

81 - DEMOCRATIZATION OF MANAGEMENT AND THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT: QUESTIONS FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

RODRIGO ALBERTO LOPES;
 ROSANE MARIA KREUSBURG MOLINA;
 FERNANDA GUEDES MARCOLLA.
 Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos - UNISINOS
 Apoio CNPq
 rodrigolopes11@yahoo.com.br

Introduction

In the present study we discuss the relationship between the educational legal framework and the pedagogical practice of sports developed in Physical Education classes in a school that has an innovative proposition.

Our analysis was based on the concepts of micropolicies developed by Ball (1989) in reference to school processes. According to Ball, micropolicies of a school are "fighting grounds" (Ball, 1989, p. 35) divided by ongoing or potential conflicts between its ideologically diverse members. To Ball, understanding the nature of schools as organizations involves the understanding of the conflicts present in it. Moreover, he states that micropolicies are the process articulated by two basic dimensions, which are contradictory and inherent to the dynamics of school organizations: conflict and control. For him, behind the scene commitment and negotiations become as important as formal procedures and official meetings. In this concept, schools are seen as fields of ideological dispute, not only as abstract and formal bureaucracies. Micropolicies describe the "dark side" of school organizations, a struggle between its members in order to define school identity. The categories of analysis presented by Ball consist of interests, control, ideological diversity, conflicts, and power.

As to macropolicies, the legal framework of the present study is the Law on Education Guidelines and Basis (LDB in the Brazilian abbreviation), no. 9394/96, which enables schools to build pedagogical propositions based on their needs and principles, aiming to watch over its fulfillment and resignification. It assigned to teachers the task to articulate their work plan to the pedagogical proposition. In this particular municipality, municipal managers contributed to the process of elaboration of pedagogical propositions of schools as a result of the 1st Municipal Conference on Education. The process involved regional discussions, debates involving all segments of the school community as well as external advisory. Students, teachers, parents, employees, and principals of all schools within the network were involved in the process.

The school to which we refer assumed a marked importance as for the autonomy signaled both by the present LDB and by the Municipal Teaching Network to reformulate its Political Pedagogical Project (PPP) in 2006. Of the pedagogical innovations undertaken, we highlight the implementation of isonomy of class hours in all courses of the curriculum and the organization of courses in thematic classrooms. The PPP also recommends interdisciplinarity and the articulation between schools and the local community. Because of its design, we considered this school as innovative. Thus, we corroborate with Gil (2004, p. 31), who states that

[...] innovations always appear linked to ideological, social and economic issues, and to be thus considered they depend of the context from which they emerge [...] they respond to the institutional needs of the teaching system, from preschool to the university, needs in which teachers have involved themselves in order to find answers to their demands and interests.

Thematic classrooms appeared as a way for curriculum courses to have their own physical space. In them, knowledge can be constructed, experienced and evaluated in a specific environment. The characterization of each classroom is a responsibility of students, who usually opt for the rearrangement of tables and chairs, besides the exhibition of works and information relevant to that particular field of knowledge. The isonomy of the class hours between all curriculum courses according the current Political Pedagogical Project appeared as a methodological proposition whose objective is to minimize power relations that historically imbue the school organization, redesigning school micropolicies. In most schools, the organization of school courses maintains Mathematics and Portuguese, for instance, with class hours significantly higher than those of Arts and Physical Education. By means of isonomy of class hours, this school aims to recognize equal pedagogical relevance to all courses.

The school investigated has one single teacher of Physical Education, appointed by the most recent public selection conducted in the municipality in the end of 2005. At first, this teacher took over the position in another school; only half year later he started teaching at this school; consequently, he was not part of the construction process of the school's pedagogical proposition. He has been a teacher for five years. During his early formation, he was a volleyball coach of competitive teams. Presently, besides teaching at the school studied, he owns of a surf training center and, in the future, intends to dedicate himself exclusively to the center.

In regards to Physical Education, the LDB 9.394/96 considers it an obligatory curricular component, integrated to the methodology and pedagogical principles foreseen in the school proposition.

