. (1996). *Health promoting schools: Regional guidelines development of health-promoting schools—A framework for action—Regional Office, Western Pacific.* Manila: Author.

Zeichner, K. (2010). Rethinking the connections between campus courses and field experiences in college and university-based teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 61*(1–2), 89–99.