

Research on Physical Education in daily school life: the state of the art

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Abstract: This study aimed to analyze production of knowledge on daily life in school Physical Education (PE). The sample included Education and PE journals contained in PE WebQualis from 2010 to 2012, totaling 63 journals and 697 articles. The main topics discussed were didactic diagnosis and professional training. Less evident topics included school violence and public policies. Elementary education was the most often studied school cycle, and Brazil's Southeast region produced the most articles. We came to the conclusion that aspects making up daily school life require more detailed attention because of their complexity.

Keywords: Physical Education. School. Scientific Production.

1. INTRODUCTION

Daily life is the life of every man, for no one is outside it, and of the whole man, in that all his senses, intellectual and manipulative skills, feelings and passions and ideas are set in motion in it. (PATTO, 1993)

The historical-materialist view understands that individuals manifest and realize themselves in the tangle of relationships present in daily life. Therefore, speaking about daily life means speaking of man in the social scenario full of institutions – where individuals perform activities necessary to their survival (HELLER, 1972). Daily school life is one of those scenarios that are realized by

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subjects working in each school: the ways they organize, establish relationships and react to the norms of the educational system and the ways they reflect on their pedagogical practice organize the content to be taught and face school's day-to-day challenges (ANDRÉ, 2003).

According to Ferração (2007), conceptualizing daily school life is difficult due to its uncontrollable, chaotic and unpredictable characteristics. It consists of the permanent movement of networks of actions and knowledges made by all individuals who work side by side. Thus, attempts to understand daily life through scientific studies are only legitimated if performed with people who work in the scenario to be studied and address topics of interest to those subjects (FERRAÇO, 2007).

Understanding daily school life becomes increasingly complex since students come to it from different social classes and bring different elements from culture (CORTESÃO, 2002, LEITE; DI GIORGI, 2011), digital revolution and communication observed in the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century (PENIN, 2009).

Understanding daily life in school PE is no less complex, as teachers' actions are influenced by pedagogical, organizational, socio-political and cultural factors, and the act of teaching is not detached from the characteristics of the society in which the school is (CAPARROZ, 2007, MALDONADO, 2012, REZER; FENSTERSEIFER, 2008).

Although school PE has been the object of different studies, we do not know in sufficient detail what issues motivate researchers' interest and especially whether or not the complexity of daily school life has been taken into account. To cover knowledge gaps and further look into what is already known, we think it is important to conduct a study on the state of research on in PE's daily life at school.

Research on the state of the art of a particular topic usually seeks to find paths for the academic production to be studied.

The aim is to contribute to the organization, analysis and creation of the theoretical body of a particular knowledge area. This type of research seeks to identify significant contributions of the construction of pedagogical theory and teaching, points out restrictions on the field of research and its dissemination gaps, identifies innovative experiences that point to alternative solutions to practical problems, and recognizes contributions of research to create proposals focused on the area (ROMANOWSKY; ENS, 2006).

Therefore, this article intends to contribute to know studies about daily life in school PE in order to find out the status of research focused on understanding its complexity. Thus, we mapped the distribution of research on PE throughout school cycles and Brazil's regions and identified the main themes that guided researchers' works.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

The study's guiding questions were: What subjects of daily school life are most commonly studied by the PE academic community? What school cycles are most commonly addressed? How are those studies distributed over the distinct Brazilian regions?

The analysis of PE knowledge production covered the period from 1975 to October 2013 and included articles that analyzed school life during PE classes published in the online version of national PE and Education journals present in WebQualis's A1-B5 strata in 2010-2012. The sample did not include literature review articles, opinion pieces, essays, book reviews, points of view, letters to the editor, editorials, article translations, articles updates, research projects still not carried out, articles analyzing school routine in PE classes abroad, articles that collected only the opinion of teachers working in higher education about the topic, and analyses documents not created by schools' technical-teaching staff, e. g. curriculum proposals, master plans, and institutionalized curricula.

