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Teaching physical education and sports in primary school between the reality of the field and the representations of teachers

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Abstract ;

Special education is considered one of the most important aspects of the National Ministry of Education, as it has been included in school activities. In fact, a teacher was assigned to this subject. Therefore, the subject of education is considered to overlap with the school curriculum for each stage of education, as it is compulsory for both boys. To help this, study the importance of education and knowledge of the actual practice of this subject in primary schools.

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Introduction

The school has formed and continues to form, through all historical stages of human societies, a means and tool to achieve the goals of education and upbringing, as well as to achieve a possible degree of mental and psychological health for the student. This means that throughout the various educational stages, the school must provide the student with a learning environment that helps them achieve the completion of their physical and mental growth to ensure an acceptable academic performance. Physical education is an educational subject without which integrated growth cannot be achieved; it is a mandatory educational subject and part of general education in all three stages of education. It is present starting from the primary stage, as stipulated by the executive decree No. 16-307 dated 28 Safar 1438 (corresponding to November 28, 2016), which mandates the teaching of physical education and sports in educational institutions. It is considered an educational subject that relies on physical activities, enabling the student to develop their motor, cognitive, and social skills.

Based on this data, we pose the question: What are the social representations that teachers hold regarding the reality of physical education in primary schools in Algeria?
Previous Studies

Title of the Study: Physical and Sports Education, an Approach to Parents' Representations
The physical and sports education, expectations and representations of parents.

A study conducted by Jean-Marie Godelfin
- Objectives of the Study:

- To highlight the image that parents perceive regarding physical education.
- Parents' expectations regarding physical education.
- The main trends related to parents' representations.
- Research Problem:

- How do parents envision physical education?
- How do parents evaluate the importance of physical education in their children's curricula?
- What are the social representations that parents hold regarding physical education at the secondary level?

- Research Method:

The researcher used a descriptive analytical approach suitable for the nature of the research.
- **Tools of the Study:**

The study employed a questionnaire to collect data, which included open and closed questions.

- Study Results:

The results of the study concluded that:
- The social representations of parents were positive towards physical education.
- Parents' awareness of the importance of physical education.

- Discussion and commentary on the study: This study found that the social representations of parents regarding physical education were positive, viewing it as an important subject that

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meets the true needs of the child and is recognized by various educational stakeholders. However, the researcher noted that the social representations of parents were relatively positive, based on an analysis of the functions of physical education, which develops multiple components related to the child's physical and mental health. There was a gap between their representation of physical education classes and their management; their representations indicated that it did not require a specialist in the subject, as they believed that children could manage themselves independently, a concept referred to as "self-management," allowing them to do without a guide

It can be said that this study is somewhat similar to our study in choosing social representations as the subject of study, as well as in selecting physical education as one of the school subjects. The difference lies in the operational definition of the educational actor, where parents were chosen in this study as educational actors. There is also a difference in the method of data collection and analysis, as the latter used quantitative analysis based on a questionnaire.

Title of the study: "The Reality of Sports Practice in Primary Education and Its Impact on Socio-Psychological Development," a study conducted by Al-Haj Qadir.

- Objectives of the study:

- To gain an in-depth understanding of the reality of sports practice in primary schools.
- To reveal the extent to which teachers can positively influence the social development of students.
- To highlight the importance of the socio-psychological aspect in shaping the student's personality.

- The Problematic:

- Can a primary school teacher fulfill their duty in supervising physical education classes in the absence of training?

- Is the current situation of primary schools regarding the existing structures and spaces suitable for achieving the objectives of the physical education class?

- Study Method:

The researcher used the descriptive method in the study.

- Study Tools:

As a data collection technique, a questionnaire was used on a sample consisting of 625 teachers and 50 primary school principals

- Discussion and Commentary on the Study: The physical education class regarding human competency and the resources allocated for it. It also aimed to uncover the extent to which teachers can positively influence the social development of students through the physical education class, as well as to highlight the importance of the psychosocial aspect in shaping the student's personality and the impact of the physical education class on their development. The study targeted primary school principals and teachers in Setif Province, with a sample consisting of 625 teachers and 50 primary school principals selected randomly. The researcher used a descriptive method and opted for the use of a questionnaire. The main findings revealed that primary school teachers have a secondary

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perspective regarding physical education and sports lessons.

This study agrees with ours in addressing the topic of physical education in the primary stage, and it also aligns in some of the results, namely that physical education at the primary level in terms of practice is almost nonexistent, in addition to the lack of teacher training, which has been a barrier to teaching this subject. This study differs from ours as we explore the representations of primary school teachers regarding physical education as well as the method of data collection and analysis, where the researcher used a quantitative approach and a questionnaire as a tool.

