
COMBAT ITINERARIES OF THE PARAENSE FEDERATION OF MARAJOARA WRESTLING

ITINERÁRIOS DE COMBATE DA FEDERAÇÃO PARAENSE DE LUTA MARAJOARA**Carlos Afonso Ferreira dos Santos¹, Welison Alan Gonçalves Andrade², and Rogério Gonçalves de Freitas³**¹Federal University of Pará, Belém-PA, Brazil.²Pará State University, Belém-PA, Brazil.³University of Montreal, Montreal-QC, Canada.

RESUMO

O objetivo deste artigo foi analisar os primeiros passos da recém-criada Federação Paraense de Luta Marajoara (FPLM), e compreender quais os possíveis impactos de sua governança na escolarização e esportivização desta luta. Nesta pesquisa, de cunho qualitativo, a técnica utilizada para a reunião dos dados foi a entrevista não diretiva. Os participantes da pesquisa foram dois membros da FPLM. Constatou-se que a FPLM como instituição autoreguladora estrutura suas propostas de escolarização e esportivização em um contexto de governança esportiva centralizada, estabelecendo-se como detentora de um monopólio sobre a Luta Marajoara ao idealizar intenções voltadas ao impulsionamento local e regional dessa luta brasileira. Contudo, a pesquisa conclui que o longo caminho de “combate” da FPLM se dará entre sua concepção prática autoreguladora em contraste ao sentido crítico e democrático para o reconhecimento da Luta Marajoara.

Palavras-chave: Luta Marajoara, Federação, Escolarização, Esportivização.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this article was to analyse the first steps of the recently created Paraense Federation of Marajoara Wrestling (FPLM), and to understand the possible impacts of its governance on the schooling and sportivization of this practice. In this qualitative research, the technique used to gather the data was a non-directive interview. The research participants were two members of the FPLM. It was found that the FPLM as a self-regulating institution structures its proposals for schooling and sportivization in a context of centralized sports governance, establishing itself as the holder of a monopoly on the Marajoara Wrestling by idealizing intentions aimed at the local and regional boost of this Brazilian wrestling. However, the research concludes that the FPLM's long “combat itineraries” will take place between its self-regulating practical conception in contrast to the critical and democratic sense for the recognition of the Marajoara Wrestling.

Keywords: Wrestling Marajoara, Federation, Schooling, Sportivization.

Introduction

The Marajó archipelago, located in the North of Brazil, is widely known for its lush nature. Different types of cultural events are part of the daily life for marajoara people, such as legends, carimbó dance and poetry, the region's typical music style, and also the rich popular cuisine. Among the insular activities, traditionally practised as physical and playful manifestations, is the Marajoara Wrestling, recently declared Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Federal State of Pará¹.

The Marajoara Wrestling, also known as “agarrada marajoara”, “lambuzada”, “cabeçada” or “derrubada”, already attracted the gaze of the world when the fighter Iuri Marajó made his debut in 2011 in the international events of *Ultimate Fighting Championship* (UFC), and since then he has been recognised as a wrestler. In the late years, the athlete Deiveson Figueiredo, also known as “god of war”, a professional *Mixed Martial Arts* (MMA) fighter, has put the fight in the international spotlight in events promoted by UFC.

Driven by international prominence, some fighters, researchers and admirers have gathered to create the first Brazilian federation: Paraense Federation of Marajoara Wrestling (FPLM), aiming at offering structural organization to Marajoara Wrestling in order to rise its condition to martial art, from the perspective of competitive sporting².

In Brazil, the non-governmental organizational structure dedicated to the development of high-performance sports involves different levels of implementation, operationalization and monitoring³. At the federal level, the Brazilian Olympic Committee (COB) and the Confederations group together; at the state level, there are the Federations; and at municipal level we have the Private Clubs, Associations and City Halls⁴. The Federations have vertical interaction with clubs and sportive class entities, attached to them in their state of origin, without a legally defined number of entities which can be associated to a federation⁴. On the other hand, a sports modality can have only one state federation. With the advent of FPLM, the state of Pará is the first Federal State to have a Marajoara Wrestling Federation.

