

# *Typology of Physical Education Teachers — In the Context of Hong Kong Primary Schools*

Raymond Kim-wai Sum

*Department of Sports Science and Physical Education*

*The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

*This study investigates the typology of physical education teachers in the context of Hong Kong primary schools. Through looking at the issues affecting their work lives, identities, professionalization experience and career trajectories, the aim of this study was to develop a typology of physical education teachers in the context of Hong Kong primary schools. A qualitative research design was adopted. The researcher used semi-structured interviews, supplemented by documentary sources (diaries) for conducting data collection. Through purposive sampling methods (snowball sampling), eleven Hong Kong Primary School Physical Education Teachers (PSPETs) participated in this study. Data were analyzed through three major types of coding, namely, open coding, axial coding and selective coding. This study revealed that the PSPETs experienced both similarities and differences*

---

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Raymond K. W. Sum, Department of Sports Science and Physical Education, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, N.T., Hong Kong. E-mail: [kwsun@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:kwsun@cuhk.edu.hk)

*in their socialization processes, and as a result, their capacity to adapt acts as the core factor when exploring their working lives. These divergent patterns formed a typology for PSPETs that is presented as “engagers”, “adherers” and “dissenters”. It represents three types of PSPETs who have adapted to organizational change and adjusted to new conditions and diversely managed their work lives — all in different ways.*

*Key words: typology, physical education teachers, Hong Kong primary schools*

Numerous research studies regarding physical education and physical education teachers have been carried out in Western countries during the last two decades (Pajak & Blase, 1989; Pennington, Wilkinson, & Vance, 2004; Sparkes, Templin, & Schempp, 1993). These studies have revealed a need for those engaged in the teaching of physical education to take an in-depth look at physical education and its provisions as a whole in Asian countries, even though few comprehensive studies have examined physical education teachers' value orientations (Ha & Xu, 2002), occupational socialization (Wright, 2001), and perceptions of curriculum change (Ha, Lee, Chan, & Sum, 2004).

Over the last decade, Hong Kong has experienced a steady and significant drop in the birth rate. As a result, the number of students enrolled in many primary schools has declined, resulting in a threat to the job security of primary school teachers. In addition, Hong Kong Primary School Physical Education Teachers (PSPETs) bear a heavy workload derived from teaching and administrative tasks, in a turbulent climate for education and constant waves of curriculum reforms. Much attention has been focused on the perceived need to improve the quality of teaching in primary schools in Hong Kong (Education Commission, 2000). It is common in Hong Kong primary schools that PSPETs have a duty not only to teach PE classes, but also to teach up to three other academic subjects, such as Chinese language, English language, and mathematics. PSPETs have to coach sports teams as an additional duty compared with the other teachers. The nature of the duties of a primary

school physical education teacher makes it a very time-consuming and energy demanding profession (Ng, 2002). Hardman and Marshall (2000) commented that the education system of Asian countries is “examination oriented and it views physical education as a component of play and leisure rather than an intrinsic part of the educational process” (p. 214). Along this line, very little is known about the work lives of PSPETs after the introduction of drastic change in work hours and an increased workload, especially concerning ways in which the teachers have adjusted to the changes associated with their working environment in Hong Kong.

### **The Context of Primary School Physical Education in Hong Kong**

While reform proposals for schools and teachers continue to be proposed (Curriculum Development Council, 2002, 2004, 2005), it seems that the status of physical education as a subject, and teaching physical education as a profession, have undergone tremendous changes in the past. Parents tend to devalue physical education and are afraid of physical education interfering with their children’s academic study (Johns & Dimmock, 1999). Over the decade, PSPETs have been overloaded with work (Ng, 2002), deprofessionalized (Macdonald, 1999), and marginalized (Johns & Dimmock, 1999; Sparkes et al., 1993). They are skeptical of educational reform and curriculum change (Ha et al., 2004).

Every school or organization has its own particular circumstances and unique culture, and each institution claims to provide a “quality” experience for its students. During a sharing session in a workshop for the physical education curriculum among leaders in primary schools in 2004, PSPETs called themselves “seven-eleven” workers, which reflected that comparatively, their work lives and work duration are much longer. “Seven-eleven” means that primary school teachers often work from seven o’clock in the morning to eleven o’clock at night.

Therefore, the key influences in teachers’ work life contexts, particularly their professionalization experiences, include their school settings, students and external policies with particular support from

school; departmental leadership and staff collegiality are key contributory factors to how teachers perceive their stability of identities which influence teachers' well-being and sense of effectiveness across all career phases (Gu, 2005).