Concept of Physical Education:

It is defined by Zain Al-Abidin Hani as "that integrated aspect of general education, and it is an experimental field aimed at developing a suitable citizen from physical, social, and emotional perspectives through various forms of physical activity" (Zain Al-Abidin, 2016, p. 48).

1. Therefore, physical education is the individual's upbringing from all aspects, including skills, habits, knowledge, information, meanings, and social behavior.

2. Physical education as an educational system: It is a subject of activity that is not separate from other elements of the curriculum because it is part of it and a cornerstone of its foundations. It can be defined as a set of activities and skills that assist in the learning process.

3. The concept of physical education in Algeria: Physical education in Algeria is considered one of the basic subjects relied upon in the curriculum to achieve educational goals. It consists of organized activities and various forms of competitions, whether individual or collective, at all levels.

Regarding the Algerian educational system, it holds an important position and a recognized educational dimension. The Ministry of National Education is working to provide all the necessary means to expand sports practices and competitions among students. This is reflected in all the laws related to the organization of physical education in primary schools, as indicated in the national charter of 1976, which stated that educational institutions would include facilities that provide a wide range of physical and sporting activities. Special efforts will be made to train teachers in this field. (National Charter of 1976, p. 285).

In the year 2004, a decline in physical education practices was observed, as it was not given any importance by school administrators and was sometimes removed in favor of other subjects, often due to the lack of facilities and fields for it. Consequently, the bilateral committee proposed solutions to promote this subject, emphasizing the need to renew facilities and fill the shortage of trainers and teachers to enable students to practice this subject. Agreement between the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of National Education, cooperation agreement, 14-08-2004.

The modern Algerian legislations have also embodied significant importance for physical education, aiming to prepare all organizational

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conditions that assist in the development of this subject according to its significance and effective role in shaping a healthy personality for students throughout their educational stages. The modern school legislation stated that "physical education is a means of maintaining the psychological and physical health of the child, aiming to care for the student's health and protect them especially from posture deformities, and achieving integration between their physical, mental, and emotional health, thus eliminating the causes of psychological disorders, as well as providing better opportunities for learning" (School Legislation and Law 2004). We then find the law regarding physical education dated 27 Jumada al-Thani 1425 AH, corresponding to August 14, 2004.

Then we find the 2008 guiding law for education, which acknowledges the development of students' mental, psychological, and physical abilities through Article 04 of Chapter One as well as Article 37.

Objectives of Physical Education:

A/ Physiological objectives:

Enjoying a healthy body leads to an individual's vitality and energy, enhances skills, and these qualities can all be developed by the student through practicing physical education. Al-Shahat, p. 43.

B/ Objectives of motor skills:

These objectives focus on equipping him with an appropriate appearance that reflects on various aspects of his public life, as he performs his work easily, successfully, and optimally, and develops the various skills that an individual needs.

C/ Psychological objectives:

Physical education achieves the psychological compatibility of the student, providing him with joy, happiness, and delight; thus, he learns to accept others, learns about winning and losing, and learns to overcome selfishness, especially in team games. The care of Don Suna, p. 19.

Features and Characteristics of Primary School Students:

This stage begins at the age of six and ends at the age of eleven. During this stage, the child's growth increases in physical, psychological, and intellectual aspects. The characteristics of this stage are represented in:

A/ Intellectual and Emotional Development: Piaget's theory plays a significant role in understanding the intellectual development of children during childhood. Based on what has been presented, this stage can be summarized as follows:

In this phase, perception through the senses dominates, and awareness of the causes of events begins. They can also perform some classification operations based on sensory foundations, as well as form logical mathematical procedures but based on sensory data. The beginning of conceptualizing the characteristics of phenomena and objects enables them to use the ability of reversibility, allowing them to form concepts and use principles of differentiation, relativity, and comparison. Ben Yahia, 2009, p. 68.

B/ Physical Growth:

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Physical growth plays an important role in self-concept as well as the child's relationships with others, as physical growth involves anatomical changes in both quantity and quality. Males tend to be taller than females, while their weight is nearly equal. Coordination improves in terms of muscle by the end of this stage, allowing the child to master many basic movement skills such as walking, jumping, throwing, and even leaning towards learning motor skills. Muscle and nerve coordination relatively improves between the body and eyes, as well as the sense of balance. Ibrahim Kamel 2008, p. 45.

c/ Psychological and Social Development: The child's behavior during practice is characterized by a strong emotion that is linked to the rapid development of thinking and broad imagination. The child can focus on their tasks, seek out relationships, deepen them, and develop mental activity, as noted in page 8. Their perception of social values, behaviors, and attitudes may be confused, and they become more capable of both positive and negative self-regulation. Ben Yahia, p. 71.

