Research assessment: Analytical exposition — netball

This sample is intended to inform the design of assessment instruments in the senior phase of learning. It highlights the qualities of student work and the match to the syllabus standards.

Dimensions assessed

- Acquiring
- Applying
- Evaluating

Assessment instrument

The response presented in this sample is in response to an assessment task.

Context

Allender et al. (2006) identified a number of barriers that impact on access and equity to participation in sport and physical activity for teenage girls and young women. These included negative experiences at school, peer pressure, identity conflict, poor-fitting school Physical Education uniform, competitive class environment and lack of teacher support. Using your awareness of these barriers, develop an action plan during the term for overcoming one barrier to participation in netball.

Task

Write an analytical exposition that evaluates the possible outcomes developed in your action plan for overcoming one barrier to participation in netball. Use Figueroa’s framework to analyse the selected barrier.

Genre

Analytical exposition

Word Length

800–1000 words

The student uses Figueroa’s framework to examine a barrier involving equity and access to physical activity.
# Instrument-specific standards descriptors

Student responses have been matched to instrument-specific criteria and standards; those which best describe the student work in this sample are shown below. For more information about the syllabus dimensions and standards descriptors, see: [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11366.html#assessment](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11366.html#assessment).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard A</th>
<th>Standard C</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acquiring</strong></td>
<td><strong>Acquiring</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The student work has the following characteristics:</td>
<td>The student work has the following characteristics:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>in-depth comprehension</strong> of a <strong>wide range</strong> of terminologies, principles and concepts <strong>relevant</strong> to both the focus area and physical activity</td>
<td>• <strong>comprehension</strong> of <strong>fundamental terminologies, principles and facts relevant</strong> to both the focus area and physical activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>sustained and accurate use</strong> of <strong>appropriate textual features</strong></td>
<td>• <strong>use</strong> of <strong>appropriate textual features</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Applying</strong></td>
<td><strong>Applying</strong></td>
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<td>The student work has the following characteristics:</td>
<td>The student work has the following characteristics:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>insightful, independent and appropriate analysis and application</strong> of information relating to both the focus area and physical activity</td>
<td>• <strong>appropriate analysis and application</strong> of information relating to both the focus area and physical activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>purposeful and effective selection, sequencing and organisation of relevant and substantial subject matter.</strong></td>
<td>• <strong>suitable selection, sequencing and organisation of relevant subject matter.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Evaluating</strong></td>
<td><strong>Evaluating</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The student work has the following characteristics:</td>
<td>The student work has the following characteristics:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>discerning, convincingly justified and independent evaluations, solutions and recommendations</strong> concerning the focus area and physical activity</td>
<td>• <strong>defended evaluations and solutions</strong> concerning the focus area and physical activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>discerning and effective choice</strong> of <strong>communication strategies to enhance meaning and impact.</strong></td>
<td>• <strong>effective choice</strong> of <strong>communicative strategies that convey meaning.</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Colour highlights have been used in the table to emphasise the qualities that discriminate between the standards.

**Key:**
- **Quality words**
- **Cognitive words**
- **Elements**
Student response — Standard A

The annotations show the match to the instrument-specific standards.

Equity and access are two guiding principles in the study of the sociology of sport (Evans, 1993). Equity pertains to the equal distribution of resources among members in society, whereas access is concerned with the barriers in place that hinder the distribution of resources and affect participation (Donnelly, 1996). Action plans to address equity and access issues may be linked to Figueroa's framework (Fyfe and Figueroa, 1993). These action plans provide an effective way of examining, identifying and overcoming barriers that may exist to restrict access and equity in sport in a range of contexts. At xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, where the student body consists of adolescent girls, it can be expected that in alignment with research conducted by Allender et al, (2006) the barriers to participation that are most prevalent range from negative self-image, lack of self-confidence, negative experience, restrictive uniforms, favouritism, and lack of teacher and peer support.

In particular, one barrier that impacts upon access to students of Physical Education in netball is favouritism. Favouritism presents in Physical Education classes via the preferential treatment of girls who display higher level athletic capability. Often, resources are distributed unequally in favour of superior performers, whilst those who are less able do not receive as much attention and their performance is further diminished as a result. Favouritism is ultimately destructive to the adolescent girl’s psyche as it leads to diminishing self-efficacy (Houlihan, 2008). Consequently, as Allender et al. (2006) suggest, when an individual has limited confidence in their own ability to perform, enjoyment levels decline and inevitably, participation ceases. Pratt et al. (1999) found that perceived competence and sport ability beliefs had a “strong and direct impact on enjoyment”. As enjoyment is a precursor to ongoing participation, it is thus evident that self-confidence is an important factor in the ongoing participation of xxxxxxxxxx students in netball and Physical Education.