Through looking at the issues affecting PSPETs, their work lives, identities, professionalization and career trajectories, the aim of this study was thus to develop a typology of PSPETs in Hong Kong. The research question was, "What are the types of physical education teachers in the context of Hong Kong primary schools?" PSPETs in Hong Kong have been defined by the researcher as professionals who specialize in teaching physical education in primary schools in Hong Kong.

## **Nature of Typologies**

The following gives a brief overview of the nature of typologies and their use in studies which are based on an interpretivist methodological framework. In many qualitative studies, types are constructed in order to apprehend and explain the complex world in a meaningful way (Kluge, 2000). Every typology is the result of a grouping process: An object field is divided into a number of groups or types with the help of one or more attributes (Bailey, 1994). Every typology is "based on an attribute space which results from the combination of the selected attributes and their dimensions" (Kluge, 2000, p. 2).

Previous research has produced numerous teacher typologies. Warren (1969), for example, came up with a typology for ethnographic research on the teaching experience. Through teaching experience outside the classroom, sociocultural forces and classroom teaching behaviour, Warren (1969) illustrates various dichotomies, such as "professional-bureaucratic" and "authoritarian-democratic", reflecting and reinforcing values about teaching that teachers encountered. Dreyfus, Keiny, and Kushnir (1989) examined teachers' modes of participation in school systems, culminating in a teacher typology formed around individual response to self-renewal efforts: activists, arrogant anti-leaders, conservatives, helpless fatalists, the insecure, impatient-impulsives, authentically committed, and floating indifferents.

Oxford et al. (1998) constructed a variety of metaphors to describe teachers, especially language teachers, such as “teacher as conduit”, “teacher as nurturer” and “teacher as competitor”. Halonen (2001) constructed a set of dichotomous constructs seeing teachers who teach at college level as “sage on the stage” or “guide on the side”, describing teachers who break traditional rules of teaching effectiveness to great advantage. More recently, based on an analysis of the characteristics of teacher reflection, Luttenberg and Bergen (2008) examine the actual practice of teachers and show a clear preference for closed types of pragmatic and ethical reflection over open or moral reflection.

The PSPET typology used in this study is descriptive and aims to develop an understanding of PSPETs’ work lives rather than to identify cause-effect relationships or promote general results. The analysis is not intended to objectively explain how PSPETs manage their work lives and how they see their careers but, from an in-depth examination of the data and using grounded themes as a basis (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), to identify the subjective and enacted meanings that emerge that may make sense of PSPETs’ work lives.

## Methods

This study investigates the typology of PSPETs in Hong Kong. This study therefore was restricted to physical education teachers currently teaching in Hong Kong primary schools. It was carried out through the inductive development of a theory, based on grounded theory methods (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). An in-depth qualitative study generated a framework towards this understanding.

## Data Collection

In the context of the present study, the assumption is that PSPETs in Hong Kong make sense of their work lives through their interactions and shared meanings, *inter alia*, with other teachers and students. Data for grounded theory methods were collected, coded and related, with the intent to develop a theoretical understanding of the phenomenon, that is, how physical education teachers make sense of their work lives. The

data were collected in the PSPETs' own schools with their consent. (Figure 1 depicts each major step of data collection and interpretation.)

