

The concept of physical education in Brazil

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要 約

体育の概念, すなわち体育についての基本的な考え方は, その国の歴史や文化に色濃く反映された運動実践の教育的価値により様々な形態で存在する。ブラジルにおける体育の概念の変遷も例外ではない。本研究は, 最初に教育プログラムに採用されて以来, 様々な社会的, 政治的状況に影響を受けつつ, 現代的プログラムに発展したブラジルの体育概念の変遷を紹介することにより, 体育の目的やカリキュラムについての文化的特性について検討しようとするものである。併せて, 本研究は, 比較体育学の視点から, ブラジル-日本の体育カリキュラム論及びそこから導かれる「体育の専門性の教育」という将来的な問題について考察するための基礎資料を得ることを課題としている。

キーワード：体育の概念 ブラジル 比較体育学

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1. Introduction

Since the period when physical education started in Brazil, various changes were made. These changes were due to the different historical, social, and political periods of the country. The subject of the physical education depended greatly on its socio-political situation. Various concepts were developed alongside these social changes. The approaches also vary from one period of history to another. Reorganizations were also made with regards to the main goals and the scope of the physical education program. The purpose of this paper is to introduce the physical education of Brazil from the viewpoint of its historical background, different conceptions, physical education program nowadays, and its scope and limitations.

2. Historical Background

The concept of physical education first appeared in Brazil during the period of Brazilian colonization, in the latter half of the 16th century (1566). It was

introduced and organized by the Jesuits while they were catechizing the Brazilian native people. The objective was to provide a way to release the stress suffered by them because of the imposition of a different way of life. The native people, known as indios, used to be the unique inhabitants of the land and, as expected, did not have a formal physical education. However, in order to survive they practiced some activities such as swimming, wrestling, hunting, canoeing, and running. They also practiced a type of rustic badminton called peteca and, apart from this, the other activities did not contribute in a direct way to what is known as Brazilian physical education. Then with the arrival of the Africans, brought as slaves to Brazil from Portugal, another type of physical activity (martial art and style of dance) was introduced, the capoeira.

In 1837, during the imperial regime, a model institution for practicing sport called National Gymnasium was established, this being a discipline called gymnastics which was included in the regular curriculum of the schools; 15 years later, the regular

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practice of sport became a law. According to this law, gymnastics had to be adopted at the elementary schools throughout the capital of the court, Rio de Janeiro. With the end of the imperial regime, there was a recommendation for the practice of German gymnastics at the schools, up to here introduced only in the military environment. A few years later, the Swedish method of gymnastic was also introduced.

After the proclamation of the Brazilian Republic (1889) and the abolition of slave trafficking, a movement of transforming of the proslavery society into the capitalist one took place. This new society followed the tendency that existed in Europe whose main idea was to structure the new citizenship based on the political, social and economic situation of its country (Gallardo, 1998). From this time on the physical education was systematized, reflecting the educational tendencies that provided different points of view for the mind of mankind and its physical body. Taking the above points into consideration, we can see that Brazil already had a Physical Education system although not systematized nor organized as early as the colonization era up to the imperial regime. This system went through several changes after the proclamation of the republic.

3. Concepts of Physical Education

There are several physical education concepts in Brazil. This section will discuss some of the most relevant concepts, which include the concepts about hygiene, militarist, technical, psychomotor, developmental, constructive, socio-cultural, humanistic, open conception, and historical-critical. The first is characterized as the "hygienist concept". In Europe, the Brazilian middle class was in charge of the organization of the family's hygienic habits, releasing them from the viciousness found during the colonial period. Doctors of this age wanted to prevent the families from developing habits that could lead to the decline of their health and moral values and, consequently, to compromise collectivity. To reach their objective, the doctors and hygienists applied the concepts of physical education. Several programs of disciplinary proceedings and corporal exercises were used to strengthen and develop the students in physical and moral terms. Another objective was to make

them ready for constructing the new society. Boys and girls were placed in different classes and received different training. Boys were trained to be strong, healthy, and productive, and possible in their future to be soldiers. The girls were trained to be feminine, good housewives, and progenitive (Guiraldelli, 1989).

Under the "militarist concept", physical education had as its objective to attend the demand from the economic and industrial sectors that required skilled laborers, healthy, and capable of doing extensive routine. During the World War I, physical education was influenced by the army whose objective was to prepare soldiers for combat. In this way, physical education pointed to schools to accentuate that students should be dotted with physical abilities as a way to prepare them for combating or for defending the nation. In this interval, various approaches for the Brazilian gymnastics arose. Among them the French method, the natural Austrian method that replaced the Swedish method, and the German method applied in 1860.