Allender et al. (2006) identified that diminished self-efficacy is the primary consequence of favouritism. Measures need to be put into place in order to restore self-confidence and efficacy to some students of Physical Education at xxxxxxxx so that netball and Physical Education may achieve higher participation rates across the student body.

This must start at the Structural level (Amezdroz et al. 2010) where the practice of unequal distribution of resources and rewards needs to be re-formed. Favouritism means that those who display higher level capabilities in Physical Education are rewarded with a higher share of resources than their less capable peers (Allender et al. 2006). Teacher time, extra training, better coaches and extended expert guidance are given to these people — often to the detriment of their lower performing counterparts, who experience exclusion, lack of guidance and reduced levels of skill development (Allender et al. 2006).

In order to subdue the effect of favouritism and make the practices in netball classes in Physical Education equitable and accessible, these resources need to be re-distributed in favour of all students to achieve optimal performance and encourage greater levels of participation. Lunchtime netball sessions with an expert coach might be offered to all participants. These sessions would primarily focus on fun, enjoyment and the development of confidence in student players.
Teachers would be encouraged to dedicate their time equally in class physical learning experiences to the overall improvement of the entire cohort — not just the high performers. This would enable the lower performing athletes to enhance their learning, improve their skills so that they are better aligned with the high performers and thereby addressing equity and access in the netball class during Physical Education. It is expected that an increase in self-efficacy will result and thus the lower performers are more likely to continue participating (Allender et al. 2006).

Currently, this aspect of the action plan is not in place, but it is expected that with these changes made at the Structural level of Figueroa’s Framework (Amezdroz et al. 2010), that the more highly-skilled performers will not be favoured in Physical Education, so that everyone may have the same access to coaching and more equitable learning experiences. This contrasts with the previous practice of favouring the high performers which was evidently detrimental to the self-efficacy and limited participation of lower-level athletes.

At the Interpersonal level of Figueroa’s Framework, where parents, peers, coaches and teachers are strongly associated with the formation of attitudes towards participation in sport (Amezdroz et al. 2010), changes can be made to diminish the effect of favouritism and enhance self-efficacy. All students who participate in Physical Education will experience the effect of positive feedback, encouragement and enhanced self-efficacy in their junior years at through a range of positive learning experiences in Physical Education. This will ensure they have an understanding of how to deal with their peers in a Physical Education setting and develop a culture of supportive and positive feedback, access and equal opportunity and elimination of peer favouritism of the more able students in Physical Education.

Positive feedback, as indicated by Allender et al. (2006) is a major factor affecting the self-efficacy and self-belief of physical education students and in fact, has been shown to lead to a lower drop-out rate in physical activity of teenage girls. (Scraton, 1990) This effect was explored in an Physical Education learning experience, where students, during a roleplay, were required to select teams based upon performance — higher performers were part of an extended skills session, where the low performers were left to their own devices and ultimately ended up sitting out the session altogether (Personal journal, 2011). Feedback from the students expressed that those who were excluded (not favoured) were less likely to put themselves in the position again, they had negative recall of the experience and this is expected to exclude them from participating in the future (Personal journal, 2011).

This aspect of the action plan will be embedded in the curriculum for junior Health and Physical education, which is a core requirement for all students up to Year Ten level. Teachers will also be responsible for fostering class environments that value participation over performance and in which teams and activity groups are never formed based on ability, especially in the junior grades. It is expected that this will lead to a culture in physical education where every student’s ability is respected, by themselves and others, and as a result of their enhanced self-efficacy, uptake of senior physical education and netball should experience greater participation rates.

Overall, this action plan targets favouritism at the Interpersonal and Structural level (Amezdroz et al. 2010) and with the methods suggested should lead to a higher level of participation in netball and Physical Education. Through eliminating harmful favouritism, which in turn leads to diminished self-efficacy, students should be able to improve their performance as result of improved access to positive and worthwhile physical education lessons (Allender et al, 2006).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Bibliography</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Scraton, S., 1990, Gender and Physical Education, Deakin University, Geelong.</td>
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**Student response — Standard C**

The annotations show the match to the instrument-specific standards.

