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"I Want Kids to Have the Same Feeling As I Do Towards Physical Activity": Acculturation of British Preservice Physical Education Teachers

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to describe the acculturation of six British physical education (PE) preservice teachers (PSTs). The research questions we sought to answer were: (a) What were the PSTs' values, beliefs, and perspectives regarding PE? and (b) What factors shaped the PSTs' values, beliefs, and perspectives during their acculturation? We collected data with three types of formal interviewing and employed standard interpretive techniques to reduce the data to themes. Key findings were that the PSTs aspired to a career teaching secondary PE, possessed a balanced orientation to teaching curricular PE and coaching extracurricular sport, and espoused a mostly traditional multi-activity curriculum that was dominated by sport. The main attractors to a career in PE were the opportunity to maintain a connection with sport and working with youth. The key shaper of the PSTs' perspectives were their apprenticeships of observation. These findings should aid sport pedagogy faculty in their efforts to produce stronger initial teacher education (ITE) programs.

Keywords

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Introduction

Studies of physical education (PE) teachers' acculturation (i.e. the influence of their pre-initial teacher education [ITE] biographies) have revealed how they are attracted to and socialized into the profession before starting their ITE (Curtner-Smith, 2017). This research has indicated that preservice teachers (PSTs) begin ITE with a clear set of perspectives, views, and values regarding the role of a PE teacher (Curtner-Smith, 2017; Merrem and Curtner-Smith, 2019). Together with PSTs' estimation of their potential to be an effective physical educator, these perspectives, views, and values form what Lawson (1983) termed the "subjective warrant." The subjective warrant, in turn, acts as a filter for the material to which PSTs are introduced during their ITE. Specifically, PSTs accept and assimilate material that is congruent with their subjective warrants and reject that which is not (Curtner-Smith, 2009; 2017; Doolittle et al., 1993).

Research on the acculturation phase has suggested that it has a more powerful influence on PE teachers than their professional socialization (i.e. the impact of ITE), and organizational socialization (i.e. the influence of the school culture, Curtner-Smith, 2009; 2017; Richards et al., 2014). This research has also provided ITE faculty with knowledge about why PSTs want to become PE teachers; knowledge of PSTs' perspectives, views, and values on entry into ITE; and explained how these perspectives, views, and values have been honed (Curtner-Smith, 2017; Merrem and Curtner-Smith, 2019). This knowledge should aid teacher educators in constructing effective ITE, selecting PSTs likely to succeed in their programs, developing the thinking of PSTs that is in line with current professional standards, and deconstructing thinking that is not (Curtner-Smith, 2017; Merrem and Curtner-Smith, 2019).

Acculturation research indicates that many PE teachers are first attracted to the profession through their enjoyment of physical activity and sport and so wish to work in these

two mediums (Curtner-Smith, 1999; Stran and Curtner-Smith, 2009; Templin and Richards, 2014). Other attractors to a career in PE teaching include working with children and youth, helping the community, and the prospect of long holidays (Hutchinson, 1993; Spittle et al., 2009). Personnel outside schools that mold future PE teachers' perspectives include their family members, peers, and sports coaches (Curtner-Smith et al., 2008, 2021). The key socializing agent that shapes these perspectives, views, and values, however, is prospective physical educators' "apprenticeships of observation" (Lortie, 1975) in schools, particularly the time they spend in PE, extracurricular sport, and with PE teachers (Curtner-Smith, 2017; Green, 1998; Lawson, 1983). A few PE teachers report that their motivation for entering the profession is to improve on the poor PE they received as children and youth (Curtner-Smith et al., 2008; Kakazu & Chow, 2023). Most teachers, however, have positive memories of their own PE and school sport and wish to replicate it when they are teachers themselves (Curtner-Smith, 1999; 2017).

A considerable amount of research has indicated that PSTs begin their ITE with subjective warrants focused either on coaching extracurricular sport or teaching PE (Curtner-Smith, 1999; 2017; Richards et al., 2014). Coaching oriented PSTs regard the teaching role as a "career contingency" (Lawson, 1983) and are more likely to be male, to have received low quality PE, to have played a relatively high level of "major" sport (i.e. mainstream team games), both inside and outside school, and to have decided to become PE teachers relatively early. By contrast, teaching oriented PSTs often regard the coaching role as a career contingency (Lawson, 1983) and are more likely to be female; to have experienced high quality PE; to have participated in "minor" sports, a relatively low level of major sport, or non-competitive physical activities; and to have decided to become PE teachers relatively late (Curtner-Smith, 1999, 2017; Curtner-Smith et al., 2008, 2021; Doolittle et al., 1993; Moy et al., 2014).