We consulted 63 journals and selected the studies whose titles or the keywords included the following descriptors: *educação física; escola; currículo; cotidiano* (physical education; school; curriculum; daily life) whose abstracts were read. Works were read in their entirety only if their abstracts did not allow identifying the topics under consideration.

As we read the abstracts and papers and analyzed their content, we defined categories according to their thematic similarity: didactic diagnosis; professional training; pedagogical innovation; school inclusion; working conditions; teaching career; curriculum development; violence at school; school evaluation; public policies; and complexity of daily school life.

The **Didactic Diagnostic** category included works that examined school PE teachers' pedagogical practices, identifying content developed, teaching methods and lesson organization. These studies are characterized by some "judgment" of the didactic actions observed.

Articles classified as **Professional Training** analyzed the initial training of future PE teachers who will work in schools and actions aimed at continuing education of those already working. They analyzed how internships take place and future teachers' personal impressions on their area of work during those internships.

In order to build the category we called **Pedagogical Innovation**, we referred to Faria, Machado and Bracht (2012), who describe Pedagogical Innovation as the work of teachers seeking to meet a series of didactic and pedagogical requirements in order to give PE the same significance/status of other curriculum components and legitimize the specificity of the discipline. The papers we read with that trait reported pedagogical practices that brought diverse contents of body movement culture and developed teaching methodologies distinct from those guided by technical paradigm traditionally used by PE teachers, and studies using action research methodology aimed at changing reality.

Inclusion at School covered articles on practices for inclusion of children and adolescents with special needs in school PE classes.

Working Conditions included works describing the reality faced by PE teachers, such as physical space for classes; the amount of teaching materials; students' indiscipline; professionals' salaries; health conditions; and other factors that directly influence the development of PE classes.

Teaching Career was the category that grouped studies analyzing the development of teachers' careers at different times of work, conducted with the intention of showing professional development of teachers working in the school context, from the beginning of their career to retirement.

In **Curriculum Construction**, we included articles that studied PE teachers' experiences built in daily school life that might contribute to the construction of the curriculum in their states or municipalities.

Works analyzing violence among students during PE classes and violence to which PE teachers are subjected at work were classified under **Violence at School**.

Evaluation at School covered articles identifying evaluation practices and tools used most frequently.

Public Policy included studies on how policies arrive at school and influence PE classes.

Finally, **Complexity of Daily school life** was based on Morin, Ciurana and Mota (2003), who claim that a phenomenon is understandable by analyzing the relationship between its constituent parts. What distinguishes that category of articles is the fact that they address different aspects already mentioned in previous categories by discussing the relationships between them.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**3.1 JOURNALS RESEARCHED AND ARTICLES LOCATED/USED**

The names of the journals researched are listed in Box 1:

Box 1 – Brazilian Education Journals used in the research.

Artifícios	Rev. Brasileira de Educação
Atos de Pesquisa em Educação	Rev. Brasileira de Educação Especial
Avaliação: Rev. da Avaliação da Ed. Superior	Rev. Brasileira de Estudos Pedagógicos
Cadernos de Pesquisa	Rev. Didática Sistemica
Contrapontos	Rev. EDUCAamazônica
Currículo sem Fronteiras	Rev. Educação e Cultura Contemporânea
Diálogo Educacional	Rev. Educação Especial
E-Curriculum	Rev. Educação Temática Digital
Educação e Pesquisa	Rev. Eletrônica de Educação
Educação e Realidade	Rev. Filosofia e Educação
Educação e Sociedade	Rev. Linhas
Educação em Revista	Rev. Mackenzie de Ed., Arte e História da Cultura
Educação: teoria e prática	Rev. Novas Tecnologias da Educação
Educar em Revista	Rev. Pesquisaeduca
Práxis Educacional	Revista Teias
Presença Pedagógica	Rev. Teoria e Prática da Educação
Pro-Posições	Trabalho, Educação e Saúde
Quaestio: Rev. de Estudos da Educação	