### Participants/Sampling

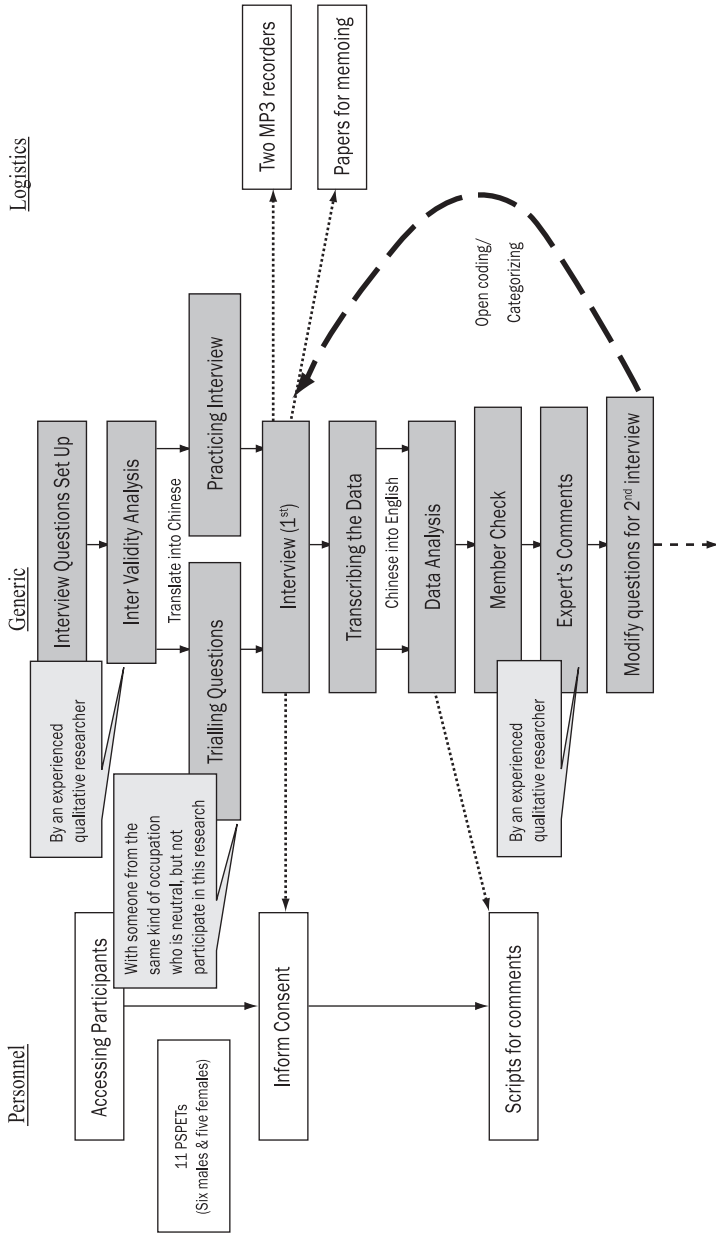
Through snowball or chain sampling (Patton, 1990), the researcher identified suitable participants for study. PSPETs were requested to help identify others from whom the researcher could extract or generate data. Selection of the next interviewee was based on what was found in the previous round of data collection and analysis processes.

PSPETs selected for this study were from a variety of backgrounds and were able to enrich the contexts for analysis. Eleven PSPETs (6 males, 5 females) between the ages of 25 to 59 years were purposively recruited from a variety of backgrounds to enrich the contextual analysis. Their years of experience as PSPETs were between 2 and 30 years (see Table 1). In addition, data collection ceased upon data saturation, which was when nothing new could be added to the data.

**Table 1: Summary of Participant Characteristics**

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Years of experience
Winnie (R1)	F	38	18
John (R2)	M	46	22
Toby (R3)	M	31	9
Chunk (R4)	M	28	6
Rose (R5)	F	50	28
Holly (R6)	F	30	6
Justin (R7)	M	46	23
Jeddi (R8)	F	40	10
Kenny (R9)	M	59	30
Thornley (R10)	M	25	2
Eagle (R11)	F	41	15

**Figure 1: Data Collection and Interpretation Procedures**



## **Interviewing**

The researcher used semi-structured interviews as the primary source of data collection. The semi-structured interview was particularly important because the purpose of the study required an exploration of the actual work lives and experiences of PSPETs to gain insight into and understand the types of particular experiences. Detailed consideration was, therefore, given to the whole picture in explication. This method allowed for differences that unfolded between participants to be maximized, and consequently for relationships between categories to be more robustly tested and verified.

The interviews were audio-taped and transcribed by the researcher. Recorded material was then transcribed verbatim and translated from Cantonese into English as soon as it had been collected, while the researcher's memory was still fresh. The researcher was responsible for data collection, transcription, translation and analysis to ensure quality, consistency and accuracy of data processing and interpretation.

## **Diaries**

In conjunction with interviews, participants were asked to keep diaries. These were seen as a secondary data source, the purpose of which was mostly for triangulation. PSPETs' daily activities were recorded for a "typical" week — hour by hour on a daily basis. To do this, each PSPET was given 7 copies of the diary, one for each day of the recording period. The intention was to ask diarists to record their activities and then to write a short piece reflecting on events, activities, relationships and conversations over a specific time span and to reflect on their work lives. The daily diaries that were kept for a week as part of this study began one week before the interview. In contrast to the interviews, the diary allowed PSPETs to record data in privacy and in their own time.



### **Trustworthiness**

To avoid personal bias and to aim for interpretive understanding of the subjects' own perspectives (Charmaz, 2000), the researcher attempted at key points in the study, to keep an open mind, and was willing to listen, and give voice to respondents in order to gain accurate findings and to corroborate them (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

To ensure that the study was credible, member checks were conducted by emailing interview transcripts and the analyzed data to the participants, who were asked to correct errors or inaccuracies in the transcripts and analyzed data. As triangulation was also implemented in this study, the diaries were used for validating the incoming data from the interviews. Through systematic record-keeping and ongoing evaluation of findings, confirmability of the research findings was an uppermost consideration.

