INCLUSIVE PHYSICAL EDUCATION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS NETWORK IN A BRAZILIAN MUNICIPALITY

A.M. Lima, G. Aparicio

Polytechnic Institute of Viseu, Health School (PORTUGAL)

Abstract

Introduction:
Inclusive Education is defined as a school model that promotes the inclusion of all students in a single schooling system. Particularly regarding inclusive physical education, or Adapted Physical Education, this is applied under special conditions, targeting a particular population that needs special motor and functional stimuli for adequate development.

Objective:
To understand the teaching methods of Inclusive Physical Education in public schools at Maceió, Brazil, namely: To analyze the teachers and pedagogical managers perception on inclusive education and Inclusive Physical Education; To know school strategies and structures for its implementation; Identify teachers competence to develop inclusive physical education; to understand what benefits are recognized in its implementation; to describe the support provided by the school and municipality.

Methods:
A Qualitative study with phenomenological approach was carried out in a sample of four physical education teachers and four educational managers aged between 33 and 50 years old, who were part of the active board of public schools in the city of Maceio, Brazil, during 2014-2015 academic year. The data collection used was a semi-structured one-to-one interview and data interpreted using content analysis method.

Results:
In general teachers agree with the inclusive school and recognize the psychosocial and social benefits; however they report not to have adequate preparation to work with special needs students. Some of them invested in personal special training and adapted the contents and teaching methodologies. Lack of appropriate material for teaching and the precarious structural facilities for students that public schools provide are other negative aspects they face as well as not participating in the constitution of the school's legal document. Managers pointed out as the main difficulties: the lack of support from the Municipality (council) towards professionals who work directly with these students; the lack of training in the field of inclusion and consequently the inadequate education provided by them. Professionals believe that this discipline has an important role in the process of inclusion of special needs students as it contributes to the socialization, enhances self-esteem, life quality, and supports cognitive, affective and psychomotor development.

Conclusions:
The process of inclusion is developing at a slow pace, particularly in physical education classes. In this region of Brazil, few students with special needs attend regular schools and even less participates in physical education classes. Through the content analysis it's clear that changes are necessary for the inclusion of special need students in physical education classes. It's important to emphasize that physical education is not the basis for school inclusion. However an improvement in this area can have significant positive effects in this field and on the quality of life of these students.

Keywords: Inclusive school, Physical education, Special Needs Students.