

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Physical education by competencies in the South American context: Pedagogical perspectives and curricular approaches for the integral development of children

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ABSTRACT

Physical Education goes beyond the development of motor skills; it also includes cognitive, social and affective aspects. The aim of this research was to analyse the pedagogical perspectives and curricular approaches of the national physical education curricula by competences in South American countries. A systematic review was carried out by searching several Latin American databases due to the characteristics of the study, 2985 documents were collected, from which 22 were selected. An analysis of the similarities of the pedagogical perspectives and curricular approaches used in the physical education curricula by competences was carried out, which will allow educational authorities to make informed decisions for the implementation of changes and improvements in the teaching-learning process.

Keywords: physical education; approach; curriculum; pedagogy; competences

1. Introduction

The purpose of Physical Education is not only for students to develop motor skills but also cognitive, social and affective skills^[1], in which they build their own active and healthy lifestyle, through the acquisition of knowledge and practice of body movement, coordination, play, sport and physical activity^[2]; in addition to promoting socialisation, cooperative and collaborative work, the search for solutions, the selection of the best alternative that will help them to develop successfully in their daily lives^[3].

In recent years, it has been observed that national physical education curricula have undergone a positive transformation^[4], which was the displacement of the traditional teacher-centred approaches that only transmitted knowledge^[5], by learner-centred approaches towards the development of their competences^[6]; directly aligned to active, participatory and meaningful learning, which aligns them to be the protagonists of their own learning^[7].

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This curricular transformation seeks to ensure that students' learning is the result of the acquisition of knowledge, attitudes, skills and competences through interaction with real situations, the environment and their own experience^[8], these actions promote their autonomy and self-regulation^[9], as well as recognition of their learning style and pace of learning^[10]; i.e., learning is a truly internal process that is built on interactions between people in a context of interlearning^[11], through previous experiences connected to new experiences.

In this line, Physical Education has evolved towards the work by competences, in which it is oriented towards an open, flexible and contextualised teaching, which means that it adapts to the particularities of each context; it promotes pedagogical freedom on the teaching contents^[12]; it is connected to the requirements, demands and realities of every educational community^[13]; primarily promoting inclusion, equal opportunities and recognition of diversity^[14]; This also implies teaching with active methodologies and evaluation focused on holistic performance^[15], encompassing aspects such as learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live in society.

Some South American countries have adopted the competency-based curriculum^[16,17], but so far there are no studies that compare their pedagogical perspectives and curricular approaches, which makes it difficult to adjust them to the reality of the region, preventing or delaying informed decision-making for the implementation of changes and improvements in the teaching-learning process in Physical Education, towards effective and meaningful learning.

In this sense, it is essential to compare the pedagogical perspectives of the national curricula by competences from three dimensions:

- The cognitive dimension that seeks the understanding of concepts and principles; the development of critical thinking and analytical skills.
- The competence dimension that seeks the acquisition of motor and socio-emotional skills necessary for participation in physical, sporting and recreational activities.
- The formative dimension that seeks integral development such as training in values, the promotion of healthy habits, the promotion of inclusion and the development of positive attitudes for the practice of physical activity.

It is also necessary to compare the curricular approaches used in Physical Education, which serve for the development and implementation of the curriculum, these are defined by the graduate's profile, the general objectives of the area, as well as the context and the characteristics of the students; that is to say, it focuses on decisions about how to teach in order to promote learning experiences.

Objective and research question

The aim of this research was to analyse the pedagogical perspectives and curricular approaches of the national physical education competency-based curricula of Spanish-speaking South American countries. The research questions were the following:

- What are the pedagogical perspectives and curricular approaches of national physical education curricula by competencies in South America?
- What similarities exist between national physical education competency-based curricula in terms of pedagogical perspectives and curricular approaches?

2. Methodology

This article is based on systematic review research^[18], under the PRISMA methodology^[19] with the aim of compiling publications that reflect the competency-based Physical Education curricula of the South American countries, for this purpose we searched exclusively in Latin American databases such as Dialnet,

ScieELO, Redalyc and Google Scholar, as well as on the official platforms of the Ministries of Education of each country. This search was carried out during the month of June 2023, using keywords such as curriculum by competencies, Physical Education curriculum, relating them with the Boolean operator AND, obtaining a total of 2985 documents in the phase called identification.

The following exclusion criteria were applied: relevant documents published in the last 10 years (2013–2023) and geographical origin, i.e. referring to national curricula exclusive to the nine South American countries. In addition, we considered the inclusion of documents that provide information on pedagogical perspectives and curricular approaches to physical education curricula by competences and that are in Spanish. In the screening phase, a total of 34 documents were selected; and, finally, the summaries of the articles and the introduction of the curricular documents were reviewed, excluding those that do not belong to a physical education curriculum by competences, leaving 22 documents included in this phase.

