



INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION AND PRACTICES OF TEACHERS IN PHYSICAL EXERCISE AND SPORTS PROGRAMMES IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF VOLTA REGION, GHANA

^{*1}Donkor, S.K., ²Domfeh, C., ³Hormenu, T., ⁴Okala, C., ⁵Nkrumah, AA., ⁶Osei, C.A., ⁷Agortey, J.J., ⁸Asare, M., ⁹Adenyoh, C.K., ¹⁰Selase, F.A., & ¹¹Appiah, M.

^{1,8}University of Ghana, Legon – Ghana

^{2,3}University of Cape Coast – Ghana

⁴Department of Human Kinetics, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

⁵Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development, Ghana

⁶University of Health and Allied Studies, Ho – Ghana

⁷Physical Education and Sports Unit, Department of Science, St. Francis' College of Education, Hohoe - Ghana

⁹University of Education, Winneba – Ghana

^{10,11}Physical Education and Sports Unit, Department of Science, E.P, College of Education, Amedzofe - Ghana

*Corresponding author email: skdonkor@ug.edu.gh

Abstract

Regular supervision of instructional tasks of the teacher is a powerful contributor to classroom achievement and effectiveness. The purpose of this study was to investigate instructional practices and frequency of supervision of teachers of PES programme in public primary schools and to explore gender differences in supervision of teachers in six educational circuits in the Volta Region, Ghana. We adopted a cross-sectional descriptive survey to investigate the pedagogical problems. We used 172 participants out of a population of 300 teachers in the study area. Good results based on the validity and reliability of the data collection instrument were achieved through expert consultation and the Cronbach alpha reliability test ($\alpha \geq .71$). We conducted pre-data analyses to clean data from probable errors during data entering. Analyses of data using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS for Windows, Version 21) revealed that most teachers in public primary schools did not receive any form of supervisory assistance in teaching the PES programme in public primary schools. Findings showed that the PES programme was not taught regularly in public primary schools. Again, the findings revealed frequent cancellation of PES lessons and the use of PES time for other subjects such as English, Mathematics and Science in public primary schools. In terms of instructional supervision of the PES programme, both male and female teachers did not differ significantly. We recommended that the Ghana education service assign supervisory roles to qualified PES coordinators and resource persons to help teachers in public primary schools implement the PES curriculum successfully.

Keywords: Instruction, Supervision, PES Programme, Public Primary Schools

Introduction

Supervision of instructional programmes and instructional practices of teachers is essential in promoting professional responsibility and standards of the teaching profession. Research demonstrates that "high frequency of supervision will result in high improvement of teacher's teaching competence" (Daud et al., 2018, p.523) and that the experiences and the pedagogical techniques of the teacher should contribute to classroom effectiveness (DiPaola & Wagner, 2018). Admittedly, the instructional tasks of the PES teacher have become weightier (Amir, 2017) for which reason the instructional tasks of the teacher should constantly receive supervisory support. A study in the area of instructional supervision establishes that without guidance and assistance, teachers are not able to change or improve the quality of teaching significantly (Oliva & Pawlas, 2004). In this regard, teachers should continuously acquire new knowledge and skills necessary for enhancing the quality of instructional practices to bring the desired effect.

111 | Cite this article as:

Donkor, S.K., Domfeh, C., Hormenu, T., Okala, C., Nkrumah, AA., Osei, C.A., Agortey, J.J., Asare, M., Adenyoh, C.K., Selase, F.A., & Appiah, M.(2023). Instructional supervision and practices of teachers in physical exercise and sports programmes public primary schools of Volta Region, Ghana. *FNAS Journal of Mathematics and Science Education*, 5(1), 111-117.

According to the literature, "Supervision is the function concerned with overseeing, assisting, and assessing the empowerment potential of the situation within each human resource function" (Bucher & Krotee, 2002, p.237). Supervision of teacher performance is integral to the effectiveness of classroom tasks. For this reason, supervisors should impart knowledge, encourage teachers and resolve conflicts to serve as a quality control measure for the assessment and evaluation of teaching tasks. In ensuring effective supervision, supervisors need to acknowledge the unique contributions of each PES personnel and align their tasks with their capabilities. The onus is on the supervisor to display a willingness to delegate responsibilities, set realistic standards, conduct a comprehensive analysis of each school position, establish accountability for teachers, and nurture a sense of accomplishment and affinity for each teacher. It is stated that "Supervision will be effective if sound leadership is provided with the supervisor's focus of attention not on his or her interests or power, but on the needs, interests and development of the employee (Bucher & Krotee, 2002, p.238). Consequently, instructional supervision requires the ability to coach teachers in envisaging their strengths and weaknesses to make them able to judge objectively and assess their performances in assigned tasks. Teachers who teach the PES programme must have "qualities that include a thorough knowledge of the subject matter, ability to take a personal interest in each learner, good communication skills and knowledge of clear boundaries between teacher and student" (Donkor, 2021, p.260).

