

TEACHING PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE IN THE COLLECTIVE CONSTRUCTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULAR PROPOSAL

PRÁTICA PEDAGÓGICA DOCENTE NA CONSTRUÇÃO E IMPLEMENTAÇÃO COLETIVAS DE PROPOSTA CURRICULAR DE EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA ESCOLAR

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RESUMO

Práticas pedagógicas docentes e propostas curriculares compõem aspectos entrelaçados, porém na Educação Física parece haver um descompasso entre ambas. Portanto, o objetivo desse estudo foi analisar a prática pedagógica docente de duas professoras e um professor que buscavam elaborar e implementar coletivamente uma proposta curricular de Educação Física para o ensino fundamental em escolas públicas na cidade de Porto Velho-RO. A metodologia consistiu de uma pesquisa-ação desenvolvida entre os meses de junho e novembro de 2023, por meio de grupo focal, entrevistas, análise documental e anotações em diário de campo. Na análise dos dados foi empregada a análise temática reflexiva, da qual emergiram temas e subtemas. As evidências revelaram dois temas abrangentes: *atitudes docentes* (com subtemas atitudes *ativas, reativas e passivas, inertes*) e *fontes que modulam* (com os subtemas fatores *diretos/imediatos* e *indiretos/mediatos*). Concluiu-se que a prática pedagógica é afetada e/ou modulada por diversos fatores, ocasionando um sincretismo pedagógico na prática docente. A sistematização curricular é vista como importante pelos docentes, porém é precedida por outras demandas. As percepções dos docentes acerca do desenvolvimento da própria prática pedagógica foram incrementadas, evidenciando a importância da reflexão crítica e participação coletiva.

Palavras-chave: Educação física escolar. Prática pedagógica docente. Proposta curricular.

ABSTRACT

Teaching pedagogical practices and curricular proposals make up intertwined aspects, however in Physical Education there seems to be a disconnect between the two. Therefore, the objective of this study was to analyze the teaching pedagogical practice of two women teachers and a men teacher who sought to collectively develop and implement a Physical Education curricular proposal for elementary education in public schools in the city of Porto Velho-RO. The methodology consisted of action research carried out between the months of June and November 2023, through focus groups, interviews, document analysis and notes in a field diary. Reflective thematic analysis was used to analyze the data, from which themes and subthemes emerged. The evidence revealed two broad themes: teaching attitudes (with subthemes active, reactive and passive, inert attitudes) and sources that modulate (with the subthemes direct/immediate and indirect/mediate factors). It was concluded that pedagogical practice is affected and/or modulated by several factors, causing pedagogical syncretism in teaching practice. Curriculum systematization is seen as important by teachers, but it is preceded by other demands. Teachers' perceptions regarding the development of their own pedagogical practice were increased, highlighting the importance of critical reflection and collective participation.

Keywords: School physical education. Teaching pedagogical practice. Curriculum proposal.

Introduction

Curricular proposals and teaching pedagogical practices are linked to the extent that the latter are the means to achieve the objectives sought by the former¹. Briefly, curricular proposals are the desires and objectives of society expressed in an official document. In the field of School Physical Education there are several pedagogical approaches² and curricular proposals³.

Teaching pedagogical practices are social practices carried out with the purpose of implementing pedagogical processes⁴. In School Physical Education, pedagogical practice^{5,6}, teaching work⁷ and teaching knowledge⁸ have been studied.

When investigating teaching pedagogical practice, some studies have found resistance to change⁷; the crystallization of conservative practices⁹; the use of participatory planning¹⁰; non-directive teaching pedagogical practices, focused on processes and not content¹¹; the tendency of teachers to reproduce experiences in their school phase that were perceived as positive and avoid those that were negative^{12,6}, confirming what has been found in the literature¹³. Some teachers realize that their anxieties and difficulties are not exclusive to them, but rather shared by many others⁹. However, no studies were found on the collective implementation of School Physical Education proposals.

Therefore, the objective of this study was to analyze the development of teaching pedagogical practice in an action research oriented to the process of construction and implementation of a Physical Education curricular proposal in elementary school.

