Korea Institute of Curriculum & Evaluation

To date, there have been six curriculum revisions on the national level. Whenever the national curriculum in Korea was revised, the curriculum philosophy in physical education was not changed. The emphasis has been on sport skills in the national physical education curriculum from the first to the seventh curriculum. Which is to say that from the first to the seventh, the national physical education curricular have imposed limitations on teachers interested in holistically teaching physical education content and on students in learning meaningful physical activity. One of the main limitations is the use of repetitive practice in motor skills with low achievement in the cognitive domain and non-learning in affective domain (You, 2005). For this reason, most teachers tend to focus mainly on skill acquisition for physical activities, while overlooking other educational components of physical activities. In addition, many students do not perceive why they must participate in physical activity, move without enjoyment, or experience no meaningful learning in their physical education classes (Ahn, 2005; Choi, 2002; You, 2005).

Thus, the purpose of this paper is to introduce the philosophy and main characteristics of the 2007 revised national physical education curriculum, in order to improve the quality of the seventh national physical education curriculum.

Backgrounds of the 2007 Revised National P.E. Curriculum

The 2007 revised national physical education curriculum, published in Feb. 28, 2007, as made to address two needs: external needs and internal needs.

1. External Needs

In Korean society, there were two external needs that are used to revise the 7th national physical education curriculum. The first external need is that physical education should play a significant role in health and fitness education in order to solve students’ health problems and to raise the low fitness level. It has been reported recently that each year the level of students’ fitness is lower and that students’ health problems are more serious (You, 2001). In Korea, national academic tests, such as the college scholastic ability test, are the hottest issues. This fact deprives students of opportunities to participate in physical activities. In addition, students are becoming more passive and gaining weight because of excess television consumption, computer games, instant foods, and similar factors. (Kang, 2005; Kang & You, 2003; You, 2005b).

Secondly, there is a growing voice that school physical education should include ‘leisure education’ content. As the Korean society prepares for a five-day workweek, a five-day school week will also be introduced. With this change, there will be more
leisure time for students and they will be out of school every Saturday. Within these societal changes, lots of parents are concerned that students’ misbehavior or fruitless free time will increase. So our society hopes that physical education will take the important role of teaching constructive leisure activities and culture to future classes.

2. Internal needs

Within the physical education community, there are three internal needs to should be added to the revisions. First, societal perception toward physical education as a subject needs to be changed. Although the national physical education curriculum has been revised seven times, the status of physical education as a subject is getting lower, unfortunately. You (2005) insisted that the one of the major reasons for the negative attitude toward the role of P. E. in schools is due to the inappropriate role of the 1st to the 7th national physical education curriculum. That is, the past and current national physical education curriculum could not effectively document ‘what physical education is, as a subject’; ‘what educational roles physical education has, except for sports skill acquisition, and health and fitness promotion;’ or ‘why physical education should be required in the Korean school system.’ That is, even if the revision of the national physical education curriculum is not written only for ‘P. E. people’, they did not do their best to introduce a variety of educational values of physical education to non-P. E. people such as government and school administrators, parents, educational scholars (You, 2005a; 2005b). In fact, their negative perception of P. E. had been significantly affected by the reduction of P. E. lessons in the 6th and 7th national curriculum revision.

Secondly, Korean school physical education needs to accept the international changes of physical education. That is, many countries have shifted the emphasis of the goal of physical education from sports skills to life skills. These life skills include health management, social skills, thinking skills, and communication skills.

Third, Korean school physical education needs to rethink the philosophy of curriculum in physical education. There are many critiques that show that most physical educators have only emphasized sports skills acquisition. The root of this phenomenon is the past and current national physical education curriculum. The content of the curriculum is composed of sports-based categories such as gymnastics, field and track, swimming, soccer, and basketball etc. Furthermore, the curriculum sets the evaluation ratio of sports skills to 70%. Thus, most physical educators tend to think that swimming equals swimming skills in the national curriculum, and the same with other sports. For this reason, they rarely teach other educational content in physical education (You, 2003b; You et al., 2004; Choi, 2002b, 2005). Thus, within physical education community, there are some arguments that it is time to rethink the rationale of physical education as a required subject in school system.

Directions and Characteristics of the 2007 Revised National P.E. Curriculum

This revision aims to document various educational values of physical activities in physical education in order to revive the essence of physical education and to systematically establish the role of school physical education.