There is also some indication that PSTs enter ITE with strong or moderate orientations to teaching and coaching. Those with strong teaching orientations are likely to have relatively sophisticated conceptions of teaching and believe the subject should be aimed at realizing multiple affective, cognitive, and psychomotor goals. In contrast, those with strong coaching orientations possess a non-teaching perspective and regard PE as little more than supervised play, while those with moderate coaching orientations have a very conservative conception of the subject and, at best, believe it is solely concerned with teaching traditional sports and games (Curtner-Smith, 2017; Harvey et al., 2018). Moreover, PSTs with strong coaching orientations are unlikely to change their perspectives during ITE, but those with moderate coaching orientations can be won over by faculty who run effective programs (Curtner-Smith et al., 2008; Sofo and Curtner-Smith, 2010).

Most of the research on PE teachers' acculturation has been conducted within studies that have also examined the impact of other phases of their occupational socialization including their professional socialization, organizational socialization, and secondary professional socialization (i.e. the influence of master's and doctoral degree work, Brunsdon and Curtner-Smith, 2022; Jowers et al., 2022; Lee and Curtner-Smith, 2011). Thus, findings reported by scholars in published papers have been balanced among these various phases, meaning that those on each phase, including acculturation, have, by necessity, been somewhat diluted. In fact, there have only been two studies that have focused exclusively on acculturation—those conducted by Hutchinson (1993) in the United States and Merrem and Curtner-Smith (2019) in Germany. Moreover, relatively little is known about the occupational socialization of British PE teachers in general, and their acculturation in particular. Research on the acculturation phase in that culture may directly aid local ITE faculty and indirectly help faculty working in other countries and cultures. The purpose of the current study, therefore, was to describe the acculturation of a group of PSTs in England. The

two research questions we sought to answer were: (a) What were the PSTs' values, beliefs, and perspectives regarding PE? And (b) What factors shaped the PSTs' values, beliefs, and perspectives during their acculturation?

Method

Participants

Six PSTs at the beginning of their ITE at three English universities participated in this study (see Table 1). Three of the PSTs were enrolled at one university, two at a second university, and one at a third university. They were assigned a pseudonym so as to protect their identity. When recruiting participants for the study, our goal was to include PSTs of different races, genders, ages, and being trained within different types of ITE programs. All but Suzie were post-graduate students and had completed a non-teaching undergraduate degree in the kinesiological subdisciplines prior to their ITE. Approval from the authors' institutional review boards and PSTs' consent was obtained prior to the study commencing.

Data collection

Following the acculturation studies completed by Hutchinson (1993) with physical educators and Maurer and Curtner-Smith (2019) with adventure educators, PSTs completed three different semi-structured formal interviews (Patton, 2015) with one member of our research team. The interviews ranged in duration from 17 to 58 minutes and their content reflected key constructs from previous theory and research on acculturation. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

The first interview was conventional in format. During this interview, PSTs were asked to supply relevant background information (i.e. age, race/ethnicity, and gender) and to describe and discuss their values and beliefs about PE (e.g. In your view, what are the objectives of PE in schools?), career aspirations (e.g. Which age group would you like to teach and why?), attractors to a career in PE (e.g. Which aspect of PE teaching are you most

looking forward to?), and acculturation (e.g. Who and/or what influenced you to start training to become a PE teacher?). The second interview involved PSTs engaging in role playing and role making (Hewitt, 1988). Each PST was asked to play the role of a PE teacher already employed at his/her ideal school (i.e. either primary or secondary) who was attempting to induct a new teacher (the interviewer) into his/her PE department. Specifically, PSTs were asked to give the "new teacher" a description of the school (e.g. Describe the students who attend our school?) and the school's PE (e.g. What are the main goals of our program?) and extracurricular sport and physical activity programs (e.g. How important is extracurricular sport and physical activity compared to curricular PE lessons?). In addition, PSTs were asked to provide the new teacher with advice about joining the PE department of the school (e.g. What knowledge, abilities, and qualities are you looking for from me as a new teacher joining the PE department?).

During the third interview, PSTs were read three short fictional descriptions of PE lessons which they were asked to respond to and comment on. The protocol for the third interview also permitted the interviewer to ask multiple follow-up questions based on the PSTs' initial responses to and comments on each lesson. For example, if a PST indicated that she thought a lesson was well-taught, she was asked what specifically was good about the lesson. The lessons reflected different orientations to teaching and coaching but PSTs were not made aware of how each description was labeled.

The first scenario read to the PSTs in the third interview depicted the pedagogies of a teacher with a coaching orientation. Specifically, "Mr. Brown" is described teaching football to a class of 35 Year 8 boys. During the lesson, he spends most of his time coaching 15 boys in his Year 8 football team squad, focusing on set-piece play, attack versus defense, and full game play because they have an "important match" the next day. He asks the rest of the boys to organize themselves and play small-sided games. The higher skilled boys follow these

instructions. The lower skilled boys spend most of their time socializing. At the end of the lesson, Mr. Brown gathers the boys in, suggests that the school team players are in with a very good chance of winning tomorrow's match, and thanks the other boys for working "so well" on their own.

