The Holistic Development Curriculum:  
An Irresponsible to Spiritual Enlightenment Levels  

Kicheon LEE¹  
Seungjae KIM²  

¹ Korea University  
² Kangwon University

I. Introduction
Throughout the 100 years history of school physical education settings, much opportunities have been provided to develop school children not only psychomotor skills but personal and social awareness as well (Morgan and Goldston, 1987). Thus, a variety of activity programs have emphasized in physical education curriculum. These programs are based on western movement approach, and related with a wide range of sport and games, health and fitness activities, and gymnastics as well (Kleinman, 2000). Especially, the identification of sport with physical education has been to have enormous consequences on the direction and development of physical education throughout the 20th century. However the role of physical education in changing society will be greatly enhanced in the future.

The twenty-first century will be the Age of holistic development of human beings. Increasingly in our society, there has been a growing interest by the population at large in the development and engagement in holistic development approach. This is based on the concept of oneness of body, mind and spirit as whole human beings. In educational settings, each student finds identity, meaning and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to spiritual values such as compassion and peace (Miller, 1993). The harmony of three values of body, mind, and spirit for each student are extreme goals in holistic approach. Thus, the understanding of holistic approach in physical education is becoming more important to find
enhancement of a student’s quality of life through physical activity.

II. Two Philosophical Approaches of Human Movement

There are two distinct visions to characterize human movement approach based upon conceptual perspectives: They are dualism and holism (Kretchmer, 1995).

1. Dualism: Bodies Separated from Individual

It looks at human bodies two different perspectives: body and mind. This concept generalizes the facts that the individual pays bodies too much attention to diet for shape and weight control, and physical beauty. The other characteristics tending too little attention are cutting physical education as a school subject, way of thinking of mind superior and body inferior, and battle between our selves and bodies. Historically, there are three perspectives that represent the concepts of dualism.

1-1. Education of the physical - This means physical education should focus on development of individual’s physical aspects. Much emphasis put on organic development, such like strength, flexibility, cardiovascular endurance, and motor skill acquisition. Gymnastics was one of major subject as early physical education program according to based on this concept.

1-2. The body as a machine - Like a machine the body performs many mechanical functions. It circulates blood, regulate temperature, locomotive action, metabolism, and active and reactive systems of levers, etc. These physical work capacities are different person to person. This knowledge has brought about a great deal of scientific information about human body, such as anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, and motor development. Today, it develops public interest of fitness and body shape.

1-3. Object dualism - A human body is composed of mind and body. It believes that education is focused on the body, not the whole individual. The consequences of this concept have leaded the importance of body care, physical training, and fitness also.

Typically, when the body is separated from the self, it becomes a problem in need of control or redesigning. It is experienced as a manipulative object that should be molded so that it can fulfill culturally defined expectations (Charles, 2001). The social problem of the body as object may be reaching crisis proportions today.

2. Holism: Bodies United with Individual

The characteristic of human being as whole beings is that the physical aspect of person is united with and influenced by idea that individual generally have in mind. Following four concepts are along with the idea of holism.

1-1. A sound mind in a sound body - It means a sound body is controlled under the guidance of a good mind.

1-2. A unity of mind, body, and spirit - An individual is a whole being who having balanced three aspects of mind, body, and spirit. A triangle of body, mind, and spirit is symbol of YMCA.

1-3. Education through the physical - When human moves physically, the whole individual is affected because an individual is whole being. Thus, through the physical movement, the one should learn socially meaningful outcomes.

1-4. Somatic education - It is a study of living body as unity of body, mind and spirit. It involves the whole human being, focusing in a practical way on the interactions of posture, movement, emotion, thought, self-concept, and cultural values (Linden, 1994). A variety of somatic methods exist in sport and health areas. In sports area, much result would be found based on this concept. Tennis players experiences the deeper layers of the game, and marathoner’s super-physical recognition of self during running are good
example.