The main objective of our study was to identify the impacts of the political pedagogical innovations made in this school on the teaching practice of one particular Physical Education teacher, specifically in regards to sports teaching.

We consider the study of school sports to be pertinent because we identify an ambivalent content in its principles (ASSIS, 2005). In other words, first it is seen as a reproducer of other social structures then it is seen as a counter-hegemonic element. The first understanding is incapable of offering the possibility of construction of a proper "school culture" (VAGO, 1996, p. 4). It is a system which fulfills roles determined by other systems, legitimating the transmission of an accumulated social knowledge that attributes in the case of the institution *school* the role of fulfilling some determinate tasks in favor of hegemonic socio-cultural values. In other words, sports "*in*" school are those simply present in it but not articulated to intrinsically school principles. On its turn, sports "*of*" school are those that aim at the construction of a proper school culture (BRACHT, 1992).

The objective of this study is to understand the pedagogical practice of a Physical Education teacher of a school, based on the following research questions: According to this teacher, how did Physical Education assume the school's innovations? What are the main challenges to the compatibilization of sports and the critical ideas proposed by the school?

The presuppositions that structure these questions suppose that the premises built during the early academic formation, the theoretical referential in the topic, and the experiences in the area of sports guide and design the profile of the Physical Education teacher as follows:

A) Physical Education teachers do not see the Political Pedagogical Projects of schools where they work as reference elements to their knowledge and teaching tasks.

B) They organize their classes based on the methodologies identified with sports training, or they refer to experiences not identified with the school system.

Methodology

Because this particular school counts with a differentiated pedagogical proposition when compared to the other school of the Municipal School Network, we considered that to investigate it was an opportunity to explain in a relevant way a case of mediation between PPP and sports taught at Physical Education classes. By means of a descriptive and interpretative case study, we researched the pedagogical practice of the only Physical Education teacher of this school.

For the collection, organization and analysis of results, we used tools and processes recommended by authors such as

Stake (1998), Woods (1986), and Triviños (2001).

The semi-structured interview was organized as to show the teacher's positions on the topic.

Document analysis was also conducted. The Political Pedagogical Project was the main document analyzed; we interpreted the process of construction of meanings to identify how the guiding principles of school processes are arranged, mainly those regarding thematic classrooms and the isonomy of class hours. According to Stake (1998), the analysis of documents aims at offering evidences so that we can understand how the object of study produces meaning in its context, so that latter we are able to better understand it. As to Physical Education, we aimed to understand from the perspective of the teacher the following processes: projects devised; principles of pedagogical mediation of sports of or in school; methodologies underlying sports activities.

For the organization of data, we used fragments of interviews, impressions based on observation, and official guidelines collected in official documents, distributed in three categories of analysis: a) appropriation of construction and discussion process of the school's pedagogical proposition; b) view of sports; c) articulations between sports taught at the school and the Political Pedagogical Project.

The main document used in the formulation of results was a semi-structured interview. The data collected from observation and document analysis were used to triangulate information aiming to deepen understandings of the evidences collected in the field.

The School Project

The school studied is located in a peripheral neighborhood of a municipality of the metropolitan region of Porto Alegre, the capital of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. The school restructured its pedagogical proposition in 2006. According to the PPP of the school, these innovations were mainly due the possibilities made available by the 1996 Law on Education Guidelines and Basis (LDB) and municipal education policies. Of the LDB, we highlight the flexibilization of public teaching, expressed in the responsibility of schools constructing their own work plan. On its turn, the Municipal Network of this school promoted the 1st Municipal Conference on Education in 2005, which created a space for discussion in which schools assumed some mechanisms of democratic management and understood how this process is related to the construction of PPPs.

Thus, the school by means of discussions involving the entire school community reconfigured some of its structural aspects. For example, it reviewed the traditional allocation of higher class hours to Portuguese and Mathematics in comparison with the other curriculum courses. The new pedagogical proposition grants isonomy of class hours to all courses; as a result, it enabled Physical Education and Arts, traditionally identified in school spheres as those courses of lower prestige, equal treatment in terms of time organization.