The second scenario portrayed the methods of a teacher with a teaching orientation. Specifically, "Ms. Jones" is described teaching a dynamic and fast-paced lesson on volleyball to a class of 28 Year 7 girls. During the lesson, she moves her students through a series of practices and small-sided and conditioned games focused on passing and basic game strategies and provides them with a great deal of performance and motivational feedback. When students struggle with or find an instructional task too easy, Ms. Jones has a new task ready to challenge them at the right level. She asks one girl, who has forgotten her kit, to help set up for new practices and provide performance feedback for her peers. At the conclusion of the lesson, Ms. Jones gathers the girls in, tells them how "wonderful" they have been, and checks their understanding of the teaching points she has used.

The third scenario depicted the pedagogies of a teacher with a mixed orientation (i.e. equal focus on teaching and coaching). Specifically, "Ms. Peters" is described teaching hockey to a class of 30 Year 6 girls. She begins the lesson by announcing that the first Year 6 hockey team practice will take place in two days and pledges to run multiple teams if enough girls attend. She then moves her students through a well-constructed series of practices and small-sided games focused on passing and dribbling and provides them with a good deal of encouragement and technical feedback. As she monitors the girl's efforts, Ms. Peters also frequently notes what "an asset" particular girls would be to the school team and urges those who receive this praise to come to the first team practice. During her lesson closure, Ms. Peters gathers the girls in and asks them to repeat and explain key skill cues. She then notes

how "talented" the girls are and suggests that any of them would enjoy playing on the school team.

Data analysis

During Stage 1 of the analysis, which was deductive, the first author separated data across all participants into subsets that pertained to the two research questions: (a) the PSTs' values, beliefs, and perspectives regarding PE and (b) the factors that shaped the PSTs' values, beliefs, and perspectives during their acculturation. During Stage 2, which was inductive, the first author employed analytic induction and constant comparison (Patton, 2015) to reduce the data to themes. Specifically, 310 data chunks on distinct thoughts, views, perspectives, and actions across both sets were identified and circled on the interview transcripts. Data chunks were given a descriptor and numerical code. Codes within each set were then collapsed, expanded, or modified, and grouped to form categories. Categories were then grouped to form themes. During Stage 3, the first author selected data extracts to illustrate key themes described in the findings section of this paper. Trustworthiness and credibility were established by searching for negative cases in the interview transcripts and triangulation (Patton, 2015). Specifically, the first author used negative cases to modify codes, categories, and themes. Triangulation was achieved by comparing the data yielded by the three overlapping interview techniques.

Findings and discussion

We begin this section by describing the PSTs' values, beliefs, and perspectives regarding PE. Next, we describe the factors that shaped the PSTs' values, beliefs, and perspectives during their acculturation.

PSTs' values, beliefs, and perspectives regarding PE

The data analysis yielded six themes on PSTs' values, beliefs, and perspectives regarding PE. These were *value orientations and goals*, *curriculum*, *pedagogy*, *teacher*

orientations and characteristics, *departmental dynamics*, and *extracurricular sport and physical activity*.

Value orientations and goals. As indicated in Table 1, all of the PSTs had aspirations to teach at the secondary level and none was interested in teaching primary school PE. Their goals for secondary PE reflected the disciplinary mastery (i.e. a focus on students becoming proficient in content), self-actualization (i.e. a focus on students' individual development depending on their strengths and interests), social responsibility (i.e. a focus on students making decisions about their own learning and acquiring affective skills that allow them to function in groups), and social reconstruction (i.e. a focus on changing society through PE) value orientations (Curtner-Smith et al., 2018) (see Table 1). The main focus of all six PSTs was on improving sporting performance through the mastery of skills and tactical understanding within games. They also stressed the need for teachers to allow students to learn to participate in sports which they enjoyed, were passionate about, and were good at. Of secondary importance to the PSTs was that students became healthy and fit as a result of their PE, participated in lifelong health-promoting physical activity, and gained an understanding of health and fitness principles. The PSTs also argued that PE was a good medium through which to realize affective goals. These included: developing social skills (e.g. cooperation, communication, teamwork); promoting ethical, moral, and sporting behavior; and developing self-confidence. In addition, Shan argued that students should learn cognitive skills and to be creative through PE. Less positively, Lucy suggested a key goal of the subject was to provide students with "a break from academic work." Typical of the PSTs' comments regarding goals was the following:

> Getting people involved and engaged in physical activity. . . . To instill a love for it so that they continue participation throughout their life. For me, it's just because I enjoy it so much. I want kids to have the same feeling as I do towards physical activity, being

active and all that. And also the holistic benefits in terms of the social side, . . . in terms of values like teamwork and cooperation. (Suzie, interview 1)

Curriculum. In order to achieve their goals, the PSTs noted that prerequisites were excellent onsite facilities, access to offsite facilities, a large budget, a "modern PE kit," and support from school administrators and parents. They also realized that although some "regulation" was necessary, their effectiveness might be constrained by educational bureaucracy and the "marginalization" and "low status" of the subject.