After the Second World War, another concept of physical education came into being. This was called the "technical concept". Under this concept, sportive activities were included in its curriculum under a strong influence of the United States. With the industry acceleration of post war, the increasing urbanization increasing and diversification of the media, the sports practice at schools attained a high level of development. It was generally believed that through sports the children could understand that between them and the world there were people. Furthermore, for leading a social life they should follow some clear rules. By the sportive practice and based on their own effort, the students could learn how to be a winner and to admit defeats and conquests (Gallardo, 1998). On the other hand, utilitarian and technical finality of physical education in Brazil rises during the martial law brought out by the military coup in 1964. With the period of this regime the institution of physical education as a scholar subject became an obligation. They aimed to develop and improve the physical exercises, the moral, civic, psychic, and social knowledge of students. The physical aptitude improved and was considered as reference for a fu-

ture plan and for assessing and control. A new model of education called "the pyramidal model" in which physical education and sportsmanship would be the base of the pyramid, also appeared.

The "psychomotor concept" existed early in 1970's. It was the first well-conceived approach since the previous modules. Based in the interdependence between cognitive and motor development, arises as critics to the dualism, body and mind, predominant in the physical education at schools. In this concept, physical education involves itself with the development of children in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor processes. The work is based on games of movement and exertion, and it is organized to develop basic psychomotor structures: motor coordination, equilibrium, laterality, space-time organization, and corporal plan. It seeks to integrate man and space, body and soul. The development of psychomotor becomes itself a pre-requisite for acquisition of cognitive contents, and the education of movement gives way to education by the movement.

The next one is the "developmental concept. Due to the influences of sport and its associated values, in the beginning of 1980's, arise studies about how the acquisition of sporting abilities occurs, with the interest centered in the way how the children learn, or the cognitive aspect. The developmental approach tries to characterize the normal progression of physical growth, development and motor learning regarding to age. It defends the idea that the movement is the main way and objective of physical education, and it should prioritize the learning of the movement while occurred cognitive and social-affective learning. Physical education at schools should provide conditions for the motor behavior to be developed by the combination between diversity and complexity of movements. Its main objective is to offer experiences of adequate movements during growth and development in order to achieve the training of the motor abilities and correspond to motor challenges. After that perspective, the adaptation of contents by age passed to be diffused a lot.

The "constructive approach" has as its intention the construction of knowledge from the interaction of

people with the world. The acquisition of knowledge is a life-long process, causing the assimilation of plans and accommodation in a trial of constant re-organization. The construction of knowledge is evident when some authors consider as objective of physical education the respect of cultural universe of students, exploit the multiple educational possibilities of its playful activity and propose more and more complex tasks and challenges to construct knowledge. That proposal had the merit of considering the knowledge that the children already possessed in physical education, including prior knowledge of students in the learning-teaching process. It also alerted the teachers about the importance of active participation of students in problem solving (Gallardo, 1998). The psychomotor concept influenced the constructive perspective to find the integral formation with the enclosure of the affective and cognitive dimensions to the human movement.

At the end of 1980's a new conception about physical education began to be structured, based in the study of environment and social influences in human development. Those studies utilized information from anthropology, psychology, sociology and history that give a critical vision to reality, permitting us to understand our role in society. This was called the "socio-cultural concept". This conception considers man integrated with environment and society, being modified by him, and at the same time, he is transformed by this integration.

In the middle of 1980's, a new concept was born. This was called the "humanistic conception". It showed itself against the sport of performance and the technical method. The learning occurs through discoveries, exploiting the creativity, and valuing the needs of students. Individuality is respected, because each person possessed his or her own characteristics and they don't have the same level of maturity and motor development. Children should not be selected based on their performance for the reason that they might feel diminished. From this point of view, the best thing to do is to provide different situations of motor experiences, in order that students will have the opportunity to choose their challenges when they feel ready for it (Oliveira, 1985).

Regarding the contents, they defended the natural exercises, believing in the natural development of children. Games are considered important because they promote the interaction of cognitive, psychomotor and social-affective aspects. In this tendency, the class looks to be faced like therapy, concerning itself with individuality and personal achievement, giving opportunity for self-development. The contents and the knowledge do not need to be required, and the development processes are important.

