



Analysis of the teaching practices of PE teachers: The example of General Education College Angola libre of Brazzaville

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Abstract

The teaching of Physical Education and Sport (PES) is a fundamental aspect of education as it plays an important role in the development of society and a nation. Seeking to understand the professional practices of PE teachers is the subject of interest here. The aim of this study is to analyse the teaching practices of PE teachers at the Angola Libre CEG in Brazzaville. A questionnaire survey of 3 PE teaching advisers was used to gather their responses. In addition, 3 PE teachers (1 man and 2 women) were observed in class. The results reveal that teaching practice in PE at CEG Angola Libre shows several weaknesses: lack of respect for time, space, teaching materials and class management. The participants felt that teaching practices should be improved to ensure that schools are a rich environment for the training of learners. Other measures to be taken include the proper selection of teachers when they are recruited, good curriculum planning, monitoring and training workshops. Finally, as well as being motivated and selected on the basis of certain known criteria, PE teachers need specialist skills in this area.

Keywords: Physical and sports education, teaching practices, competence, learning

Introduction

The professional practice of PE teachers in secondary schools in the Congo is sobering for specialists in the field. Educational research, sometimes undertaken and subsidised as a necessary contribution to political decision-making, is interested in gaining a better understanding of educational practice, and more particularly teaching practice. There is a growing body of research focused on identifying action scenarios aimed at improving the day-to-day realities of education, as well as a growing interest in analysing teaching practices in the classroom (Bru, 2001; Bru, 2002; Philippe, 2017) [1, 2, 3]. These authors believe that identifying the weaknesses and understanding of teaching practice has now become a central concern of teaching research, since it has been the cornerstone of major works studying human action in different professions for several decades. Several authors have done work in this area, including Nora and Borel (2012) [4]; and Martinez (2018) [5]. First of all, Nora and Borel state "From a certain point of view, it is possible that these security needs present in the social environment that surrounds the future of the profession limit our margin of risk-taking". It is clear that a PE teacher is confronted with a number of dangers that differ from other disciplines.

Research shows that they have different preferences with regard to the type of pedagogical support they receive (Charlier, 2012 ; Clanet, 2012; Mohib, 2011) [6, 7, 8]. The image of the teacher The PES teacher is a dynamic, active person who has developed through a variety of sporting activities, and a person with certain physical qualities. They are often seen as technicians of the sporting gesture, with an innate or acquired sense of pedagogy (Bertrand, 2018, p.3) [9]; In the same way, the teacher must be the guarantor of compliance with rigorous and specific methods and criteria to be observed in the classroom situation. They are faced with the challenges of responsibility, reassurance and guaranteeing the success of learners in order to achieve good academic results. Apart from the challenges mentioned above, there are certainly others. For this reason, we were

interested in carrying out this research on the theme of "Analysis of the teaching practices of PE teachers: the case of the Angola Libre CEG in Brazzaville".

Research question

What are the weaknesses observed in teaching practice in Physical Education and Sport ?

To answer these questions, we have formulated the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis

The weaknesses observed in teaching practice in Physical and Sports Education at the collège are of an organisational, material and pedagogical-didactic nature.

We formulated the following objective for this study.

Objective

The aim of this study is to identify and analyse weaknesses in the professional practice of PE teachers.

Theoretical framework

The theory of competence and learning proposed by Holmes *et al.* (2021) [10], for which competence is the guiding framework, implies multiple interpretations and understandings. It gives rise to multiple meanings for assessors, especially when applied to their own teaching and assessment practices. While universities in the UK and the US are increasingly adopting competency-based learning, it has been observed that any development of new competency-based assessment processes and procedures is still problematic in the Congo, unless informed and considered discussion can take place between educational stakeholders about their individual understandings and interpretations. This theory provides an overview of the main issues involved in defining and assessing competences in professional practice, together with recommendations for action. The aim is to stimulate reflection and discussion so that PES teachers can reach a common understanding and interpretation of the terminology of their competency-based

action, so that they can develop appropriate, authentic and fair assessment processes.

Materiel et methods

In this chapter, we present the preliminary steps, the composition of our sample, the data collection method and the data analysis and processing mechanism.

Type of study

Our research is cross-sectional and based on a qualitative approach.

Field of investigation

The study was carried out in Brazzaville at the General Education College (CEG) Angola Libre. It involved PE teachers and pedagogical advisors at this school and took place between 10 April and 15 June 2023.

The pre-survey

As part of our study, we visited the CEG Angola Libre to make contact with the administrative staff and the PE department.

