45 - MEDIATIC AESTHETIC VERSUS PROFESSIONAL FORMATION IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN BRAZIL AND CHINA

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INTRODUCTION

Because I have been working in a gym for some years, I came across some students with wrong ideas about physical conditioning, training results, class frequency, etc. This thought may be resultant of easy access to communication (media), which suggests the idea of an immediatist culture and of the accomplishing of desires in a short term.

As Physical Education professionals, it is our duty to possess conscious and scientific knowledge of facts, considering the student's health and being reasonable in training prescription, and not being influenced by the discourse of the fashions of each period. Nevertheless, it's not easy to change the culture of a student who was bombarded with advertising discourse, which has as a single goal the announcer's company profit.

Currently, fitness magazines bring headlines and articles which fascinate the public, saying that if you do certain exercises, in a few weeks your abdomen will be perfect. Reading this, the interested person sets out to do the program. Physical Education professionals know that this person is not going to reach his or her final aim in such a short time, resulting in frustrations and even distrust in the benefits of the physical exercise moving them away from the possibilities of practice, for the information given was wrong putting at risk his or her physical health.

Starting from these facts, one asks: what prevails in the student's opinion? Media, in its idealist discourse or the knowledge of the professional in the area which has its formation based on scientific assumptions? And what is this professional's view in relation to media? Is he or she prepared to receive this student? These are some questions that this paper attempts to answer.

Regarding that, Betti (2004, p.4) points out:

(...) consider Physical Education professionals as mediators who interpose between body culture of movement of our times and the ones interested in systematic and intentional exercising of motricity, helping them to perform a critical reading of that culture and their own motricities.

Nowadays, one thinks of the body as a spectacle used to attract people's attention in advertising ads, products, fashion, etc. that don't have anything to do with the body itself. According to Garcia (2005, p.30):

(...) contemporary social-cultural conditions allow for (re)thinking, strategically, the body as a poetic instrument of an entertaining performing activity, which exhibits it as a trophy, an accomplishment, therefore, desire. The body's dimension, however, appears as a mediatic object, that is, a medium of communication that brings with it elements of reflection and reading, articulating punctual discursivity, particularly in advertising.

So, the present study has as an objective to analyze Physical Education professionals' perception of media discourse regarding physical exercise, in Brazil and China.

Therefore, one can identify if there is critical conscience, in relation to media, in a Physical Education professional at Estação Corpo (Body Station) Gym in the city of Taquara and another professional at Mega Fit Gym in the city of Shanghai, being able to determine their professional intervention as for aesthetics and health subjects in the magazines discourses. Thus, we intend to know the professionals and undergraduates perception in relation to the magazines. The research problem was: what is the Physical Education professionals' perception of media discourse regarding physical exercise?

This study provides an approximation with the problem, with the aim of making it more explicit and conscious, improving present-day ideas and findings, of movements of transformation of the present-day thought, because it's an activity aimed at the professional's pedagogical and critical practices in order to find ways to work with reality, in which a comparative analysis between Brazilian and foreign professionals, and of how their students react before media is made; in order to do that, two specific collaborators were compared, called by the nicknames Alex and Yan.

METHODOLOGY

This study was characterized by the qualitative interpretative approach, in which the collaborators were teachers who work in gyms. Interviews and observations were used as research instruments.

Individual semi-structured interview

In the first phase, an interview plan containing twelve questions was performed. The questions were developed considering the research objectives, attempting to aim the contents published on Corpo a Corpo magazine. It was chosen an issue of a magazine with wide advertising expression, particularly among the female public, which is September 2005 issue of Corpo a Corpo magazine. The interview happened on 01/23/2006 at 1.30 p.m. The interview performed in Shanghai had eight semi-structured questions. A Mandarin interpreter was necessary so the Physical Education professional interviewed could understand the research questions. The interview was carried out in a private place at the gym, on 08/03/2006 at 8 a.m., with twenty minutes duration. During the interview pictures from the Chinese magazine *Woman's Day*, August 2006 issues were shown.

Observations

They were of extreme importance in this method in which one can perceive the environment, behavior and manifestations of the people involved. In the collection we have emphasized information referring to people who attend the gym and their relation with the Physical Education professional and undergraduates chosen as collaborators in this study.