Methods

Context and participants

Action research methodological procedures were adopted to investigate the process of collective elaboration and implementation of a Physical Education curricular proposal for elementary education in schools in the State network of the government of Rondônia and Municipal schools in the city of Porto Velho. Four teachers participated in the study, two men teachers and two women teachers, respectively called teachers “A”, “B”, “C” and “D”. The teacher called teacher “A” withdrew during the course of the study. They were recruited by convenience, among the contacts that the researcher had. Teacher B works in two state and two municipal schools, having a 40-hour contract with the State and a 25-hour contract with the City Hall. Teacher C works in two state schools and one municipal school, having a 40-hour contract with the State and a 25-hour contract with the City Hall. Teacher D works in just one municipal school, however, with two 25-hour contracts with the City Hall.

The schools where the intervention took place were a total of five schools, two state schools and three municipal schools; a state school where teachers B and C work was not part of the study, because in the case of teacher B they were high school classes and in the case of teacher C she taught another subject. The two state schools work with students in the final years of elementary school, both have indoor sports courts; however, one of them was a rented building because the original building was under renovation. Of the three municipal schools, one operated in its own building, being the only one that had a small covered courtyard for Physical Education classes. The other two schools operated in rented buildings and one of them was an “extension”, that is, a branch of the main school and both only had uncovered spaces.

Action research

For action research, we sought to observe the ontological, methodological and epistemological aspects^{14,15}. The procedures¹⁶ comprised the planning-look-think-act phases, as well as involving monthly focus group meetings, field diaries of participating teachers, interviews with participating teachers, visits to intervention sites and consultation of their teaching plans. The intervention took place between June 2023 and November 2023.

To operationalize the research from the perspective of action research, monthly meetings were initially structured during the six months of execution of the research project with the participating teachers. These meetings marked the passage through the complete cyclical procedures of planning, looking, thinking and acting.

The planning phase occurred mainly during focus group meetings, where the contents to be taught by all teachers were listed and discussed. Planning began during the teacher recruitment period, when they were informed of the research objectives and actions. The chosen

contents were decided based on consensus and not by a majority, so there was everyone's agreement.

Looking took place during classes taught and recorded in a field diary, the teacher himself observed his class. "What" to observe was discussed during the meetings, finally a small instrument was created to be filled out by teachers, recording the content, classes and observations made. These notes served as material for the thinking phase, which took place during classes, during focus group meetings and in the interview. During the meetings, everyone was encouraged to theorize their observations, generating reflections on their own pedagogical practices.

Finally, act occurred when teachers taught their classes based on what was previously discussed and planned. One of the fundamental pillars of action research is the involvement of the main agents involved in the research question, therefore, all these phases were permeated by the direct involvement of teachers, who made decisions based on their observations and reflections.

After signing the Free and Informed Consent Form, teachers participated in a focus group with six monthly meetings. In these meetings, issues that afflict teachers and the development of curricular proposals were discussed. Furthermore, teachers agreed to cover the same content for their classes in the same year of elementary school. The results and reflections were recorded by the teachers in a field diary. At the subsequent meeting, the results were discussed and future content was planned.

The interviews were carried out between the fifth and sixth meeting of the focus group, one for each teacher. Both meetings and interviews were audio recorded, transcribed and printed. The field diary and teaching plans were also printed. All material was filed in a rail clip folder. This collected material served as a database for the reflective thematic analysis procedure.

Reflective thematic analysis

The reflective thematic analysis procedures^{17,18,19,20} involved six phases. The first, called familiarizing yourself with your data, began during data collection, when the researcher conducted the focus group meetings, received the teaching plans and carried out the interviews. In this phase there was total immersion in the data, making some notes and reading the data in full.

The next phase was generating initial codes, where several extracts of possible themes and subthemes related to the research objectives were listed. In the third phase, called searching for themes, an initial thematic map was created, as well as the first possible themes and subthemes. The fourth phase, reviewing themes, included the moment to review each theme, whether it worked in conjunction with the others, resulting in the creation of a developing thematic map.

These processes were carried out indefinitely, but when it was realized that the process added little to the themes, then the stage of defining and naming themes came. At this stage, the final thematic map was prepared, as well as the themes, their names and subthemes were defined. The last phase was producing the report, which makes up the results section of this article.