Source: Prepared by the authors

PE journals were selected under the same criteria applied to the Education journals and also for declaring in their scope their intention to contribute pedagogically to Social and Pedagogical Sciences. Their titles are listed in Box 2:

Box 2 – Brazilian Physical Education journals used in research

ACTA Brasileira do Movimento Humano	Perspectivas em Educação Física Escolar
Arquivos em Movimento	Pulsar
Biomotriz	Rev. Brasileira de Atividade Física e Saúde
Caderno de EF	Rev. Brasileira de Ciências do Esporte
Cadernos de Formação – RBCE	Rev. Brasileira de Ciência e Movimento
Coleção Pesquisa em EF	Rev. Bras. de Docência, Ensino e Pesquisa em EF
Conexões	Rev. Brasileira de EF e Esporte
EF em Revista	Rev. Brasileira de Futebol e Futsal
Motriz	Rev. Brasileira de Prescrição e Fisiologia do Exercício
Motricidade	Rev. de EF da UEM
Motrivivência	Rev. Eletrônica do Estudo do Mov. Humano
Movimento	Rev. Kinesis
Movimento e Percepção	Rev. Mackenzie de EF e Esporte
Pensar a Prática	Rev. Mineira de EF

Source: prepared by the authors

Out of the 1214 works found, 697 met the inclusion criteria. Of 63 journals where those articles were found, 35 were from the field of Education and 28 were from PE. Table 1 shows the number of articles found and used in both areas distributed over PE's WebQualis strata.

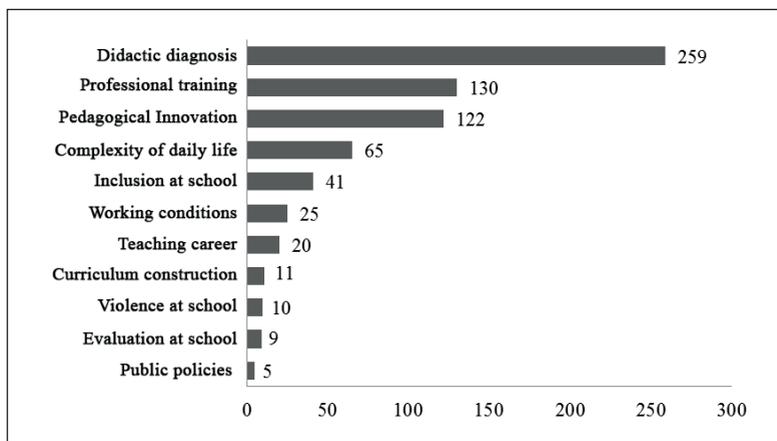
Table 1 – Distribution of articles found and used by Web Qualis stratum 2010-2012

Qualis	Articles found	Articles used
A1	0	0
A2	198	121
B1	232	118
B2	135	69
B3	0	0
B4	614	374
B5	35	15
Total	1214	697

Source: Prepared by the authors

3.2 THEMES MOST COMMONLY STUDIED IN THE DAILY LIFE OF PE SCHOOL CLASSES

Graph 1 illustrates the main issues discussed in studies of daily school life classified in categories adopted in our study.

Graph 1 – Distribution of articles involving the daily life of the PE School by theme

Source: prepared by the authors

The analysis of this thematic distribution shows that most studies conducted didactic diagnoses of classes, that is, researchers wanted to know how teachers worked. A total of 259 articles were classified in this category – 37.1% of the articles analyzed.

These results confirm what has been pointed out by similar works on production analysis. In the sample of Antunes *et al* (2005), consisting of national and international journals in order to diagnose the main themes studied by PE and in school PE, 26.5% were didactic diagnostic studies; Betti, Ferraz and Dantas (2011), in turn, consulted 11 national PE journals and identified 54.7% of works with that theme. Neira (2012) analyzed two national journals focusing on the main objectives of studies on School PE and found 55% of works with diagnosis characteristics, while Dias and Correia (2013), when seeking to describe and characterize the inclusion of PE in secondary education in national journals, found 19.35%.

