

PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN RESEARCH WITH QUALITATIVE APPROACHES: AREAS OF KNOWLEDGE AND THEMES

PRODUÇÃO DO CONHECIMENTO EM EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA NAS PESQUISAS COM ABORDAGENS QUALITATIVAS: ÁREAS DE CONHECIMENTO E TEMÁTICAS 

PRODUCCIÓN DE CONOCIMIENTO EN EDUCACIÓN FÍSICA EN LAS INVESTIGACIONES CON ENFOQUES CUALITATIVOS: ÁREAS DE CONOCIMIENTO Y TEMÁTICAS 

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Abstract: The objective was to identify the areas of knowledge and to understand research themes with qualitative approaches in Physical Education in Brazil, based on documentary research and the following criteria: studies developed in Brazil; studies in collaboration with Physical Education professionals; original studies; indexed in the SciELO database; full texts online; and published between January/2008 and August/2020. In total, 191 articles were analysed. The results pointed out that qualitative research concentrates its productions in the sociocultural and pedagogical knowledge areas. In the sociocultural area, the following themes were predominant: sport, bodily practices, physical activity and physical exercise. In the pedagogical area, the following themes were observed: initial training; continuous training; training of trainers; training of researchers; basic education. In conclusion, qualitative studies in Physical Education concentrate in the sociocultural and pedagogical areas only, with diverse themes, but within the specificity of areas of knowledge, in order to meet Physical Education.

Keywords: Physical Education. Qualitative research. Review. Brazil.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The production of knowledge in Physical Education has been discussed since the last century based on three major questions: a) What are the areas of concentration of the postgraduate programmes? b) How is the production in journals developed? and c) What are the theoretical and methodological approaches that support the research? (GAYA, 1994; SILVA, 1987). The most recent studies have analysed, mainly, the productions of Physical Education postgraduate programmes (CASTRO; SILVA; LUDORF, 2019; CASTRO *et al.*, 2017; MANOEL; CARVALHO, 2011; ROSA; LETA, 2011) and some Physical Education journals (ROSA; LETA, 2010). According to Silva and Gamboa (2014), these studies are characterised as “research about research”, since they investigate the research and its epistemological aspects in a given area of knowledge.

The above studies highlight a relative fragility in the discussion on Physical Education as a scientific field that had already been indicated above all in the discussions of Bracht (2015; 2000); on the predominance of biodynamics as an area of knowledge (MANOEL; CARVALHO, 2011; CASTRO *et al.* 2017); and on the predominance of approaches generically classified as quantitative, positivist, present in the studies of Souza and Silva (1997), or nomothetic cited in the study of Castro, Silva and Ludorf (2019) and of Gaya (2008).

The scientific knowledge produced in Physical Education carries a strong and historical trace of natural sciences, of biological nature, with nomothetic approaches, with quantitative characteristics, of objectivity and impartiality of the researcher (GAYA, 2008). Thus, qualitative research in Physical Education focused on Humanities and Social Sciences is considered relatively “recent”, from the 1980s, when qualitative studies began to be disseminated in the country (THOMAS; NELSON; SILVERMAN, 2012; VARANDA; BENITES; SOUZA NETO, 2019). This period is marked by academic questioning about the prevalence of research with quantitative approaches, resulting in an increase in the number of studies on Physical Education from a social and cultural perspective (SILVA; VELOZO; RODRIGUES JÚNIOR, 2008).

Research with qualitative approaches (CRESWELL, 2007) have their origin in the field of anthropology, psychology, sociology and philosophy, are characterised by presenting detailed and dense description, seeking to understand the social manifestations, facts, places, cultures and values, attributing senses and meanings to the object of study (CHIZZOTTI, 2003). It answers particular questions, in a complex reality, not summarised to the operationalisation of variables. While qualitative research deepens human relations and the meanings of their actions, research with quantitative approaches seek to explain reality objectively, emphasizing population aspects, to be studied in the verification of theories and concepts listed *a priori* (MINAYO; DESLANDES, 2007). Both contribute to the expansion of the understanding of Physical Education as a field of knowledge, when performed with methodological rigour and ethical consistency, and may be complementary despite their ontological, axiological, epistemological and methodological differentiated bases (CRESWELL, 2007).

As Manoel and Carvalho (2011) state, research with qualitative approaches in Physical Education stand out for taking as object the intervention in its most direct

forms, in the court, in the field, in gyms and fitness centres, in schools, among others. Or, as Hallal and Knuth (2011) point out, qualitative research in the specific scope of physical activity epidemiology needs to be encouraged to unveil what lies behind the motivations, and meanings for physical activity practice.

Although the authors cited above indicate the relevance of research with qualitative approaches (direct intervention, physical activity and health), research on the production of knowledge in Physical Education have not been clear about the specific themes addressed in these investigations. Mostly, they focus on the characterisation of general knowledge areas (biodynamic, sociocultural and pedagogical) and/or discussing their theoretical bases. The studies identified on specific thematic areas in the production of knowledge in Physical Education as in Moraes, Amaral and Bastos (2021), Mendes and collaborators (2017), Rojo, Mezzadri and Silva (2019), which elect a thematic area, respectively: management in sport, physical activity and health, public policies of sport and leisure.