The study was submitted to the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Santa Catarina (CEPSH/UFSC), obtaining approval on April 22, 2023 through Opinion no. 6,9015,162.

Results

The reflective thematic analysis procedure allowed us to identify two major themes related to teaching pedagogical practice, which united several codes, also called *comprehensive*

*themes*¹⁹. The first theme deals with teaching pedagogical practices themselves. However, when observing the different teaching pedagogical practices, it was noted that their mere description or classification was insufficient, opting here for another approach and, without prejudice to other types of classifications or themes, linked to the teacher's attitudes towards their work of teaching, therefore here called *teaching attitudes*. The second comprehensive theme addresses the *factors that modulate*, that modify teaching pedagogical practices, factors external to the teacher, but that interfere in their performance (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Thematic map of teaching pedagogical practice

Source: authors

Regarding *teaching attitudes*, the teachers investigated expressed opinions and convictions that oscillated between different behaviors, ranging from creativity to accommodation, including improvisation. These were postures that defined teaching attitudes, so that teaching pedagogical practices were coded into three subthemes: *active, reactive and passive/inert*.

The so-called *active* teaching pedagogical practices comprise those in which the teacher seeks to innovate, adapt or improvise, but not to meet the demands that arise, but to achieve the objectives that have been planned. In short, your attitude is active.

The concept of this theme is related to the teacher's active stance, he or she is there, in front of the students, with clear teaching intentions. Within this practice four subthemes emerged: *a) creative and/or improvisation; b) significant; c) tests and experiments; d) delegating functions to students*.

Active pedagogical practices were considered *creative and/or improvisation* when the teacher sought to innovate, adapt or improvise, not to meet the demands that were presented, but to achieve the objectives he set out to achieve. Active pedagogical practices were considered *significant* when the teacher brought the concepts and knowledge discussed in a theoretical way to the practical moments, seeking to relate them. Throughout the meetings, teachers complained that students did not use the knowledge that was worked on in the classroom, particularly in theoretical classes. With the moments of reflection, teachers began to realize the

need to “reinforce” what was covered in the classroom during the practical part, trying to relate the knowledge previously worked on with that moment of practice.

Tests and experiments are teaching pedagogical practices where the teacher sought to experiment with content that they traditionally apply in a given year of teaching and also in other years. The success among students of a certain content or even activity often justified replication by teachers in other contexts, with younger or older audiences.

Finally, among active practices, *delegating functions and responsibilities* refers to when the teacher delegates functions and responsibilities to students, to provide greater involvement in classes and so that they can experience different roles, such as being the referee, the organizer, among others.

While some teachers investigated demonstrated several active pedagogical practices, at other times some “throw in the towel” or simply complied with external dictates. There are teachers who seek to negotiate with students, especially in situations that require a reaction to certain events or that deviate from what was planned.

This theme had as subthemes *negotiation, bargaining and blackmail*. The teachers investigated practiced negotiation, bargaining and even blackmail to achieve the most varied objectives. Blackmail served to contain indiscipline, apathy or even refusal to participate in a certain class or type of class. Bargaining and negotiation took place so that classes could proceed as the teachers considered most appropriate.

At times, teachers reported an accommodating stance where they only followed what was established in the curricular proposals, affecting the organization of theoretical and practical classes, as well as some dictates from hierarchical superiors, for example the prohibition of the use of the multi-sports court in certain periods. Two subthemes stood out in relation to this teaching stance: a) *accept dictates*; b) *throw in the towel*.

The subtheme accepts dictates resulted from the teacher's leniency towards the dictates of the School Management and/or higher authorities, without any type of questioning. Although it is questionable to say that this is a teaching pedagogical practice, the subtheme *throw in the towel* occurred when the teacher allowed students to lead the class, doing only what they wanted to practice. The reasons that led a teacher to “give up” teaching, limiting themselves to “dropping the ball”, are quite diverse. In the case of teacher C, she did not identify with the initial years of elementary school and, furthermore, she did not receive support from the Management of this school in question.

The second comprehensive theme comprises the *factors that modulate* teaching pedagogical practices. In conversations, meetings and interviews with teachers, some external factors that influenced their work were highlighted. Some with immediate/direct results and other factors with mediate/indirect results.