Effective school PE programs, the PSTs argued, consisted of six-week units, with between 1 and 5 lessons per week ranging from 40 to 90 minutes in duration, taught to students in the same year group, within classes that were "not too small" and ideally between 20 and 30 students. The PSTs also believed that ability grouping was often a bad idea, that mixed-gender PE was desirable when possible, but that teachers needed to be flexible on both ability and gender grouping depending on the activity/sport and context.

Although the PSTs did not mention curricular or instructional models directly, the traditional multi-activity model dominated their thinking and it was through this model that they implied most of their objectives could be realized (see Table 1). The PSTs also hinted at incorporating elements of the teaching games for understanding (TGfU), sport education, and teaching personal and social responsibility (TPSR) models within their multi-activity teaching. Mainly, however, the PSTs advocated for a "broad and balanced' set of traditional and non-traditional sports being offered to secondary students, as well as a few other physical activities that could not be classed as sport and that matched national curriculum requirements, such as outdoor and adventurous activities, gymnastics, and dance:

In an ideal world, I think it would be individualized sports. So it'd be gymnastics, it would be dance, swimming. Swimming is a massively important one that's not done enough. And then team sports as well. I think you can learn a huge amount from team

> sports: netball, football, rugby, hockey, basketball. I think you've got the alternative sports nowadays. You've got racquetball, you've got tag rugby, and then . . . being in the gym, . . . yoga, and activities that . . . are more likely to flow to adulthood (Joan, interview 1)

These activities, the PSTs suggested, could be selected from a sport classification system, partly based on the views of students, and be linked to or reflect the extracurricular sports offered in a school ("not the other way round"). Suzie and Lucy also suggested that the curriculum include "different pathways" for students to follow depending on their interests, and that were competitive, recreational, theoretical, or focused on the development of leadership skills. Furthermore, Lucy and Emily advocated for teaching through an activity based health-related fitness model, while Alice argued that such a focus, particularly when combined with classroom-based academic work, merely served to "put kids off." Finally, there was a quite a lot of support among the PSTs for employing the kinesiological model, in the form of academic coursework alongside "practical" physical activity, that led to older secondary students acquiring formal qualifications including GCSE [General Certificate of Secondary Education] PE and BTEC [Business and Technology Education Council] Sport.

Pedagogy. The PSTs argued that effective physical educators planned in some depth, set up their equipment early when possible, and had clear objectives for each lesson. In line with Shulman (1987), they also noted that teachers should have good knowledge of schools and students as well as high levels of content and pedagogical content knowledge. Although they professed to have a bias against "direct teaching" and suggested that skilled teachers possessed a range of teaching styles, they contradicted this sentiment somewhat by mainly focusing on key behaviors related to the use of Mosston and Ashworth's (2008) practice style. For example, they emphasized that good teachers provided physical demonstrations, gave large amounts of performance feedback to individuals and groups, and checked for

understanding during student practice and at the conclusion of lessons. There was, however, also universal support for the inclusion style or "differentiated" teaching and for more indirect teaching styles further along Mosston and Ashworth's (2008) spectrum. Specifically, they indicated an interest in the guided discovery and divergent teaching styles by suggesting that teachers ask questions of students about content and require them to "solve problems."

In congruence with Rink (2019), the PSTs also explained that good teachers were skilled at developing content through the instructional tasks they asked students to complete. Most importantly, they argued that teachers challenge students with tasks at the "right level" and extend, refine, or simplify tasks for students as necessary. Opinions on behavior management were divided. Emily emphasized the need for teachers to be aware that there was great potential for bullying to occur in the PE context. Joan spoke about handling discipline progressively, positively, restoratively, and with humor, and Suzie favored an online system in which students were awarded positive and negative points depending on their actions. Most comments on this area, however, advocated the use of traditional sanctions, such as detentions and lines, when students misbehaved.

Finally, the PSTs argued that assessing students led to more accountability, learning, and a higher status for PE. Their views on what to assess were congruent with their value orientations and goals. Thus, they suggested that physical educators should assess sporting skills, performance, understanding and the use of tactics and strategies, officiating, and scorekeeping. In addition, they noted that teachers should evaluate students' fitness and understanding of health-related concepts. Alice, Emily, and Shan stressed that assessment of sporting or health-related physical performance should be based on "progress" rather than achievement and Joan suggested that teachers assess higher skilled students' sporting prowess but focus on lower skilled students' ability to "analyze movement." In the affective domain, the PSTs opined that teachers should assess effort, teamwork, cooperation, sporting

behavior, leadership, communication, attitude, and the willingness of students to "bring their kit." In the cognitive domain, as well as assessing older students' knowledge of theory, Alice suggested evaluating students' critical thinking skills. Illustrative of the PSTs' comments on what to assess was the following:

