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Abstract

Education in Ireland has always had a very strong academic tradition. While the benefits of physical education are widely acknowledged in a holistic education, the subject has often been marginalised and has been over-looked in favour of the more traditional academic subjects. The introduction of a new physical education syllabus as part of a new primary school curriculum, and a new physical education syllabus in the junior cycle in secondary school may be one of the first steps in the implementation of a syllabus that will see physical education being given equal status to that of the more traditional academic subjects.

The aim of the thesis is (i) to examine the newly introduced physical education syllabi in primary schooling and junior cycle secondary schooling in the Irish Republic and (ii) to investigate teachers' perceptions and experiences in relation to the syllabi.

Chapter One will give an overview of the schools involved in the study.

Chapter Two will outline physical education in the Irish context. It will also shed light on the current trends in physical education curriculum theory in both Irish and international settings through a review of literature.

Chapter Three will deal with research methodology in general and with the questionnaire and interview techniques in particular, as these will be the methods used in the study.

Chapter Four will present, analyse and discuss the findings from the research carried out

The fifth chapter will present the conclusions reached as by the study, make recommendations and provide indications for future development.