Functionally, physical educators have a wide variety of responsibilities that include regularity of teaching the PES programme using a prescribed syllabus, efficient use of instructional time and regular attendance of workshops and in-service training for professional development. It is reported that "in-service training and staff development programmes are vital to building the instructional capacity of teachers" (Donkor, 2021, p.260). Notably, instructional responsibilities can be problematic if heads of institutions lack the required intellectual capacity to understand the dynamics of PES tasks. The inability to make classroom teachers understand the expectations of the PES programme renders heads of schools unequal to the task of supervision attached to teaching and learning of PES in schools. Therefore, this study concentrated on instructional supervision of PES programme and the practices of teachers in implementing the PES curriculum across the public primary schools of six specific circuits in the Volta Region of Ghana.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study aims to investigate the instructional supervision and practices of teachers in physical exercise and sports programmes in selected public primary schools of Volta Region, Ghana. Specifically, the was designed to:

1. Determine how often teachers of public primary schools are supervised in the PES programme
2. Find out how often teachers of public primary schools teach the PES programme
3. Determine the state of instructional practices among teachers of public primary schools in implementing the PES curriculum
4. Determine if there is a difference between male and female teachers in the supervision of the PES programme

Research Questions

1. How often are teachers of public primary schools supervised in the PES programme?
2. How often do teachers of public primary schools teach the PES programme?
3. What is the state of instructional practices among teachers of public primary schools in implementing the PES curriculum?
4. What is the difference between male and female teachers in the supervision of the PES programme?

Methodology

The studies targeted an estimated population of 300 teachers in public primary schools of six selected circuits in the Volta Region of Ghana. By gender, the population was composed of 183 male teachers and 117 female teachers. All participants in the study area were aged 20 to 57 years. Participants were teachers employed by the Ghana Education Service (GES). Stages were involved in the sampling of participants. Initially, the study's geographical areas were stratified, with eight circuits in the northern stratum (Kadjebi district), 13 circuits in the central stratum (Ho West district), and six circuits in the southern stratum (Akatsi North). Subsequently, two circuits were randomly chosen

from each of the three strata. In the final phase, a comprehensive population sampling approach was employed, enabling the inclusion of every teacher from the six circuits randomly chosen for the study. Notably, it was anticipated that each public primary school would have approximately six teachers. Likewise, the circuits selected for the study consisted of only six to 13 schools. In all, a total of 172 participants (males = 97, females = 75) correctly filled out and submitted the questionnaire for analysis.

A self-structured questionnaire was used for data collection. On a 5-point rating scale, respondents were asked to indicate how often they taught the PES programme and how often they were supervised in the instructional PES programme for public primary schools. Descriptors in this category included: 1 = never, 2 = occasionally, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often and 5 = always. On instructional practices of teachers in public primary schools, subjects responded to dichotomous responses of 'yes' or 'no'. A sample question was: 'Do you use PES-allocated time for other subjects?' The self-structured questionnaire was validated by experts in educational and social research as a tool for data collection. It was observed that all sections of the questionnaire displayed good reliability ($\alpha \geq .71$). Ethical clearance for the study (ID number: UCCIRB/CES/2016/14) was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana. The services of four research assistants were employed to facilitate the collection and management of data. All four research assistants received brief orientation on the distribution and management of data for the study. The purpose of data collection was explained to participants to encourage them to fill out the questionnaire independently and honestly. To prevent disruption to instructional time, participants were urged to fill out the questionnaire during the first and second breaks or at home. Subsequently, they were instructed to submit the completed questionnaires to data collection coordinators designated in each school serving as the site for data collection. All data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS for Windows, Version 21) and Excel. Before analysis, pre-data procedures were conducted to rectify errors. Boxplots and histograms were created and visually examined to verify that variables adhered to parametric assumptions essential for the t-test employed in the study. Precisely, the graphical presentation contained the analyses of instructional practices of teachers, supervisions of PES programme and the frequency at which PES programmes were taught in public primary schools. Independent samples t-test was utilized to examine gender differences of teachers in terms of instructional supervision of the PES programme in public primary schools.