For some authors (ALMEIDA; BRACHT; VAZ, 2012; BRACHT, 2015; SILVA; GAMBOA, 2014), Physical Education needs a “re-enchantment”, from the deepening and reformulation of analytical references of research in the area. In this way, our study is established within Physical Education as an area of knowledge that is constituted as a scientific field (BOURDIEU, 1983) in constant production, tension and distrust of itself and of science (BRACHT, 2000), from its productions identified as a minority, in the aspect of Humanities and Social Sciences, developed in research approaches generically called qualitative.

Thus, given the specificity of qualitative approaches, their place in the recent production in Physical Education in Brazil, and the scarce studies on their thematic areas, the objectives of this study were: to identify the areas of knowledge and understand the themes of research with qualitative approaches in Physical Education in Brazil. For this, we took as a research source, diverging from the studies previously mentioned, articles published in journals indexed in the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO)¹, which is characterised as a digital library of general index, because it receives articles from various areas of knowledge, including health, social and human sciences, with inclusion criteria that ensure the high standard of publications. Thus, it was possible to capture a movement of the scientific field beyond its demarcations and delimitations (postgraduate programmes and journals of the area).

2 METHOD

This is a documentary study carried out in secondary and public sources, articles published in SciELO, developed from four criteria (MOGALAKWE, 2006): authenticity (means respect for the original documents); credibility (indicates whether the reference is free or not of distortions); representativeness (if the sample collected corresponds to the reality investigated); and comprehension (refers to how understandable or clear are the sources used). In order to ensure authenticity and credibility, all articles were taken from the indicated digital library. As for representativeness and comprehension, they were evidenced by applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria defined below.

¹ SciELO – Scientific Electronic Library Online. Available at: www.scielo.org. Accessed on: Jun. 20, 2022

After defining the guiding question (What are the general knowledge areas and themes of research with qualitative approaches in Physical Education in Brazil?), the following search criteria were established: I) studies conducted in Brazil; II) studies conducted by at least one author with a field of expertise and/or training in Physical Education (to confirm this criterion, in some studies we consulted the authors' Lattes curriculum); III) original studies; IV) publication indexed in the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) database, for its comprehensiveness in indexing scientific production in Brazil; V) full texts available online.

From then on, the literature searches were limited to articles published between January 2008 (year in which an expansion and decentralisation process of postgraduation in Physical Education in Brazil begins, with the opening of the first programme in the Northeast (BARROS *et al.*, 2010), and August 31, 2020. They were carried out by two independent researchers and a third researcher was responsible for resolving doubts about the inclusion or exclusion of any article. Data collection occurred between September and December 2020.

Due to the amplitude of qualitative research in Physical Education in Brazil, not necessarily associated only with the health area (postgraduation in Physical Education in Brazil is linked to Area 21 of the National Research Council — CNPq), terms were defined that pointed to the multiplicity of understandings and approaches of both Physical Education and qualitative research. Chart 1 presents the exact terms that were combined through the Boolean operators “and” and “or”. They were defined from the literature that guides research with qualitative approaches in Physical Education in Brazil (BARDIN, 1977; CRESWELL, 2007; DEMO, 1995; LUDKE; ANDRÉ, 1986; MINAYO, 1992; ORLANDI, 1999; THIOLENT, 1986; THOMAS; NELSON; SILVERMAN, 2012), research on the production of knowledge in Education and Brazilian Physical Education (BRACHT, 2000, 2015; SILVA; GAMBOA, 2014; GAYA, 2008; MANOEL; CARVALHO, 2011; SOUZA E SILVA, 1997), and also studies in Physical Education that place it in the field of the culturalist turn (COSTA; ALMEIDA, 2018).

Chart 1 - Terms combined with the Boolean operators “and” and “or”

PHYSICAL EDUCATION	RESEARCH WITH A QUALITATIVE APPROACH				
	GENERAL	BASE THEORIES	TYPES OF STUDY	DATA COLLECTION	DATA ANALYSIS
physical education	qualitative research	historical materialism	ethnographic study	participant observation	discourse analysis
physical activity	qualitative method	phenomenology	field study	semi-structured interview	content analysis
physical exercise	qualitative approach	symbolic interactionism	action research	semi-structured interview	qualitative analysis
bodily culture	qualitative study	hermeneutics		focus groups	
movement culture		structuralism			
bodily practices					

Source: the authors.

After the inclusion of articles that met the inclusion criteria, our documentary *corpus* was composed as follows: a) reading the title; b) reading the abstract; c) reading the methodology of the article. In the initial search, a total of 335 articles were found. From these, duplicates were removed and, from the title reading, 63 articles were excluded (n=272). From the analysis of the method used, 59 articles (n=213) were excluded, including those which were self-titled quanti-qualitative or mixed studies (with quantitative and qualitative analyses). The doubts (n=22) were discussed with a third researcher and, finally, the final sample for data analysis was composed of 191 articles.

From the reading of the abstracts, the descriptive data of each study were extracted: year of publication, authorship, state and region of the authors, title of the article, journal and the results were presented through frequency analysis, in the characterisation of the documentary *corpus* under study. In addition, the objectives, the methodological characterisation of the study and the outcomes were also identified.

