

Health and body image: physical activity as a relevant factor

Vera Lúcia Morais de Castro

This work of qualitative research mainly aims at studying the speech of the individual about the existing relationship between physical activity and quality of life, and not the speech of Physical Education about the quality of life of the individuals. In such regard, the analysis of this individual will allow understanding him or her in a systemic perspective and in a wider, more general sense, determining, inclusively, which physical activity and which Physical Education he or she feels meets, or not, his needs as an individual inserted in a more complex and dynamic context. It is about giving meaning to the individual in relation to his or her quality of life, to know and debate the procedures and actions the professionals of Physical Education have been performing to provide this individual with experiences that cause real benefit to him or her and, at the same time, represent positive relationships or, at least, less negative relationships to said individual. From this paradigm herein presented, we shall verify in what measure it occurs, in order to better understand this topic and this approach. Choosing this topic is justified by, and has as a secondary objective, the need to better understand the existing relationships between individual, physical activity and Physical Education as a whole and, therefore, in a systemic perspective, as well as contributing to the study of Body Image and its relationships with Physical Education and with other fields of scientific knowledge. As an area of knowledge, Physical Education has shown, through studies and researches, how the practice of systematic physical activities bring advantages and benefits to the human populations, in the personal, social, psychological and physical aspects resulting from such practices. From this evidence, studies are originated that aim at establishing a relationship between such practical benefits, health and the improvement of the quality of life. There are studies and researches that seek to analyze this situational scenario; however, some studies and researches indicate positive relationships and others, on the other hand, show negative relationships. We observed the fact that such conclusions are

exclusively related to each author's speech within his or her scientific production, in conformity to a determinate epistemological posture assumed by each author within his or her production, allowing so different opinions. Such problem led us to question the need that the individuals' opinion, thinking, arguments and speech are the object of analysis, that is, that the individuals are heard as to their perception, meaning, and understanding in relation to the quality of life. We believe that body image performs an important role in self-awareness, and if this perception is positive, self-image will be positive, and there will be satisfaction with the image and, consequently, a better self-esteem. Under a methodological point of view, this is a descriptive study, developed through the documental analysis of studies and researches (thesis and dissertations) that deal with the subject, as well as other sources of study. As to the results, we assumed the hypothesis that the self-image interferes with the practice of physical activity and, therefore, with the quality of life. We might conclude with a few considerations that indicate the importance of studies and researches on this topic and of the study of the body image on a systemic and interdisciplinary perspective, in order to contribute to a wider reflection, so that the speech of the individual in relation to his or her physical activities practices, positive or negative, is the central object of analysis by the professionals of Physical Education.

Keywords: Body Image; Self-esteem; Quality of Life; Physical Education; Individual

References

Abuquerque, E. A. Neves, R., Arcuri, R., T. (2006). *A Nova Fase da Mulher Brasileira*. São João da Boa Vista, SP: Centro Universitário de São João da Boa Vista, 2006. Recuperado em 19 jul. de 2008 de http://www.fae.br/cur_jornalismo/literaturas/Projetos2006/A_Nova_Fase_da_Mulher_Brasileira.pdf

Brandão, A.R., Brandão, T.C.R. Envelhecimento cutâneo. (2006) In: Freitas E.V., et al, (Org.). *Tratado de Geriatria e Gerontologia*. Rio de Janeiro: Guanabara Koogan, 2^a ed.

Papaléo Netto, M. (2006). O estudo da velhice: histórico, definição do campo e termos básicos. In: Freitas EV, et al, (Org.). *Tratado de Geriatria e Gerontologia*. Rio de Janeiro: Guanabara Koogan, 2^a ed.

Damasceno, V.O., Lima, J.R.P., Vianna, J.M., Vianna, V.R.A., Novaes, J.S. (2005). *Tipo físico ideal e satisfação com a imagem corporal de praticantes de caminhada*. Rev. Bras. Med. Esporte, 11(3).