For a number of years, staff and students of the Universities of Tsukuba and Queensland have enjoyed learning with and from each other reflecting the positive outcomes of globalization. In the critical education literature, globalization is often associated with negative messages around the hegemony of Western ideas and the unwelcome penetration of transnational companies into all facets of people’s lives. However, what this co-hosted AIESEP Congress allowed us to do was to celebrate the close relationship of our universities and the global community of AIESEP in a unique blending of East and West, North and South.

The Congress was held in the Châteaurisé Gateaux Kingdom, a magnificent hotel and spa resort on the outskirts of the city of Sapporo on Hokkaido, the northernmost of Japan’s four main islands. The city is the 5th largest city in Japan with a population close to two million. It is renowned for its parks, its seafood and the excellent Sapporo beer. Importantly Sapporo is the political and cultural centre of Northern Japan and with its sophisticated transportation system and traditional hospitality it is no surprise to learn that Sapporo hosts over 100 mostly international conferences each year. The timing of the conference was intentional; it was the first ever winter AIESEP congress. This allowed many of the delegates to experience the fabulous skiing conditions in nearby resorts with powder every bit as good as popular European and North American ski spots. In addition, Congress activities provided many delegates with an opportunity to celebrate their Japanese host’s cultural delights. Delegates were introduced to the excitement of Hokkaido dance and music, challenges posed by ice fishing, delights of Japanese cuisine and, for those daring delegates who experienced the skiing, the restorative sensations of the onsen (hot springs) were a delight. Local Sapporo students and volunteers performed many of the dance and music displays. These occasions offered further opportunities to interact with our local hosts. No doubt these cultural experiences were merely an overt expression of the rich networking and interaction that occurred amongst delegates from all corners of the globe.

The keynotes speakers were drawn from Canada, the USA, France and Japan and their interests embraced pressing international issues and ideas related to our broad field and this served to emphasize that the concerns of pedagogy in all its manifestations transcend national borders. On the day preceding the main conference, four workshops were featured on important topics such as social theory in research in physical activity and physical education research; teaching games for understanding; ‘challenG-ball’ and Olympic Education.

The Congress was a genuine opportunity to celebrate the Congress theme of North meets South; East meets West and presentations were given by delegates from Scandinavia to New Zealand. It was particularly gratifying to learn of the work so many of our colleagues are conducting in countries outside of Europe, North America and Australasia. Even the difficulties posed by language did not detract from the sharing of information, the expression of friendship and the general willingness to be part of something truly global.

The theme of the Congress was ‘Sport pedagogy research, policy and practice: international perspectives in physical education and sports coaching’ and as such encompassed a broad perspective on pedagogy in health, sport pedagogy and coaching. The program included over 150 presentations and over 110 posters, organized within six sub-themes—research on PE/PETE; professional development for PE and coaching; coaching process; physical education as health; physical education as culture; and morals and ethics. The sub-themes highlighted the diversity of foci, methodologies and practice implications of research in the field of health, physical education and sport pedagogy. Moreover, the inclusion of sports coaching within the Congress focus exemplified the breadth of the field and the potential connections that could be made between sub-disciplines in physical education and sport pedagogy. Established and new researchers were provided with opportunities to contribute to and draw from the rich and diverse international research and practice perspectives offered through the presentations and papers. Congress abstracts and papers were reviewed by an international scientific committee of considerable repute, ensuring that valuable contributions were made to the knowledge and understandings of the field.

These proceedings are slightly different to the usual format in that some keynotes are presented in their presentation form rather than as a written paper. These were the requests of the keynote presenters who felt that the presentation should be told the story of the presentation. It is important to acknowledge the fantastic job of those presenters for whom English was a second or even third language. It was necessary in the editing process to make small adjustments to the language in some of the abstracts. This was done sensitively and every effort was made to ensure that meaning and nuance were not lost. This meant that every abstract and every paper had to be read. It was often the case that no modifications were made at all. For those that submitted extended papers for review; papers were blind reviewed by two reviewers. The final paper was read only for any typographical and formatting inconsistencies. It is important to acknowledge the efforts of Ms Deb Noon (on staff at the School of Human Movement Studies at the University of Queensland) who single-handedly formatted the entire document including the reformatting of every table; ensured the issue of an ISBN number; arranged for the multiple burning of the CD, and in the final stages of the process, kept me and the editorial group on our toes. We are forever in her debt.

Finally the staff of the School of Human Movement Studies at The University of Queensland and the Institute of Health and Sport Sciences at the University of Tsukuba who formed the Organizing Committee would like to thank the delegates for making the trip to Sapporo and sharing their research, their wisdom and their friendship. We look forward to connecting with you again in a different part of the world.

Enjoy your reading

Dr Tony Rossi
Dr Peter Hay
Dr Louise McCuaig
Professor Richard Tinning
Professor Doune Macdonald