Next, qualitative analyses of the data on objectives, methodology and results were performed in the abstracts of the articles and, whenever necessary, the articles were read in full. To identify the areas of knowledge and the themes of the studies, the analysis of the objects under study was undertaken. Thus, through thematic categorical analysis (BARDIN, 1977), initially the *a priori* categories referring to general areas of knowledge (CASTRO *et al.*, 2019; MANOEL; CARVALHO, 2011) were identified. And, finally, from the inductive-constructive approach, the *a posteriori* categories that characterised the themes under study were defined (MORAES, AMARAL, BASTOS, 2021).

3 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

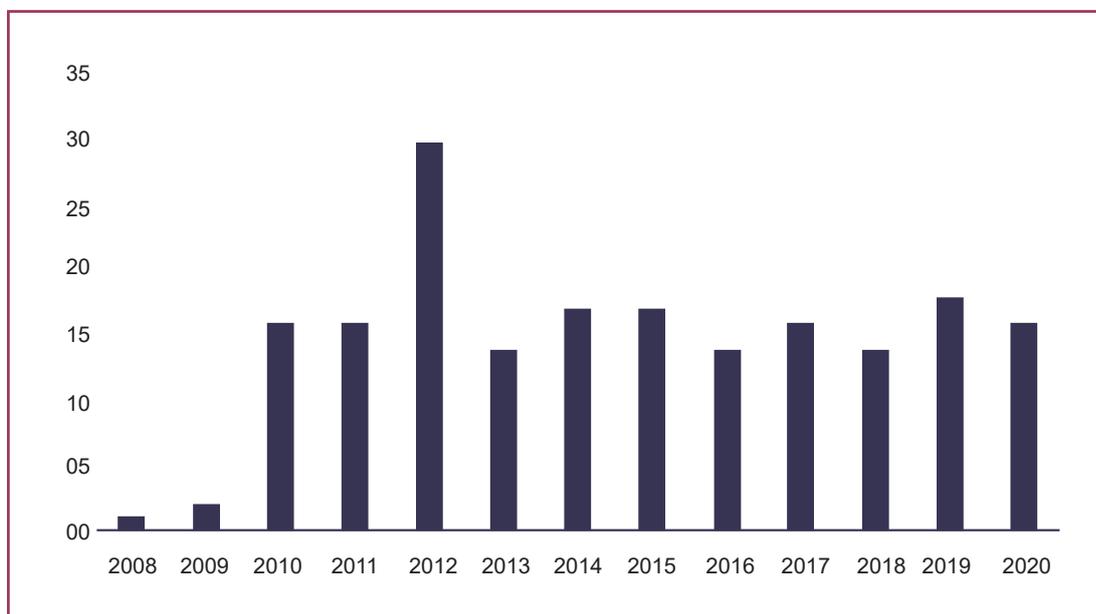
The documentary *corpus* of the study was composed of 191 articles in the area of Physical Education, conducted in Brazil. To characterise the studies, identify the areas of knowledge and understand the themes developed, the results will be presented below in two stages, being: a) descriptive analysis; b) content analysis for areas of knowledge and themes developed.

3.1 CHARACTERISATION AND DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE DOCUMENTARY *CORPUS*

Regarding the interval of years from 2008 and 2020, it was observed that a peak occurred with a greater number of publications in 2012; and except for 2008 and 2009, with one and two publications, respectively, the other years remained with a constant flow of publications (Graph 1). One of the hypotheses we raise is the fact that this period coincided with Decree No. 6096 of 24 April 2007 (BRASIL, 2007), which established the Programme of Support for Restructuring and Expansion Plans of the Federal Universities (REUNI), whose main objective was to expand access and permanence in higher education. This period was marked by investment in physical, academic and pedagogical expansion of public institutions of higher

education². However, although there has been an expansion of postgraduation in Physical Education in Brazil, after 2008, data from the research of Corrêa, Corrêa and Rigo (2019) on *stricto sensu* programmes point out that the variation in the number of teachers registered in the three subareas of knowledge of Physical Education, in the period from 2010 to 2017, was established unevenly, with the biodynamic subarea presenting an increase from 260 to 478 teachers; and the pedagogical and sociocultural subareas, from 142 to 165. In this way, it can be inferred that the stability of the number of articles published in the investigated period (2008-2020) has some relation to the small variation in the number of teachers who have been dedicated to sociocultural and pedagogical themes in Physical Education, according to the research indicated above, since research with eminently qualitative approaches, such as the ones investigated here, seem to be affected to these themes in the field of knowledge of Physical Education in Brazil, as it will be verified later.

Graph 1 - Evolution of publications of qualitative studies in Physical Education in Brazil (2008-2020)