Moreover, the school instructed courses to organize themselves in thematic classrooms, so that they would become a motivating learning environment. The main objective of these innovations, as registered in the school's Political Pedagogical Project, is to provide students with greater conceptual depth in all that is developed in each of the courses.

What the teacher says

Because the Physical Education teacher joined the teaching staff of this school only after the creation of the Political Pedagogical Project, it was important to understand how he assumed these guidelines. The participating teacher states that he does not participate in the discussions promoted by the school, be them pedagogical or administrative. He justifies his being absent for lack of time and his interest in "pedagogical discussions". He recalls that when he started working at this school none of the school managers requested that he read the PPP. He says that they only informed him that the school had its curriculum organized by isonomy of class hours and that courses were developed in thematic classrooms. He was informed of the need to devise a work plan for his classes. He considers that his insertion in the dynamics of the school was fast, even because there is no need for teachers to know the school's guiding political pedagogical principles, since these are redundant. As he sees it, the general guidelines of a school are vague and incoherent with the knowledge and practice and a Physical Education teacher.

He considers that the pedagogical and class meetings are irrelevant to the object of study of school Physical Education, since a teacher linked only to practice is enough to fulfill its teaching role in the area. However, his view is that class meetings are pointless in this school. They promote pertinent discussions neither to the teaching practice nor to the students' evaluation; they simply label students as undisciplined.

The study plan of Physical Education, one of the appendices of the school's PPP, plans sports as the only content to be seen in Physical Education classes in the last years of Primary Education. The plan was formulated by the teacher and foresees only the practice of collective sports, such as indoors soccer, volleyball, basketball, and handball.

To be highlighted is the absence of other elements of corporal culture, such as games, dances, fights, and gymnastics, perfectly adequate for the exploration of thematic classrooms. The teacher justifies this by the saying that he does not feel prepared to develop this knowledge. In fact, he believes he is just a good volleyball teacher because he has participated in several specialization courses in the area. According to him, it would be irresponsible to teach sports techniques and tactics without possessing the specific qualification for it. He also mentions the lack of adequate materials for the practice of sports, such as athletics, Olympic gymnastics, and extreme sports, as being another reason for his opinion. Moreover, the fact that, in his first undergraduate years, he coached competitive volleyball teams contributes to his understanding of teaching. He recognizes that this was the experience that most impact had on his present teaching practices. He believes school Physical Education should methodologically reflect sports schools. His reference is the school where he taught prior to the present one, where each teacher was responsible for one sport modality practiced exclusively during an entire school year. Thus, he identifies that school as a "perfect school". He believes students should practice all sports in Primary Education so that in Secondary Education they may opt for the sport they identify with. He bases this position on the National Curricular Parameters (PCNs in the abbreviation in Portuguese) devised in 1998.

The methodology used by him in the teaching of sports, even if not expressed in the PPP and not mentioned directly in his interview, is based on the developmental method. And the indication for this is the fact that he organizes the levels of difficulty of motor gestures into a hierarchy, aiming to near them to those pre-established as correct.

On the legal framework that organizes the teaching of sports in school, the teacher identifies himself with the principles that were in place in previous legislations because he considers them conceptually closer to the objectives of the teaching of sports in Physical Education classes. According to him, the guidelines of the present LDB should focus on the formation of athletes, the formation of citizenship, and knowledge of sports.

The main difficulties that he identifies in his teaching practice are the excessive interest of students in professional soccer and the alienation caused by the media. For him, children and adolescents do not make a point of even trying other sport modalities and, when they feel inapt to play soccer, they abandon entirely sports practice, without even getting to know other sports. The teacher signals that the mass media is responsible for this behavior; the mass media is not interested in promoting volleyball, basketball, handball, and other competitions.

As to the evaluation process, the teacher also resorts to the developmental theory with which he identifies. Students are evaluated by means of adequate technical gestures and pre-established executions. However, the teacher highlights that the effort to reach an adequate performance is rewarded, since he believes each student has particular limits and possibilities.