"Open conception" on the other hand, is considered a progressive perspective since it proposed "open teaching". In other words, centered in students, making them participate in all educational processes where the priority is their ideas and intention. In this method of teaching, the purpose is to develop the capacity of action, and understanding the directives and objectives of actions. One of the main contents is the sport that possesses two approaches, one objective and another subjective. The first reflects norms and social values, and the other can be modified according to students' necessity (Medina, 1986). This approach states that sport develops the capacity of action through possibilities of insertion and communication, health and well being, self-affirmation and significant enjoyment of spare time. An analysis and modification of values passed by sports is necessary.

Next is the "historical-critical conception" which suggests the construction of a list about contents, it is classified in: contents that belong to cultural movement and contents produced to spread the capitalist market. The application of contents should be put in a historical context, giving the students notion about historical conditions, persuading them to a critical education. It is perceived in this concept that the vision of physical education is related with the contents that should provide to socialization of elaborated knowledge and/or erudite culture. The knowledge is produced in the social relations and cannot belong to a social class (Guiraldelli Jr., 1989). Based on the above points, it can be noticed that there are various concepts of physical education in Brazil. Although each concept had its own unique characteristics, they all lead to the same objective; that is to develop the students latent abilities to the fullest.

4. Current Status of Physical Education

At present, there are four main approaches being utilized in the physical education program in Brazil which include the psychomotor, developmental, constructive, and critical. All these approaches had unfolded in proposals that stand out the student as an integrated being. The student is viewed as a being situated historically, not only possessing knowledge that is important for a socialized life, but at the same time having critical capacity to find his place in the world, to modify and transform it.

The Parametros Curriculares Nacionais (National Curricula Parameters), at present, orients physical education in Brazil. It delegates autonomy to schools, elaborates the pedagogical proposals and suggests the integration of physical education. The pedagogical proposal should be formulated by teachers, directors, and a pedagogical technical team of each school, according to the reality and social demand of students. That possibility of elaboration should generate an advancement in direction to full exercise of citizenship and guarantee to all students the access to knowledge of corporal culture of movement.

According to National Curricula Parameters (1998), every person is born in the context of a culture that influences him and drives in a way that each social group conceives them. The diverse possibilities and necessities of use of the body are transformed during time. It includes: military motives, relatives to the domain and use of space; economic motives, that say respect to technologies of hunting, fishing and agriculture; motives of health, by practicing disease prevention and helping in physical rehabilitation; religious motives, referring to rituals and festivals; artistic motives, connected to construction and expression of ideas and feelings; and by playful motivations related to leisure and enjoyment. It tries to combine, each one in a specific way, the improvement of efficiency, as well as the search for satisfaction and pleasure in the execution of corporal movements. From those knowledge and possibilities derive the transformations during the time.

Considering those possibilities and necessities of body according to intentions that are carried out, the man-

ner that are expressed and the systematical way constitute what could be called corporal culture of movement. Some productions from the corporal culture of movements were incorporated by the physical education as objects of action and reflection: games, sports, dances, gymnastics and martial arts, that have in common the corporal representation of diverse aspects of human culture. The practice of corporal culture proposes, instead of the emphasis in fitness, the necessity to consider also other dimensions of being human involved in corporal practices: cultural, social, political and affective, present in the living body that interacts and moving like citizen and socialized people. Therefore, physical education is understood as an area of the knowledge that treat the movement culture and physical education at schools as a discipline that introduces and integrates students in the corporal culture of movement. Forming citizens that produce, reproduce and transform it, and giving conditions to enjoy games, sports, gymnastics, dances and martial arts in benefit of critical point of view and improvement of life quality.

The corporal culture of the movement conception contribute to physical education at schools for the full exercise citizenship because it proposes the social-cultural development and affirms the right of everyone to access and participate in the trial of learning. It seeks the development of autonomy, cooperation, social participation and the assertion of democratic principles. The physical education classes should provide knowledge to the student which recognizes leisure, and the corporal activities as essential needs of the contemporary man therefore a right of the citizen. Emphasize those activities and claim the access to centers of sports and leisure is another behavior to be adopted. The built knowledge should provide, in addition, the critical analyzes of social values as standards of beauty and health, exacerbated competition and performance, that become dominant in the society, and of its hole as instrument of exclusion and social discrimination.

The National Curricula Parameters propose three aspects for pedagogical practices at present physical education. Included herein are the inclusion principle, diversity principle and the content categories.