Some situations immediately and directly interfere with teaching plans and pedagogical practice. In this case, four subthemes were coded: a) *climate, time of year and local traditions*; b) *spaces, materials and complications*; c) *teaching mobility*; d) *target audience/school segment/school network*.

The subtheme *climate, time of year and local traditions* includes practices that are guided by school traditions or associated with certain content in seasonal situations. At the municipal school where Teacher C worked, there is a traditional event that always takes place in the same month each year, and in a joint act, she already addresses content due to the proximity of work. In the sub-theme of *spaces, materials and complications*, specific external factors emerged, such as the lack of materials and/or inadequate space, unforeseen events/intercurrences of accidents and unexpected events on the court and even impositions from the school management. *Teacher mobility* reveals that teachers are often forced to transfer schools due to various reasons. Changing schools directly impacts your pedagogical practice, as was the case reported by teacher D, who changed schools and found that what she did at the

previous school was more tiring to do at the next school. *The target audience/school segment/school network* comprises immediate/direct factors that modulate teaching pedagogical practice. In fact, the type of public that is taught modulates and influences how the teaching pedagogical practice will be used, as is the case reported by teacher C, who revealed the difficulties in working with the initial years of elementary school.

Unlike the immediate and direct factors, the mediate/indirect factors permeate the teacher's work environment, so that two subthemes were related: *a) professional relationships; b) stigma of discipline/lack of support.*

The *professional relations* subtheme emerged with the teachers' statements about the constant suggestions, in a tone of interference in their work, from other professionals who are not from Physical Education. In addition to this intrusion, there are tense relationships, especially with teachers in the first years of elementary school. But not everything is negative, there are positive interactions with other teachers, who are from other areas. One aspect worth highlighting is that the biggest complaints from the teachers investigated are associated with professional relationships, especially those with teachers in the early years of elementary school. Regarding the subject *stigma of discipline/lack of support* subtheme, teachers revealed that the Physical Education subject carries some stigmas, lacks support from school leaders and they often feel isolated or in conflict with their colleagues in other school subjects.

Discussion

The investigation to analyze the development of teaching pedagogical practice in an action research oriented to the process of construction and implementation of a Physical Education curricular proposal included several aspects. Initially, based on the concept proposed by Franco⁴, that they are social practices carried out with the purpose of implementing pedagogical processes and which are carried out to organize, enhance and interpret the intentions of an educational project, it is clear that not all *teaching practices* would be *pedagogical*.

Such practices would depend on the concept of pedagogy that underlies it, oscillating between two extremes. On the one hand, technical-scientific rationality oriented towards instructional processes aiming for efficiency and effectiveness. On the other hand, the critical-emancipatory rationality that considers historicity as a basis for understanding knowledge. Therefore, in a strict sense, many practices observed and codified in the analysis could not be considered as teaching pedagogical practices, both from a technical-scientific and a critical-emancipatory perspective.

One aspect to highlight is that teaching pedagogical practice occurs only with critical reflection on their practice and awareness of the intentions that guide their practices⁴. This concept generates two consequences. The first is that a practice in itself would not be sufficient to be characterized as a teaching pedagogical practice. The second development is that, considering the needs for critical reflection on their practice and awareness of the intentions that guide them, teacher training, both initial and permanent, should focus not on procedures and processes, sometimes tending to the development of mechanized practices, but in developing in teachers their abilities to critically reflect on their own work, as well as to seek awareness of their intentions. The focus, therefore, should be on the teacher's attitude when planning and executing their classes. Within the scope of School Physical Education, there is a diversity of understandings in research into pedagogical practice^{5,6}, teaching work⁷ and teaching knowledge⁸.

Another important aspect is that investigating these practices requires expanding the angle of vision, or even "broadening" its concept. When preparing the final thematic map of the study's evidence, constituent elements of the teaching pedagogical practice of the teachers

investigated were identified, namely in broad themes called teaching attitudes and factors that modulate them. The first, *teaching attitudes*, which can sometimes be confused with teaching pedagogical practice itself, were characterized from active to passive. One doubt that remained is whether or not teaching pedagogical practice could be classified as passive.