The survey itself

The survey consisted in identifying the subjects who had voluntarily agreed to take part in the observation of their PE lessons according to the inclusion criteria of our study. We therefore observed 2 female teachers and 1 male teacher during the football cycle in 4th grade.

Sample

For this study, we observed 3 teachers (1 male and 2 female) in the middle of a lesson at CEG Angola Libre, and then interviewed 3 educational advisors.

This sample was based on the following inclusion and non-inclusion criteria:

Inclusion criteria

- To be a teacher at CEG Angola Libre;
- Have agreed to be observed;
- To be part of the counsellors working at CEG Angola Libre;
- To have agreed to answer the questions.
- **Criteria for non-inclusion**
- Not to be a PE teacher at CEG Angola Libre;
- Not to have agreed to be observed;
- They were not counsellors at CEG Angola Libre;
- Did not agree to answer the questions.

Data collection tool

We used a qualitative approach for this study, with observation using a grid and an iPhone 8 telephone as the data collection tool.

An interview guide was used to gather information from each educational adviser.

Analysis and interpretation of the data

The method of analysis of the corpus collected was based on a content analysis according to Bardin (2013) [11], it took the form of a four-stage analysis process: 1) full retranscription

of all the observations; 2) floating reading of all the retranscriptions; 3) coding of the retranscriptions and 4) categorisation of the coding (Lemvo *et al.*, 2020) [12].

As regards the verbatims, a content analysis was carried out in order to gain a better understanding of the process of teaching practice and to cross-check the results of the interviews (Leedy & Ormod, 2013) [13].

To preserve the anonymity of the analyses, the identification of the participants in the transcriptions was replaced by a code. In addition, the data from the observation grid has been interpreted in the chapter below:

Results

Presentation of observation results

Table 1: Data on the teaching practices observed in the Getting Started (GS) in a football lesson

Teaching practices observed in a PE lesson over a football cycle		
Time	What the teacher says	Weaknesses identified
7h15'-7h20'	After gathering the equipment (2 balls and 1 whistle), the teacher introduces the lesson and gives the instructions for the day's task and places the pupils in 3 columns.	The teacher didn't talk about the structure of the class, the names of the teams were not mentioned. -Many pupils wearing multicoloured outfits that are not in keeping with the practice of PE.

The information found on the weaknesses of the teacher's practice in table 1 concerning Taking Charge shows that the subject does not talk about the structuring of the class, nor does he check the conformity of the pupils' sportswear, and the lesson, which normally starts at 7.00 am, was 15 minutes late.

Table 2: Data on teaching practices observed in a football lesson at the Getting Started (SG)

Teaching practices observed in a PE lesson over a football cycle		
Time	What the teacher says	Weaknesses identified
7h20'-7h30'	The teacher begins the physiological awakening with a walk around the blocks, followed by a short run ; - The teacher places the pupils in columns of 3 and asks them to do a hopping exercise, followed by alternating knee-to-chest raises, before moving on to other exercises.	The teacher does not remind the students of the number of turns and times they must perform ; Lack of mobility and poor positioning for proper warm-up, no individual corrections ; -No linking exercises.

The analysis of table 2 dealing with the Start Up (US) of the observed teacher's professional action shows that the teacher forgets the instructions on the duration and dosage of the exercises to be carried out by the learners. She remained fixed on what did not allow her to detect pupils who were not working, to correct those who were performing the movements incorrectly and, finally, no exercise related to the day's task had been proposed.

Table 3: Data on teaching practices observed in the Main Part (PP) of a football lesson

Teaching practices observed in a PE lesson over a football cycle		
Time	What the teacher says	Weaknesses identified
7h30'-7h56'	<p>The teacher asks the pupils to sit down in rows, places the studs in a line 1m apart in 2 rows and places the pupils at each end, then asks the first to pick up the ball with their foot, drive the ball between the studs, arrive at the other end and pass to the other and so on;</p> <p>-Ask the pupils to be on the move so as not to cause any cooling;</p> <p>-The teacher has organised the competition, with the girls competing against each other and the boys competing against each other;</p> <p>During the game, the teacher makes it official, takes the flag before restarting the game and places the posts in a free space.</p>	<p>The teacher does not demonstrate what to do, explain the rules or ask who wants to be an official;</p> <p>-Fails to mark out the pitch in a way that is appropriate to the circumstances, to teach the pupils the basic concepts of the game (the ball offside, the ball in play, touching the ball with your hand if you are not the goalkeeper, the centre of the pitch to start play, restarting play after a goal has been scored, etc.).</p> <p>-Poor classroom management: while the girls are working, the boys are jumping up and down and having fun.</p> <p>-The teacher uses her voice when she had a whistle throughout the lesson,</p> <p>-Poor positioning for good peripheral vision of the pupils, wasting time and working more with some pupils than others;</p> <p>-The number of balls (2) was insufficient to get the pupils to work properly.</p>

In the light of the data in Table 3 on the Main Part, it emerges that the teacher did not show the learners the task to be done, did not provide the necessary equipment for the number of pupils, did not organise a triangular tournament or make the pupils responsible during the competition, the rules of the competition were not set out, and there was poor management of space and time. Finally, the separation of girls and boys during the competition did not allow the girls to make amends, and this created disorder for those who were not working while the others were playing, even though PE is a means of inclusion.