> [Students should be assessed on their] effort because they might not be the most talented sports individual or sports performer but actually they put in 100% effort in every single lesson and I think that's something that should be recognized. And I think [teachers should evaluate based on] . . . progress data. . . . It might not be physical performance, so actually they might not be able to perform it to perfection, a skill for example, . . . but they can actually tell you how to do the specific skill. (Alice, interview 2)

The PSTs were much less forthcoming on how to assess the various outcomes they thought important. In congruence with the National Curriculum, they suggested that teachers should decide where their students were on a continuum of "levels" that corresponded to official report grades sent home to parents. They were, however, short on ideas as to how to actually collect data to make this judgement. They mentioned giving traditional written examinations to assess theoretical and health-related knowledge and the "bleep test" to measure fitness. Other suggestions were relatively vague and included meeting with students to discuss their progress, making notes on students' performances after classes, and using rating sheets. The main method of evaluation, however, appeared to be incidental observation of students during classes.

Teacher orientations and characteristics. The PSTs were unanimously critical of the coaching orientation scenario they were asked to respond to in interview 3:

> I don't agree with the fact that he [i.e. the teacher] was working with the team [i.e. during a PE lesson]. . . . He was focusing on that extracurricular competitive side of

> things rather than . . . every student matters. . . . I mean, at the beginning . . . the non-[team] boys—they were enjoying themselves. Although that's important, they still weren't learning anything. . . . I don't think it was right that he, the teacher, didn't focus on learning in the lesson (Emily, interview 3)

In contrast, they were mainly positive about the teaching orientation scenario:

> Sounds pretty good. Yeah, I like that. . . . I'm not sure I would have modified all the [volleyball] nets. I'm sure she [i.e. the teacher] knows the ability of the class, so maybe it's that they all need to have modified nets, but I'd maybe have differentiated ones so they could play around with different ones. She's got the children active straight away, so even while they were waiting for the slow changers getting ready they had an exercise to do. She was going around everybody giving feedback on how to progress . . . and what the expectation was. She got the non-participant involved in the lesson and she clearly had a lot of differentiated and extension tasks that she could give to children very rapidly depending on their individual ability which was fantastic. . . And she's encouraging participation. (Joan, interview 3)

Moreover, they also liked the mixed orientation scenario in interview 3 although they thought that the teacher "overdid the team stuff." Furthermore, in line with some previous research (Curtner-Smith, 1999), Emily suggested that younger teachers were more likely to be teaching oriented and that older teachers were more likely to be coaching oriented.

The PSTs also mentioned a number of traits that they thought strong teachers should possess. These included being positive, student-centered, creative, dedicated, and passionate about competitive sport. They also suggested that PE teachers should enjoy teaching to the extent that their students could see it, be committed to "making a difference" in all "kids' lives," and have respect for other teachers. In addition, the PSTs believed that more effective

PE teachers "fitted in" with other teachers, carried out duties other than teaching, and were adept at mentoring students and providing pastoral care.

Departmental dynamics. The PSTs stressed how important the PE department was in terms of facilitating individual teachers' success. They noted that departments should consist of men and women who were team players with different strengths and personalities and who agreed on a "shared technical culture" (i.e. the skills and knowledge needed for PE teaching, Lortie, 1975). Moreover, the PSTs argued that all the teachers in a department should be involved in the design of the curriculum and teach all its aspects.

Key to a department functioning well, the PSTs noted, was the head of department who needed to be an experienced cutting-edge teacher with good curricular knowledge, strong, democratic, supportive, open-minded, approachable, and a good communicator. In addition, the PSTs explained that an effective department head should lead by example and be good at managing students, providing pastoral care, and dealing with serious behavior issues. Lucy and Suzie also suggested that the department head be an advocate for female participation in sport and physical activity and Shan stressed the importance of the department head managing and organizing the curriculum and extracurricular offerings as well as evaluating the teachers in a department.

Extracurricular sport and physical activity. The PSTs viewed a school's extracurricular program as being an extension of and having equal status with the PE curriculum. They also saw the extracurricular program as being particularly important given that there was not enough time allocated for curricular PE. Furthermore, Alice explained that the extracurricular program allowed teachers and students to get to know each other at a deeper level than during curriculum time because it was more relaxed and there was no assessment. Moreover, Joan, Suzie, and Shan argued that extracurricular sport was important

since it allowed for more flexibility, made it possible to go into more depth with sports that were part of the PE curriculum, and allowed departments to offer new sports.

The goals the PSTs espoused for the extracurricular program differed slightly from those they advocated for the curriculum and were mainly affective. For instance, they included: "pure enjoyment;" character building; and personal, social, ethical, and moral development. All this was to be achieved through a program that emphasized "sport for all," participation for "team and non-team players," and that was "two-tiered" and so included "competitive and recreational" options rather than a narrow focus on "sport for excellence." Shan took this a step further when he suggested a key goal was to "keep kids off the street."