Federations are usually created aiming at developing and encouragement a certain sport modality⁵. According to the specifications of the Brazilian laws, these leading bodies coordinate activities linked to sports in the States of the country and are managed autonomously, having financial and technical competence. Hence, the federations have become “political actors” in the regional sphere of governance, in this case, sporting governance.

Therefore, with the establishment of neoliberal economic policies in on a global scale, mainly from the 1990s onward, the world has witnessed a number of metamorphoses of the state, often uneven and combined, allowing its decentralisation and disclaimer as regarding law prerogatives for the communities. It is believed that the absence of either a political authority or certain regulations has facilitated the dissemination of global and local governance, such as sports federations, being FPLM among those. In these terms, the guiding question of this study was: which are the first impacts that FPLM governance has in the conceptions of schooling and sportivization of Marajoara Wrestling?

From this perspective, this study aimed at analysing the first steps of FPLM, in order to understand the impacts of its actions and conceptions regarding the development and practice of Marajoara Wrestling, according to the governance model.

Methods

The present qualitative approach study has adopted the interview as the technique for data collection. A non-directive interview was chosen, that is to say, we decided to gather information from the free report of the interviewees. In this kind of collection, the interviewer keeps listening attentively and registers relevant information, intervening in the process only if the aim is to motivate the interviewee⁶.

The survey participants were two members of the FPLM, entitled in this study as MF1 and MF2. Due to the context of Covid- 19 pandemic, the interview was done via videoconferencing in a meeting room using the platform Zoom, under the ID 9332467030. The participants were selected due to their nomination as the main creators and articulators for the establishment of the entity.

Thus, after transcribing and reading the interview, it was possible to collect a range of information about FPLM concerning the events that culminated in its origin and its working proposals directed to Marajoara Wrestling.

For the data processing, we used the content analysis⁷. In this way, the analytical and interpretative process was divided in three different phases: 1) pre-analysis; 2) material exploitation; 3) obtained data processing (inference e interpretation). The three phases came out of this process, and they will be presented in this study.

Therefore, following the ethical principle, an Informed Consent Form (TCLE) was sent via email to all the interviewees, also to provide them with more information about the study as well as proving participation.

Results

Origin of FPLM: legitimacy and credibility

Federations are defined as associations formed by the alliance of people who get organized for non-profitable purposes, with mutual rights and obligations. They are classified as legal people established under private law, in accordance with the Article 44 e 53 da Law n° 10.406, from 10th January, 2002, provided by the Civil Code⁸. The operation of these sports institutions is ruled by Decree-Law n° 3.199, from 14th April 1941⁹, and by Law n° 9.615, from 14th March 1998, Pelé Law¹⁰.

Thus, based on Decree-Law n° 3.199, which establishes the bases of the organization of sports in Brazil, it is possible to infer that the federations are formed by boards of directors that coordinate sports activities in States of the country, and they can be specialized or eclectic, depending on the amount of sports they direct. The same Decree-Law indicates that each federation has a statute, which provides them with competence in administration, operating and organizing, as well as financial and technical autonomy.

It is worth pointing out that, however, that in the last few years, there has been a growing literature about the legitimacy of the sports organizations, due to increasing series of events of corruption¹¹⁻¹⁵, scandals involving athletes' integrity, doping control, mafia, harassment and so on.

All the definitions that reflect the constitution, the operation, the competence and the management of a representative entity go through, necessarily, legitimacy debate¹⁶. However, it seems that the legitimacy, which is, in the sports world, anchored in legal "technology" such as civil codes, decrees, laws and all the regulation artifacts mentioned in the beginning of this section, are facing a crisis as an instrument for producing consensus. Instead of highlighting the legitimacy, the credibility is the main priority in a context of degraded reputation¹⁷.

From an interactionist Goffmanian perspective¹⁸, the credibility helps to understand better how the sports organizations convince the public of their actions and policies. For this reason it is believed that the debate involving legitimacy and credibility can be the key to understand the first steps of the FPLM, an entity which officially started its activities in 2020, due to the convergence of interests among heterogenous groups, constituted by athletes, professors and other stakeholders.