All the interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. During the process of data collection and analysis, memos and field notes were written, thus helping the formation of more robust categories. Data collection ceased when nothing new appeared from additional interviewees.

Although only a small number of PSPETs in Hong Kong formed the sample, maximum variation was sought between them, so as to enrich the conceptualization of the emerging results.

### **Results and Discussion**

This study of the typology of PSPETs in Hong Kong reveals that the participant PSPETs experienced both similarities and differences in their socialization and professionalization processes. As a result, their capacity to adapt acts as the core factor when exploring PSPETs' working lives, their identities, socialization and professional experiences and ultimately their career trajectories. These divergent patterns formed

a typology for PSPETs in Hong Kong that is presented in this study as “engagers”, “adherers” and “dissenters”. This typology represents three types of PSPETs who have adapted to organizational change and adjusted to new conditions and diversely managed their work lives — all in different ways.

In this study, three types of PSPETs were identified: Engagers, Adherers and Dissenters. Each type will be elaborated upon and described separately in the coming sections. This typology is based upon PSPETs’ different reactions towards four distinct categories: (1) switching work lives, (2) interplaying identities, (3) diversifying professionalization, and (4) assimilating career trajectory.

PSPETs are professionals who are willing to accept changes as Engagers, Adherers or Dissenters. Each of these three groups is diligent and assiduous, but each reacts to change differently. PSPETs continually switch roles and job levels in their typical work lives. They also perceive how their multiple identities interplay in the schools in which they work. They have to possess multi-dimensional knowledge and are socialized and professionalized in a diversity of ways. In terms of career trajectory, this study shows that PSPETs have deeply internalized traditional Confucian values and culture which manifests itself in a lack of assertiveness when it comes to seeking promotion or moving up the hierarchy in their schools. It showed them to be patient and passive on the issue of their seniority and in relation to changing the organizational culture within their schools. The relationship between the types and categories is presented in Table 2, which promotes an understanding of the conceptual distinction between the types.

In this study, the results are enriched and enhanced by the examination of situations and experiences in which individual PSPETs acted in ways which were both consistent and inconsistent with the type to which they had been categorized. Specific examples of these situations and experiences are presented in the following sections.

**Table 2: Relationship between PSPET Types and Categories**

Ideal Types	Categories			
	Switching (Work Lives)	Interplaying (Identities)	Diversifying (Professionalization)	Assimilating (Career Trajectory)
<b>Engager</b> <i>Winnie (R1), John (R2), Justin (R7) and Kenny (R9)</i>	Bring more of their personal lives into their work lives	There is an interplay between their identities and those of their organization and colleagues	Accept more diversified changes in their work lives	More positive in relation to their career development
<i>Label: self-rectifying, affirming, empowering and committing</i>				
<b>Adherer</b> <i>Toby (R3), Holly (R6) and Thornley (R10)</i>	Work cooperatively to follow changes in school culture and external environment	Compromise to maintain harmonious relationships between colleagues and school	More likely to fulfill their professional and organizational duties in school	Cooperatively follow the practices and cultures within their schools and are ready to move if required
<i>Label: following, cooperating, fulfilling and compromising</i>				
<b>Dissenter</b> <i>Chunk (R4), Rose (R5), Jedd (R8) and Eagle (R11)</i>	More concerned about how their personal lives clash with their work lives	Perceive more conflicts in relation to their multiple identities	Feel more disappointed with changes which affect their professionalism	Consider more obligations and commitments other than their career
<i>Label: clashing, conflicting, disappointing and resisting</i>				

## Typology of Physical Education Teachers

### **The Engagers** [Winnie (R1), John (R2), Justin (R7) and Kenny (R9)]

In general, the above PSPETs fall into the Engager category, which includes such adaptive behaviour characteristics as self-rectifying, affirming, empowering and committing. PSPETs classified as Engagers are heavily involved in their daily work lives and are deeply committed to their profession, their school and their professional development. In this study, Winnie (R1), John (R2), Justin (R7) and Kenny (R9) fall into this category. The following discusses the relationships among the types of PSPETs and the four categories.

