

An approach to quality Physical Education in early childhood

Un acercamiento a la Educación Física de calidad en la primera infancia

Uma abordagem à Educação Física de qualidade na primeira infância

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In the historical, socioeconomic and cultural development, the formation of children from early childhood has played a strategic role in the development of today's society; its role is increasing so that, as never before, children's institutions are called to develop a true quality education. According to the 2019 sustainable development goals report, quality education is the best investment a society can make in its children, as it is the foundation for learning in the years to come. The function of this education model is to achieve more competent individuals committed to their social responsibility, compelling it to the need for a new vision and a new paradigm, especially in early childhood where the first qualities of personality are forged.

At this educational level, Physical Education as part of the curriculum is oriented to the educator as a facilitator and guide of this process to lead the pupil through the logical paths between reproductive methods and creative methods for the development of knowledge. This is possible from the interchange between the flexible, open, multiple, varied and fun motor activities that are essential for the enrichment and transformation of his personality towards integrality.

Raising the quality of this educational process requires that Physical Education addresses specific problems with the intention of offering theoretical contributions aimed at improving educational practice. This process works in benefit of the integration of the areas of the curriculum, from an integral perspective that guarantees a quality education for all children. The achievement of this objective demands the collaboration of educational and sports sciences to complete contents that strengthen interdisciplinarity and favor the design of new intervention methods, by virtue of the child's integral development.

After carrying out a critical analysis about the educational process of quality Physical Education in these early ages, several researchers in Cuba and abroad have shown that today this process is also a unique system. It comprises a more integral perspective that undoubtedly becomes important theoretical referents. This is stated by McLennan, & Thompson, (2015), who states that



"Physical Education should be recognized as the basis for continued inclusive civic participation throughout the life cycle" (p. 20).

In this sense, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization recognizes in Physical Education a context of high educational potential for the acquisition of values and attitudes. This premise is necessary to achieve success in the 21st century, whose approach combines corporal and physical competence. However, it is necessary to make a deeper interpretation of the educational process in the light of the educational sciences, which provide the dialectic for the analysis and transformation of the educational reality.

This claim increases and becomes more complex in the contemporary world, given a marked tendency to relegate the teaching of Physical Education in pre-school children to a second level. Nevertheless, the traditional vision of this teaching must be overcome and challenges must be posed that are feasible, measurable and sustainable, as [Vizuete \(2015\)](#) has already stated. This author announces that,

"If we are able to provide quality Physical Education in schools, we will probably survive as a profession and as a school subject, otherwise the end of Physical Education as a school discipline is near" (p. 22)

Quality Physical Education is the result of interdisciplinary relationships between fields of knowledge. This teaching is designed to achieve the formation and integral development of the child's personality; it constitutes a theoretical and practical construction and expresses the bases of physical culture. In its essence, this process has been part of the pedagogical and cultural development that takes place in the country. As a priority, Physical Education has been in charge of developing the physical-motor skills, to attend to the biological and social structure of children, in correspondence with the demands and conditions of society.

Physical Education must be approached in terms of integrating knowledge, skills, abilities and aptitudes to maintain a physical activity throughout life; these aspects have been recognized by researchers in various fields.

From a basic quality perspective, Physical Education results in results that contribute to theory and practice, as:

- It arises and develops not only for pedagogical reasons, but also for health, intellectual, social and emotional reasons of the child.
- It is obtained as a product of a theoretical and practical activity throughout life for the full development of the personality.
- It is an expression of the educational system and other aspects of social life.
- It is linked to and contributes to the solution of the problems of theoretical and practical activity for an integral human development.

In the author's opinion, quality Physical Education is a general interpretation of an educational process, which forms an active subject in a socio-historical context determined by activity and communication. This process is the result of the dynamics between the levels of help that the educator offers the child, to facilitate him/her to assume new roles and place them in a developmental situation. It is also a system composed of a set of actions that must have an intentional and planned character.



In its actions it forms a framework, which provides new knowledge, skills, abilities, aptitudes and creates the conditions for the child to develop his/her creativity; capable of transforming society and itself.

Thus, Physical Education would not be a particular theory in itself about a certain educational process, but it would provide a series of common principles, premises or conditions that would inspire theories or contribute to the existing ones about this process in early childhood. It is important to raise some necessary premises to provide a quality Physical Education in early childhood:

- Clearly justify that the methodological procedure of Physical Education must start from the knowledge of the characteristics of the children and their developmental potential and attend to them according to their individual differences.
- Reveal clearly the principle of theory and practice to guide the child in an accurate way for the solution of the different motor tasks.
- To consider the need of the dialectic method to support Physical Education in an integrated way
- To assess the possibilities of integration of the contents of the other areas of the curriculum, to the contents of Physical Education and also vice versa.
- To show consistency and coherence between reproductive methods and creative methods for the development of the personality as a whole.
- To clearly determine the personal and non-personal components of the educational process and their relationships with each other.

Finally, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of abandoning any posture that implies rigidity in the educational process, since based on the particularities of the children and their developmental potential, the types of content that one aspires to form are determined, as well as the understanding of the process of planning, execution, control and feedback.

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Conflicto de intereses:

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