We started debating in a group (WhatsApp) [...] things started moving forward, we had some presential meetings [...]. Many professors from other states in Brazil came, a lot of people, many experts in the fighting fields who we could meet because of Marajoara Wrestling. Iuri and Ildemar have always been with us, and, more recently, also Deiveson Figueiredo and Junior, his brother. It was when the three working lines were defined: the federalization, the sportivization and the schooling of Marajoara Wrestling. (MF2)

The interactions among various actors have converged towards a collective engagement which created external credibility to the point of having a proposal to start Marajoara Wrestling federation when the Combat Channel, a sports channel owned by Globo Television organizations, in 2017, decided to produce a documentary about the fight and gathered a group of professionals who are, currently, FPLM executives. During the recording of the documentary, it was necessary to allocate financial resources to buy trophies, medals, cash prizes, for promotion and preparation of the combat area. However, there were no entities which would take responsibility for this financial matter.

[...] at that time there were no Entity to transfer the money to, they were very worried about this situation, and then Combat Channel [said]: "you have to

create the federation”. Then they proposed the creation of the federation to us, and they would give us the amount of R\$1.500 (a Thousand and five hundred reais) only for financing the establishment of the federation. I still have this money. (MF2)

The movement of associativist convergence¹⁹ which originated FPLM, has chosen the search for legitimacy as the next step, focusing the formalisation of the entity on the acquisition of National Register of Legal entity (CNPJ), in which “Activities of employer and business membership organizations” was established as main activity of the organization, besides formalizing its first president, Mr. Rodolpho Fernando Engelhard Neto. In this way, the volunteers’ option has concentrated even more in how to elaborate the rules and regulations of Marajoara Wrestling, as well as on how to create strategies in order to spread and promote it.

That way, based on the report of the current FPLM managers, we noticed the interest in recognizing Marajoara Wrestling once it is transformed in high-performance sport, as a national sport as well as Capoeira is, which has also gone through a sportivization process.

The federalization is the establishment of the Federation. A representative entity, the first one in the world, recognized by the Federal Government, Marajoara Wrestling as a national sport, as it happened to Capoeira during Getúlio Vargas government. (MF2)

In practice, the objectives of FPLM with the federalization of Marajoara Wrestling and its recognition as a national sport is inspired not only by the regulations which cover the organization of sports in Brazil, but also the interpretation it has of the term “national sport”, according to its social interest.

From the regulatory perspective, established by law, Marajoara Wrestling fits in as educational sport, participatory or high-performance, supervised and disciplined by the National Sports System¹⁰. Its Governance actions, in this case, have FPLM as a national board of directors, and its practice and teaching can occur, among other spaces, in entities of sports practice affiliated or non-affiliated, such as clubs and associations.

Under the scenario of social interpretation of the term “national sport” by FPLM, on the occasion of the recognition of Marajoara Wrestling as a fight which was created and developed in Brazil, we can highlight its national identity, its popularity and the historical importance for marajoara and Brazilian people. That way, turning Marajoara Wrestling into a national sport reflects further development in the knowledge of its origins, similar to what happened to Capoeira in the country, that has gone all the way from criminalized practice in the first half of the twentieth century, to a sport that is now recognized at governmental level, through sports law²⁰, but, above all, through popular Brazilian recognition that has legitimated this body practice after many battles fought in the cultural field and also through the credibility of what we can call “institutional people”: the Capoeira masters.

Likewise, with the purpose of working together with the recognition of the Marajoara Wrestling practice, either in sportive or social terms, it was possible to notice that the interests and the aims of FPLM face professional experiences of sports governance of current administrators: “We are finding out a lot of things now. Neither of us, who are members of the federation, has ever been on a federation before. Everything is brand new for us” (MF2). The existence of amateur administrators running FPLM contrasts with the need of having a professional administration for the federations to organize their activities, what can be guaranteed, most of the times, by hiring managers with expertise in its area of operation²¹. It is worth mentioning, however, that the profiles of the expert managers must match the ethical, moral and cultural values linked to Marajoara Wrestling, so the credibility of the institution can also have ethical components.

Facing all the transformation occurred on a large scale in the world, Leoncini and Terra²² have analysed that there is the professionalization of sportive entities is a necessity, as it ensures the efficiency of the organization's resource management, allowing the goals to be achieved. This process happens by coordinating the government techniques which help managing a wide range of sports fields we have in our society²³.