Table 4: Data on teaching practices observed in the Return to Calm (RC) in a football lesson

Teaching practices observed in a PE lesson over a football cycle		
Time	What the teacher says	Weaknesses identified
7h56'-7h58'	<p>-The teacher asks the pupils to walk around the blocks as they were before.</p>	<p>- The teacher did not carry out relaxation and relief exercises</p> <p>- Lack of attention to the pupils: while some were walking, others were picking up their belongings and going back to class.</p>

The data in table 4 on the Return to Calm tells us that the respondent had not planned exercises to relax and relieve the learners' bodies and had no peripheral vision of his class. This led to disorder as some learners left the set during this part of the lesson without the teacher noticing.

Table 5: Data on teaching practices observed in the Taking Charge (TC) in a football lesson

Teaching practices observed in a PE lesson over a football cycle		
Time	What the teacher says	Weaknesses identified
7h58'-8h00'	<p>-The teacher groups the pupils in a space at the corner of the post of the large football pitch, with some sitting on the ground and others standing up, in order to project the next lesson and carry out the check in the presence of another teacher, then asks the pupils to return to their classrooms.</p>	<p>The teacher misses the lesson projection, no announcement of the results of the matches ;</p> <p>-Poor classroom management, time management, etc.</p>

The results of table 5 on Taking Charge (TC) indicate that the teacher did not plan for the next lesson and did not communicate the results of the competition to the students. In addition, the teacher showed weaknesses in class and

time management because, for a 1-hour lesson, she only did 45 minutes with a lot of gaps.

Summary of the advisors' interviews

During the interview, the advisers stated the following :

C1. "Teachers, inspectors, pedagogical advisors and pedagogical experts are hired by the state to carry out a complete job, each with a clearly defined role. In the course of this process, unfortunately the work of some actors is characterised by notorious weaknesses".

C2. "Some poor pupil results are the result of unhealthy behaviour on the part of some teachers".

C3. "In the past, many pupils were interested in the teaching profession because they were motivated by the role models who were the teachers. Hmmm, but this is no longer the case".

C2. "If we're not careful, schools in the Congo are going to suffer a great malaise, and yes. they need to turn around because teachers need to be role models".

C1. ". it would seem that teachers need more support to understand their role, which is generally seen as an additional task".

C1. "I have the impression that every time our task came into conflict with the teachers, it was the task that had to be sacrificed".

C2. "It seems as if teachers explicitly knew very little about their professional practice. Yet everything is defined when the work sessions were to take place".

C2. "The teachers seem to have been guided by the existing contexts in their schools and it was these contexts that influenced the way the teaching took place".

C3. "Training sessions (capacity-building and refresher courses) should be set up to provide teachers with better support in the exercise of their profession".

C2. "I think that our schools should have sports equipment, Teachers should have a minimum of equipment".

From the point of view of the advisers interviewed, it is shown that teachers' practices also seem to have shaped the dark contexts, as teachers have used their practices in their own classrooms to provide opportunities to learn how to teach. Yet the socioconstructivism current reported by Haddour and Haroun (2017, p.11) [14], proposes to consider learning as active participation in real-life activities.

Discussion

The present study was carried out in the interest of leading PE teachers to improve the quality of their teaching.

The main objective of the study was to identify and analyse the weaknesses of PE teachers during their professional practice.

The information on the weaknesses in teaching practice in table 1 concerning the Getting Started (GS) showed that the subject did not talk about the structuring of the class, nor did he check the conformity of the pupils' sportswear. What's more, the class, which normally starts at 7.00 am, was 15 minutes late. Physical and Sports Education (PSE) is a teaching discipline governed by official standards, texts and instructions. Schmitt (2007, p.13) ^[15] stipulates that PE is the name given to a school-based teaching discipline that uses Physical, Sports and Artistic Activities (PSAA) as a medium for educational purposes. It is compulsory, and aims to develop pupils' physical skills as well as their confidence and ability to use them in a range of activities. This author has specified that PA promotes the acquisition of skills, the development of appropriate mental capacities, knowledge of one's own body and the limits and capacity for movement. This is why Mascrot (2009, p.3-4) ^[16] considers PASAs to be the reference social practices for PES. Similarly, Vincent (2005, p.14) ^[17] believes that "PES is an intervention practice that exerts an influence on the motor behaviours of the participants as a function of implicit or explicit educational norms".