Professional Training comes next with 130 articles (18.6%) and shows how school PE researchers have been concerned about the effects of the initial and continuing training on teaching practice. The works of Antunes *et al.* (2005), Betti, Ferraz and Dantas (2011), Dias and Correia (2013) did not show professional training as a predominant subject of study since the issue reached a maximum of 8% of the articles in those three studies, while Dias and Correia (2013) did not find any work with the theme.

This difference regarding the results found in our analysis could be the result of the fact that our sample included a higher number of journals and also analyzed magazines of the area of Education where the subject of teacher training is recurrent.

Pedagogical Innovation included 122 articles – 17.5% of the studies showed that there are teachers in some educational contexts who can accomplish innovative teaching practices even in face of complexity and difficulties in daily school life.

The fourth most prevalent thematic category in studies was complexity of daily school life, with 65 articles, corresponding to 9.3% of

the material analyzed. That thematic category has become increasingly important from the 2000s to the present, perhaps because researchers are beginning to believe that, to better understand the problems of and seek solutions for PE in daily school life, they need to consider the relationship between different factors that influence and interfere in their practice. (BOSSLE; MOLINA NETO; WITTIZORECKI, 2013, MALDONADO, 2012, REZER; FENSTERSEIFER, 2008, WITTIZORECKI; MOLINA NETO, 2005).

Our analysis found 41 articles that were classified under Inclusion in School, totaling 5.8% of the articles. This category is relevant to understand the dilemmas of daily school life because it reveals that a significant share of PE teachers have difficulties to include students with special needs in the classroom and shows the need to expand knowledge production and professional training on that specific theme in order to work efficiently.

We placed 25 articles (3.6%) under Working Conditions, which showed that most school PE teachers face difficulties related to the matter. Many schools still lack proper materials or their physical space is less than desirable for practice and for the amount of students in each class; students are unruly, and wages are lower than expected by professionals. We know that numerous factors influence teachers' working conditions, including what is seen as the desired practice of a PE teacher exposed in public policies and programs in the field of Education, such as aspects of the management of each school and its surroundings. We can say that there is a need for a greater number of academic studies to better understand this web of intervening factors, which propose and, if possible, test solutions through interventions in daily school life.

The Teaching Career theme was found only in 20 items – 2.9% of the total. This finding also occurred in studies by Folle and Nascimento (2008), who, in a systematic review in different databases of studies analyzing the professional development of teachers, especially PE teachers, found 65 studies, of which only 40

were conducted on Brazilian reality. The articles we found focused on identifying and analyzing career stages in schools. Such studies are important, among other reasons, to clarify future professionals' doubts about the characteristics of professionals with different times of work and the complexity of working places. They also serve to assist teachers at different career stages to reflect about their possible career paths.

There were 11 Studies on Curriculum Construction, representing 1.6% of our sample. This result shows that studies with potential to improve the school curriculum and pedagogical proposals are not the most frequent and indicate the possibility of a closer relationship between academic researchers and school teachers. This approximation might be very productive to build effective educational proposals – an idea supported by the arguments of Tardif (2000), who mentions that teachers working in schools have knowledges that constitute their own work environment, which are as relevant as those built by researchers working in universities. Ramos, Graça and Nascimento (2008), in their essay on the pedagogical knowledge of content, report that each teacher's experiences and the way those experiences are interpreted and used are important to develop extremely useful knowledge for intervention, and it should be valued in the curriculum construction process. The small number of such studies makes us wonder whether PE teachers effectively participate in the construction of curricula of school systems or researchers' curiosity about this participation is low.

We found ten studies – 1.4% – on Violence during PE classes, including violence among students, from students towards teachers and the other way around. This is a serious contemporary problem that occurs daily in schools and deserves more attention from research intended to understand daily life during PE classes.