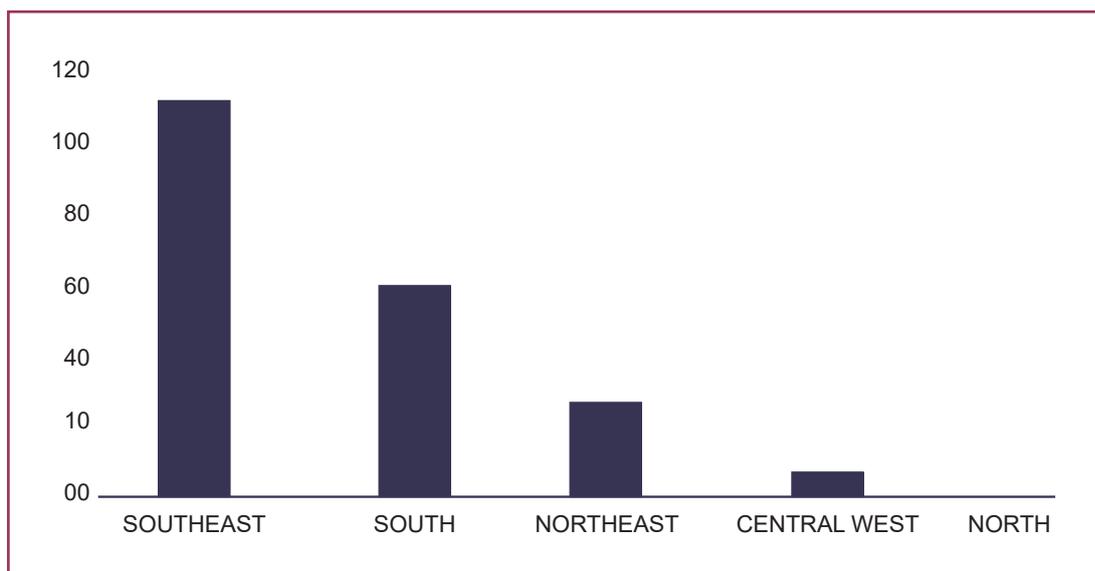


Source: research data.

Regarding the regions (Graph 2), the Southeast maintains its hegemony and stood out for the largest volume of studies (54.97%), followed by the South (29.31%), Northeast (12.56%) and Central West (3.14%); the North region did not present studies (Graph 2). This regional inequality corroborates recent studies on the production of knowledge in Physical Education in Brazil (CASTRO *et al.*, 2017; MORAES; AMARAL; BASTOS, 2021) and directly reflects the presence of postgraduate *stricto sensu* programmes in Physical Education in Brazil by region, with a greater number of programmes in the Southeast and South regions and the absence of a programme in the North Region, in the period 2010-2017 (CORRÊA, CORRÊA; RIGO, 2019).

2 BRASIL. Ministério da Educação. REUNI. Available at: <http://reuni.mec.gov.br/o-que-e-o-reuni>. Accessed on: Jun. 20, 2022.

Graph 2 - Number of publications by region



Source: research data.

Regarding the journals that house the investigated production (n=191), it is identified in Table 1 that, when grouped by general scientific area, 70.15% of this production of research with qualitative approaches in Physical Education are published in journals with the scope defined in the area of Health Sciences, in Humanities and Social Sciences 20.41% and hybrid (Humanities/Social Sciences and Health Sciences) are 9.42% of publications.³ The predominance of the area of Health Sciences reiterates the predominance of the journals in the area of Physical Education, which are framed, mostly, in the scientific scope of Area 21 of the National Research Council (CNPq), assigned to areas of knowledge within the Health Sciences, namely: Physical Education, Physiotherapy, Speech Therapy and Occupational Therapy.

Table 1 - Number of publications in journals by area (n=191)

Area	N	%
Health Sciences	134	70.15%
Humanities and Social Sciences	39	20.41%
Hybrid	18	9.42%

Source: research data.

On the other hand, a more detailed description of the number of publications in journals of the specific area of Physical Education (n=141) and the classifications of the scientific areas for these journals (Table 2) pointed out that most of this production is found in Physical Education journals, identified as Health Sciences, especially the *Journal of Physical Education*⁴ (27.65%), followed by four other journals: *Revista*

³ To identify the scope of each journal, the SciELO pages of the journals were visited. Thus, the classification that SciELO establishes for scientific areas was adopted. When the journals were classified into two scientific areas, we adopted here the hybrid classification as in Corrêa, Corrêa and Rigo (2019).

⁴ In 2015, the *Revista de Educação Física da UEM* changed its profile to *Journal of Physical Education*. In our description the data of the *Revista de Educação Física da UEM* were grouped with the number of publications in the

Brasileira de Educação Física e Esporte (Brazilian Journal of Physical Education and Sport) (22.69%), *Revista Brasileira de Ciências do Esporte* (Brazilian Journal of Sport Sciences) (19.65%) and *Motriz* (19.14%).

Table 2 - Number of publications in journals in the Physical Education area (Area 21- CNPq)

Journals	PE/Health		PE/Humanities		PE/Hybrid	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Journal of Physical Education (Brazil)	39	27.65%				
Revista Brasileira de Educação Física e Esporte (Brazil)	32	22.69%				
Revista Brasileira de Ciências do Esporte (Brazil)	28	19.65%				
Motriz	27	19.14%				
Revista Brasileira de Medicina do Esporte (Brazil)	2	1,41%				
Revista Brasileira de Cineantropometria & Desempenho Humano (Brazil)	1	>1%				
Educación Física y Ciencia (Argentina)			4	2.83%		
Motricidade (Portugal)					5	3.54%
Movimento (Brazil)					3	2.12%

Source: research data.