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**Barriers to Participation in Netball**

There are many social factors that directly or indirectly mould and influence a person’s decision to participate in physical activity. These factors change throughout an individual’s life. Allender et al. (2006) identified a number of barriers which impact on access and equity to participation in sport and physical activity for teenage girls and young women. These include negative experiences at school, peer pressure, identity conflict, school Physical Education uniform, competitive class environment and lack of teacher support. This essay will analyse how self-esteem and confidence have affected mine and my peers desire to participate in Netball at Figueroa’s framework will be used as the context for creating an action plan to overcome self-esteem and confidence issues and promote enjoyable participation in Netball at

There have been many studies into the motivating factors and barriers to participating in sport. Robbins et al. (2003) found the following top 7 barriers to physical activity, specifically pertaining to teenaged girls: (arranged in order of priority)

1. I am self-conscious about my looks when I exercise.
2. I am not motivated.
3. I do not have anyone to do physical activities with me.
4. I am too busy.
5. I don’t feel like exercising when I have a bad or tiring day at school.
6. The weather is too bad.
7. Physical activity is hard work.

It is interesting to consider that the top barrier is about self-image. Negative self-image is a barrier that applies to the individual level of Figueroa’s framework. To make a significant impact on participation rates in sports such as netball, it is clear that the issues of self-image must be addressed.

In finding ways to improve self-image in sport it is important to consider Athletic Identity. “Athletic identity, (AI), is the sport specific component of an individual’s self-concept and is the extent to which an individual identifies with the athletic role” Lamont-Mills & Christensen (2006). They maintain that “individuals who value the athletic element of the self-concept are more likely to engage in physical activity than those who do not. Thus, individuals with strong athletic identities are more likely to participate in sport than those with weak athletic identities”. It was noted in their study, that whilst male recreational sports participants do not label themselves as athletes, good sporting outcomes do have a potential to influence how they feel about themselves, whereas “female recreational sports participants may not perceive sports participation to be overly important to how they feel about themselves, in fact participation in sport for women is often seen as contrary to social expectations”.

So, whilst Improving Athletic Identity on a Cultural may assist in improving self-esteem and motivation in teenage girls and therefore participation in sport, before this will have any serious impact, the influence of gender role socialisation must be addressed.
appropriate analysis and application of information relating to both the focus area and physical activity

So what is “gender role socialisation” in relation to sport? It is how sport in society is viewed in the light of gender norms. (What people see as acceptable sports for males vs females). There have been many studies into how sports are typed in regard to gender. Metheny (1965) described the set of attributes used to categorise sport as either feminine or masculine. Sports recognised as masculine involved contact and the use of force or heavy objects (Kolvula, 2001), further Postow (1980) argued that attitudes such as devotion to team, stamina and competitive spirit were also seen as masculine – hence team sports were considered more masculine than individual sports. Feminine sports allow women to exhibit gender-role attributes like grace and beauty (Kolvula, 2001).

Hardin and Greer, (2009) maintain that this genderisation of sport reinforces the construction that men are stronger and faster, thus deserving a higher rank in the overall social order than women.

Hardin and Greer, (2009) also note that this traditional genderisation is still as prevalent as it was in 1965 when Metheny presented his study. What is interesting is that their study highlights the emergence of Action Sports such as snowboarding, skateboarding and motocross as more gender neutral as they combine the risk (male attributes) with the aesthetic (female attributes), and that these sports may have a significant impact on breaking down the stranglehold of male sports in the media, and allow for a greater development of athletic identity in women who participate in sport at the structural, recreational level.

Another important factor in considering the barriers to participation in sport is the influence of family and friends. Bradford & Green, (2009) maintain that “psychosocial issues were very important when explaining levels of sport participation. In particular, family and friends were considered to be the most important factors influencing participation in sport, regardless of participation level. Furthermore, complex psychosocial issues such as self-confidence, and perception of personal ability, were also found to play a significant role in the decision to participate in sport.”

They studied a group of young women and the study identified the following factors as likely to increase participation in sport and physical activity:

- Freeing up more of their spare time to do sport
- Getting support from friends and family
- Having sports clubs and classes for beginners or existing friendship groups, to reduce feelings of embarrassment and intimidation
- The provision of a wider choice of facilities, and better advertising of the existing facilities
- Making sport more fun, with less emphasis upon competition
- Making facilities cheaper
- Making facilities easier to access
- Motivating families to participate in sport
- Changing the image of sport
- Providing women only facilities
- Improving information and knowledge about physical activity and health.

So another significant factor to be addressed in removing barriers to participating in Netball is the support of family and friends and freeing up more time to do sport. This is addressed in the interpersonal level of Figueras’s framework.
In summary this report has identified four key measures to improve self-esteem and confidence in students at _________. These measures are:

1. Remove barriers to sports participation created by self-consciousness about looks.
2. Improve students’ athletic identity.
3. Remove gender role socialisation in sport.
4. Encourage support of family and friends.

An action plan is included in Appendix A which addresses how these measures can lead to increased participation in all sport at ________, including Netball.

Acknowledgments

The QSA acknowledges the contribution of All Hallows’ School in the preparation of this document.