According to the teacher, of the curriculum courses, Physical Education is most difficulty one to be articulated to the pedagogical proposition of the school. For him, the objectives of each area are particular and incompatible with each other. The teacher

considers that when pedagogical innovations take place in the school the PPP gives priority to the needs of other fields of knowledge. Thus, he thinks the supposed equality in power relations between courses recommended by the school PPP is theoretical. For him, Physical Education is present at the school because the law says it should. He exemplifies his position by saying that the present pedagogical proposition values the creation of thematic classrooms, when for Physical Education thematic classrooms are expendable. He deems necessary for Physical Education the obtainment of sports materials in higher quantity and quality, even for modalities such as gymnastics and athletics. The valorization by school managers of student participation in sports competitions in the city, excusing them from classes with no restriction whenever competitions require, is another demand seen by the teacher as significant and not met.

As to the innovations introduced in the school, Physical Education seems not to have suffered any significant impact. The teacher considers that the isonomy of class hours has only made students tired and rapidly uninterested in classes. As to the thematic classrooms, he says there is one for Physical Education, but which is not as decorated as the others. According to him, his physical space of pedagogical mediation is the court. The theoretical contents developed in his classes are seen in practice. However, the school Political Pedagogical Project sees thematic classrooms as spaces for courses to be "experienced in their own environments, where materials may be better organized, fostering discussions in line with the topics fomented by the pedagogical artifacts made available to students" (POLITICAL PEDAGOGICAL PROJECT, 2006).

According to this teacher, sports and the PPP are incompatible. The teacher disagrees with some of the school's political pedagogical guidelines that suggest some understandings of what Physical Education is. Nevertheless, it is surprising that the teacher presupposes that the PPP contains what he most likely works with in his classes. Therefore, contradictorily, he affirms that the sports taught by him are articulated to the guidelines of the PPP. He does not recognize that participating in the construction of the PPP may qualify his pedagogical practice. In his view, the PPP is only a "document in a drawer", a demand made by the Municipal Secretariat of Education to be met by the school.

Final Considerations

Our research showed a marked disagreement between the principles that structure the school project and what is done in Physical Education classes. The teacher was contrary to the ideas of the PPP. He did not share the guidelines of the document and minimized the effects of the methodological innovations undertaken in the school for the set of curricular courses.

The school has the responsibility signaled by the present LDB to reformulate its pedagogical proposition. It politically integrated Physical Education to the pedagogical process, including it in the same methodological guidelines conceived to the other courses; this aimed at decreasing the exercise of power of some courses in relation to others. Thus, it assures to each course the same "time possibilities of pedagogical action" by means of an equal distribution of curricular class hours.

However, the Physical Education teacher undervalued the space of discussion of the PPP, systematically made available. He recognized that the pedagogical discussions did not interfere in his concepts, since the topics debated in these spaces made no sense to Physical Education, mainly due to the fact that his classes were based on the ideas of performance sports.

The methodology chosen for the practice of sports in Physical Education at the school studied is a result of the previous experiences of the teacher, especially those conducted in non school spaces. As a result, it becomes clear that his concepts are more identified with the sports system than with the school system. In our view, this position characterizes him more as a coach than as a teacher.

We do not consider correct to justify the lack of specific knowledge and adequate materials as a reason for the lack of experience of other elements of the corporal culture of movement in Physical Education classes, such as games, fights, dances, and gymnastics. We are not thus demeriting the practice of sports "in" school; we are considering that its presence should imply the discussion of its codes and meanings, to the point of transforming it pedagogically, making it coherent to the pedagogical principles, that is, according to Bracht (1992), a sport "of" school. In our opinion, the way sports are taught in this school inhibits a process that privileges, via legitimate spaces legitimated by the PPP, the critical discussion of its contents. The prioritization of some sports further legitimates them as hegemonic contents, at the same time that they marginalize all the other sports, maintaining them "mystified" for the students, as to their technique, history, and representations.