Some elements addressed in the literature consulted were observed in this research, such as resistance to changes⁷, the crystallization of conservative practices⁹, the use of participatory planning¹⁰, the tendency of teachers to reproduce experiences in their school phase that were perceived as positive and avoid those that were negative^{10,6}. As for non-directive teaching pedagogical practices, focused on processes and not content¹¹, no evidence was found to confirm anything of this nature with the teachers investigated. As reported in Bracht's⁹ investigation, the teachers participating in this study realize that their anxieties and difficulties are not exclusive to them, but rather shared by others.

The evidence found in the present study also includes other observations, because the themes and subthemes were not separated by participating teacher, but reported as codifications that were constructed based on the three participants. This observation is pertinent because there seems to be a *pedagogical syncretism*. In other words, the teacher uses everything he knows and has experienced to cope with the demands imposed in the classroom, even if this means adopting positions that are apparently contradictory to each other. In short, they are the tools he or she has for their work. Therefore, the teacher can have an active attitude at a certain moment and then change his attitude, moving to a more reactive or passive stance. This finding is consistent with what has been reported in the literature¹³.

An interesting finding was the difference in teachers' professional relationships according to the school segment. Relationships with teachers in the initial years of primary school seem more tense and problematic than with peers in the final years of primary school. Recurrently, the teachers investigated complained a lot about the teachers responsible for classes from the 1st to the 5th year of elementary school. Therefore, it is believed that it is possible to draw conclusions based on some differences in the relationship between these professionals. For example, it will be possible to find some differences if a Physical Education teacher, due to illness, has to be absent from her classes for a day. For another professional, a geography teacher who is in the final years of primary school, this could be the opportunity for him to join classes and, eventually, leave work early, at the very least, this absence will not interfere with his work in any way. In the case of the initial years, it can be problematic for the teacher-pedagogue, the leader of the class from which the Physical Education teacher will be absent. Perhaps she planned to use this class time to update her diary or finish correcting activities, or even rest. It is interesting to note that one of the researchers is also a Physical Education teacher and experiences these situations in the same school system, even on a routine basis. However, until then, there had not been the dimension and awareness of this difference in professional relationships between teachers in the initial and final years of primary education.

With regard to resistance to changes in pedagogical practice, the teachers investigated often reinforced and agreed with their colleagues' statements that the situation would not change. However, it was found that some dogmas or premises, previously considered absolute, were reduced. This change in myths is one of the expected results when using action research¹⁶.

Sending and sharing activities and solutions to some problems, in a spontaneous and satisfactory way, seems to contribute to the improvement of teaching pedagogical practices. In addition to face-to-face meetings, the group formed on the electronic instant messaging application proved to be an important tool, in which teachers began to share their teaching pedagogical practices, especially their activities in the classes taught. The use of such an electronic tool encouraged participation and involvement, as well as sharpening creativity and improvisation, as each teacher was inspired by the other. When carrying out action research, the environment of spontaneous exchange between teachers ("they exchanged stickers" and

small favors) favors the search for consensus, one of the positive points of the methodology used. However, the action research process had some limitations. To solve some problems, it would be necessary to obtain adequate space and materials or modify/adapt, in the curricular proposals, the contents to the reality that arises. However, even this second solution has limitations, as teachers claimed they did not have the confidence/competence to teach certain content.

In the literature consulted, people's low adherence to the solution or even work practices reflects feelings of frustration, impotence, invisibility and that things are immutable¹⁶. Furthermore, they share the perception that centrally controlled programs disregard local demands and factors. During the investigation this can be observed, both in meetings with the teachers investigated and in coordination with technical staff from SEMED and SEDUC.

The action research cycle, which served as the basis for this research, had to contain severe limitations imposed by time, by people in a hierarchically superior position and by the bureaucratic structure of the public entities involved. Thus, the question arises whether action research can only occur when there is time available (in terms of agenda and project duration) and when some problem-solving options are not available. The intent of this research approach is to provide an environment that allows heterogeneous groups to work harmoniously and productively. In fact, sincere listening involves people, but without the power of the "pen", the result will be limited¹⁶.