To realize these goals, and in line with their beliefs about the curriculum, the PSTs suggested that teachers offer a wide range of "traditional and non-traditional" team and individual sports. Aesthetic sports and physical activities that were purely health-focused were rarely mentioned with one exception being a "dance club." Such a program, the PSTs argued, should be run by teachers with expertise in the various sports offered and in congruence with sporting seasons and what was offered by sporting organizations in the community. Programs for younger students, the PSTs thought, should be mixed-gender and would be more effective if all the PE teachers in a department were involved. Finally, Shan believed the extracurricular program to be so important that participating in it should be made compulsory for a number of hours per year, a sentiment that seemed to be at odds with the views of the rest of the PSTs.

Factors that shaped the PSTs' values, beliefs, and perspectives during their acculturation

Two broad themes were developed from the data on PSTs' acculturation. These were *attractors* and *shapers*.

Attractors. In line with past research (Curtner-Smith, 2017), the key attractor to a career in PE for this group of PSTs was a love of sport and engaging in an active occupation (see Table 1):

> I was literally interested in every sport. . . . [And] I am not the type of person who wants to be in an office doing something on a computer. I want to be out there. (Shan, interview 1)

The PSTs mentioned always being active and "playing outside" as very young children and described their past and current extensive participation in high level sport, university sport, and recreational sport. For example, Joan had been an international sailor, Shan had played a good standard of youth cricket, and Suzie had been a "county level" netball and volleyball player and participated at the "regional level" in gymnastics, trampolining, and track and field.

A second key attractor that was also congruent with past research (Curtner-Smith, 2017) was working with children and youth. Specifically, PSTs mentioned wanting to make a "difference in kids' lives" in general, "developing the whole child," and the satisfaction of seeing students "make progress." In addition, they looked forward to working with "disadvantaged kids," less physically gifted students, and students who liked PE but had little academic ability. Alice also stressed her mission to help more girls participate in sport and physical activity. Somewhat contradicting the main thrust of their arguments for the purposes of extracurricular sport, the PSTs noted that they were particularly looking forward to working with high level players on their teams and developing their sporting prowess.

Other attractors to the role of PE teacher, and factors that influenced the PSTs' entry into ITE, included: long holidays, free accommodation (if employed at private schools), teaching theoretical PE because it meant the subject had an enhanced status, and the challenge

of changing the negative "stereotype of PE." Lastly, PSTs explained that they were attracted to secondary PE because they perceived it to be "more difficult" than teaching the subject at the primary school level and since there was more opportunity to specialize in terms of coaching extracurricular sports teams.

Shapers. As alluded to in the previous sections of this paper, all of the PSTs possessed subjective warrants (Lawson, 1983) in which the main goal was to teach sport, a role for which Joan and Lucy believed themselves well suited because of their current level of content knowledge and pedagogical potential in this medium. All of the PSTs also indicated that they had subjective warrants that included a balanced orientation to teaching and coaching (see Table 1). In contrast to previous research (Curtner-Smith, 2017; Doolittle et al., 1993), the timing of their decision to become a PE teacher (i.e. relatively late or early) appeared to make no difference to their orientations or perspectives (see Table 1).

Five of the PSTs explained that their parents had played a key role in their initial socialization into sport and PE by being active, encouraging their children to do likewise, and, in Suzie's case, by being PE teachers (see Table 1). All five PSTs also noted that their parents were supportive of their decisions to become PE teachers. Shan was an outlier in that he explained that although his family supported his decision to become a PE teacher, its members were largely "anti-sport."

More positively, Joan and Emily indicated that peers who were already in or had completed ITE were enthusiastic about their experiences and had encouraged them to follow the same route. Moreover, Joan, Suzie, Emily, and Lucy indicated that the positive experiences that they had while coaching children's sport had strengthened their interest in a career in PE, and Alice and Emily explained that their introduction to pedagogy within their kinesiological undergraduate degrees had the same impact. Suzie also recalled that the

attempts some of her secondary school academic subject teachers made to dissuade her from entering ITE had the opposite effect.

The main shapers of their subjective warrants, and the subsequent filters of what they were receiving during ITE, were the PSTs' apprenticeships of observation (Lortie, 1975). Unlike previous research (Curtner-Smith, 2017; Curtner-Smith et al., 2008, 2021), there was more of a balance between positive experiences in their own schooling the PSTs wished to emulate and negative experiences they wished to avoid or change. Many of the comments they made in this regard were about their own PE teachers. For example, the PSTs noted that their teachers had been excellent "role models," competitive, active, and capable instructors who had a positive impact on students in general. Moreover, the PSTs talked about the relationships that they were able to form with their PE teachers and Lucy recalled one of her PE teachers being "TGFU-like." These characteristics, traits, and pedagogies were ones the PSTs wished to emulate. Conversely, the PSTs also recalled "awful," "traditional," "authoritarian" and "old fashioned" PE teachers who taught "what they enjoyed," as opposed what students were interested in, treated boys and girls "differently," and employed direct styles of teaching exclusively. The PSTs reserved their harshest criticism for their primary physical educators, however, who had been generalist classroom teachers or, in Shan's case, worked for an outside agency brought in to deliver PE and who provided little in the way of instruction.