Moreover, we corroborate with the principles of Soares, Taffarel, and Escobar (2006), who understand Physical Education as a course of the school curriculum no different from all the other courses. In order to legitimate its pedagogical relevance, Physical Education must engage itself in the responsibilities deriving both from micro and macropolicies. Under this view, one of these policies is for teachers to watch over the articulation of their work plans with the guidelines of the PPPs of the schools where they work, especially when these are a result of the intentions of the school community and establish a balance between the wishes and the possibilities of feasibility of the pedagogical propositions.

We are not defending here the idea that teachers are simple enforcers of plans devised by others. According to Sacristán (1998, p. 201), this movement also implies accommodation. For him, "[...] a low level of dedication to a predicting and reflective activity such as planning means a professional activity that is little autonomous or a high level of dependence". It is our understanding that teachers in general should participate in the spaces of discussion in schools, and use them to resignify both their practice and their positions in face of educational policies. Using a metaphor by Sacristán (1998), we consider teaching proposition as an art, where the artist is the owner of the sketch, dominates all its process, and even if at times different from what was idealized, the resulting work is the direct reflex of the artist's senses and meanings; we do not see teaching as a building, where construction workers execute the ideas planned by the architect, with little knowledge of the whole and only find out about the result of efforts when the construction is finished, without at least discussing the process, nor benefiting from it.

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Av. Castro Alves, 915 – Bairro Santa Catarina - Sapucaia do Sul-RS - rodrigolopes11@yahoo.com.br

DEMOCRATIZATION OF MANAGEMENT AND THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT: QUESTIONS FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

ABSTRACT

The present study investigates meanings conferred by a Physical Education teacher to the democratic management of a school whose proposition is innovative. The theoretical reference used was the sociology of school organization (BALL, 1989). The Law on Education Guidelines and Basis (LDB), no. 9.394/96, characterizes Physical Education as an obligatory curricular component of basic education, integrates it to the pedagogical proposition of schools, and gives teachers the responsibility of this articulation within the framework of the management of the Political Pedagogical Project of each school unit. By means of a qualitative case study, we identified a school locus in the context of a municipal school network. In the school studied, courses count with isonomy of their working hours, and activities are developed in thematic classrooms. The participating teacher is the only Physical Education teacher of the school. The investigation was conducted by means of a semi-structured interview, document analysis, and observation. Results show that innovations do not interfere with the teaching-learning process in the area of Physical Education, since the knowledge that bases the teacher's concepts comes from previous experiences, forged in a meritocratic view. There was a divergence between the concept of school Physical Education understood by the teacher and the political pedagogical principles that structure the school. The spaces for discussion made available by the school were undervalued by the teacher because he does not identify them as relevant in order to resignify his practice. Built under this aegis, school Physical Education reinforces the marginality of the course and does not confer it the centrality that the political pedagogical project intends to realize.

Key words: Physical Education, management, pedagogical project.

LA DEMOCRATISATION DE LA GESTION ET DE L'ESPACE SCOLAIRE: QUESTIONS POUR LES PROFESSEURS D'EDUCATION PHYSIQUE

RESUME

Il s'agit d'une étude sur le sens et la signification concédés par un professeur d'Education Physique concernant la gestion démocratique d'une école innovante. Notre référence théorique fut la sociologie de l'organisation scolaire (BALL, 1989). La LDB (Loi de Directives et Bases), Loi n°. 9.394/96, caractérise l'Education Physique comme une composante du programme obligatoire de l'enseignement primaire, faisant partie intégrante du programme pédagogique des écoles et confère aux professeurs la responsabilité de l'exécution dans la gestion du Projet Politico-Pédagogique de chaque unité scolaire. A travers une étude de cas qualitative nous observons l'école *in situ*, dans le contexte d'un réseau municipal. Dans cette école, les disciplines ont une isonomie d'heures de cours et les activités se déroulent en salles thématiques. Le collaborateur est l'unique professeur d'Education Physique de l'école. La recherche a été réalisée au moyen d'un entretien semi-structuré, de l'analyse de documents et d'observations. Les résultats montrent que les innovations de l'école n'interfèrent pas sur le processus d'apprentissage dans ce domaine, étant donné que les savoirs qui fondent la conception du professeur viennent d'expériences antérieures, forgées sur une vision méritocratique. Il y a divergence entre la conception de l'Education Physique Scolaire du professeur et les principes politico-pédagogiques qui structurent l'école. Les espaces de discussion proposés par l'école sont par ce professeur dévalorisés parce qu'ils ne les identifie pas comme importants pour sa pratique. L'Education Physique Scolaire, construite autour de cette protection, renforce la marginalité de la discipline et ne lui confère pas la centralité que le projet politico-pédagogique souhaite concrétiser.