1. The Directions of Revision

A. Philosophy shift of physical education curriculum

As mentioned earlier, international trends in physical education have moved from sports skill to life skill for healthy and active living. In Korea, even if the physical education community argues that the most important goal of physical education is ‘health promotion,’ in fact the portion of health-related content of the national curriculum is significantly lower than it is for sports. This is
because most P. E. people believe exercise itself can automatically bring health promotion. That is, they think that when students acquire sports skills, they will actively participate in physical activities. Of course, some students will do this as expect. However, there is the missing concept that other students will lose interest in exercise and be frustrated whenever sports skills are the primary focus in physical education classes. People have ignored the fact that not all students have appropriate motor skills, interests, and success in physical education classes (You & Kim, 2002).

According to Corbin (2002), it is impossible to effectively teach sport skills because there is less lesson time and fewer facilities than physical educators expect. Too much emphasis on teaching sports skills in physical education classes deprives students of the pursuit of lifetime sports after graduation because many students lose their interest in moving or doing exercise. In addition, Corbin (2002) insists that most students with a higher level of sports skills do not show desirable behavior changes such as continued participation in sports or exercise.

Thus, physical education no longer emphasizes sports skill acquisition and systematically teaches why students should actively move or continuously participate in physical activities, what benefits physical activities offer, and what life skills are meaningful for the students’ future healthy, active life. In a sense, the 2007 revised national physical education curriculum has accepted an alternative philosophy: physical activity based curriculum (PAV curriculum), instead of sports skill based curriculum. The PAV curriculum emphasizes the idea that the reason for moving in physical education is the achievement of physical activity values. In other words, the PAV curriculum seeks to enable students to understand the value in various physical activities, experience participation in a variety of physical activities, and perform and appreciate them in their lives.

B. Re-conceptualization of physical education contents

As indicated before, the content of the past and current national curriculum has only sports or exercise categories. In the case of the 7th national physical education curriculum, there are eight content domains on the secondary level. These are gymnastics, field and track, swimming, individual and team sports, fitness exercise, dance, theory, and health. After deeply analysis of these eight content domains, it can be seen that the first six domains have no theory or health related contents. That is, the analysis yielded the information that sports are perceived as ‘physical or motor skills’, regardless of knowledge or theory (You, 2003a). Thus, these eight content domains in the 7th national curriculum give people the idea that the essence of physical education content itself is ‘sports skill’, not sports or exercise. Automatically, all teaching and learning activities in physical education classes tend to emphasize the teaching and learning of sports skills only.

To resolve these phenomena, both in the national curriculum and in the school curriculum, the 2007 revised national physical education curriculum uses an alternative content concept: ‘physical activity knowledge’ (You, 2007). This knowledge means the conceptual knowledge and procedural (or practical) knowledge of physical activities, including concept, principle, performance methods, and rules. Specifically, the conceptual knowledge in physical activity is viewed as a theory related to physical activity and means knowing why, understanding, inquiring about, and appreciating a physical activity. On the other hand, the practical knowledge in physical activity is viewed as ‘practice’ of a physical activity and means knowing how to move directly or to experience a physical activity. Thus, the concept of physical education content on the national level should be knowledge of physical activity. But, on the school level, the physical education content is still each physical activity such as swimming, skiing, soccer, basketball, gymnastics
C. Maximizing localization in school curriculum implementation

In the new curriculum, localization in school curriculum implementation is greatly maximized. In this way the new national curriculum gives each school authority to select appropriate physical activities, according to the school environment. To date, most schools have had difficulties in acquiring facilities and equipment for teaching swimming, gymnastics, and track and field. Contrary to the expectations of the physical education community, it is difficult, due to financial constraints, to improve the quantity and quality of facilities and equipment in Korean schools. To adjust to the current limitations of schools in terms of educational environment, the authority to select physical education content and activities, with consideration of the physical and personnel limitations of each school, is given to schools and teachers.

2. Major Characteristics

The 2007 revised national physical education curriculum consists of six components: characteristics, objective, content, teaching-learning methods, evaluation, and glossary.

A. Characteristics: A physically educated person

Characteristics clearly describe what a physical education is, as a subject. This part contributes people’s understanding of the essence, values, roles, and content of physical education as a subject. This part contains the four elements of the definitions of physical education, a physically educated person, the conceptual content framework, and the educational orientation at the elementary and secondary levels. A physically educated person is described as follows.