#### *The relationship between Engagers and the switching category*

The properties of the switching category show how Engagers describe their work and feel about their typical daily work lives. Under the present trend of current education reforms, Engagers realize that it is inevitable that they will have to undergo irregular work hours and heavy workloads. They consider their private lives to be as much a part of their professional lives as their work lives. One example of such adaptive behaviour is Winnie (R1) switching her work and personal lives when she drives home from school at seven o'clock in the evening, still thinking about what she needs to do and teach the following day. When she is shopping, she may buy things she considers good for school. Another is Kenny (R9) who is fully committed to his work even though his school is still on the old half-day system. He volunteered to be the only teacher in charge of extra-curricular activities during the summer holidays causing him to claim that he hardly gets any time off throughout the year. PSPETs who fall into the category of Engagers are committed totally to their jobs in a variety of different ways and levels and are more likely to accept irregular working hours than other types of PSPETs.

*The relationship between Engagers and the interplaying category*

The properties of the interplaying category show how Engagers perceive their personal and professional identities in the schools in which they serve. Unlike the other types of PSPETs, Engagers enjoy a particularly positive relationship with their colleagues and students, and especially with their superiors. There is also more likely to be interplay or switching between their identities in the organization. An example of such an adaptation included the rise in status through curriculum reforms that John (R2) had experienced. He was proud to indicate that most colleagues considered him a responsive teacher whose views on the PE curriculum were well respected in staff meetings, at which he believed his contribution was valued. Justin (R7) who is considered popular with colleagues enjoys bonding with them to strengthen his status and professional identity. As a vice principal he believes that communication is essential among colleagues when it comes to reforming the way subjects are taught, so that better results are achieved and everyone is happy. PSPETs as Engagers are more affirmed by the status they have built and their contributions to their schools than are other types of PSPETs.

*The relationship between Engagers and the diversifying category*

The properties of diversifying show how Engagers describe their socialization and professional experiences. They are highly aware of, and committed to, the multiple roles involved in their professional lives and share a readiness to accept changes and reforms to the education system and curriculum. They are also fully aware of, and exploit, the importance of professional development as a way of maintaining their status within their profession. An example of such adaptation is the versatility demonstrated by Winnie (R1). She has devoted herself to being a physical education teacher and coach as well as an administrator. She is content because she has been given the autonomy to do what she wants, although she did indicate that she felt disappointed that the EDB (Education Bureau) did not recognize that she and her colleagues work

successfully as a team. In addition to her other roles, Winnie (R1), who has a Master of Philosophy in Sport Science, is committed to her professional development in the area of sport science — through reading newly published journals in her leisure time. John (R1) stated that he is not marginalized in school because he is a physical education teacher, but rather sees himself as having important responsibilities within the school. His reputation in coaching football is also rewarding within school and around the Hong Kong region. PSPETs who are Engagers feel more empowered by the versatility of their roles and their professional status than other types of PSPETs.

#### *The relationship between Engagers and the assimilating category*

The properties of the assimilating category show how Engagers describe and conceptualize their career trajectories. Since they are sensitive to how their organizations work, they are adept at positioning themselves within them in order to further their career paths. They also know exactly what they are looking for in career terms. Examples of adaptive behaviours include John (R6) and Kenny (R9). They are both already in middle management positions within their schools with John (R2) serving as Head of the Discipline Section and Kenny (R9) as Head of the Physical Education Section. They are thoroughly committed to their current roles and do not seek further advancement as this is not a priority for them. John (R2) is satisfied with coaching football in school and elsewhere in Hong Kong and Kenny (R9) believes that his interest lies in developing and managing swimming training as an extra-curricular activity, believing the amount of time he devotes to it is worthwhile as his career is almost at an end. Unlike John (R2) and Kenny (R9), Winnie (R1) maximizes her strengths in all aspects of her work. She positions herself within the school and thinks about how she can best fulfill her job requirements in order to realize her desired career path, despite the fact that she claims that she needs time to prepare herself for further advancement. Engager PSPETs are more committed and satisfied professionally, as a result of their self-orientation towards career and career aspirations than other types of PSPETs.

**The Adherers** [Toby (R3), Holly (R6) and Thornley (R10)]

This type of PSPET particularly demonstrates the adhering characteristics of cooperating, fulfilling and compromising. PSPETs classified as Adherers are loyal to the schools they work in and dutifully follow the organization's expectations. In this study, Toby (R3), Holly (R6) and Thornley (R10) most closely represented the Adherer type. The following discusses the relationships between this type of PSPET and the four categories.