The governance as a concept closely linked to the processes of professionalization of sportive entities denotes formal political institutions which aim to coordinate and control the government practices and have the capacity to impose their decisions¹⁶. Thus, we believe that the governance model of a Federation also reveals the bordering concepts of its own targets.

In the specific case of the sportive entity analysed in this study, in which school and sport are the primary focus of operation for its legitimacy and/or credibility, in the FPLM interests, conceptions linked to the process of neo-liberalization, reflected in the ways through which Marajoara Wrestling is expressed in the school institution and in the sports field. Concerning education, the new chains of value production in the world have boosted changes, involving renovations in a large part of the educational systems in the world²⁴. These renovations summoned, mainly from 1990 on, education systems to prescriptive adaptations of international organizations with the aim of disseminating consensus. In sport, the dialectics of the society of spectacle seems to get stronger in the representation of combat fights, driven by a kind of economy of sportive culture, which foundations are can be found in the roots of neoliberalism.

Under the focus area of its governance, the FPLM represents, in the context of Marajoara Wrestling, an organization that has claims aligned with the creation of institutional tools in order to, in school and sportive areas, express certain opinions on how to proceed concerning the practice of the fight. The following sessions talk about the entity expectations and conceptions about schooling and sportivization of Marajoara Wrestling, and discuss the related impacts produced by the model of governance of the "paraense" federation which, apparently focus on searching for rationalized legitimacy, based on an autoregulatory practice, instead of the credibility as a key to nourish democratic legitimacy.

Marajoara Wrestling schooling

Omnilateral formation or mercantilist agreements?

A school knowledge is the one treated in specific institutions, such as schools, where they group a set of knowledge, foundations and techniques directly connected to scientific activity²⁵, allowing the students to expand their individual knowledge about something unknown²⁶.

Towards the mobilized definition for the term "schooling", the act of schooling Marajoara Wrestling, according to specific literature on the subject, refers to inserting this body practice and its legitimacy in the basic education core curriculums, in order to enhance its knowledge in schools in Brazil²⁷. In this context, we can understand Marajoara Wrestling schooling as its use for pedagogical purposes.

For the National Common Basis Curriculum (BNCC), Marajoara Wrestling is a Brazilian fight which is possible to be taught as soon as inserted in the curricular component of Physical Educational²⁸, and this conception has inspired the proposal of schooling the fight by FPLM, as its purpose is to disseminate the practice of the fight in schools, through the usage of its pedagogical perspectives in Physical Education: "The schooling is precisely the fact of getting this fight, which is currently practiced in the sportive scope, and make it suitable for Physical Education lessons, using its pedagogical possibilities" (MF2).

To reach the proposal of Marajoara Wrestling schooling, that is, students from basic schools getting to know the diversity of aspects regarding this modality of "paraense" fight,

FPLM has the support of State Secretariat for Education in Pará (SEDUC-PA) to offer continuous training for Physical Education teachers who already work in state schools:

We already have a very important partnership with the Sports and Leisure Center SEDUC, which has already committed to do a great job, and the federation has also to be responsible for SEDUC Physical Education professors' training, so that they can acquire the knowledge. (MF2)

Through different regulatory measures, FPLM has the chance to cooperate with Physical Education teachers in their process of teaching the fight at school. Due to this, the proposal for Marajoara Wrestling schooling arises in response to the FPLM organizers concerns about Physical Education teachers' formation in Pará, in order to inspire pedagogical practices at schools: "I don't think it is possible, in the state of Pará, to form Physical Education teachers without the knowledge contribution of a combat practice which is typical from Brazil and from our state" (MF2). The concerns shown contribute with the evidence that come from the emerging scientific production about Marajoara Wrestling, which highlights its oblivion in areas of formation and performance of the Physical Education teacher^{29, 30, 31}.

However, we must pay attention to how the continuing formation of teachers has been developing, bearing in mind the possibilities and the restrictive factors of teaching Wrestling sport in the school context³². It must be said that the offer of theoretical-practical contribution for teachers, mainly with knowledge related to Marajoara Wrestling, demands reflection on the organization of the didactic and pedagogical activities as well as dealing with the knowledge, in order to provide the primary students with an omnilateral formation.