*A physically educated person* is defined as the person who has internalized and can perform ‘the values of physical activities’ by holistically experiencing various physical activities. That is, a physically educated person has health and fitness, sportsmanship and teamwork, creative and reasoning thinking skills, an awareness of physical culture while regularly participates in physical activities, and has the competence to contribute to a healthy society and nation as well as to actively develop his or her own life.

B. Objectives: Integration and Inclusion

In the 7th national curriculum, physical education objectives are divided into the three cognitive, psychomotor, and affective learning domains. This classification of the objectives has caused the educational activities in physical education to become discrete, separate, and partial in terms of content, teaching and learning, and evaluation. In addition, the classification cannot include other concrete objectives in the learning domains. Representatively, in the affective domain, only desirable attitudes are focused on physical education objectives on the national level. That is, other objectives such as teamwork, leadership and followership, cooperation, interpersonal skill, and caring in the affective domain are not present on the national level. Cognitive and psychomotor learning domains have similar characteristics.

The limitations of physical education objectives on the national level have directly influenced textbooks and teaching materials (You & Oh, 2000; You, 2002; Choi, 2003). For example, it is common that the cognitive objective is dealt with only in the classroom, not in the gymnasium or on the playground. On the other hand, the psychomotor objective is taught only in the gym or on the playground, but not in a classroom. Thus, the new curriculum has changed the classification structure of physical education objectives from Bloom’s learning domains to physical activity value-based objectives. This new classification has the intention of facilitating integrated content and teaching in physical education classes by integrating the three
One of the most important characteristics of the 2007 revised national physical education curriculum is the use of ‘Physical Activity Value’ based content system. The physical activity values are health, challenge, competition, expression, and leisure. On the basis of these values, the content system consists of the five content domains of healthy activity, challenging activity, competitive activity, expressive activity, and leisure activity.

Healthy activity seeks to develop rational judgment and a healthy lifestyle for acquiring health-related knowledge, promoting physical and mental health, and solving individual and community health problems. Healthy activity is composed of ‘fitness promotion and management’, ‘health and safety’, and ‘health management’.

Challenge activity means physical activity that challenges the self and others in seeking to establish individual goals and to make efforts in systematically doing one’s best to achieve the set goals. That is, it emphasizes the development of abilities in order to prepare for the future, by understanding individual potentials and adjusting to limitations. Challenge activity is divided into record challenges, form challenges, and target and martial challenge.

Competitive activity is physical activity that focuses on scientifically performing and appreciating competitive elements in sports athletic situations. This activity is a team-based activity to develop game performance abilities and various cognitive strategies necessary for competition between teams. In addition, this activity focuses on cooperation, leadership, sportsmanship and other skills. Competitive activity includes dodging, invasion, field, and net competition.

Expressive activity is a physical activity that expresses own’ thoughts and feelings by the use of physical movements and appreciation of one’s own and others’ movements. Contents in expressive activity are movement expression, rhythmic expression, folk expression, and theme and creative expression.

Leisure activity aims for continuous participation in a variety of leisure-based physical activities and for planning constructive leisure culture independently and applying it to participants’ daily lives. The contents of leisure activity are the inquiry into the meaning and values of various leisure activities, the development of exercise ability necessary for leisure performance, home, school, and community based participation, and individual participation of physical activities for leisure. Leisure activity focuses on ‘leisure life’ at the elementary level and ‘leisure culture’ at the secondary level.