The instructions on the duration and dosage of the exercises on the subject of professional action, the respondent observed during the Getting Started (GS) remained fixed on what did not allow her to detect the pupils who were not working and to correct those who were performing the movements incorrectly. Secondly, no exercise related to the day's task was proposed (table 2). It is clear from this observation that the respondent has weaknesses not only in how to prepare the learners' bodies physiologically, but also in classroom management. As a result, pupils are exposed to many dangers. Teachers must have a relationship with training, practice and knowledge in order to progress in their profession. They need to question their practice at every moment. Altet (2012) ^[18] and Vergnaud (2016) ^[19] support this approach. In everyday school life, errors play a very significant role in stimulating learning. The nature of errors varies according to the subject area (Eisenbis & Touchard, 1995) ^[20]. A mistake in mathematics does not have the same consequences as a mistake in jumps (long jump, for example). In PES, an error can therefore result in physical harm, which is not the case in many other subjects. It is this nature of error that makes "PES one of the most potentially problematic subjects" (Derlon, 1999) ^[21].

As the body in action is the medium of instruction, the risks of injury are obvious. Work environments are sometimes sources of danger. This is particularly true of the equipment used, swimming pools and climbing walls, as well as the location of certain outdoor sports facilities. What's more, "by their very nature, physical and sporting activities place participants in situations that are not always under their control and in which their physical integrity may be compromised" (Nabé, 2000) ^[22]. This situation requires PE teachers to put in place safety measures and rules, and to use sound common sense, so as not to expose their pupils to excessively threatening dangers in an ill-considered manner. Derlon (1999) ^[21] refers to subjective risk as the risk taken by a pupil with a responsible teacher. This notion of responsibility is very important because it is the basis on which a teacher's risks rest. To protect themselves, teachers

must adopt a certain behaviour. In particular, they must be attentive to compliance with instructions and supervise their pupils (Delignieres, 2004 ; Jonnaert, 2004) ^[23, 24].

Concerning the main part, it emerged that the teacher did not show the learners the task to be done, did not provide the necessary equipment for the number of pupils, did not organise a competition to test their apprehension (tournament between the clubs), and did not make the pupils aware of their responsibilities. Finally, the separation of girls and boys during the competition did not allow them to make amends. Finally, the separation of girls and boys during the competition did not allow the latter to make amends and this created disorder for those who were not working while the others were playing. However, PE is a discipline that advocates inclusion (table 3). In fact, PES in the Republic of Congo is a discipline that promotes inclusion, and the demonstration of the tasks to be taught is essential to facilitate efficient modelling by the pupils. Also, the management of time, space and human resources (learners) by giving them a sense of responsibility during the triangular tournament is very important. The image of the PE teacher is that of a dynamic and active person who has developed through the practice of various sporting activities or that of a prepared person (Bertrand, 2018, p.3) ^[9]. Teachers are confronted with the dangers, risks and accidents of their pupils. They therefore have a responsibility to keep them safe, not only to achieve good results but also to manage their class properly. "More than any other training activity, PES is a discipline that places risks on the pupils and a particular responsibility on the teacher" (Nabé, 2000) ^[22].

According to Bonvin (1992) ^[25], concern for responsibility is constructive and positive, because "the educator will do everything possible to assume his responsibility and guarantee the safety of young people as much as possible". Professional teachers think reflectively about their practice, in conversation with the situation (Schön, 1994 ^[26], cited by Paquay, 2012, p. 13) ^[27], at the time of teaching, when preparing for it or afterwards. This reflective approach enables teachers to manage complex situations and enhance their teaching skills. Hence the role of the educational consultant, who is responsible for implementing programs, methods and other teaching resources adapted to the needs of the board and its clientele in one or more subjects ; he or she must also advise the people concerned by these issues. Draelants (2007) ^[28]. The data in Table 4 concerning the Return To Calm (RC) indicate that the respondent did not work in such a way that the learners' bodies were relaxed by the exercises and he had no peripheral vision of his class, causing disorder. To prove the point, some learners left the set during this part of the lesson without the teacher noticing. Derlon (1999) ^[21] explains that : "PES cannot avoid evolution if it wants to keep up with social and cultural changes outside the school. Potential risks cannot be used as an excuse to reject certain physical activities. Teachers need to give themselves the means to offer an open, varied and motivating programme that complies with regulatory requirements, while at the same time ensuring that their pupils have the essential duty to think about and control safety". The results of table 5 on Taking Charge (TC) show that the teacher did not plan for the next lesson and did not communicate the results of the competition to the pupils. In addition, she showed weaknesses in class and

time management because, for a 1-hour lesson, she only taught for 45 minutes, with a lot of lulls.