A omnilateral formation project contemplates the development of corporal, cognitive, social, playful, cultural and technical aspects of students through a contextualized approach of Marajoara Wrestling, which schools allow to conceive – locus socializer of knowledge – as a "[...] space to disseminate and build knowledge in all human dimensions"³³. Thus, the wide context at school reveals itself as a starting point for producing knowledge that contribute with the students' body and cultural repertoire in different phases of schooling.

Facing this understanding, the alternatives for pedagogical experiences with Marajoara Wrestling in the school environment are large. It is possible to teach Marajoara history and culture; the experience of the modality in the community; the meaning of national identity and feeling of belonging; the cultural, playful and corporal repertoire; the fundamentals and moves of the fight, and so on. Moreover, some of these aspects have already been worked out according to some records^{34, 35}.

It is interesting to mention that the proposal of Marajoara Wrestling schooling, as well as all the other propositions, arises in response to the self-regulatory characteristics in managing of sports in Brazil and also all over the world. In this scenario, FPLM regulates itself, without any external intervention, once it is established as a regional authority of sports administration⁹ and, therefore, it has independent operation, according to the competences defined in its statute. Thus, it is free not only to elaborate its own objectives, but also to organize and assess its own management. This law premise implies the need to carry out academic research, which can help the federations to get equipped with effective tools to improve their governance³⁶, as well as reflect about their actions and purposes directed to the sport development.

Precisely, the schooling of Marajoara Wrestling by FPLM evinces the need of a critical understanding, not only concerning the organization itself, but also of topics related to public school education in parallel with formulation and direction of social policies in Brazil, implemented by the "third way" in the neoliberal context.

The exercise of the understanding mentioned above reveals the existence of two poles of action, which act together on the Brazilian school education. These poles are related to

reforming and mercantilist processes which obviously impact the public school in many different levels of teaching³⁷, and the implementation of social policies validated by the Third Sector (entities and/or companies with self-regulatory power)²⁴ with impacts on the ways of developing and offering services and products to the society. In this way, the FPLM entity as sports governance devises a huge “combat arena” and regulation achievements, potentially mapping purposes of schooling of Marajoara Wrestling in harmony with neoliberalist goals.

Therefore, the Marajoara Wrestling schooling by FPLM, given its self-regulation, comes from the obvious need of leading the formation of Physical Education teachers in Pará on its own, in order to inspire different conceptions of practice and development of the fight, in presumed commerce agreement and out of tune with the most critical educational alternatives.

For this reason, the formal education institutions (Universities, primary schools, research institutes, among others) must be responsible for Marajoara Wrestling training, as well as a wide democratic discussion to produce curriculums which contemplate this Brazilian body practice. At the same time, FPLM must be in charge of the recognition of its limits and interventions concerning forming instructors, trying to motivate training processes that aim to disseminate this Brazilian body practice in schools, through institutional partnerships with capable educational entities.

Sportivization of Marajoara Wrestling

Sportivization involves a historical process of changing the popular practices towards its transformation into modern sport, together with characteristics such as competition, physical-technical performance, streamlining and scientification of the training. Such features involve the constitution of a fundamentally genuine system in order to turn the sport into a profit-seeking product, by offering products and services associated with a sports practice³⁸. Sportivization of Marajoara Wrestling, therefore, involves development of its practice with sports features, fundamentally based on combat sports.

The impetus to turn Marajoara Wrestling into sport is linked to the hegemony that the sportive phenomenon exercises over the contemporary other body practices, bearing in mind its advantage to generate profit as a high-performance sport and, consequently, social-economic growth, not only for the athletes, but also for the sports businesspeople. Nevertheless, from the members of FPLM perspective, the viability of financial return for fighters should not be the focus, although it may happen, according to MF1: “If we focus on using Marajoara Wrestling only as a way to generate occupation and income, we are going to lose it, it will not last long”. In that case, the transformation of Marajoara Wrestling in high-performance sport reveals the purpose of the federation to adjust the fight to the characteristics of sportive phenomenon.

The sportivization of Marajoara Wrestling, or the act of “[...] transforming Marajoara Wrestling in a competitive sport” (MF2), is a proposal through which FPLM reveals multiple intentions, such as: the certifications of the instructors, involvement in carrying out competitions, the graduation of practitioners and the universalization of the rules.