In the category Evaluation during PE classes we found only nine articles, corresponding to 1.3% of the total analyzed. Even though the theme was brought to the agenda at a dedicated seminar

in 1999, at the School of Physical Education and Sports, University of São Paulo – EEFEUSP, there is still much controversy on and few solutions to the subject. Reflecting on the issues addressed in successive seminars promoted by EEFEUSP, Ferraz (2011, p. 9) states:

Based on distinct proposals for evaluation, in general terms, we find several approaches in school Physical Education in basic education and the difficulty of proposing evaluations that are feasible and consistent with the theoretical perspectives of Physical Education.

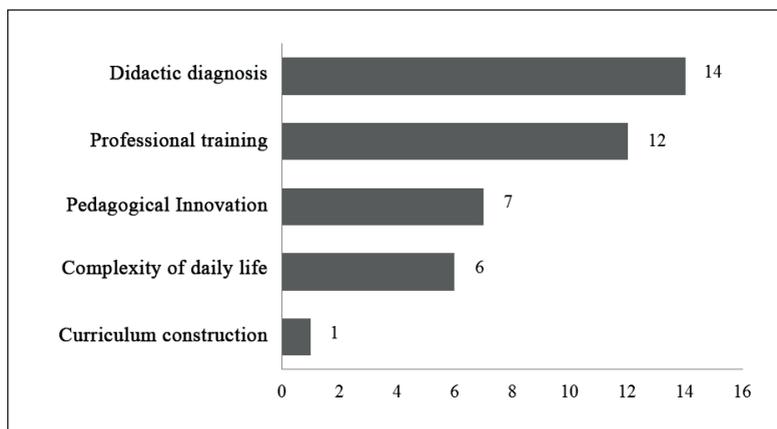
In the last twenty years there has been a variety of theoretical and political perspectives pervading the discussion on school PE which resulted in the absence of consensus on what would be its specificity in the school curriculum. Such disagreements allow different definitions about its goals and what evaluation should be like. Such variation in understandings is clear when we consider the various contexts in which curricula are implemented, the presence of different theoreticians influent in different places and also the action of different political groups that come to power. All these factors justify increased investment in research to understand the daily life of school PE focused on its goals and evaluation.

Among the categories in which we include the articles selected, Public Policy in School PE included the lowest number of works – a total of five articles – which corresponds to 0.7% of the studies used. We consider that public policies strongly influence daily practices at school. Because of that, they could be studied more often.

Having conducted this thematic survey of articles, we identified how many were published per decade to better understand the distribution of the themes investigated over time. Therefore, we divided the number of articles produced by decade: 1980-1989; 1990-1999; 2000-2009; and included the period 2010-2013.

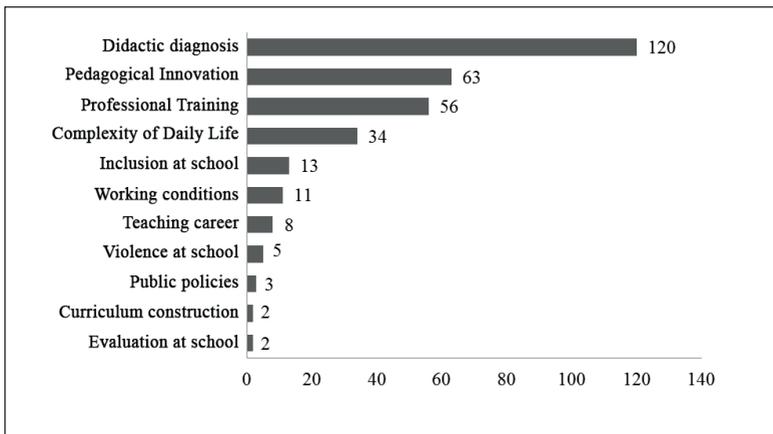
In 1980-1989, only six articles were found that analyzed the daily life in school PE classes. Two of them conducted Didactic Diagnosis, two addressed Vocational Training and two addressed the Complexity of Daily School Life. No studies were found in the other thematic categories of our research. Of all the articles analyzed, only 0.9% was published in that decade.