Results

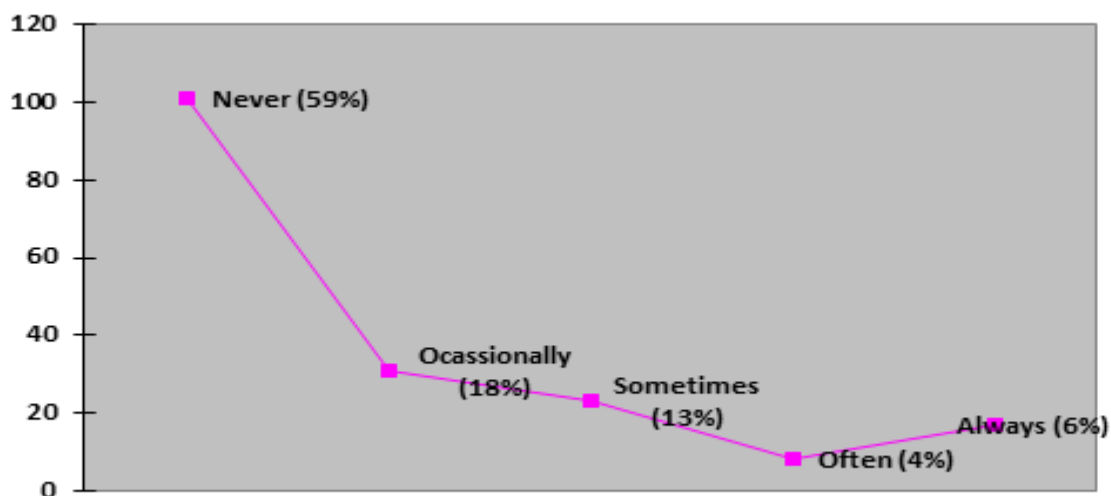


Figure 1: Supervision of the PES Programme in Public Primary Schools

Descriptive analyses of data relating to instructional supervision of the PES programme revealed that 101 teachers (59%) had never been supervised in PES lessons they taught, 31 teachers (18%) were occasionally supervised, 23 teachers (13%) were sometimes supervised, 7 teachers (4%) were often supervised while 10 teachers (6%) said they were always supervised. Figure 2 presents the results of instructional supervision of public primary school teachers in the PES programme.

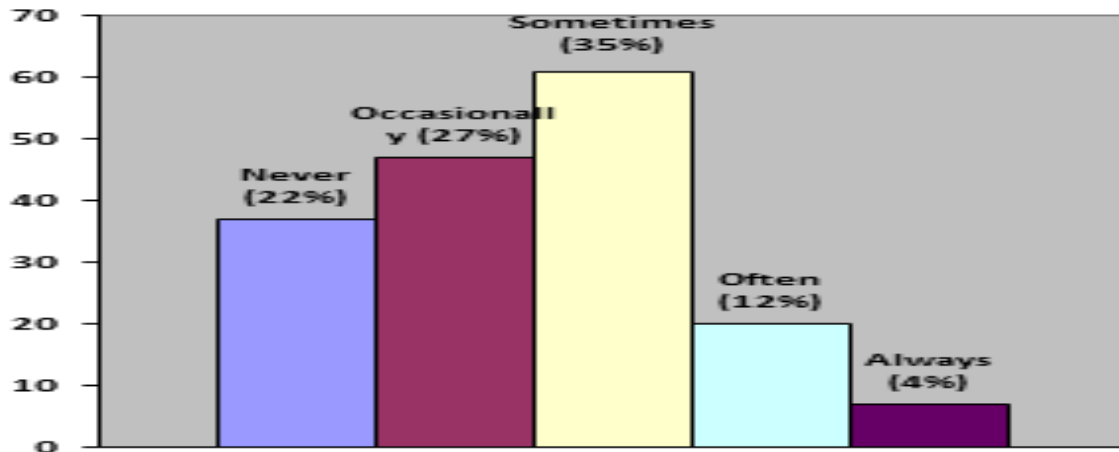


Figure 2: Frequency of PES Lessons Taught in Public Primary Schools

The study indicated that only 7 teachers (4%) taught PES always as indicated on the school timetable. 37 teachers (22%) reported that they did not teach PES frequently while 20 teachers (12%) and 47 teachers (27%) taught PES often and occasionally respectively. The study further revealed that 61 participants(35%) taught PES sometimes. Figure 2 presents the results of participants on the frequency of PES lessons in the primary schools of the Volta Region.