INITIAL CONTACT

One of the research collaborators is an instructor in Estação Corpo Gym, located in the city of Taquara, which has been working for twelve years in this field. It has a mean of 210 students per month, its working hours are from 6.30 a.m. to 10 p.m. and it serves students of both genders from 9 years of age on, their students being, in the majority, females, with age ranging from 30 to 47 years old.

The first contact was made with the gym's owner about the possibility of performing this research in his facility, showing its objectives and benefits.

In Shanghai the first contact with the gym was made one day before the interview, when its objectives were shown, and a teacher was available to be interview. It wasn't possible to take pictures of the gym, nor have access to the facility's data, like for instance the age of people who attend the place.

Collaborators list:
Alex, 43 years old.
Education: Licentiate in Physical Education- IPA
He's been working in this area for twelve years.
Yan, 26 years old.
Education: Physical Education and Pedagogy, he has got his degree from a college located in a province of Shanghai. He's been working in this area for two years. It's important to point out that there was great difficulty for the interviewee in talking about his professional life, due to the Chinese political regime.

DATA ANALYSIS

We used source and methodological triangulation to data analysis, in which the information sources were compared to the accounts of the different participants. In methodological triangulation we compared the semi-structured interviews with the observations. According to Cauduro (2004, p. 89), "triangulation is like sewing a bedspread of remnants; it's the creativity on putting the sewing together, metaphorically referring to data analysis and interpretation." That is, it is the moment of creation of a masterpiece, the time when you obtain answers and reflect about the investigation's questionings, and which now are confirmed totally, including what relates to qualitative investigation.

From the interviewees' speeches, categories were drawn up with the aim of facilitating data analysis, making thus, their triangulation possible.

Descriptive categories:
Category 1 body and media
Category 2 professional intervention
Category 3 knowledge construction

BODY AND MEDIA

One can perceive that the appeal of media is real and its influence is present in people's everyday life. It is for sure, an opinion shaper and it dictates social rules linked to the ideal physical type, according to one of the interviewees:

"Women in a general way it's the slimness, they always want to be slimmer, however much slim they are, it's the anorexic physical type they like, lately it's changed a bit, and men the one with well defined musculature."(Alex)

The professional interviewed has clearly shown in the group interview that media interferes with his work:

"Even longtime students, the private ones who have been attending us for seven years, talk about it a lot, the power of media is such that in short time they're asking … are you the owner of truth?…and we have to state that the truth is not absolute, that what we use is based on a scientific knowledge and it doesn't come from media and it's so hard… because marketing's pressure is really big (Alex).

In the interview with Yan, he said that media influences standards, but differently from Brazil, it doesn't influence his work, his students follow what the instructor determines, he was even surprised by the question.

Regarding the collaborators' perception as for the changing in the new cultural image and the values assigned to it, one of the interviewees points out:

" ...Sales...just sales, they took the standard physical type, although this one, Luisa Brunet's daughter, is out of the male standard, and in the female standard, the female universe is one and the male's is another, her mother at her age was a lot more famous in the male world than she is these days and she must be famous to the female public because she's the anorexic type, the other cover is really in the male universe, with rounder shapes, but it's all sales." Alex)

Yan notices that Chinese women like the American beauty standard, slim, thin waist and that they always want to work out the thighs and not the gluteus muscle, and that Chinese women don't go through many correction surgeries.

The collaborator emphasized the fact that women, in a general way, are more concerned with their slimness, because that's what matters in their social environment.

In that sense, Sanfelice and Araújo (2005,p.4) state that:

Nowadays, women are seen, almost in a mandatory way, putting themselves to their own bodies' indulgence. This is, without any doubt, another way of subordination. A subordination, one may say, worse than that suffered before, because differently from the past, when the husband was in charge, today the torturer has no face, it's the media, street posters, magazines, television image raids.

Some advertising campaigns try to make overweight women feel included in a social group and it's clear on the interviews that the slimness law is almost irreducible.

At a certain moment during the group interview, the collaborators were asked about the headlines "Smashing plan, slender body in 30 days", presented by Corpo a Corpo magazine.