Certification of instructors

As a way to ensure that Marajoara Wrestling goes through the process of sportivization, FPLM recognizes the need to certify the current instructors of the fight: “I am developing a certificate to certify all the masters.” (MF1). Thus, the federations ensures that these individuals are able to deal with the Marajoara Wrestling training, therefore, encourages a still poorly exploited market, offering a service which can then be sold by certified instructors.

The certification of instructors represents a proposal that aims to promote the income generation among the Marajoara Wrestling practitioners, similar to what happened to the sportivization of Capoeira, in which the ability to give classes has revealed a financial possibility for masters and instructors, from the realization of workshops and seminars⁹. Based

on this proposal, the certification in the sports sphere of Marajoara Wrestling, facilitates, potentially, the creation of a profession in the scope of the fight. However, it can also pave the way to processes of trading certifications of instructors, besides possible professional interferences, such as the well-known interventions of Confef system (Conselho Federal de Educação Física).

Competitions

Another way of endorsing the sportivization of Marajoara Wrestling, according to FPLM, is through the organization of competitions. Assuming the implementation of sports events, the entity hopes to achieve a guiding administration: “The federation should not hold the rights of producing events, it has to be the one to guide who already produces them” (MF2). However, the discourse does not make it clear in which way FPLM would contribute to guide such events.

Marajoara Wrestling tournaments have been organized during São Sebastião de Cachoeira do Arari Festivity, in Pará, since 2002⁴⁰. We wonder, therefore, what is FPLM’s credibility, before the public, to organize the tournaments? Do the Federation activities benefit the event and the practice of Marajoara Wrestling? These are some of the questions which arise in the discussion about the organization of competitions.

The emphasis on entertainment as intrinsic dimension of modern sports represents one of the main ways to disseminate the practice of Marajoara Wrestling, as highlighted by the FPLM’s board members. In the contemporary world, the sports movement expressed in events is seen as an instrument which is able to mobilise different audiences, from practitioners to spectators, and sharpen different senses and emotions in the competitive practice of a certain body manifestation⁴¹.

The spectacularisation of Marajoara Wrestling, brought by the organization of spaces for the competitive tournaments, reflects the FPLM’s perspective to gather different figures around the fight who, besides expressing certain public emotions in the perception and appreciation of the modality, also facilitate its transformation into a product, in the different locations where the fight is developed as a sport.

Graduation of athletes

In order to motivate the sportivization of Marajoara Wrestling, another challenging and bold FPLM’s intention is used in the graduation of athletes.

I defend a project called “cabeçada”. Every fight the athlete wins, will give him the right to have an ornament for his “cabeçada”. When he becomes a master, he will be able to adorn his “cabeçada”, like the cowboys do in Marajó island., they adorn their “cabeçada”. I will then know that person is a master because the “cabeçada” will be adorned. Moreover, for each fight the athlete fights he will change his grade, changing the category. (MF1)

As we can see in the above report, when graduating the practitioners, the FPLM has a project to operate a ritual which is currently not related to Marajoara Wrestling and organize its practice shaped by other martial arts. These are radical changes of which impacts we still do not know and whether they would actually contribute to the sportivization of the fight is still not certain. This is a process called here “poisoning” Marajoara Wrestling.

Going through the sportivization process and adopting the codes of its phenomenon⁴², including the principles of high-performance sports, Marajoara Wrestling can have some of its representative aspects, traditionality and historicity set aside to the detriment of others, such as sports training and competition. Moreover, some of its moves would be banned for being

hurtful. This is a required adjustment, according to Campos Pinheiro e Gouveia⁴³, in order to benefit the entertainment that involves its competitions and its sportivization. All this process of warming up and adaptation of Marajoara Wrestling, enabled in its graduation process, can be understood as “poisoning” the fight. It is not a matter of “killing” it but distorting and/or erasing its traditional and historic way.

The rules of the fight

The process of “poisoning” Marajoara Wrestling also encompasses the FPML intention of universalizing the rules of the fight, one of the main characteristics of modern sport.