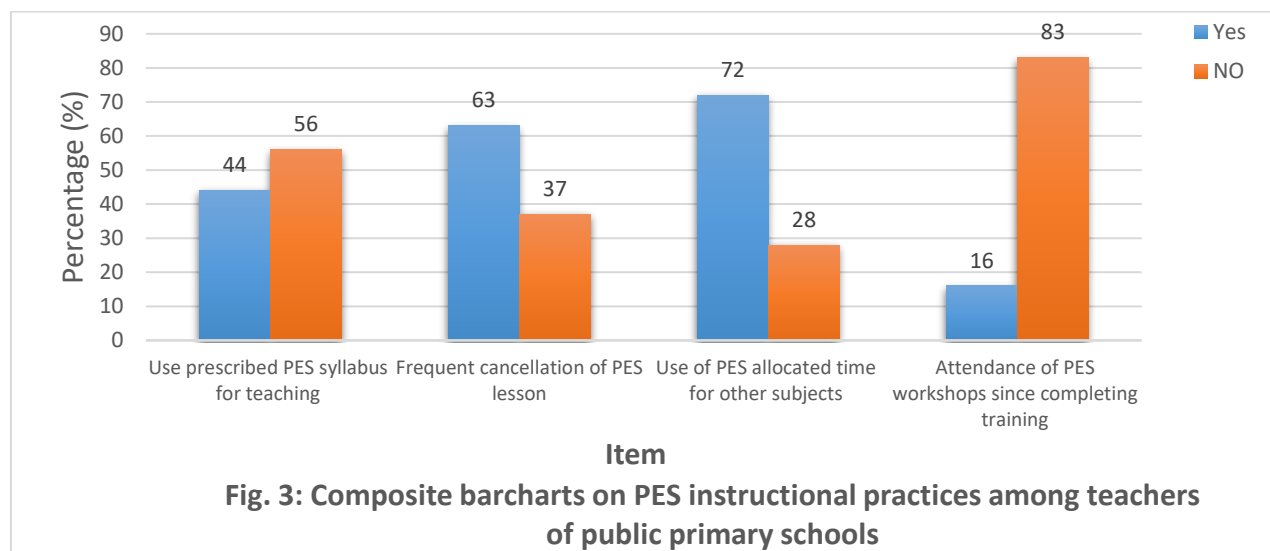


Fig. 3: Composite barcharts on PES instructional practices among teachers of public primary schools

Data collected on teachers' instructional practices suggested that most teachers (84%) had never attended any PES workshop since they started teaching in public primary schools. Data that formed 63% of the respondents revealed that there was frequent cancellation of PES lessons as compared with other subjects. The PES programme continued to suffer setbacks as most of the teachers (72%) used PES-allocated time for teaching other subjects. Most teachers (56%) who taught PES did not use the prescribed syllabus for teaching in public primary schools. Figure 3 presents the results of some instructional practices of teachers in the public primary schools of Volta Region, Ghana.

Table 1: Summary of descriptive statistics and independent sample t-test on the mean difference in supervision of PES lessons between male and female teachers in public primary schools

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	p-value	Decision
Male	97	1.87	1.17	0.81	170	0.42	Not significant
Female	75	1.72	1.18				

Table 1 presents the results of the differences in Supervision of PES lessons between male and female teachers. At a .05 level of significance, the observed difference between male teachers (M=1.87, SD=1.17) and female primary school teachers (M=1.72, SD=1.18) at 170 degrees of freedom was not statistically significant ($p=0.420$).