The PSTs also spoke at length about the curriculum their own PE teachers had delivered. Again, the experiences they recalled were balanced between those that were positive and which they wished to replicate and those that were negative and that they were determined to avoid. Most of the positive comments focused on how the PSTs had "loved" the kind of secondary school multi-activity curriculum dedicated mainly to competitive sport that they now espoused. Joan also noted that she had enjoyed the sporting component of her

primary school PE. Further, the PSTs recalled their "GCSE PE" fondly. In contrast, the PSTs noted that aspects of their secondary programs that they had not enjoyed or even "hated" included "dance," "fitness testing," poor instruction, and a limited number of sports being offered. In addition, they were critical of sex-segregated PE that had been a "disaster," ability grouping in PE, and girls being limited in terms of sports offered in comparison with boys. Emily also noted that her secondary PE had been fun but "just sport" and lamented the fact that other forms of PE, particularly "theoretical" PE, had not been part of the curriculum. Suzie could not remember her primary PE at all, which she suggested meant that it had been substandard, and Alice recalled not enjoying her primary PE curriculum because it was conducted in less-than-ideal facilities. Finally, Joan explained that she had disliked the movement education component taught at her primary school that consisted of educational dance, gymnastics, and games.

Most of the positive comments the PSTs made about their own extracurricular sport were also congruent with the kinds of program they now championed. Specifically, they recalled enjoying participating in competitive sport at both the secondary and primary levels and being coached by specialists who were different pedagogically in their coaching roles because they focused on what their players could not do well and gave less praise than they did in PE lessons. Conversely, the negative aspects of the extracurricular sports programs that they had experienced as students were contrary to the programs the PSTs looked forward to providing themselves. These included their teachers offering a limited range of sports delivered in a way that did not appeal to their lower skilled peers.

Finally, and congruent with past research (Curtner-Smith, 2017), the PSTs noted that their perspectives regarding PE had also been partially honed by their experiences of sport and the coaching they had received outside schools. Again, some of this coaching had, according to the PSTs, been of a low standard and provided examples of "what not to do."

Most of their memories in this area, however, were positive. Lucy, for example, explained that her coaches:

> Always knew the answers to our questions and were always able to help us technically and they were always going on courses. They would come back and be like, "We went on a course and today we are going to try this." The way they coached us made me think like I really do enjoy that aspect of sport. So, I was sort of thinking like how I could then do that, but coaching did not really appeal to me, it was teaching. (Lucy, interview 1)

Summary and conclusions

During this study, we described six British PSTs' values, beliefs, and perspectives regarding PE and the acculturation that shaped these values, beliefs, and perspectives. Key findings were that the PSTs aspired to a career teaching secondary PE and espoused a mostly traditional multi-activity curriculum, taught by pedagogically effective teachers, that was dominated by sport, and that mostly reflected the disciplinary mastery value orientation. The PSTs also noted the important role that a school's PE department and department head played in program effectiveness and possessed a balanced orientation towards curricular PE and extracurricular sport. Despite having entered three different types of ITE program that were overseen by the sport pedagogy faculty of three different universities, the PSTs' core beliefs were remarkably similar and, in our view, fairly sophisticated for recruits that were just beginning their training and when compared with the views espoused by recruits in previous studies (Curtner-Smith, 2017).

The acculturation that shaped the PSTs' perspectives, beliefs, and values was also very similar. As in past research (Curtner-Smith, 2017), the main attractors to a career in PE were the opportunity to maintain a connection with sport and working with youth. The key shaper of the PSTs' perspectives were their apprenticeships of observation (Lortie, 1975).

Specifically, they sought to reproduce the kinds of curricular PE and extracurricular sport programs that they had experienced during their own schooling. In contrast to past research (Curtner-Smith, 2017, 1999; Richards et al., 2014), however, the PSTs focused as much on improving on aspects of their own schooling that they perceived negatively as they did on the elements of their own PE and extracurricular sport that they recalled positively.

During the first section of our findings, we noted that there were a number of contradictions, inconsistencies, and gaps in the PSTs' perspectives, beliefs, and values. For example, the PSTs espoused using a range of teaching styles (Mosston and Ashworth, 2008) but spoke mostly about the effective use of the practice style. Similarly, the PSTs supported an extracurricular program that prioritized participation but also noted that they were looking forward to working with higher level players. Finally, the PSTs had a large number of ideas about what to assess but were short on ideas about how to assess. We believe that the inconsistencies and contradictions were partly a result of the PSTs starting to assimilate new material they were learning in their early ITE that was only partially compatible with the subjective warrants (Lawson, 1983) formed during their acculturation. The gaps, we think, represent aspects of teaching with which they had little experience in their apprenticeships of observation.

