STRESS LEVELS AS A RATIONALE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EMPLOYEE RECREATION PROGRAMME IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES IN SOUTH AFRICA

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For the fulfillment of the requirements for the degree MAGISTER ARTIUM in Human Movement Science In the Faculty of Humanities (Department of Biokinetics, Sport and Leisure Sciences)

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

PRETORIA 2001

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincerest gratitude to the following professors, colleagues, family and friends who made this study possible:

A special word of gratitude to Professor Gerrit van Wyk, Head of the Department of Biokinetics, Sport and Leisure Sciences at the University of Pretoria, for his encouragement, friendship, guidance, teaching and tremendous help in the organisation and completion of this study.

A word of gratitude to Professor Leo Vermeulen, Head of the Department of Human Resource Management for introducing me to the SPSS system and for his enthusiastic encouragement and help in analysing the data in this study. A word of gratitude to his assistant – Mev.J.Lange for her assistance.

To Mr. G.J.Steyn a special word of thanks for your assistance.

To all the Heads of Prisons of the Department of Correctional Services – a special word of gratitude for responding to the questionnaire. This document will form the basis for the development of stress programmes and will benefit all employees in the DCS.

To Belinda my colleague; who was always prepared to assist, a word of thanks for your assistance.

My sincerest gratitude to my wife Eileen and my sons – Aveer and Prahiel for their moral and spiritual support.

My eternal gratitude to my parents – Amichund and Leela Bhoodram who have inspired me to complete my thesis.

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SYNOPSIS

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In this study, human movement studies, physical education, recreation and its contributions and stress have been placed in proper perspective. Conditions within the Department of Correctional Services regarding situations leading to the generation of stress in employees are also placed in perspective.

Stress within the Department of Correctional Services is a growing concern both for Management and employees. This study is aimed at identifying stressors both from within as well as outside the work context as well as reviewing the relationship between stress and physical activity (sport and recreation) in general as well as in the context of the Department of Correctional Services sport policy. Heads of prisons have been selected for the purposes of this study as they are constantly under pressure. Heads of Prisons in the Department of Correctional Services are ranked according to the size of the prisons they supervise. Subsequently a

Head of Prison could be ranked from a Correctional Official (CO) to an Assistant (ASD) or Deputy Director (DD).

Although there are many methods of reducing stress this study proposes to view physical activity and recreation as a central part of life, much like sleeping and to show that sport and recreation can serve to balance work by providing restorative refractory periods as well as reducing stress. This study has shown that conditions in the workplace are a major contributor to stress. The study also shows that the DCS has excellent sporting facilities in most Management Areas and that these need to be utilised fully. The DCS sport and recreation policy should be reviewed to ensure that DCS employees make optimum use of the opportunities to participate in sport and recreation.

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