Taking into consideration the analysis undertaken by Corrêa, Corrêa and Rigo (2019), it can be stated that investigations with qualitative research approaches in Brazil are published in Physical Education journals of lower strata of Qualis Periodicals (2013-2016),⁵ since, as pointed out by the authors, there are few national journals of Area 21 in the upper strata and most of them have scope in the field of Biological Sciences and Health and few have adherence to the field of Humanities and Social Sciences or are hybrids, scientific fields that anchor most of the knowledge production of research with qualitative approaches in Physical Education. *Movimento* is one of these journals classified in the A2 stratum, currently classified as hybrid by SciELO and with three identified articles.

In general, the publication of the production of knowledge in Physical Education in Brazil is stable in the analysed period (2008-2020); it is predominantly carried out in research groups in the Southeast and South of the country; it is mostly published in journals of the Health Sciences area, more specifically Physical Education and with lower classifications in the Qualis Periodicals strata.

As Manoel and Carvalho (2011), Hallal and Knust (2011) and Corrêa, Corrêa and Rigo (2019) have been pointing out, the situation revealed threatens the production of knowledge in Physical Education in its relation to the direct interventions of our

Journal of Physical Education.

⁵ "The Qualis Periodicals represents the totality of the journals that have published articles by professors belonging to the postgraduate programmes recognised by Capes" (CORRÊA, CORRÊA, RIGO, 2019, p. 362). For the triennium (2017-2020), the Qualis Periodicals underwent a process of restructuring the analysis for the classification of journals, which has not yet resulted in the official release of a Qualis Periodicals subsequent to the triennium (2013-2016). Thus, for the classification of the journals investigated, we followed with the one that is still in force in 2022.

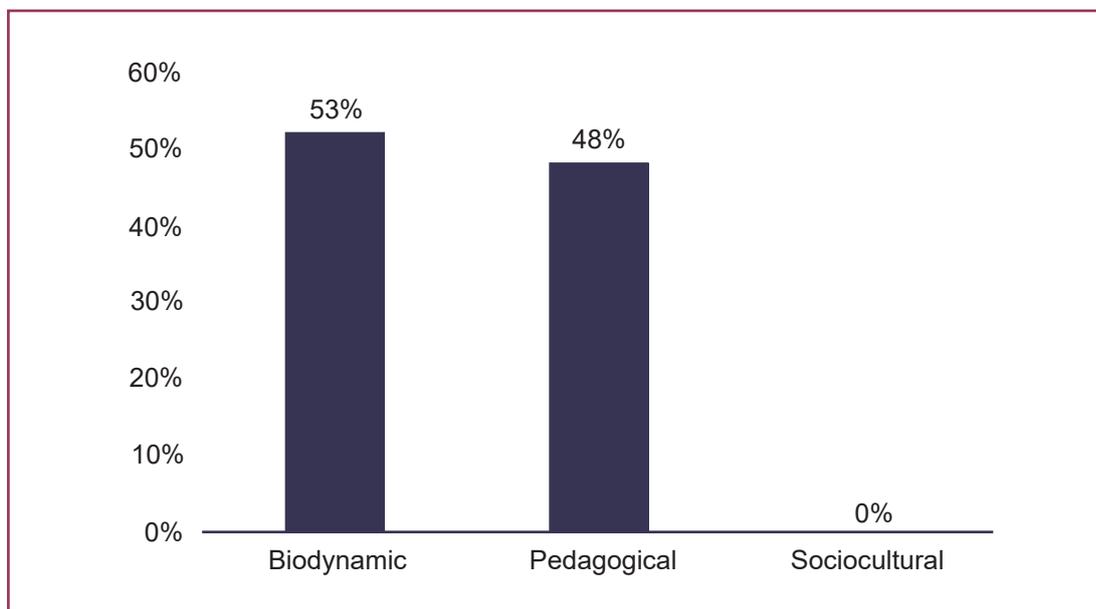
professionals, as well as with the survival of the sociocultural and pedagogical areas in postgraduate programmes in Brazil, even though the production of these areas is not limited only to research with qualitative approaches.

3.2 AREAS OF KNOWLEDGE AND THEMES DEVELOPED

Content analysis was performed in two stages. In the first, we identified the areas of knowledge, taking as reference the characterisations proposed by Manoel and Carvalho (2011) and reaffirmed by Castro *et al.* (2017). And, in the second, in an inductive-constructive process, the themes of the studies emerged for each of the areas of knowledge.

Graph 3 shows that the researchers who dedicate themselves to the qualitative approaches concentrate their productions in the sociocultural (52.35%) and pedagogical (47.64%) areas of knowledge, not being identified any study in the biodynamic area. This result corroborates previous studies that point out that, among the sociocultural and pedagogical studies in the area of Physical Education, sociocultural studies are predominant, although in our documentary *corpus* this difference has been lower than previous studies on the production of knowledge in postgraduate programmes in Physical Education (CASTRO *et al.*, 2017; MANOEL, CARVALHO, 2011). This lower difference may be attributed to the fact that the pedagogical production in Physical Education, captured in our documentary *corpus*, reaches the production performed also in education programmes and other related areas.

Graph 3 - List of articles by area of knowledge



Source: research data.