Discussion

Multidimensional engagement in instructional tasks requires that the PES teacher constantly receives supervisory support to be able to diagnose and solve teaching-related problems. However, findings of the research revealed that most teachers in public primary schools had never been supervised in the PES instructional programme. According to earlier studies, teachers attempt to provide supervision in a way that is often inadequate (French, 2004; Giangreco & Broer, 2005) even though supervision should often be seen as a principal foundation of clinical practice (Starr et al., 2013). Supervision should aim at equipping PES teachers with clinical practice experience that will help them accomplish assigned duties in schools. Recognition of the distinct contributions made by each PES personnel and their impact on the school is essential for supervisors. The supervisor must ensure that tasks assigned to PES teachers are commensurate with their abilities. Additionally, supervisors should demonstrate a willingness to delegate responsibilities, set ambitious yet feasible standards, provide a comprehensive analysis of each position in the school, establish accountability for teachers, and assist each teacher in experiencing a sense of achievement and affection. "Supervision will be effective if sound leadership is provided with the supervisor's focus of attention not on his or her interests or power, but on the needs, interests and development of the employee (Bucher & Krotee, 2002, p.238). Effective mentoring and supervision of teaching tasks should include collaborative planning for lesson delivery. Supervision requires the ability to coach staff members in envisaging their strengths and weaknesses and to provide assistance to teachers to resolve personal conflicts, improve morale, objectively judge and assess personal performance, and make recommendations for promotions, retention and other rewards.

The study revealed cancellation of PES lessons and use of PES-allocated time for other subjects as regular practices among public primary school teachers investigated. Most participants (public primary school teachers) reported that they had never attended any PES workshop after the completion of pre-service education and the start of their professional careers as teachers. Likewise, the use of prescribed syllabi for teaching PES in public primary schools was not a regular feature among most teachers investigated. Admittedly, teachers encounter many challenges from many directions in their day-to-day performance of teaching responsibilities. Studies have proposed the development of resilience in teachers (Day, 2014; Ee & Chang, 2010; Gu & Day, 2007; Jennings, Snowberg et al., 2011; Kitching et al., 2009; Sinclair, 2008; Tait, 2008) and support from colleagues (Brunetti, 2006; O'Sullivan, 2006) to make them successful in their teaching roles. The teaching profession is an enduring journey of continuous learning that encompasses ongoing professional development, a facet that has garnered increasing attention (Webster-Wright, 2009) and is perceived as an essential tool for improving the quality of education (Van Driel et al., 2012). Admittedly, the role of the physical educator "is critical to helping students acquire knowledge and skills necessary for fostering a positive attitude to physical activity (PA) for health and wellbeing." (Donkor & Hormenu, 2021, p.330). The quality of PES instruction and programmes is dependent upon several components that operate simultaneously. These

components provide a foundation defining essential content to be learned by students. Literature demonstrates that the "inability of the classroom teacher to provide quality PES programme at basic school level predisposes children to the risk of cardiovascular diseases, colon and breast cancers, type 2 diabetes and osteoporosis" (Donkor & Hormenu, 2021, p.330). Despite challenges relating to supervision and instruction in schools, the PES teacher must assume "responsibilities of all best instructional practices in a way that facilitates learning" (Donkor et al., 2021b, p.135).

The role of the PES teacher in primary schools involves guiding pupils to acquire the competencies and beliefs needed to integrate regular physical activity into their daily routines. It is documented that "professionals or individuals who teach PES at the primary school level must possess qualifications and special training skills needed to work in a variety of PAs in school setting" (Donkor et al., 2021a, p.187). Incidentally, an important part of a comprehensive PES programme is instruction in fundamental motor skills. In this regard, PES teachers need to constantly develop and implement good strategies that enhance students' acquisition of knowledge (Donkor et al., 2021b). Good instructional practices involving the use of a prescribed syllabus, regular workshop attendance, and regularity in teaching will help children to successfully participate in a range of movement activities for health benefits.

Conclusion

Based on the results, we deduced that a majority of teachers did not consistently deliver the PES programme, and the widespread occurrence of frequent cancellations of PES lessons was evident among public primary school teachers. Furthermore, there was no statistically significant difference in instructional supervision of the PES programme between male and female teachers in public primary schools.

Recommendations

1. The study recommends that the Ghana education service should assign supervisory roles to qualified PES coordinators and resource persons to help teachers in public primary schools implement the PES curriculum successfully.
2. Teachers must be abreast of changes in the educational landscape and be aware of professional development opportunities for improvement in teaching at the basic school level.