The reality of physical education in primary institutions in Algeria:

If we reflect on the Algerian constitution, we find it filled with laws that emphasize the mandatory teaching of physical education in primary institutions. However, what is noticeable is the marginalization of this subject at the expense of other educational materials. Some studies, such as that of Haj Qadri, have also confirmed that teachers face many difficulties in teaching this subject, especially since they have not received specialized training in this area, yet primary school teachers are required to teach it. Additionally, the curriculum is not sufficient for teaching this subject; it is merely a supporting tool. Therefore, other complementary factors must be available, such as specialized training in this field (Qadri, 2010-2011, p. 156, 158). Furthermore, physical education is practiced in our schools under poor conditions. For instance, students are forced to conduct physical education in a schoolyard that is typically made of cement or asphalt, which poses a risk to the health of the students.

Methodological procedures:

Sample:

At this stage, we conducted interviews with individuals in the sample. We intentionally selected a sample consisting of 20 teachers from the city of Djelfa.

Study tools:

Interview:

The respondents were asked about their opinions regarding physical education and its position in the curriculum, with the aim of understanding their social representations of physical education and the reality of its teaching. The data were analyzed using the Alzest program for qualitative analysis to understand their representations of this subject.

Alzest Program:

This program was created by Maxe reneit and developed by Ben Zekri. It primarily works on achieving multivariate statistical techniques for discourse analysis and determining the quality of correlations in the text in order to

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discover new linguistics akin to Chomskyan linguistics. (Benzekri, j.p), 1982, p. 101

Analysis of the results and discussion:

Sample Distribution

Table 1 represents the distribution of the sample by gender.

%	number	Sex
25	5	male
75	15	feminine
100	20	total

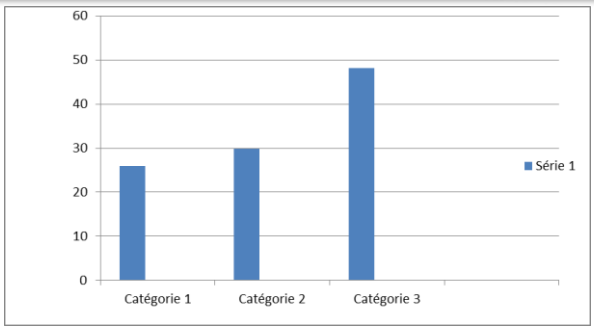
Table 2 represents the distribution of the sample by Age

%	number	Age
25	5	30-23
25	5	40-30
25	5	50-40
25	5	above50
100	20	total

Al-Zest Program

In this phase, the general text is divided into contextual units for the analysis of interview content—on the subject of physical education practice—89 ko, containing 450 key words in which 303 words and 12 textual units were analyzed.

Figure 1 The layers classified by the Alzest program



As shown in Figure 1, three layers were obtained: This layer contains 100 units, which is 25.90% of the classified units that illustrate the spatial relationship, such as the use of the following shapes: in, above, around (or the relationship with the place) and negation markers such as: not, no, nothing, I don't think so, won't. These categories emerged clearly during the teachers' statements, expressing that physical education has no importance or value compared to other academic subjects. This idea contradicts the content of the reform, which is clearly evident in the guiding law of 2008 that emphasized the importance of this subject, in addition to the competencies approach, which involves the integration of academic subjects without favoring one subject over another.

This layer contains 110 textual units, with 29.89% of the classified units appearing in a set of vocabulary items, which are a group of prominent categories in this layer. Such as: information, competency, performance in the educational process related to the subject of language and mathematics, and a set of negation markers, such as (no), (not), (will not), (I do not think). We notice that this layer is not different from the second layer except that it is more subjective, where the representation features of teachers appear, indicating that physical education is not a tool for achieving the educational competency demanded by the content of reform.

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This layer contains 186 units, which is equivalent to 48.18% of the classified units. It includes markers related to the teacher in the form of a set of pronouns - I, we, me, they - as well as units about the cultural environment of society, such as shame, women's behavior, men's behavior, and age. The textual units of this layer demonstrate that teachers expressed their representations of physical education in a personal manner, revealing the declarative background of the teachers. The procedural aspect of social representations presents the actor with a model of performance based on the principle of the community's culture, which acts as a driving force for representation.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

Social representations are a set of perceptions, innovations, and beliefs that dominate the values, principles, and behaviors of individuals. They represent a way of thinking and feeling reflected in individuals' actions; thus, they encompass subjective perceptions about the future. Therefore, the attention given to physical education, or lack thereof, is related to teachers' representations of this subject. This was proven by the results obtained, where we found that physical education is a marginalized subject compared to other academic subjects, which is due to the negative representations held by primary school teachers regarding this subject. This has led teachers to compensate for it with other subjects they perceive as more important. Additionally, the lack of resources and materials needed for teaching physical education causes teachers to often neglect it. The availability of resources and equipment is crucial for teaching physical education, as is the lack of dedicated spaces to conduct lessons, which can be attributed to the representations of the authorities regarding this subject.

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