Subsequently, an analysis was carried out based on the results achieved by the search engines and the methodology proposed. **Figure 1** shows the systematic review process adjusted to the PRISMA 2021 methodology, which consisted of three phases.

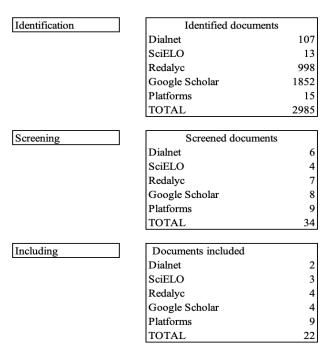


Figure 1. Systematic review process: PRISMA 2021.

3. Results and discussion

An exhaustive analysis of the 22 selected documents was carried out in order to identify and analyse the pedagogical perspectives and curricular approaches present in national physical education curricula by competences in Spanish-speaking South American countries. To achieve this purpose, these documents were grouped into two main categories: pedagogical perspectives and curricular approaches. Within each of these categories, the main ideas and concepts that underpin and characterise the category were extracted. This process of grouping and extraction of ideas allowed for a systematic organisation of the data and a deeper understanding of the trends and approaches present in the curricula studied.

Additionally, as part of the research, it was identified whether or not each of the nine South American countries analysed had a competency-based physical education curriculum. This information provided an

important context for understanding pedagogical perspectives and curricular approaches, as it allowed an assessment of the availability and scope of such curricula in the region.

The results of this analysis are presented in detail in **Table 1** below in response to the research question: 'What are the pedagogical perspectives and curricular approaches of national physical education competency-based curricula in South America?' This table also provides an overview of the main characteristics of competency-based curricula in the region, highlighting similarities and differences between countries and providing a solid basis for analysis.

Table 1. Pedagogical perspectives and curricular approaches.

N.	Country	National Curriculum for Physical Education by competences	Author and year	Pedagogical perspectives	Curricular approaches
1	Argentina	Yes, it focuses on the development of cognitive, behavioural and socio-emotional competences to learn to do with science and conscience	Dirección General de Cultura y Educación, 2008 ^[20] ; Rodríguez, 2018 ^[21]	It favours personal autonomy and bodily sensitivity, skilful disposition and binding motor skills, sensitive and rational motor learning, respect and protection of the different environments, critical appropriation of the contents and the promotion of healthy habits.	It focuses on corporeality because it links body awareness; body and motor constitution; and, reflection on one's own body and its motor capacities. Body Movement Focus focuses on the development of skills and knowledge related to body movement.
2	Bolivia	Yes, it focuses on the productive socio-community educational model, aimed at the dimensions Being, Knowing, Doing and Deciding. It seeks integral and holistic development in harmony with Mother Earth and the Cosmos.	Ministerio de Educación, 2023 ^[22] ; Ministerio de Educación, 2023 ^[23]	Encourages the development of skills, abilities and attitudes that enable students to participate in physical, sporting and recreational activities for life.	Traditionalist military approach because it focuses on exercises and practices of organisation, control, discipline and military training. Sportsmanship approach because it emphasises the development of specific skills and knowledge related to sport.
3	Chile	Yes, it is oriented towards the acquisition of motor skills and the promotion of an active and healthy life.	Rannau Garrido, 2020 ^[24] ; Ministerio de Educación Gobierno de Chile, 2023 ^[25] ; Mujica y Orellana, 2019 ^[26]	It favours the development of motor and socio-emotional skills in students, promoting an interdisciplinary vision.	Transdisciplinary approach because it transcends disciplines and addresses the complexity of human movement in a holistic and globalising way.
4	Colombia	Yes, the curriculum guidelines develop practical skills and knowledge applicable in everyday life.	Ministerio de Educación de Colombia, 2000 ^[27] ; González-Valeiro et al., 2019 ^[28] ; Gil et al., 2020 ^[29]	It favours the development of motor, social and emotional skills necessary for participation in physical, sporting and recreational activities; development of critical thinking and analytical skills.	Human development approach because it addresses personal and social development, enhancing the physical and playful dimension of the human being.
5	Ecuador	Yes, it is oriented towards learning skills, content, level of complexity and context, with an emphasis on communication, socioemotional, digital and mathematical competences.	Ministerio de Educación, 2021 ^[30] ; Posso, 2018 ^[31]	It favours motor, cognitive, social and affective development, for performance in daily life.	Playful, inclusive and embodied approach because it transforms physical education into an integral and participatory learning space, where physical, emotional and social skills are developed in a meaningful, fun and enjoyable way.

Table 1. (Continued).