Despite the limitations of studies of this nature, it is believed that it is often necessary to exercise a certain right, faculty or possibility so that it can be perfected and incorporated as a habit. In the first meetings, people were asked about the problems that afflicted the teachers, who were quite wordy in reporting them. However, when identifying the possible origins of these problems, that is, theorizing their practices and, above all, possibilities for solutions or suggestions, the teachers investigated were silent or, at most, presented very personal reasons for the cause of problems that are chronic. As the meetings progressed, records in field diaries, individual conversations and interaction between teachers favored the issuance of more suggestions, suggesting other causes for the problems. In fact, it was an exercise in which we gained practice and improvement.

As for the field diaries, teacher C was the one who made all the records, from the first focus group meeting, delivering the records in digital files. Teacher B and teacher D had greater difficulty registering. Furthermore, it was noticed that the teachers presented several resistances, but that in essence they were excuses, which is why the focus of the work needs to be people. Action research has a primary interest in establishing and maintaining positive working relationships¹⁶.

When considering the professional development cycles of the study participants, it was found that one of the teachers had accumulated 13 years of teaching experience with only the initial years of elementary school. She did not feel motivated to work at this level of education, but she was very motivated working with the final years of elementary school, even though it was the first year of working at this level of education.

Evidence on the collective elaboration and implementation of curriculum proposals was quite limited. There is recognition that the teaching plan of a Physical Education teacher can express their beliefs and conceptions about Education and Physical Education, associated with the school reality and for the children and adolescents who attend there. Thus, a curricular proposal requires dealing with the challenge of covering and/or respecting the diversity of these expressions in the figure of countless teachers. Therefore, choices, openings and limitations must form the framework of a curricular proposal.

Despite understanding that there is some gap or inconsistency in the curricular proposals, the teachers investigated are surrounded by barriers (resistance) that prevent them from facing the issue. Thus, the construction of a curricular proposal may face difficulties prior

to its preparation. Another possibility is that there really are other problems that precede teachers from focusing on a curricular proposal. It is interesting to note that the teachers, at different moments during the investigation, claimed they lacked the conditions to develop what was included in their planning. Perhaps a small contradiction may occur in this situation, because most of them know the work environment and planning should consider these situations.

The problem of the lack of consensus in systematization and collective implementation seems to be relegated to secondary levels compared to the various problems faced by the teachers investigated. The three teachers even agreed that the absence of synergistic work would be harmful, but they expressed the greatest concern about surviving inclement weather, student demands, tensions in professional relationships, the arbitrary dictates of their superiors, the guidelines disconnected from the reality that they emanate from the highest levels of educational management.

The concern with the systematization of the contents/objectives of School Physical Education seems to be preceded by other pedagogical issues. The lack of materials and/or inadequate spaces may make it impossible to approach certain topics, but it must be considered in the prior assessment and necessary in the teachers' planning. Therefore, it is believed that it is possible to address these issues concomitantly, that is, it is possible to advance in systematization at the same time as facing other issues. Furthermore, it does not seem sensible or coherent to discuss a list of materials and the appropriate space without even knowing what content you want to work on.

Conclusion

When analyzing the development of teaching pedagogical practice in an action research oriented to the process of construction and collective implementation of a Physical Education curricular proposal, it was found that the teachers participating in the study expressed concern about other demands (working conditions, professional relationships and stigmas of the discipline), which discourage critical reflection on curricular proposals, prioritizing other issues. Furthermore, the constituent elements of the teaching pedagogical practice of the teachers and teachers investigated comprise comprehensive themes regarding teaching attitudes and the factors that modulate these practices. In the process of preparing and collectively implementing a curricular proposal, the teachers investigated revealed active, reactive and passive/inert pedagogical practices and highlighted factors that modulate pedagogical practice with immediate/direct and other mediate/indirect results.

An important aspect identified in the investigation is that there appear to be tense and problematic professional relationships between Physical Education teachers and teachers of classes in the initial years of elementary school, a situation not identified in relation to teachers who work in the final years of elementary school. Although those investigated demonstrated initial resistance, they diminished through critical reflection, listening without judgment and exchanges with their peers. In addition to the importance attributed to the systematization of the curricular proposal, the teachers and professors investigated highlighted the collectively organized implementation, the results of which are time-consuming, limited and require time and reinforcement. In summary, teachers' perceptions regarding the development of their own pedagogical practice were increased, highlighting the importance of critical reflection and collective participation.

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