

PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: Gender dimension in Initial Physical Education Teacher Education in Portugal

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INTRODUCTION

The harmonization of the curriculum process initiated in Europe as a result of the implementation of the Bologna Process, has put new challenges and creates new opportunities for training institutions in Europe to rethink, streamline and reassessing Initial Physical Education Teacher Education (IPETE) (Carreiro da Costa, 2007). Simultaneously, demands for improvement issues about equity and gender in curriculum of teacher's education have strengthened. This is reinforced through the educational research which indicates that teachers do treat their male and female students differently (Erden, 2009) based in the dominant forms of masculinity that prevail yet today due perhaps in part to deep-seated structures of patriarchy. Moreover a literature review conducted by Jacobs in 1996 and later on by Buchmann *et al.* (2008) revealed that continue to prevail differences in performance between boys and girls in all major subjects and thus in Physical Education (PE). In fact, recent international research has shown that physical activities within the school curriculum contribute to reinforce and development of "gender-appropriate" behaviour (Hills, 2006; Azzarito & Solomon, 2005; Penney, 2002; Hargreaves, 1994; Scraton, 1992) often considered socially and culturally legitimate. In Portugal, this is also particularly visible in some studies which argued that PE teachers may claim that they espouse equality of opportunity for all children, but their teaching behaviours and practices reveal entrenched sex stereotyping, based on historical constructions of sport and sense 'notions about what boys and girls must do, i.e., what is suitable for girls and boys in PE (e.g. Silva, 2005). In considering this research results relating to PE teaching practice we can argue, as O'Sullivan and colleagues said, that this gender inequities in school physical education have as much to do with attitudes and practices of PE teachers and teacher education training programs (O'Sullivan *et al.*, 2002). In this sense, it is assumed that PETE programs and teaching practices are sites of production of dominant discourses and gender practices (Azzarito & Solomon, 2005), which continues to be constructed due to the hidden curriculum which is operationalized by teachers and students in PE classes (Gill, 1991). Moreover, research found that pedagogical practice in teacher education is a strongly gendered process (Flintoff & Scraton, 2006). Therefore, teachers "learn" a gendered knowledge that perpetuates a sex differentiated curriculum built on perceptions of male and female different physical capabilities. In considering this, teachers thus need to be aware of their own attitudes toward gender roles and need to increase their knowledge about gender, so that they can provide a bias-free learning environment for their future students of PE (Erden, 2009). Moreover gender must become a standard part of the curriculum of ST (Sanders, 2002). Therefore institutions, schools and departments of education must be seen as a logical and vitally important place for examining gender issues. As Bento (2008) has argued, University must be seen not only as an institution for the academic qualification and professional competence of students. Not only have to reinforce and enhance students with scientific knowledge but also to help them to promote human, cultural, spiritual and moral knowledge.

OBJECTIVES

To investigate within IPETE in public universities of Portugal, how teachers' concepts, beliefs, programs and practices contribute to gender construction.

- To examine whether gender issues are addressed in the study plans and modules of the Master Degree Programs on IPETE in all public universities of Portugal;
- To know the conceptions, beliefs and concerns of teachers educators (supervisors and cooperating teachers (CT)) of the Master Programs on IPETE in a public university of Portugal, concerning to gender and how does it contribute to a more gender-sensitive teaching practices;
- To know the conceptions, beliefs and concerns of student teachers (ST) of the Master Programs on IPETE in a public university of Portugal, concerning to gender and how does it contribute to a more gender-sensitive teaching practices;
- To know what extent have the scientific and pedagogical knowledge promoted by an IPETE program within the student teachers gender beliefs and practices.

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

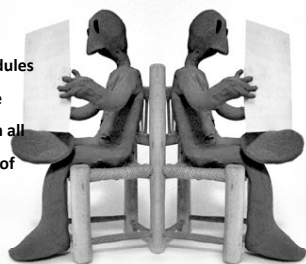
SAMPLE

- Study plans and modules of Master Degree Programs on IPETE in all public universities in Portugal;
- Teachers educators (supervisors and CT) responsible for the supervision and orientation of the ST over the Supervised Teaching Practice in a university;
- ST who are attending the Supervised Teaching Practice in a university;
- PE classes.

DATA COLLECTION

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

[Study plans and modules of Master Degree Programs of IPETE in all public universities of Portugal]



- Modules, the semester that are taught and the number of credits rating;
- In which components of the modules there is reference to gender (learning outcomes, contents, teaching, learning and assessment methods, etc.);
- Number of occurrences of the word *gender* or other words associated with this issue.

OBSERVATION

Physical Education classes

[student teachers of a university throughout their Supervised Teaching Practice]

video camera -----to record teachers and students actions and interactions within the pedagogical relationship and activities during their PE classes



SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

- Teachers educators of a university (supervisors + cooperating teachers)
- Student Teachers

(e.g. reconstructing and conceptualizing gender; gender and initial teacher education curriculum; gender, PE and schooling; curriculum models; teaching models; teaching practices; teachers attitudes towards males and females and gender relations in PE classes)

DATA ANALYSIS

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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STUDY PLANS and MODULES OF MASTER DEGREE PROGRAMS

Observation : field notes

Semi-structured INTERVIEWS

Inductive analysis | Content analysis

QSR*Nvivo

validity, trustworthiness and reliability will be conducted by a member check and a peer check (Patton, 2002)