"It's commerce, it's marketing, it's got nothing to do with Physical Education" (Alex).

When we showed Yan a Chinese magazine with trainings, he said that few students read those magazines with the aim of following his trainings, in the gym where he works, students comparing the instructor's trainings with the ones in magazines is something unusual.

In relation to the gym, the collaborators realize that students put there their dreams and also frustrations. It is in this place that daily clashes happen and that's when physical educators play a role of extreme importance. It's appropriate to quote the idea of Iwanowicz apud Bruhns (1989, p.63) who says "what was done before with the body, today is being done through machines."

PROFESSIONAL INTERVENTION

It was noticed in the moment of the interview the professionals' effort in having some professional self-assurance; with this conduct, they valorize what they say trying to pass an idea of confidence and maturity due to their professional intervention.

One could observe that the collaborators take on a posture that is coherent to what is written on the guidelines of the Physical Education professional's Code of Ethics which mentions respect to ethics in the various professional activities, in an

attempt to respect the individuality of each student.

"If one is aware, in the light of Science, that the training he's doing is bad for his health, and he doesn't give up this training we tell him the gym is not responsible for what may happen, and he might even be expelled from the gym. And I've already had to expel about four people from the gym." (Alex)

During the interview in Brazil the gym and their staff's view was clearly identified: there must be a clarifying talk about the student's doubt, because most of times marketing confuses the student.

As for the interview in China, Yan said that if students have any doubt regarding trainings, the instructor gives advice and clears up their doubts, the same way Brazilian professionals do. Nevertheless, it was evident from the observations and interviews that the Brazilian professional is more inquired on account of the contents of women magazines. The Chinese professional, however, pointed out that he had never been questioned about a certain content of women magazines related to physical exercise. Even though the Chinese beauty standard is the American one, the teacher's speech is above mediatic aesthetic.

KNOWLEDGE CONSTRUCTION

During the inquires, both collaborators gave great importance to knowledge acquired through living together in the work place, with workmates and students, which Silva (2004) affirms as having a great value in continued professional formation.

Alex points out the importance of years of work in the gym, the routine that every professional has in his or her work environment.

"Especially the affective and emotional parts, for you can take a thousand subjects at college, and you won't learn it in one semester, but as years go by."(Alex)

Yan pointed out twice that practice in everyday work routine is very important.

Brazilians feel there's a gap in professional formation, in relation to work market and current education in colleges. At this stage the collaborators point out the importance of empirical knowledge as continued formation being one of the most important complementary sources of knowledge to this area. We didn't have the opportunity to ask Yan about this subject, because he had little time to be interviewed and also little openness because of the Chinese culture and political regime.

In spite of the differences between the collaborators, regarding the subject body and media, both have shown interest and concern in relation to their students.

When one mentions that the new professional has migrated from the classroom to the gym, it's also mentioned the need of a new didactic method in the institutions, and the collaborators perceive this necessity. Silva (2004) says "What one notices is that post-graduation courses proposals present a distancing from reality."

When talking about the reality of the colleges they know, both are unanimous confirming the little representation of subjects connected to work at gyms and to media, which are mentioned, but in a very superficial way.

Yan declares that typical books and courses of the area are other ways of updating about subjects linked to the gym.

CONCLUSION

By means of this study an approximation with the research problem was obtained, making possible for some considerations, like the analysis and perception of ideas, life, academic and empirical experiences of Physical Education professionals about the media discourse referring to physical exercise which is published on some magazines. With the problem, we attempted to make more explicit and investigate to a certain point the awareness of truths and untruths about movements of transformation of the present-day thought, besides comparing Brazilian and Chinese reality.

It was realized that the Brazilian professional clearly notices the influence and interference of media in his daily work so he feels, sometimes, his students discredit, for it's clearly verified that their are interested in the articles of the magazines. In China one could notice that the professional is more valorized by the student, there is an interest in media and it influences the beauty standards, but does not influence the professionals' work in the gym.

One concludes, considering it, that:

a) There is professional conscience in relation to the media discourse, about training prescriptions, both in Brazil and China.

b) There is professional intervention as for clearing up students' doubts and questions both in Brazil and China.

c) It was evidenced that media dictates the quest for slimness and is globalized.

d) The Physical Education teacher's knowledge is more valorized and respected in China than in Brazil.