Graph 2 – Distribution of the thematic categories on daily life of School PE(1990 to 1999)



Source: Prepared by the authors

Forty articles were found in the following decade representing 5.7% of all those used in the study. Again, we noted that the categories Didactic Diagnosis, Vocational Training and Complexity of Daily School Life were predominantly studied, representing 35%, 30% and 15% respectively. Pedagogical Innovation appeared for the first time, representing 17.5% of the production of knowledge in that decade. Furthermore, 2.5% of the articles analyzed Curriculum Construction among researchers and PE teachers at school.

Figure 3 – Distribution of the themes about Daily Life in School PE (2000-2009)

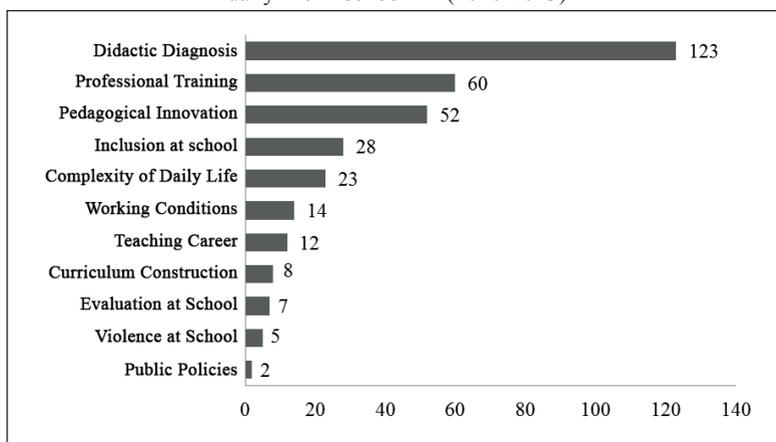
Source: Prepared by the authors

We found 317 articles in 2000-2009, representing 45.5% of the production of knowledge found on daily school life in PE classes. Again, most articles published fell into the following categories: Didactic Diagnostic, Pedagogic Innovation, Professional Training and Complexity of Daily School life, representing 37.9%, 19.9%, 17.7% and 10.7% respectively. Inclusion in School represented 4.1%; Working Conditions was 3.5%; Teaching Career, 2.5%; Violence at School, 1.6%; Public Policies, 0.9%; Curriculum Construction, 0.6%; and Evaluation, 0.6%. The analysis of distribution shows that controversial and sensitive issues that directly affect the performance of PE teachers at school, such as their working conditions (infrastructure, materials, salaries, discipline, etc.), violence at school, public policies and evaluation at school have not been predominant objects of research. This leads us to ask whether these issues are poorly researched because they involve issues that are difficult to address or which are uncomfortable to deal with, or there is not yet sufficient mastery in the area to use research methods that might promote understanding of the intertwining of different factors that make up daily school

life. It seems that current academic production and intellectual maturation of the PE field already allow conducting research that is not limited to diagnosing, classifying and even judging teachers' didactics, that is, it is possible to advance toward understanding the meanings and conditioning factors in each educational context.

In the last period analyzed, and which does not even make up a full decade, 332 articles were found, representing 47.6% of the total.

Figure 4 – Distribution of thematic categories on daily life in school PE (2010-2013)



Source: prepared by the authors

The categories Educational Diagnostics, Professional Training and Pedagogical Innovation remained as the most commonly studied by PE researchers, accounting for 37%, 18.1% and 15.5% respectively. This result shows that the trend seen in the previous decade has held early this decade.

Pedagogical Innovation acquired a new feature: it includes studies in which teachers themselves report on their experiences with pedagogical practice. In addition, research methods in which the

researcher intervenes and interferes in teachers' pedagogical practice started to be used. Inclusion in School became the 4th category with most studies, with 8.4% of the total. The theme increased over the previous decade, which may indicate an increase in the importance assigned to it when it comes to elucidating the issues of daily school life.