*The relationship between Adherers and the switching category*

The properties of the switching category show how Adherers describe their work and feel about their work lives. They tend to follow the performance expectations set by the school organization, rather than strive to exceed them or risk not meeting them. Even though the nature of their work involves irregular working hours, which they dutifully accept, they strive to make the most of their personal lives outside of work. They follow their work plans and guidelines which list the tasks and activities to occur in each period. Holly (R6) is an example of an adherer. She indicated that all she has to do is just follow a School Based Management (SBM) plan. Like other PSPETs, Toby (R3) manages to strike a balance between his work and family life despite his school assigning him the development of IT (information technology), while his prime job remains a physical education teacher. Although he claimed that he had not agreed to this change, he has adjusted to it well and it suits his work life. Thornley (R10) found himself in a similar situation in that he was given instructions and guidelines when he first joined the school. However, he claimed that the guidelines and instructions change from time to time, yet he sticks to the new guidelines even though they are not always to his liking. Adherer PSPETs are more likely to follow guidelines and cooperate in their work lives that involve multi-level job specifications, irregular work hours and heavy workloads, than other types of PSPETs.

*The relationship between Adherers and the interplaying category*

The properties of the interplaying category show how Adherers perceive their personal and professional identities in the schools in which they serve. Adherers tend to have more harmonious relationships with their colleagues and schools and they believe that their cooperative approach helps establish their position — than is the case with the other types. An example of this is Thornley (R10), who spends the time allocated by the school management team on the Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA) even though he thinks the extensive training of students for the TSA is meaningless and a waste of time. Based on his personal characteristics, he further claimed that he is unable to exert much influence on others and that the principal is the one who makes decisions for him to follow. Toby's (R3) experience is similar in that he has worked cooperatively with others as his role has shifted from that of coach to coordinator and from physical education teacher to a teacher of other subjects. As a result of the interplay and switching between various identities, he indicated that it is his relationship with colleagues that is the key to contentment in his working life because colleagues play an important role in helping him deal with work-related stress. Holly (R6) also indicated that she has a good relationship with her colleagues. She felt that she identifies with the school because the staff is a cohesive group that will gather on a social basis even during holidays, even though she sometimes disagrees with the school's senior management. Adherer PSPETs are more cooperative and contributive in terms of their expertise than other types of PSPETs.

*The relationship between Adherers and the diversifying category*

The properties of the diversifying category show how Adherers describe their socialization and professional experiences. They are often content to fulfill their professional obligations in a cooperative way, with their main motivation and satisfaction being derived from their students' academic and athletic achievements. Thornley (R10) is an example of an adherer. He indicated that despite the fact that he gets more satisfaction



from teaching physical education and coaching sports in school, he has taken his principal's advice and has furthered his professional development in Maths. Toby's (R3) situation is similar. He has had no alternative but to choose Information Technology as a subject for professional development in accordance with the wishes of the school's senior management. He indicated that he is not able to contribute more to physical education within the school even though this is his area of expertise that would benefit the students more. As Adherers, both Thornley (R10) and Toby (R3) are more organizationally socialized than professionally socialized because they claim they are teachers of physical education in their particular schools. In dealing with trends arising from education reforms, Holly (R6) is discouraged by not being allowed to attend courses and seminars that are held on schooldays because the school management says they cannot find substitute teachers. Because of her sensitivity to the organizational atmosphere, she has accepted their decisions and conformed to her school's guidelines claiming every organization has its flaws. Adherer PSPETs are more governed or fulfilled by the decisions they make that relate to their organizations than are other types of PSPETs.

#### *The relationship between Adherers and the assimilating category*

The properties of the assimilating category show how Adherers describe and conceptualize their career trajectories. In regard to their career paths, Adherers would be prepared to move if the organization required them to do so, or they would remain in their current positions. For example, Thornley (R10) stated that he did not have a clear career objective when he entered the profession and this remains the case. He sees himself as a bread-winner who is skilled only in the teaching of physical education. At one time he thought of applying for promotion, but without considering what the post entailed his only consideration was the salary. He indicated that he was content with his current work life and that he didn't want to earn more money because this would mean more work and less family time. Holly's (R6) experience is worth noting. She claims that her career prospects are highly dependent on winning medals

for her school. If the sports team was to win a gold medal, not a silver one, she may have a chance of promotion. On the other hand, she believed that promotion may spoil the good relationship she has with her colleagues. Like Thornley (R10), Holly (R6) felt satisfied with her current position and was happy to remain in it. Adherer PSPETs are less ambitious in terms of their career aspirations and have more of a tendency to be placed, and stay, in a niche regarding their careers than other types of PSPETs.