Altet (2002) ^[29] considers that teaching practices are situated and oriented by the ends, goals and norms of a professional group. Practices are not limited to observable actions, but include "the processes by which a person carries out an activity in a given situation, and the choices and decisions he or she makes" (p. 86). Based on the three categories of action variables on which the teacher can adopt different modalities (Bru, 1992; 1993) ^[30, 31], we have retained three components that make it possible to describe practices at a given moment: - The objects which concern the variables of structuring and implementation of the contents defined by Bru (1992; 1993) ^[30, 31] and refer directly to the knowledge taught or used (tasks, themes, subjects), i.e. the module(s) or discipline(s) taught and the subjects dealt with during the school-internship-school sequence by the teachers, and the tasks and modules or subjects dealt with by the company trainers;

- The process, which concerns the variables relating to the relational and activity management processes or pedagogical process variables (choice and sequence of activities, learning dynamics, distribution of initiatives, etc.). In the context of sandwich courses, the process refers to a deductive or inductive approach to training. The deductive approach to training is present when "the work situation is the place where the training is applied" (Mathey-Pierre, 1998, p. 72; Dejean, 2000) ^[32, 33], and the inductive approach is present when the training at school is based on the experience gained on placement; - The organisational elements, which have to do with the variables relating to the system and in the context of this research concern the resources used (teaching materials, equipment, tools), the locations and organisation of the space, the people involved in the training, and the training time (duration, timing). It is in this respect that advisers must be empowered to pay particular attention and give sufficient thought to the development of teaching roles and, where appropriate, to differentiate between teaching roles.

In pedagogy, a pedagogical adviser or supervisor is someone whose job it is to advise, support, monitor, supervise and train student teachers, student pedagogical supervisors and/or teachers in the field. Similarly, it is a person called upon to exercise the function of controller, guide and trainer of trainers in the field of pedagogical supervision in PES (Paquay, 2012) ^[27]; Pastré *et al.*, 2006) ^[34]. Supervisors not only know how to see, they also know how to tell. Their familiarity with the practice of teaching (the fact that they have already taught is certainly an important asset when it comes to supervision) enables them to appreciate what they observe in the classroom and to perceive, beyond the superficial and the apparent, what is hidden and underlying" (Boutet *et al.*, 2002 p. 88) ^[35]. The educational consultant must therefore put in place mechanisms to regulate behaviour in the practice of PE teachers, who themselves take charge of the pupils. According to Lessard (2008, p. 170) ^[36], educational consultants see themselves first and foremost as agents of change. He points out that they draw on a body of knowledge that they consider necessary to be an effective player. The duties of pedagogical consultants continue to focus on two main areas : coaching and support for teachers and school teams. Some secondary school teachers appear to rely on other teachers and educational advisers to keep up to

date with current teaching methods. The results of this study showed that all the participants were of the opinion that university-school partnerships should be improved to enrich the environment in which mentoring of trainee teachers takes place, by reviewing the criteria for selecting mentors, the benefits of mentoring and the mentor training workshops. They also felt that the selection of mentors could be based on explicit criteria rooted in subject specialisation to ensure that trainee PE teachers were also guided on the content to be taught and other pedagogical aspects. Universities and schools then had to join forces to train teachers, because they need to be sufficiently prepared for their role as teachers (Zeichner, 2010) ^[37]. As a result, Plantet (2001) ^[38], Piot (2008) ^[39] and Rey (2009) ^[40] talk about building teaching skills to protect learners from hazards.

Conclusion

At the end of this study, which was designed to identify weaknesses in the professional practice of PE teachers at CEG Angola Libre, a number of conclusions can be drawn, such as the lack of respect for time and space, the lack of adequate teaching materials for PE, and poor student management, all of which undermine the teaching of this activity. As a result, pedagogical advisors must emphasise their professionalism in order to provide solutions to the many shortcomings that have been identified. With this in mind, L'Hostie and Boucher (2004) ^[41] define the role of the educational consultant in terms of professional development. Accompanying a teacher means working with him or her, growing with him or her and, as a result, changing with him or her. It also means pooling efforts to find solutions when obstacles arise, without excluding the possibility of one person acting as the guide and support for the other.

Competing interests

Authors have declared that not competing interests exist.

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