Complexity in Daily School Life – 6.9%; Working conditions – 4.2% Teaching Career – 3.6%, Curriculum Construction – 2.4%, Evaluation – 2.1%; Violence at School – 1.5%; and Public Policies – 0.6% have been less often studied than the preceding subjects in this decade so far. The trend toward low concentration of studies on controversial, uncomfortable and complex issues in daily school life already noted in the previous decade remains early this decade. Such themes, however, greatly affect the pedagogical practice of School PE teachers and could be the object of more work by researchers.

Another fact that caught our attention was that more studies have been produced in the first four years (2010-2013) of the current decade than in the entire previous decade. While this may be a result of increased numbers/volume per year of the journals analyzed, it may also reflect Capes's increased demand on students and teachers linked to graduate studies to publish their research in order to remain in the postgraduate system and, thus, to contribute to the evolution of knowledge in the area.

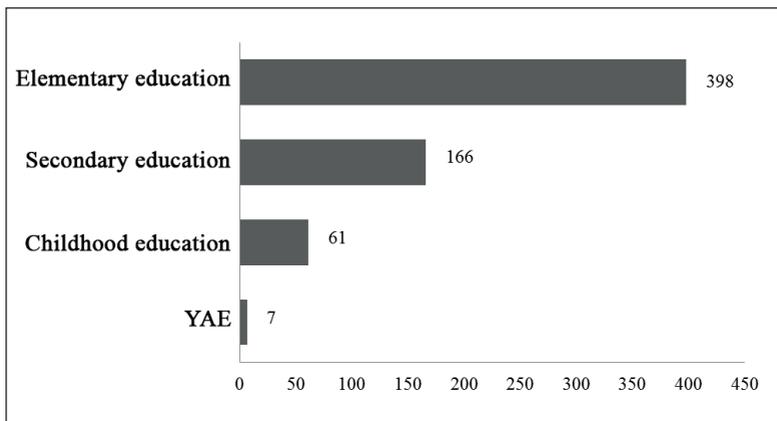
When comparing the graphs of the four periods analyzed, it is easy to see the growth of scholarship on school PE, which confirms what was previously found by Bracht *et al* (2011) when they mapped knowledge production between 1980 and 2010 in nine major PE journals.

3.3 SCHOOLING CYCLES MOST STUDIED IN DAILY SCHOOL PE CLASSES

In addition to identifying the concentration of the themes studied and their distribution over time, we were also interested in knowing what schooling cycle was given more attention by researchers.

Of the 697 articles analyzed, 65 studies did not show which schooling cycle they focused on. Given that uncertainty, they were excluded from the topic, leaving 632 articles analyzed. Next we present the distribution of studies by schooling cycle, including young people and adult education for (YAE) in the analyzed period.

Graph 5 – Schooling cycles studied in research on School PE



Source: Prepared by the authors

Elementary School prevails with 63% of the articles analyzed about daily life in school PE; 26.3% of the studies were produced in Secondary Education; 9.6% in Childhood Education and 1.1% in YAE.

Betti, Ferraz and Dantas (2012) found similar results: Elementary School was the most often studied schooling cycle – 28.7%, followed by Secondary Education – 9.9%, Childhood Education – 9.2% and YAE – 0.7 %.

Perhaps this concentration of studies in Elementary Education occurs because it is the longest schooling cycle, but that does not reduce the importance and necessity of understanding the other cycles, as each caters for people of different ages who are at