### **The Dissenters** [Chunk (R4), Rose (R5), Jeddi (R8) and Eagle (R11)]

These PSPETs display more of the characteristics of the *dissenting* category, including clashing, conflicting, disappointing and resisting — than do other types. PSPETs classified as Dissenters tend to be out of step with the prevailing culture and values of their schools, and often disagree with their colleagues and the organization as a whole. In this study, Chunk (R4), Rose (R5), Jeddi (R8) and Eagle (R11) fall into this category. The following discusses the relationships between this type of PSPET and the four categories.

#### *The relationship between Dissenters and the switching category*

The properties of the switching category show how Dissenters describe their work and how they feel about their typical daily work lives. They disagree with many of their organizations' policies and initiatives. Eagle (R11) is an example of a dissenter. She claimed her work life clashes with her personal life because she had no idea of the scope of the work when she first joined the school, especially in terms of the administrative work she is responsible for. She had not experienced such high levels of administration in previous schools. As a result, she imputes the sickness she experiences during weekends and long holidays to her work. Jeddi (R8) also indicated that administrative responsibilities affect her personal life and that she has had to bring her son to work with her on Saturdays. She also indicated that it was common for her to go to bed around 2 a.m. and wake up at 6 a.m.

Dissenter PSPETs are more likely to experience conflict between the multi-level nature of their jobs, irregular work hours and heavy workloads and their personal lives than other types of PSPETs.

#### *The relationship between Dissenters and the interplaying category*

The properties of the interplaying category show how Dissenters perceive their personal and professional identities in the schools in which they serve. Jeddi (R8) is an example of this. She indicated that she is unable to realize her lesson plan portfolio in PE lessons because of stubborn colleagues that she is unable to work with. Jeddi's (R8) frustration is made worse by her belief that the principal does not value her and rejects her ideas, scolding her for everything she does. Rose's (R5) experience is also worth noting. She left a school that she had taught in for seventeen years and began working in a new environment. Her experience in her new school is totally different in terms of the identities that she interplays. As she is planning to retire when her husband retires, she does not identify with her new school and her relationship with her colleagues is rather superficial. In addition, as a new teacher approaching retirement, the physical education panel chairperson is unwilling to delegate much professional work to her, even though she held the same position in her previous school. Dissenter PSPETs experience more conflict in relation to their status and contribution of their expertise than other types of PSPETs.

#### *The relationship between Dissenters and the diversifying category*

The properties of the diversifying category show how Dissenters describe their socialization and professional experiences. They work diligently to safeguard their family's incomes and are driven by the satisfaction they derive from their students, especially with outside of school activities. In contrast to other types of PSPETs, Dissenters are more satisfied with their personal or professional commitments outside of school, as they are often able to establish themselves as professionals in activities outside of school that give them more satisfaction. Jeddi (R8) provided an example of such an adaptation. She thought about a

career change but in the end decided to remain in her current position when she realized that in reality she would be paid far less if she changed occupation. She made a lot of mistakes in the early stage of her career that caused her superiors to be angry with her and because of this and the characteristics of the organization, she chose to develop her professional skills in Judo. She now judges in the sport in Hong Kong and internationally. Similarly, Chunk (R4) felt that his professional contribution was not appreciated by his immediate superior even though his principal supported the development of physical education. He gets more satisfaction from coaching basketball outside of school. With regard to physical education in school, professional development is not a high priority for Chunk (R4), Rose (R5) or Jeddi (R8). They have come to realize that further advancement of this field is not required by, or likely in, their schools. Due to a lack of organizational sensitivity, dissenter PSPETs are less satisfied with their status than other types of PSPETs.

#### *The relationship between Dissenters and the assimilating category*

The properties of the assimilating category show how Dissenters describe and conceptualize their career trajectories. Though all PSPETs work irregular hours, Dissenters focus more on personal or professional commitments outside of their current jobs. In addition, they have a degree of self-regulation and independence in their work, and this keeps them working in the field. Chunk (R4), who is an example of this adaptation, stated that the policy is that those recruited last have to leave first if conditions dictate. He is a permanent member of staff in his school but has never been promoted. He indicated that he regretted not being employed at the right time and that he would consider transferring to another school and working harder if his efforts were appreciated. However, he further stated that he resists working to gain promotion because he does not believe that promotion brings happiness. Similarly, two married female PSPETs, Rose (R5) and Eagle (R11), put their personal and family lives ahead of their careers, even when they work irregular hours and have heavy workloads. They would be happy to resign at anytime in accordance with their husbands' wishes and in order

to meet family needs and obligations. Dissenter PSPETs are less career orientated and have fewer career aspirations than other types of PSPETs.