2) Unification of content domains

In the 7th national curriculum, each school level has its own content. At the elementary level are the four domains of gymnastic activities, game activities, expressive activities, and health. In grades three and four there are the 6 domains of gymnastic activities, field and track activities, game activities, expressive activities, fitness activities, and health. On the other hand, at the secondary level there are the 8 domains of gymnastics, field and track, swimming, individual
Table 1. The content system in secondary level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Secondary Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness management</td>
<td>Fitness management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                         | ○ Health & Fitness management  
  • Relationship between health and each component of fitness  
  • Principle & method for fitness promotion  
  • Willingness for participation | ○ Diagnosis & evaluation of fitness  
  • Fitness measurement & exercise prescription  
  • Programming of fitness management  
  • Efforts & self-denial | ○ Self health management  
  • Importance of self-health management | ○ Health management for community  
  • Community role & activity for health promotion  
  • Methods for community health management  
  • Healthy sex culture for adolescents  
  • Others-esteem & mutual trust |
| Health & Safety         | Healthy life & Environment safety  
  • Drugs & a table luxury  
  • Prevention of environment pollution  
  • Self control & community spirit | ○ Healthy life and Life safety  
  • Sex role & violence  
  • Accident prevention & First-aid  
  • Situated discernment | ○ Form challenge  
  • History & scientific principles  
  • Game skills  
  • Courage & etiquette  
  • Appreciation of past & modern countries' sports game | ○ Challenge & Competition  
  • Characteristics & Types  
  • Game procedures & operation  
  • Sportsmanship  
  • Game analysis & appreciation |
| Record challenge        | Target/Martial challenge  
  • Speed/Distance challenge  
  • History & scientific principles  
  • Game skills  
  • Endurance  
  • Appreciation of past & modern sports game | ○ Target/Martial challenge  
  • History & scientific principles  
  • Game skills  
  • Courage & etiquette  
  • Appreciation of Korea & other countries' sports game | ○ Form challenge  
  • History & scientific principles  
  • Game skills  
  • Self-control  
  • Appreciation of past & modern sports game | ○ Challenge & Competition  
  • Sports game  
  • Characteristics & Types  
  • Game procedures & operation  
  • Sportsmanship  
  • Game analysis & appreciation |
| Challenge Activity      | Invasion competition  
  • History & scientific principles  
  • Game skills & strategies  
  • Leadership & followership  
  • Appreciation of traditional & new sports games | ○ Invasion competition  
  • History & scientific principles  
  • Game skills & strategies  
  • Leadership & followership  
  • Appreciation of traditional & new sports games | ○ Field competition  
  • History & scientific principles  
  • Game skills & strategies  
  • Social responsibility  
  • Appreciation of traditional & new sports games | ○ Net competition  
  • History & scientific principles  
  • Game skills & strategies  
  • Game etiquette  
  • Appreciation of traditional & new sports games |
| Competitive Activity    | Invasion competition  
  • History & scientific principles  
  • Game skills & strategies  
  • Leadership & followership  
  • Appreciation of traditional & new sports games | ○ Invasion competition  
  • History & scientific principles  
  • Game skills & strategies  
  • Leadership & followership  
  • Appreciation of traditional & new sports games | ○ Field competition  
  • History & scientific principles  
  • Game skills & strategies  
  • Social responsibility  
  • Appreciation of traditional & new sports games | ○ Net competition  
  • History & scientific principles  
  • Game skills & strategies  
  • Game etiquette  
  • Appreciation of traditional & new sports games |
| Creative Expression     | Creative Expression  
  • Aesthetic expression & Creation  
  • Characteristics & Types  
  • Expressive method, creation, & appreciation  
  • Aesthetic attitude | ○ Aesthetic expression & Creation  
  • History & types  
  • Expressive method, creation, & appreciation  
  • Interpersonal relation | ○ Traditional expression & Creation  
  • History & types  
  • Expressive method, creation, & appreciation  
  • Traditional rituals | ○ Movement arts & Creation  
  • Relation between movement arts & creation  
  • Expressive method, creation, & appreciation  
  • Creative attitude |
| Leisure Culture         | Leisure Culture  
  • Adolescent leisure culture  
  • Characteristics of adolescent leisure culture  
  • Experiencing adolescent leisure activity  
  • Self-understanding | ○ Adolescent leisure culture  
  • Characteristics of adolescent leisure culture  
  • Experiencing adolescent leisure activity  
  • Self-understanding | ○ Leisure Culture  
  • Worldwide leisure culture  
  • Type of worldwide leisure activity  
  • Experiencing worldwide leisure activity  
  • Multicultural understanding | ○ Leisure Culture  
  • Leisure sports culture  
  • Types & characteristics of leisure sport  
  • Experiencing & appreciating leisure sports  
  • Self-development |
| Leisure activity        | Leisure Culture  
  • Type of Korean traditional leisure activity  
  • Experiencing traditional leisure activity  
  • Traditional cultural spirit | ○ Leisure Culture  
  • Leisure Culture  
  • Worldwide leisure culture  
  • Type of worldwide leisure activity  
  • Experiencing worldwide leisure activity  
  • Multicultural understanding | ○ Leisure Culture  
  • Leisure Culture  
  • Leisure Culture  
  • Leisure Culture |
& team sports, fitness exercise, dance, theory and health. This content system implements a 'spiral curriculum', in which the quantity of learning is increased and the learning activities in elementary classes are repeated in secondary classes. In the 2007 revised national curriculum, the content system is unified from grade 3 to grade 10 in a common curriculum. This system has the strength of maintaining consistency, sequence, and connection from elementary physical education to secondary physical education.