The sportivization is one of the lines in the federation, which hasn't been finished yet because there are lots of divergences of the practice of the fight from one city to another, from one region to another here in Marajó. So, we have to mature it, maybe our generation is not going to be the one to finish this book of rules. (MF2)

It is not right to say it would take years to reach the universalization of the Marajoara Wrestling rules because it is currently practiced in different cities of Marajó. The shots, the moves, the rules and other characteristic usually vary according to the place where it is practiced.

When deciding for the production of a book of rules, it is important to point out the need to create it in dialogue with not only the minorities from FPLM, but also with the practitioners and other people involved in the fight, in order to search for institutional legitimacy as well as credibility to find agreement to ensure the practicing of the fight does not lose its characteristics facing the possibility of being in the market due to the sportivization process. This way, the sense of collectivity in the FPLM actions is enlarged, especially regarding the decision making about fight settings, such as the definition of rules in its flexible aspects.

We should highlight that the sportivization of Marajoara Wrestling expressed in the FPLM intentions, especially the universalization of the rules, indicates reflections about the contrast between its traditionality and its sports nature, manifesting both distinct purposes. Whereas one of them is characterized by the preservation of old fight traditions and generational nature, the other is worried about transforming it in sports modality for competitions and performance. Both have legitimacy, however, according to the federation perspective, the premise is that Marajoara Wrestling still needs to pave the way to be transformed into a nationally recognized sport, adopting the codes which will allow it to consolidate as a sport.

The discussion related to the confrontation between traditional and sporting is based on Elias and Dunning⁴⁴ reflections. According to the authors, the consistency and universality of modern sports practice come from, among other factors, the codification of fixed rules and the creation of its own calendar, by making the so-called sport cut back on, gradually, its local and old traditions. In this way, the development of Marajoara Wrestling towards its expressed sports condition, among the practitioners, is a matter of concern related to its traditional character⁴⁵, due to historic and social relevance of this element in the fight.

FPLM: between the self-regulatory practice and the pushing of Marajoara Wrestling

As we sought to analyse in this section, the sportivization is seen as a proposal to speed up the process of development of Marajoara Wrestling towards the high performance, according to the mentioned purposes. At the same time, it reflects fundamentally the priority strategic planning of the entity, interested in the development of the modality in the sports field and its establishment as an element in the production chain modern sports value.

When it comes to an entity centred in Governance standards based on exercise, regulation and sports control²⁴, the sportivization proposed by FPLM seems to match the political and ideological intents of federations in Brazil. Having the monopoly and power over the practice of Marajoara Wrestling in Pará, the entity reveals expectations and intents which can push the development and encouragement of the fight not only in Marajó island, but also in the whole state of Pará, which is going to depend, undoubtedly, on the directions of its governance.

Conclusion

The results obtained in this study have shown the existence of FPML current targets related to the development of Marajoara Wrestling in two instances: in school environment and for high-performance sports. The schooling and sportivization signal legitimate means, characterised by the offer of both resources and support needed, according to the FPLM members, to the acknowledgment of Marajoara Wrestling.

The schooling meets a contemporary aspiration from the perspective of having Marajoara Wrestling as the object of knowledge in the curriculum for Physical Education at school, whereas the sportivization claims its transformation in high-performance sport, based on the ownership of codes. In the context of this last proposal, the research has risen the need for attention concerning the potential loss of traditional features of Marajoara Wrestling due to sportivization, as a way to avoid its “poisoning”.

In the contrast between both proposals, schooling and sportivization, it is necessary to take into consideration the boundaries and balance in the role of FPLM in each of them, together with a proper governance of its practices. In the first one, recognising where the intervention should take place; in the second one, the organisation of practices which focus on formal aspects of sporting nature of the modality, and yet do not discourage the traditional Marajoara Wrestling practice. Such limits of performance, together with the visible systematization of its proposals as sports management entity, can ensure the pushing for the wrestling and reveal a way to the democratic and critical governance, necessary elements for the recognition of Marajoara Wrestling and the federation credibility.

The first Brazilian Marajara Wrestling Federation has a long way to go and to “fight” for the consolidation of its working proposals, which shows the need of accomplishment of new studies monitoring its actions and revealing whether the schooling of Marajoara Wrestling will actually take it to the scope of ‘paraense’ schools and if the sportivization will allow it to become a profitable sport, instead of being only a body practise.

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