## Conclusion

Within the specific context of Hong Kong primary schools, this study has generated a typology of PSPETs. Each of the three types embodies major differences in the emphasis given by the PSPETs to conceptualizations of their work lives and careers.

The typology of PSPETs derived from this study might give an insight into how different types of PSPETs manage their work lives in the context of Hong Kong primary schools. The findings are presented from a sociological perspective and may serve as a launch for further research in the related areas of the professionalization and professionalism of physical education teachers.

The typology proposed in this study might be considered in the context of other contexts and the adoption of other research methodologies besides grounded theory. Further work may also be undertaken in seeking to validate or further develop the typology using alternative methodologies, and especially in looking at whether it supports empirical research on different types of PSPETs.

## References

- Bailey, K. D. (1994). *Typology and taxonomies: An introduction to classification techniques*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Charmaz, K. (2000). Grounded theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 509–535). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Curriculum Development Council. (2002). *Physical education: Key learning area curriculum guide (Primary 1–Secondary 3)*. Hong Kong, China: Education Department.
- Curriculum Development Council. (2004). *New senior secondary physical education curriculum (draft)*. Hong Kong, China: Curriculum Development Council; Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority.

- Curriculum Development Council. (2005). *Proposed new senior secondary curriculum and assessment framework*. Hong Kong, China: Curriculum Development Council; Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority.
- Dreyfus, A., Keiny, S., & Kushnir, T. (1989). A search for self-renewal in school systems: Mode of participation. *Small Group Behavior*, 20(3), 333–343.
- Education Commission. (2000). *Reform proposals for the education system in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong, China: Author.
- Gu, Q. (2005, December). *Challenges to teacher wellbeing and perceived effectiveness in teachers' career — Resilience and retention*. Paper presented at the Faculty of Education 40th anniversary international conference “Developing Teacher Leadership and Education Partnership in the Face of Education Reform”, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China.
- Ha, A. S., Lee, J. C., Chan, W. K., & Sum, K. W. (2004). Teachers' perceptions of in-service teacher training to support curriculum change in physical education: The Hong Kong experience. *Sport, Education, and Society*, 9(3), 421–438.
- Ha, A. S., & Xu, B. (2002). Comparison of physical education teachers' value orientations in Hong Kong and Shanghai. *International Sports Studies*, 24(1), 77–87.
- Halonen, J. S. (2001, August). *Beyond sages and guides: A postmodern teachers' typology*. Paper presented at the 109th Convention of the American Psychological Association, San Francisco, CA.
- Hardman, K., & Marshall, J. (2000). The state and status of physical education in schools in international context. *European Physical Education Review*, 6(3), 203–229.
- Johns, D. P., & Dimmock, C. (1999). The marginalization of physical education: Impoverished curriculum policy and practice in Hong Kong. *Journal of Education Policy*, 14(4), 363–384.
- Kluge, S. (2000, January). Empirically grounded construction of types and typologies in qualitative social research. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 1(1). Retrieved from <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1124/2499>
- Luttenberg, J., & Bergen, T. (2008). Teacher reflection: The development of a typology. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 14(5–6), 543–566.
- Macdonald, D. (1999). The “professional” work of experienced physical education teachers. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 70(1), 41–54.
- Ng, S. (2002). A discussion on role conflict between Hong Kong physical education teachers and coaches. *Journal of Physical Education & Recreation*, 8(1), 59–63.

- Oxford, R. L., Tomlinson, S., Barcelos, A., Harrington, C., Lavine, R. Z., Saleh, A., & Longhini, A. (1998). Clashing metaphors about classroom teachers: Toward a systematic typology for language teaching field. *System, 26*(1), 3–50.
- Pajak, E., & Balse, J. J. (1989). The impact of teachers' personal lives on professional role enactment: A qualitative analysis. *American Educational Research Journal, 26*(2), 283–310.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.). London, England: Sage.
- Pennington, T., Wilkinson, C., & Vance, J. (2004). Physical educators online: What is on the minds of teachers in the trenches? *Physical Educator, 61*(1), 45–56.
- Sparkes, A. C., Templin, T., & Schempp, P. (1993). Exploring dimensions of marginality: Reflecting on the life histories of physical education teachers. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education, 12*(4), 386–394.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research — Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research — Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Warren, R. L. (1969). *Teacher encounters: A typology for ethnographic research on the teaching experience* (Research and Development Memorandum No. 45). Stanford, CA: Stanford Center for Research and Development in Teaching, Stanford University.
- Wright, S. C. (2001). The socialization of Singaporean physical educators. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education, 20*(3), 207–226.