The first is "inclusion principle", which seeks to revert the historical selection between skilled and unskilled individuals to corporal practices, that is a direct result of performance and efficiency. The inclusion of students in the corporal culture of movement is done from the systematization of objectives, contents, trials of education and learning, and evaluation by means of the participation and an effective reflection. The second is "diversity principle", which is applied in the construction of the learning-education processes to extend the relations between the knowledge and the people who are learning.

The objectives and contents are chosen in agreement the diverse possibilities of learning established, considering affective, cognitive, motor, and social-cultural characteristics of students. The third aspect is "content categories", which is divided into conceptual (facts, concepts and principles), procedure (how do it), and attitude (norms and values). The conceptual and procedure contents have proximity because the focus of corporal culture is related to practical execution, understand and feel the body. The attitude contents aim for the need of students to do it at schools, building values and attitudes according to references.

The contents are divided in three blocks that should be developed during the fundamental education. The distribution and development of contents are carried out according to a pedagogical proposal of each school. The work should enable the inclusion of all students and the individual differences should result in opportunities to change and improve this work. The deepening level of contents evolves of the simplest and general one into the more complex and specific during the cycles of learning.

Knowledge about the Body, it is an approach in anatomical knowledge about the bone and muscular structure in a basic way is studied; physiological, related to comprehension of alterations that occur during the physical activities and another that occurs in long term; biomechanical, it is related to anatomy and contemplate the adaptation of gesture and posture habits; biochemical, it approaches contents that subsidize the physiology, some metabolic

processes to generate energy, elimination and replacement of nourishment.

Sports, games, martial arts and gymnastics: sports are practices that adopt rules of character competitive and official, organized in regional, national and international federations that regulate the professional and amateur practical. Games are practices with flexibility in the rules in function of available equipment and space conditions, it is played with cooperative, competitive and enjoyment character. Martial arts are regularized by specific rules and should punish attitudes of violence and disloyalty. It is a contest where the opponent should be subjugated with techniques and strategies in combined actions of attack and defense. Gymnastics are corporal techniques of work that assume diverse purposes. It can use or not apparatus and equipment, and can utilize various gymnastics techniques that exercise the body.

Rhythmic and expressive activities, this block includes manifestations of corporal culture that are expressed by means of gestures, with rhythms, sounds and music. It treats specifically of dances, gestures and plays with music. The contents of this block are vast and vary according to each region. That content organization seeks show up which are the objects of education and learning that are privileged. The contents should be worked of diversified way and adapted to possibilities of each context. It is not an inflexible and static structure but an organization the knowledge treated according to different approaches that can be used.

The Carta Brasileira de Educacao Fisica (Brazilian Physical Education Document) presents like function of physical education at schools the choice, distribution and organization of National Curricula Parameters by teachers in each school, in accordance with the possibilities imposed to realize the work. The objectives, as well as strategies and educational methods are also the responsibilities of teachers. They will elaborate the planning based in the pedagogical propose of school.

The importance of physical education professional in learning-teaching process must be observed and em-

phasized for the reason that this person is responsible for the teaching of physical education at school. That professionals (teachers) should be open to new ideas and proposals, follow the technical and scientific advances of this area, incorporating perspectives of continued education. To realize this, the academic curricula should be harmonized with new approaches to the teaching-learning system in physical education.

The academic formation of physical education professionals is vast and permits many options of work, for example: physical education teacher at elementary school, junior-high and high schools, trainer of athletes, coach, physical trainer, instructor of exercises to develop motor abilities, academy instructor, personal trainer, laboratory assistant and sporting supervisor. In conclusion we can say that the above mentioned components serve as a blue print for whatever program or activities being implemented at present.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, this paper presented the historical development of the physical education in Brazil, the various changes in the program, and its present state. It can be noted that many changes occurred within the program in a short period of time. It is hoped that more people will; see the relevance of physical education in Brazil because many changes in this direction have been done, for example: approval of law 2696/98 that regulates professional practice in physical education, organization of physical education in regional and federal institutions and the elaboration of the Brazilian Physical Education Document. However, the improvement of the physical education program depends on how the teachers put into practice the new approaches they have learned. If this will be done, then hopefully it would result to students leading a better quality of life when they will become adults. The writer would like to contribute something for the improvement of the physical education in her country by doing a comparative study on the physical education system between Japan and Brazil. It is expected that schools will put in practice new approaches to improve physical education practice to students, seeking a better

quality of life for future adults. To realize this, it will be necessary to have qualified professionals, generating good perspectives of improvement in work conditions in the near future.

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