This view that perceives all things as connected, interrelated, and parts of the same unified whole being offers a direct contrast to fragmented perspective. Schools of holistic approach that conceive of a universal wholeness suggest that all things are different aspects or manifestations of the same reality. In this world view, it is merely illusion to see oneself as an isolated ego with the power to forge one’s own way through life or to perceive the things and events of this world as separated and disconnected (Charles, 2001).

The conceptual differences between holistic and physical education are summarized by <Table 1>.

Physical activity in holistic approach is an artless art. From martial arts to the art of archery, participants become artless, in the sense of purposeless and egoless, through the meditative centering process. Devotees of these arts seek less to win than to open themselves to a deeper level of consciousness where their very nature can be experienced. This state, where intention and action are simultaneous and the participant finds inner enlightenment (Charles, 2001).

### III. The Levels of Holistic Development Approach

The holistic development approach is designed to help students understand and be skilled in the operation of the mind-body unity, to contribute to a student’s maximal potential capabilities in the future. It proposes an idea that can brings up a new paradigm that takes on the challenge for achieving students physical, mental, and spiritual capacities through movement discipline. This view establishes new experiences of developing different perspectives in the area of school curriculum, as resources of teaching physical education (Charles, 2001).

The holistic development approach conceptualizes a hierarchy of seven levels of human beings. They are an invalid-person type, a gangster type, a righteous person type, a monk type, a dictator type, a pretended scholar type, and finally a sage type. Level one is characterized by irresponsible at all of three values in individual components of body, mind, and spirit. And level seven is characterized by responsible at all of three values, and reaches to inner enlightenment. Among these seven values, an individual can approach progressively more mature stage of holistic development.

The characteristics of seven types of individual based on holistic development approach are as follows:

1. Invalid-person type - This means the development levels in all of three values about body, mind, and spirit are extremely low. Thus, individual with this type shows depressed personalities and unwilling to do in all aspect of human behavior. And they are with socially destructive, hostile,
and become desperate attitude. Students at this level show extremely minimal personal and social responsibility. In school physical education class, they show very low physical and mental ability, and frequent violations of rules appear during game and play.

2. A gangster type - This means the development level of body is high, and values of both mind and spirit are low. They are selfish and cold-blooded. In real world, killer, robbery, and gangsters are found in this type of persons. In physical education class, students are proud of their high-skilled physical performance and fitness. And they perform outstanding abilities in physical education activities. But, they show high violation of rules and anti-social behaviors.

3. A righteous-person type - This type of persons show high level of mind, but body and spiritual values are very low. Dreamer, Gambler, examination-prepared persons, solitary-person and righteous persons are within this type. They are very stubborn, and their ultimate goals of life are unchangeable, thus continue to achieve it. In physical education class, students have low-skilled and fitness level, and are unwilling to participate to physical activity.

4. A monk type - This type represents high level of spirit, but body and mind values are far low. Person with monastic life, such as monk and nun are found in this type of person. Dreaming utopia is their personal goal. In physical education, they usually participate as referee and judge, and seldom participate as active player.

5. A dictator type - This component of level identify high level of body and mind, but spiritual value is extremely low. This type of person tends to have strong belief and confidence based on continuous body and mind discipline. In social activities, ego-involved behaviors are found most of the time. World famous war heroes are categorized into this type. They tend to give best effort to achieve extreme goal once they decided it in spite of all sacrifice.

And <Figure 1> shows an application of the seven levels of holistic development approach in society, home and physical education class.

IV. Conclusion

Physical education is the study of what it is to be alive in a human body, and it is an intensely practical study of enhancing quality of life. Thus all the important human issues should be addressed through holistic approach. It deals with the whole human being and seeks toward creating changes in the psychomotor, cognitive, and affective domains.

This study has investigated to identify the holistic
development approach in which the primary goal is to achieve human enlightenment and to conceptualize human beings to interpret its meaning into holistic view for alternative physical education curriculum.

Based on holistic view, seven developmental levels for human beings are proposed. The inclusion of this model for into a comprehensive program of physical education can be considered alternative ways in which it can be implemented and integrated into the physical education curriculum. Thus, it brings up new challenge of developing physical education model in changing society for preparation of the upcoming another century.

References