References

- Amir, N. (2017). Developing a measurement tool of the effectiveness of the physical education teachers' teaching and learning process. *Journal of Physical Education and Sport*, 17, 127.
- Brunetti, G. J. (2006) Resilience under fire: Perspectives on the work of experienced, inner-city high school teachers in the United States. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 22(7), 812-825.
- Bucher, C. A., & Krotee, M. L. (2002) *Management of physical education and sports*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Daud, Y., Dali, P. D., Khalid, R., & Fauzee, M. S. O. (2018) Teaching and Learning Supervision, Teachers' Attitude towards Classroom Supervision and Students' Participation. *International Journal of Instruction*, 11(4), 513-526
- Day, C. (2014). Resilient principals in challenging schools: The courage and costs of conviction. *Teachers and Teaching*, 20(5), 638-654.
- DiPaola, M., & Wagner, C. A. (2018) *Improving instruction through supervision, evaluation, and professional development*. IAP.
- Donkor, S. K. (2021). Adequacy of pre-service teacher education for teaching physical education curriculum in public primary schools: A study of teachers from six selected educational circuits. *International Journal of Physiology, Nutrition and Physical Education*, 6(2), 259-264. <https://doi.org/10.22271/journalofsport.2021.v6.i2e.2381>
- Donkor, S.K., Appiah, M., Atsu, F.S., Avornyo, G.K., & Ocansey, R. (2021a). Engagement in physical activity for health and wellbeing: Self-rated activity level, perception of the value of physical activity and differences among teachers in public primary schools of six selected educational circuits. *International Journal of Physical Education, Sports and Health*, 8(5), 186-191.
- Donkor, S.K., & Hormenu, T. (2021). Teacher-related barriers to effective teaching of physical education in public primary schools. *International Journal of Physiology, Nutrition and Physical Education*, 6(2), 330-335. <https://doi.org/10.22271/journalofsport.2021.v6.i2f.2398>

- Donkor, S.K., Avornyo, G.K., Koki, T.K., & Darko, R.A. (2021b). Teachers' utilization of instructional cues: Types, targets and rate per-minute in physical education setting. *International Journal of Yogic, Human Movement and Sports Sciences*, 6(2), 135-140. <https://doi.org/10.22271/yogic.2021.v6.i2c.1235>
- Ee, J., & Chang, A. (2010) How resilient are our graduate trainee teachers in Singapore? *The Asia Pacific Education Researcher*, 19(2), 321-331.
- French, N. K. (2004). Introduction to the special series. *Remedial and Special Education*, 25(4), 203–204.
- Giangreco, M. F., & Broer, S. M. (2005) Questionable utilization of paraprofessionals in inclusive schools: Are we addressing symptoms or causes? *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 20(1), 10–27.
- Gu, Q., & Day, C. (2007). Teachers resilience: A necessary condition for effectiveness. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23(8), 1302-1316.
- Jennings, P. A., Snowberg, K. E., Coccia, M. A., & Greenberg, M. T. (2011) Improving classroom learning environments by cultivating awareness and resilience in education (CARE): Results of two pilot studies. *Journal of Classroom Interaction*, 37-48.
- Kitching, K., Morgan, M., & O'Leary, M. (2009) It's the little things: Exploring the importance of commonplace events for early-career teachers' motivation. *Teachers and Teaching*, 15(1), 43-58.
- Oliva, P. F., & Pawlas, G. E. (2004) *Supervision for today's schools*. (7th ed.). Wiley Publishing Inc.
- O'Sullivan, M. (2006). Professional lives of Irish physical education teachers: Stories of resilience, respect and resignation. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 11(3), 265-284.
- Sinclair, C. (2008) Initial and changing student teacher motivation and commitment to teaching. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 36(2), 79-104.
- Starr, F., Ciclitira, K., Marzano, L., Brunswick, N., & Costa, A. (2013) Comfort and challenge: A thematic analysis of female clinicians' experiences of supervision. *Psychology and Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice*, 86(3), 334–351.
- Tait, M. (2008) Resilience as a contributor to novice teacher success, commitment, and retention. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 35(4), 57-75.
- Van Driel, J. H., Meirink, J. A., Van Veen, K., & Zwart, R. C. (2012) Current trends and missing links in studies on teacher professional development in science education: A review of design features and quality of research. *Studies in Science Education*, 48(2), 129-160.
- Webster-Wright, A. (2009) Reframing professional development through understanding authentic professional learning. *Review of Educational Research*, 79(2), 702-739.