The 2007 revised national curriculum emphasizes content sequence among school levels and grades, because the content system implements physical activity value-based content, rather than sports category-based content. Considering students' age and developmental stages, the educational sequence across the grades is set according to cognitive and physical development. Consequently even if some content at a school level seems similar to the content of another school level, the specific content in one domain is not the same as those in other domains.

3) Election of physical activities in each grade

In the 2007 revised national curriculum, five domains and content elements in the content system are required at elementary and secondary levels. When teaching the required domains and content elements, each school is allowed to select physical activities for each grade (see Table 2). For example, in grade 7, where it is necessary to teach history and scientific principles, game methods and skill/strategy, leadership/followership, and sports game appreciation, the school and the teachers can select from the examples of soccer, basketball, team handball, field hockey, and rugby in Table 2. This means that which sports or how many sports are selected to teach content standards, depends on each school and teachers.

On the national level, the content system in the national curriculum offers a minimum of content standards, so that at the school or teacher's level, there is the right to control the optimized quantity of learning since there are significant differences in environment or facilities in different districts and schools in Korea.

D. Teaching-Learning Method

In the 2007 revised national physical education curriculum, the teaching-learning method emphasizes differentiated instruction, integrated teaching-learning activities, and creative selection and modification of instruction models and strategies. A variety of differentiated instruction in physical education should be conducted on the basis of interest, motor skills, fitness level, gender, and

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Activity</td>
<td>Weight training, interval training, stretching etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge activity</td>
<td>Appropriate uses of drugs &amp; table luxury, preventive activities of environmental pollution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive activity</td>
<td>track and/or field, swimming etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressive activity</td>
<td>soccer, basketball, team handball, hockey, rugby, football etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure activity</td>
<td>creative gymnastics, figure skating, jumping rope with music etc.</td>
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</table>
learning styles. Several difficulties or types of tasks in teaching-learning activities should be able to minimize alienated students in physical education classes. Also, it is recommended that teaching-learning activities should integrate both direct activities (e.g., doing, moving) and indirect activities (e.g., reading, writing, discussing, appreciating) so that students can holistically understand and perform physical activities. Finally, instruction models, teaching strategies and techniques, educational technology should be selected and used, with regard to the characteristics of the physical education content. In addition, teaching-learning methods can be creatively modified and used according to instructional objectives and contents at the school or class level (MOE, 2007).

E. Evaluation: Flexibility and Accountability

In the 2007 revised national physical education curriculum, evaluation emphasizes the consistency between teaching content and evaluation content, the balance among evaluation contents, the diversity of evaluation methods and tools, and the differences between activity assessment and performance assessment.

One of the most significant characteristics in evaluation is that the number of sports to be evaluated and the evaluation ratio per a semester are not fixed at the national level. So, each school or teacher could decide the number and ratio of evaluation, based on content standards in the content system.

F. Physical Education Curriculum Glossary

Finally, the physical education curriculum glossary is introduced for the first time in the national physical education curriculum, so that teachers and others could easily and exactly understand and interpret ‘physical education curriculum’ in formal documents.

Closing Remarks

To effectively teach the reason that physical activity is important in our lives and what our students should learn in P. E. classes, the five physical activity values of health, challenge, competition, expression, and leisure are included in the national physical education curriculum. Physical Activity Values as educational content in P. E. have many strengths. First, PAV-based curriculum helps students understand various values while participating in physical activities. Second, PAV-based curriculum allows students to holistically experience the phenomenon of physical activities including skills, strategy, rules, aesthetic expression, cultural awareness, teamwork, scientific principles while performing physical activities. Finally, PAV-based curriculum helps students to build competence for judging the value of physical activity and for deciding to be active and continuous participate in physical activities for the rest of their lives.

There are some future tasks that are needed to effectively implement the 2007 revised national physical education curriculum at the schoolteachers’ level. First, in-depth education for in-service and pre-service teachers should be systematically made in local areas. This education should present the philosophy and characteristics of the revised national physical education curriculum. Secondly, the structure and specific contents of physical education textbooks should be changed to be in accord with the content of the 2007 revised national curriculum.

Finally, various teaching-learning material should be developed and provided to show teachers how the new curriculum should be implemented by teachers in physical education classes.

References