In addition we point out that this study is based on preliminary data about professional intervention, media and aesthetics. The intention is to go deeper into the referred themes in different social-cultural contexts, trying to aim for social praxis, often dictated by media, and the physical educator's professional practice.

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MEDIATIC AESTHETIC VERSUS PROFESSIONAL FORMATION IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION: A COMPARATIVE

STUDY BETWEEN BRAZIL AND CHINA

ABSTRACT

This paper had as an aim to analyze Physical Education professionals' perception of media discourse regarding physical exercise. The Qualitative Interpretative approach was used, in which two collaborators participated of the research, one Brazilian and the other Chinese. From the interviews three categories were defined: body and media, professional intervention, knowledge construction. The conclusions were: a) there is professional conscience both in Brazil and China; b) there is professional intervention as for students' doubts in both countries; c) Media dictates the quest for slimness; d) the Physical Education teacher is more valorized in China than in Brazil.

Key words: professional intervention; media; aesthetic.

L'ESTHETIQUE REPANDUE PAR LES MOYENS DE COMMUNICATION (MEDIA)"VERSUS" LA FORMATION PROFESSIONELLE EM EDUCATION PHYSIQUE: UN ETUDE COMPARATIF ENTRE BRESIL ET CHINE

RESUME

Ce travail a eu l'objectif d'analyser la perception des professionels de l'Education Physique à propôs du discours de la média dans ce qui se rapporteaux exercices physiques. On a utilisé l'abordage qualitative-interprétative, dans laquelle deux colaborateurs ont participé de la rechercheurs brésilien, et l'outre, chinois. Tris catégories ont eté constuites à travers dês "interview": Lê corp set la média; l'intervention professionelle; la construction de la conssoissance. On a conclus que: a) Il y a autant de conscience professionelle au Brésil qui en Chine; b) Das lês deux pays il y a chez lês eleves de l'intervention professionalle quand il y a des doutes;c) La média vant la recherche de la maigreur; d) Le professeur d'éducation Physique est plus valorisé em Chine qu' au Brésil.

Grands-mots: Intervention professionelle; média; Esthétique.

LA ESTÉTICA MEDIÁTICA VERSUS LA FORMACIÓN PROFESIONAL EN EDUCACIÓN FÍSICA: UN ESTUDIO COMPARATIVO ENTRE BRASIL Y CHINA

RESUMEN

Este trabajo tuvo como objetivo analizar la percepción de los profesionales de Educación Física sobre el discurso de la media en lo que se refiere al ejercicio físico. Se utilizó el abordaje cualitativo interpretativo, donde dos colaboradores participaron de la investigación, siendo uno brasileño y el otro chino. A partir de las entrevistas se construyeron tres categorías: cuerpo y media, intervención profesional y construcción del conocimiento. Se concluyó que: a) existe conciencia profesional tanto en Brasil como en China; b) hay intervención sobre dudas de los alumnos en los dos países; c) la media dicta la búsqueda por la delgadez; d) el profesor de Educación Física es más valorado en China que en Brasil.

Palabras clave: intervención profesional; media; estética.

A ESTÉTICA MIDIÁTICA VERSUS A FORMAÇÃO PROFISSIONAL EM EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA: UM ESTUDO COMPARATIVO ENTRE BRASIL E CHINA

RESUMO

Este trabalho teve como objetivo analisar a percepção de profissionais de Educação Física sobre o discurso da mídia no que se refere ao exercício físico. Utilizou-se a abordagem qualitativa interpretativa, onde dois colaboradores participaram da pesquisa, sendo um brasileiro e outro chinês. A partir das entrevistas construíram-se três categorias: corpo e mídia; intervenção profissional, construção do conhecimento. Concluiu-se: a) existe consciência profissional tanto no Brasil quanto na China; b) há intervenção profissional sobre dúvidas dos alunos no dois países; c) A mídia dita a busca pela magreza; d) O professor de Educação Física é mais valorizado na China que no Brasil.

Palavras chaves: intervenção profissional; mídia; estética.