It was interpreted as pedagogical all the studies that developed their object from discussions related to: a) professional training or with intervention on the practice in professional training; b) basic education (infant, primary and secondary education)

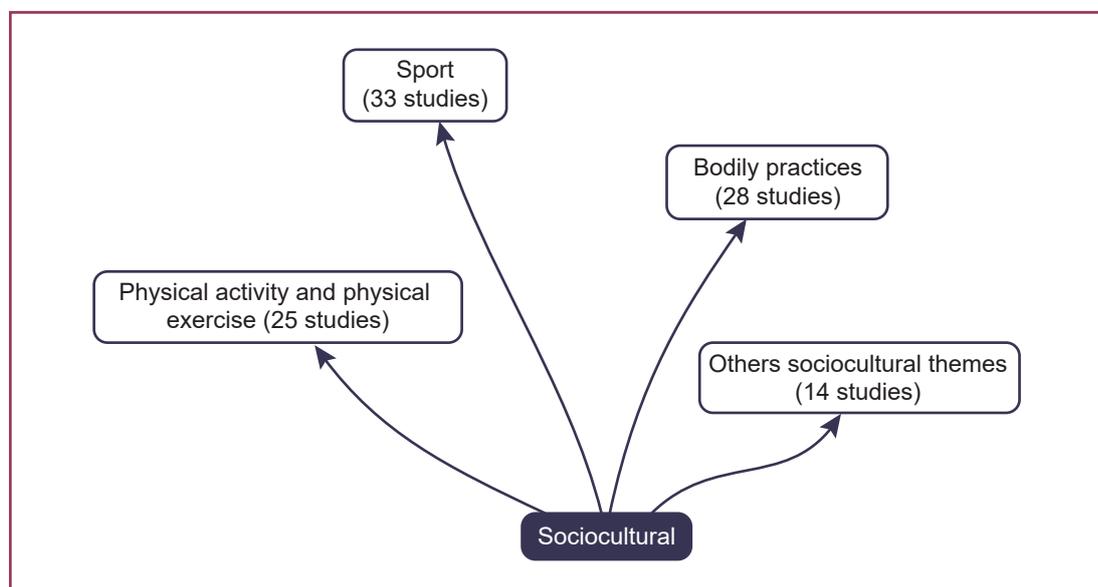
or with intervention on the pedagogical practice in basic education; c) curriculum development, especially related to prescriptive documents (laws, institutional documents etc.); d) various themes related to education.

All the studies which developed themes of physical activity, physical exercises, bodily practices and sports with different meanings and in different fields of action were analysed as sociocultural, except those with a clearly educational purpose of training and/or schooling and curricularisation.

3.2.1 Sociocultural themes in Physical Education

Figure 1 shows the themes identified in the sociocultural area: sport (33 studies); bodily practices (28 studies); physical activity and physical exercise (25 studies); other sociocultural themes (14 studies), totalling 100 articles.

Figure 1 – Sociocultural themes



Source: the authors

Sport emerged as the most recurrent general thematic category in sociocultural studies. The following were identified as sport studies: the investigations of elements related to specific sport disciplines, such as management, scoring codes, assessment protocols, and ethics of the discipline, with emphasis on the perspective of its makers (athletes, families, coaches); studies that revealed political-pedagogical actions around sport, whether related to public policy documents of the area and analysis of media productions in the creation of discourses on sport, sport disciplines and elements of sport; studies on sociocultural themes such as gender, body, violence in specific sport disciplines or sport as a phenomenon in general.

Sport as the most present thematic category in sociocultural studies indicates that this phenomenon, understood as social, historical, cultural and political, continues to be central to the production of knowledge in the area. However, this production seems to reveal the impact of two movements undertaken by Brazilian Physical Education

in the 1980s and 1990s: the first one was the questioning of the sporting monopoly within the pedagogical practices of Physical Education, proposing approaches that pointed to other bodily practices, beyond sports (BRACHT, 1989; 1999); and another movement can be attributed to perspectives arising from the Humanities and Social Sciences, which placed social and cultural issues to sport (DAOLIO; VELOZO, 2008; KUNZ, 1994). It may be stated that these shifts were established jointly with the approximation of the qualitative research approaches.

Furthermore, Moraes, Amaral and Bastos (2021), when evaluating the themes of doctoral theses within the specific scope of sport management in Brazil, identified the predominance of qualitative studies, diverging from the international literature in this area of knowledge, which pointed towards quantitative studies. In our study, some qualitative studies in the field of sport management were also identified.

Rojo, Mezzadri and Silva (2019), in a study on the dynamics of research production in the area of sport and leisure public policies, point to the consolidation of this study theme even though they do not identify the methodologies addressed in the studies.

Bodily practices was a category that emerged from the identification of studies on aspects of dances, games, complementary or “alternative” bodily practices and sociocultural themes such as body, gender, ethnic-racial relations, drugs and ageing developed within these specific bodily practices or Physical Education classes at school, with emphasis on the perceptions, perspectives, senses and meanings assigned by those responsible for the production of these practices. The emergence of this category as the second most present sociocultural theme refers us to the culturalist turn described and analysed by Costa and Almeida (2018), which points out a cultural appropriation of the body, in its movement away from the biologicist perspectives of the body. Although these authors do not directly indicate the expansion of the bodily practices under study in the field of Physical Education beyond sport, it can be inferred that this is a possible relationship.