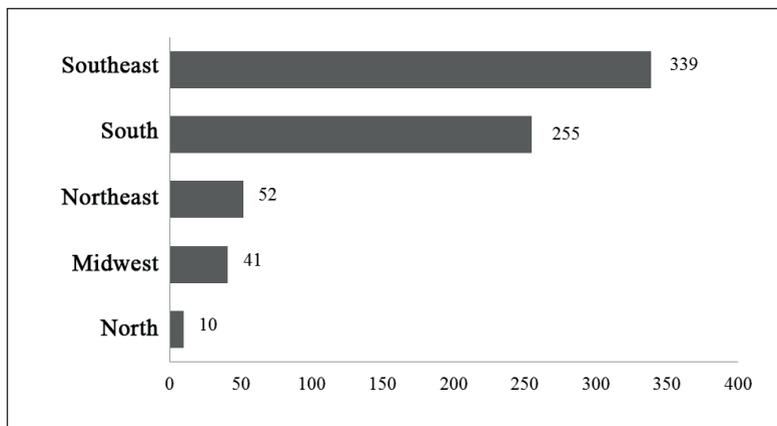
different stages in their lives. Another factor that may contribute to the prevalence of studies in Elementary School is the absence of teachers specializing in PE in the other schooling cycles or their inclusion in the curriculum after Elementary School.

In any case, to understand daily life in School PE, it is important that studies cover all schooling cycles.

3.4 REGIONS OF BRAZIL WHERE DAILY LIFE IN SCHOOL PE CLASSES IS STUDIED

To identify regions of the country where the studies were conducted, we divided them into five regions: North, Northeast, South, Southeast and Midwest.

Graph 6 – Distribution of studies on the daily life of the EF School for Brazilian region



Source: Prepared by the authors

The Southeast region has the highest production with 48.6% of the articles. The South comes next with 36.6%, and Northeast, Midwest and North had 7.5%, 5.9% and 1.4% of the articles, respectively.

A similar geographic distribution was shown by Matos *et al.* (2013), who looked into School PE teaching contents in 14 scientific journals in 1981-2010: most of them were published in the Southeast (57), then come South (50), North East (15) Midwest (11) and North (1).

This concentration of production in the Southeast and South is probably due to the fact that the main graduate programs are established there. Capes has accredited 17 master's degree programs and nine PhD programs in the Southeast, and seven master's and six PhD programs in the South. Together, the other Brazilian regions have six accredited master's programs and two doctoral programs. In addition, important journals that publish School PE-related articles are also coordinated by researchers from universities located in those regions, such as *Movimento*, *Motriz*, *Revista Brasileira de EF e Esporte*, *Revista Brasileira de Ciências do Esporte*, *Coleção Pesquisa em EF* and *Motrivivência*.

4 FINAL REMARKS

The study of thematic categories in which studies on daily life in school PE are distributed showed that most studies focused on diagnosing what teachers do in their classes and how they do it.

Professional Training and Pedagogical Innovation were often studied in comparison to the other categories established in our study. Works classified as Pedagogical Innovation include studies conducted after the 1990s that show the emergence of pedagogical practices distinct from those traditionally based on the paradigms of physical fitness and sports that used to be seen mainly in studies published in the 1980s.

Topics such as Inclusion in School, Working Conditions, Teaching Career, Curriculum Development, Evaluation in School, and Public Policies require further research. Those themes are linked

to factors that have hampered school PE teachers' pedagogical practice, and their understanding can help to deal with them.

Diagnostic research is important, but it does not seem sufficient to improve the reality of school PE because the diagnosis of daily school life is only the first part of the reflection on the complexity of daily life where PE teachers' work is included. It would be interesting to take research beyond them to unravel the many threads that make up the fabric of daily school life, to understand the relationships between those threads in order to be able to present proposals for pedagogical intervention that can be tested and evaluated by teachers, students and school administrators.

The complexity of daily life started to be more often studied from the twenty-first century on. That is reflected in more frequent publication of scientific articles that consider interrelated aspects of school reality, although a large proportion of scientific works published in the journals consulted still isolate daily issues of school PE from their relations.

If we consider that research can contribute to solving problems identified in daily life, researchers should turn to the study of school guided by an attitude focused on understanding and propose solutions to the aspects present in the PE daily life rather than giving an inquisitive look that judges and condemns teachers.

An effective approach between researchers and researched, between universities and schools, by conducting research in all schooling cycles, without fear of tackling difficult and controversial issues that affect teachers' daily work can make important contributions both to the area of knowledge and to professional work.

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