As we alluded to in the introduction, one of the main uses of this line of research is that it provides teacher educators with information about the degree to which PSTs entering ITE have views that are compatible with the perspectives and practices they advocate. In the current study, the PSTs' values, beliefs, and perspectives, and the acculturation that shaped them, were mainly congruent with the national curriculum that these PSTs would be required to teach on entering the workforce and so illustrated the cyclical nature of occupational socialization (Curtner-Smith, 2009). In short, these findings suggested that the PSTs' ITE faculty would be working with recruits who already believed in what they were about to be

taught. Sport pedagogy faculty who recruit and train PSTs in this context, however, might contemplate how difficult it would be to break this cycle, and change PSTs' subjective warrants (Lawson, 1983) for the role of PE teacher, if they (or their governments) were to emphasize value orientations, goals, and content that differed from and were at odds with the filters with which PSTs enter their ITE programs at present. For example, we would envisage faculty favoring Oliver and Kirk's (2016) critical "activist approach" to the subject as having a difficult time winning over PSTs who enter ITE intent on teaching sport, particularly given the relatively short duration of most English ITE and the reliance on the traditional/craft orientation (i.e. apprenticeship model) of teacher education (Zeichner, 1983). The evidence from our study also suggests that were the number of specialist primary school PE teachers to be expanded in England (and, perhaps, in other countries), faculty would do well to focus on recruiting PSTs with acculturation profiles and subjective warrants that were congruent with teaching the subject at this level.

Future research in this line could replicate the current study to ascertain the degree to which its findings transfer to other PSTs, both in England and elsewhere. Acculturation research which examined the perspectives and beliefs of older school students considering a career in PE would also be of use. Finally, acculturation research on PSTs recruited specifically to learn how to teach alternative kinds of PE focused on different value orientations, goals, and content should also be helpful and move the profession forward.

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Table 1. Participants' Acculturation Profiles

Biographical Detail	Participants: Joan	Suzie	Alice	Lucy	Emily	Shan
Age (years)	28	25	25	23	21	29
Race/ethnicity	White British	White British	White British	White British	White British	Asian British Pakistani
Gender	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Male
Undergraduate degree focus	Kinesiology	Teacher education	Kinesiology	Kinesiology	Kinesiology	Kinesiology
ITE	Schools direct[1]	BAPE with QTS[2]	PGCE[3]	PGCE	PGCE	PGCE
Preferred school level/type	State mixed secondary, multicultural and disadvantaged students	State mixed secondary, middle class students	State mixed and urban secondary academy, multicultural students	State mixed and suburban secondary, middle class students	Private girls' secondary, upper class students	State mixed secondary, multicultural and disadvantaged students
Value orientations	Disciplinary mastery, self-actualization, social responsibility, social reconstruction	Disciplinary mastery, self-actualization, social responsibility	Disciplinary mastery, self-actualization	Disciplinary mastery, self-actualization	Disciplinary mastery, self-actualization, social responsibility	Disciplinary mastery, self-actualization, social responsibility
Primary curriculum model	Multi-activity	Multi-activity	Multi-activity	Multi-activity	Multi-activity	Multi-activity
Orientation to teaching/coaching	Balanced	Balanced	Balanced	Balanced	Balanced	Balanced
Timing of decision to become a PE teacher	Late	Late	Late	Late	Early	Early
Key attractors to a career in PE	Love of sport, seeing students learn, free accommodation, long holidays, teaching theoretical PE	Love of sport, helping students, active job	Love of sport, working with students	Love of sport, working with students	Love of sport, helping students, improving the status of PE	Love of sport, making a difference in students' lives, active job
Key shapers of values, beliefs, and perspectives	Apprenticeship of observation, coaching experience, working with disadvantaged youth, active and supportive family, peers in ITE, coaches, confident in content knowledge	Apprenticeship of observation, coaching experience, active and supportive parents who were PE teachers, coaches, academic teachers	Apprenticeship of observation, active father, supportive parents, coaches, pedagogy element in undergraduate degree	Apprenticeship of observation, teaching experience, active and supportive parents, coaches, confident in pedagogical ability	Apprenticeship of observation, coaching experience, active and supportive family, peers in ITE, coaches, pedagogy element in undergraduate degree	Apprenticeship of observation, supportive parents, coaches

Note. [1]Schools direct is a one-year school-based ITE program. [2]BAPE with QTS (Bachelor of Arts in Physical Education degree leading to Qualified Teacher Status) is a is a three-year university campus-based ITE program. [3]PGCE (Post-Graduate Certificate of Education) is one-year university-based ITE program.