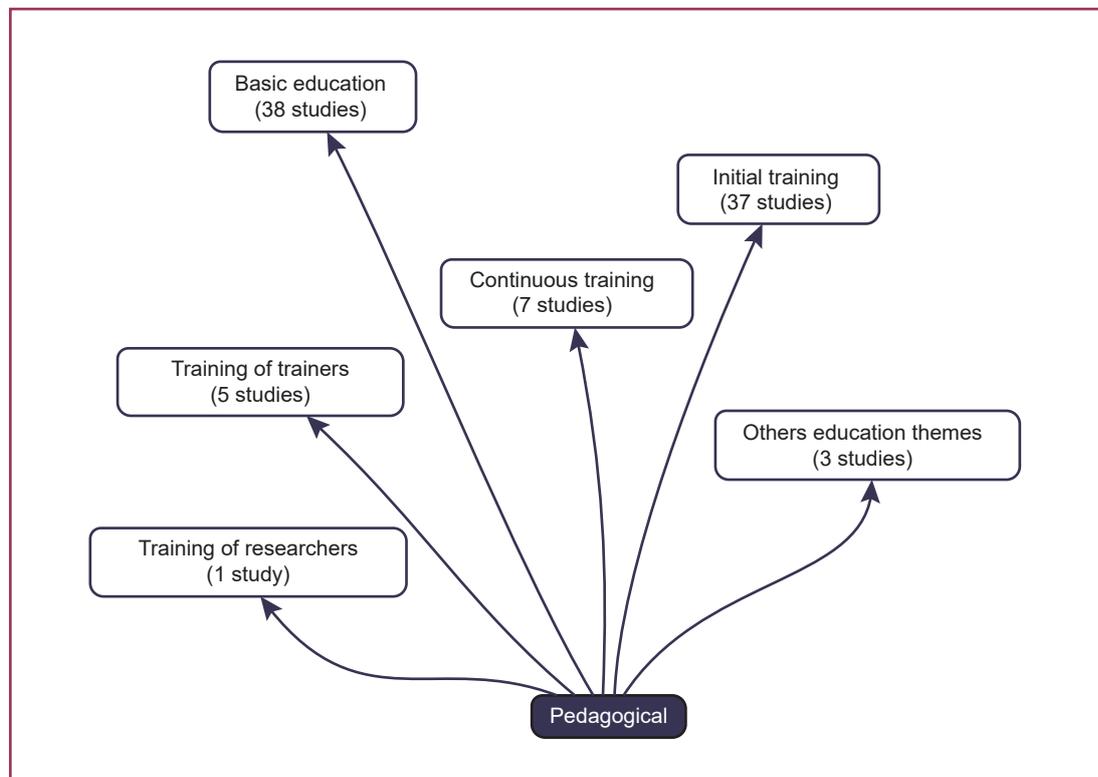
The third thematic category identified in sociocultural research in Physical Education was physical activity and physical exercise. Studies about senses, meanings and perceptions of physical activities in gyms and weight training; in government or social programmes; in schools and in other places were identified in this category. The emergence of this category corroborates what was pointed out by Hallal and Knuth (2011), when they indicated for national Physical Education the need to establish qualitative studies with sociocultural approaches in the health field, for a better understanding of the reasons, desires, senses and meanings attributed by customers, users, participants of programmes, projects, actions and interventions that are central to health care in its restricted (physical) and/or expanded (biopsychosocial) senses.

The other themes were around professional performance (six studies); the production of knowledge in Physical Education, such as this study (four studies), and other topics.

3.2.2 Pedagogical themes in Physical Education

The pedagogical themes in Physical Education were: initial training, continuous training, training of trainers, training of researchers, basic education and other education themes (Figure 2).

Figure 2 – Pedagogical themes



Source: made by the authors.

Basic education was a theme that emerged with the largest number of studies. Were identified as basic education the studies carried out in early childhood education, primary schools and high school on specific aspects of the pedagogical work: pedagogical actions (assessment, methodologies, others), knowledge of Physical Education (bodily practices) and curriculum documents. Only one study was identified in the context of special education as a modality of education.

Considering the trajectory of School Physical Education and the pedagogical proposals that have developed within Physical Education, since the 1980s (BRACHT, 1999), the approximation of Physical Education with the Humanities and Social Sciences (ALMEIDA, 2018), contributes to the expressive presence of qualitative studies in Basic Education.

In parallel to basic education, in the second category with the highest number of investigations, initial training, research were identified in bachelor's and licentiate courses, with a predominance of the latter, around different aspects of initial training, such as pedagogical actions (evaluation, internship, others), knowledge of Physical Education (bodily practices) and curriculum documents (national, state, municipal and institutional).

Contrary to the findings of Silva and Gamboa (2014) on education in general, these studies were presented as qualitative studies that sought to understand how initial training is established in its various aspects, from the subjects that develop it, whether they are teachers and/or students.

The studies on curriculum documents sought to understand the political-pedagogical orientations of the documents in the sequence of the process of implementation and consolidation of guidelines and prescriptive curriculum proposals (CBCE, 1997; GENTILI; SILVA, 1996), since the 1990s with the National Curriculum Parameters (PCN) and that culminated with the homologation of the Common National Curriculum Base (BNCC) and, in the case of teacher training, the National Curriculum Guidelines for Teacher Training - DCNFP (BRASIL, 2019). Contrary to the studies presented in this last regulatory and guiding document, which relies on quantitative studies about education, with emphasis on the development of skills, in a return to “technicist” models of training, qualitative curriculum studies in Physical Education seek to understand the political-pedagogical lessons driven by documents (FITCHER FILHO; OLIVEIRA; COELHO, 2021).