Mots-clé: éducation physique, gestion, projet pédagogique.

LA DEMOCRATIZACIÓN DE LA GESTIÓN Y DEL ESPACIO ESCOLAR: CUESTIONES PARA LOS PROFESORES DE EDUCACIÓN FÍSICA

RESUMÉN

El estudio investiga sentidos y significados conferidos por un profesor de Educación Física acerca de la gestión democrática de una escuela innovadora. Nuestra referencia teórica es la sociología de la organización escolar (BALL, 1989). La LDB, Ley 9.394/96, caracteriza la Educación Física como componente curricular obligatorio en la educación básica, integrándola a la propuesta pedagógica de las escuelas. Confiere a los docentes la responsabilidad de dicha articulación en los marcos de la gestión del Proyecto Político Pedagógico de cada unidad escolar. Por medio de un estudio de caso cualitativo identificamos la escuela *locus*, en el contexto de una red municipal. En esta escuela las asignaturas poseen equiparación en horas de clase y las actividades se las desarrollan en salas temáticas. El colaborador con nuestro estudio es el único profesor de Educación Física de la escuela. La investigación fue ejecutada con entrevistas semi estructuradas, análisis de documentos y observaciones. Los resultados explicitan que las innovaciones no interfieren en el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje de la asignatura, pues los saberes en los cuales el docente funda su práctica se originan en experiencias anteriores y son de carácter meritatorio. Hay divergencia entre la concepción de Educación Física escolar del docente y los principios políticos pedagógicos que estructuran la escuela. Los espacios de discusión organizados en la escuela están desvalorados por el docente por él no identificarlos como algo importante para resignificar su práctica. La Educación Física escolar construida bajo estos principios reafirma la marginalidad de la asignatura y no le confiere la centralidad que el Proyecto Político Pedagógico intenciona concretizar.

Palabras-clave: Educación Física, gestión, proyecto pedagógico

A DEMOCRATIZAÇÃO DA GESTÃO E DO ESPAÇO ESCOLAR: QUESTÕES PARA OS PROFESSORES DE EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA

RESUMO

Este estudo investiga sentidos e significados conferidos por um professor de Educação Física acerca da gestão democrática de uma escola de proposta inovadora. Nossa referência teórica foi a sociologia da organização escolar (BALL, 1989). A LDB, Lei n°. 9.394/96, caracteriza a Educação Física como componente curricular obrigatório da educação básica, integrando-a à proposta pedagógica das escolas e confere aos docentes a responsabilidade dessa articulação nos marcos da gestão do Projeto Político Pedagógico de cada unidade escolar. Por meio de um estudo de caso qualitativo identificamos a escola *locus*, no contexto de uma rede municipal. Nessa escola as disciplinas possuem isonomia de carga horária e as atividades desenvolvem-se em salas temáticas. O colaborador é o único professor de Educação Física da escola. A investigação foi realizada por meio de entrevista semi-estruturada, análise de documentos e observações. Os resultados explicitam que as inovações não interferem no processo de ensino-aprendizagem da área, já que os saberes que fundamentam a concepção do docente são oriundos de experiências anteriores, forjados na visão meritocrática. Há divergência entre a concepção de Educação Física escolar do docente e os princípios políticos pedagógicos que estruturam a escola. Os espaços de discussão oportunizados pela escola estão por ele desvalorizados em função do docente não identificá-los como relevantes para resignificar sua prática. A Educação Física escolar, construída sobre essa égide, reforça a marginalidade da disciplina e não lhe confere a centralidade que o projeto político pedagógico intenciona concretizar.

Palavras chave: Educação Física, gestão, projeto pedagógico.