The other themes identified in the scope of pedagogical studies in Physical Education, continuous training, training of trainers, and training of researchers, emerge as incipient themes in the area, since the pedagogical studies in Physical Education appear identified, above all, with the training of teachers (CASTRO *et al.*, 2017; MANOEL; CARVALHO, 2011).

4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study sought to understand the areas of knowledge and the themes that emerged from research investigations with qualitative approaches in Physical Education in Brazil. To this end, it constituted a documentary *corpus* consisting of 191 articles published in journals indexed in the SciELO portal, from 2008 to 2020.

Descriptive analysis revealed that these studies are predominantly undertaken in study groups in the Southeast and South of the country and published in Physical Education journals with an area of concentration in Health Sciences.

Content analysis showed that the areas of knowledge of higher concentration in research with qualitative approaches in Physical Education in Brazil are the sociocultural and pedagogical.

Regarding the categories that emerged, we highlight the plurality of themes identified among the sociocultural studies with the predominance of sport and its modalities investigated from the point of view of the meanings attributed to it by its makers and also for the sociocultural themes that cross it; and the emergence of physical activity and physical exercise as a theme in the process of consolidation in sociocultural studies.

Among the pedagogical themes, both in basic education and initial training, the studies on pedagogical actions and knowledge of Physical Education stand out. The plurality of themes in pedagogical studies is still incipiently constituted in the expansion of studies in the field of training that go beyond teacher training.

Therefore, it is observed that the significant changes that have occurred in Physical Education as a scientific field in Brazil, since the 1980s, are reflected in studies with exclusively qualitative approaches in sociocultural and pedagogical areas with a plurality of themes, even if they are published in journals evaluated in lower strata of Qualis Periodicals, threatening the survival of these areas and research with qualitative approaches in Physical Education in Brazil, since they, as Corrêa, Corrêa and Rigo (2019) stated, take place mainly in postgraduate programmes in Physical Education, which are captured by the perverse logic of the evaluation models of the production of their teachers.

Although it is understood the lack of investigations on this more specific production of knowledge, in research with exclusively qualitative approaches in Physical Education in Brazil, it is identified that authors who study the broader production of knowledge in this field, such as some of the referenced here, have stood out for their proposals to qualify it as a broad, diverse and rigorous field of investigation, bringing out the instabilities and disputes that characterize it as a field. In this sense, there is a need for further studies that enable an expansion of knowledge.

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Resumo: Objetivou-se identificar as áreas de conhecimento e compreender as temáticas com abordagens qualitativas em Educação Física no Brasil, a partir de uma pesquisa documental com os seguintes critérios: estudos desenvolvidos no Brasil; estudos em colaboração com profissionais de Educação Física; artigos originais; indexados na base SciELO; textos completos online; publicados entre janeiro/2008 e agosto/2020. Foram analisados 191 artigos. Os resultados apontaram que as pesquisas qualitativas concentram suas produções nas áreas de conhecimento sociocultural e pedagógica. Na área sociocultural foram predominantes as temáticas: esporte, práticas corporais, atividade física e exercício físico. Na área pedagógica observaram-se as temáticas: formação inicial; formação continuada; formação de treinadores; formação de pesquisadores; educação básica. Concluiu-se que os estudos qualitativos em Educação Física se concentram apenas nas áreas sociocultural e pedagógica, com temáticas diversificadas, mas dentro da especificidade das áreas de conhecimento, para atender à Educação Física.

Palavras-chave: Educação Física. Pesquisa qualitativa. Revisão. Brasil.

Resumen: El objetivo fue identificar las áreas de conocimiento y comprender las temáticas con enfoques cualitativos en Educación Física en Brasil, en una investigación documental con los siguientes criterios: estudios desarrollados en Brasil; estudios realizados en colaboración con profesionales de Educación Física; artículos originales; publicaciones indexadas en la base SciELO; textos completos online; publicados entre enero de 2008 y agosto de 2020. Se analizaron 191 artículos. Los resultados mostraron que las investigaciones cualitativas concentran sus producciones en las áreas de conocimiento sociocultural y pedagógica. En el área sociocultural predominaron las siguientes temáticas: deporte, prácticas corporales, actividad física y ejercicio físico. En el área pedagógica los temas fueron: formación inicial; formación continua; formación de entrenadores; formación de investigadores; Educación Básica. Se concluye que los estudios cualitativos en Educación Física se concentran solo en las áreas sociocultural y pedagógica, con temáticas diversificadas, pero dentro de la especificidad de las áreas de conocimiento, para atender a la Educación Física.

Palabras clave: Educación Física. Investigación cualitativa. Revisión. Brasil

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that this work involves no conflict of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Sanderson Soares da Silva: conceptualisation, methodology, writing and proofreading.

Cleene Tavares de Souza: conceptualisation, initial writing, analysis and data discussion.

Maria Maciele Gomes de Barros: conceptualisation, initial writing, analysis and data discussion.

Ana Raquel Mendes dos Santos: analysis and data discussion, writing and proofreading.

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EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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