N.	Country	National Curriculum for Physical Education by competences	Author and year	Pedagogical perspectives	Curricular approaches
6	Paraguay	Yes, it is based on the development of interrelated capacities in the use of knowledge, skills and attitudes to solve problems and challenges.	Ceballos Gurrola et al., 2022 ^[32] ; Ministerio de Educación y Cultura de Paraguay, 2014 ^[33]	Emphasises the development of diversified and complex motor skills; contributes to the knowledge and acceptance of one's own body, to express feelings and to establish codes of communication in healthy sporting, gymnastic and recreational situations.	Sporting approach because technical, tactical and regulatory skills are acquired in various sports and physical activities, promoting a healthy lifestyle.
7	Peru	Yes, because it is based on skills and knowledge to understand, apply and value the importance of motor skills, physical activity, health and social interaction.	Inca Cauti, 2021; (34) Ministerio de Educación del Perú, 2020 ^[35] ; Granados et al., 2023 ^[36]	Emphasises the development of autonomy through motor skills, assumes a healthy lifestyle and interacts through socio-motor skills.	Focus on corporeality because it is aimed at the consideration and understanding of the body and its relationship with the environment from an integral and autonomous perspective, through motor skills for a healthy life. Inclusive approach because it generates participatory learning regardless of their abilities, characteristics or individual conditions.
8	Uruguay	Yes, because it develops and strengthens specific skills and capacities through a practical and reflective approach.	Administración Nacional de Educación Pública, 2023 ^[37] ; Sarni y Noble, 2021 ^[38]	It emphasises the development of practical skills, holistic development (communication, critical thinking, metacognition, relationship), inclusion, promoting a healthy lifestyle and encouraging participation in society.	The embodiment approach because it emphasises the importance of the body and body awareness in the process of social and cultural construction.
9	Venezuela	Yes, because it focuses on the development of practical skills, social and citizenship competences, encourages critical reflection, values processes and performance.	Ministro del Poder Popular para la Educación, 2007 ^[39] Navarro et al., 2019 ^[40] ; Reyes, 2021 ^[41]	It emphasises physical, socio- emotional development, encourages critical thinking, reflection, and values such as inclusion, health and respect.	Inclusive and comprehensive approach because it generates respect for diversity, offers opportunities for participation, learning and enjoyment of physical activity and sport in an inclusive environment.

Regarding the second question, what similarities exist between the national physical education curricula by competences from their pedagogical perspectives and curricular approaches? The analysis was carried out separately, first the similarities of the curricula from the pedagogical perspectives and then the similarities by curricular approaches.

3.1. Pedagogical perspectives

It is clear that all nine countries have adopted a competency-based physical education curriculum, which reflects a pedagogical vision that goes beyond providing theoretical and practical learning specific to the area, but rather that this learning is also applied to real situations, paving the way for meaningful participation in society, from similar pedagogical perspectives, as analysed below:

Integral development. All physical education curricula emphasise the holistic development of students, which implies addressing motor, cognitive, social, affective and ethical aspects^[42], that promote holistic

education^[43], i.e. it focuses on all dimensions of the human being towards a formation of autonomy, communication, acceptance and recognition of everything that surrounds him/her^[44].

Development of motor and socio-emotional skills. In all countries, the development of motor and socio-emotional skills is oriented towards the consolidation of practical competences and social skills which are necessary for participation in physical, sporting and recreational activities aimed at improving health^[45], that allow them to interact with their surroundings and thus perform in everyday life.

Critical reflection. The nine curricula place greater emphasis on the development of critical thinking and analytical skills, i.e., it encourages reflection on one's own body, body practices and the values associated with movement and physical activity^[46]; the benefits are directly to the motor, emotional and social aspects which allows students to understand their physical condition^[47] and establish strategies for acquiring personal goals.

Promoting inclusion. The curricula propose an inclusive perspective, seeking to guarantee equal opportunities, regardless of individual abilities or characteristics, promoting the adaptation of pedagogical strategies that address the development of physical, social and affective capacities in a learning environment of equitable, equal participation and respect^[48].

3.2. Curricular approaches

The analysis of the curricular approaches of the physical education curricula by competences in the nine countries shows a diversity of approaches that emphasise embodiment, inclusion, human development and play, as well as specific approaches such as sport and body movement that emphasise technique and physical ability. These approaches reflect an orientation to all dimensions of the human being by promoting conscious participation in society through physical activity, movement and health^[49]. The similarity analysis is presented below:

Focus on embodiment. Several countries such as Argentina, Ecuador, Uruguay and Peru orientate Physical Education classes under the corporeality approach, which is based on the conception of the body as the central axis, in which the cognitive, motor, affective and social dimensions are considered for the teaching-learning process; Marcillo Ñacato et al.^[50] also develops body awareness, perception of the body and its relationship to the environment, which allows for the experience of movement and physical activity^[51].

Inclusive approach. All nine countries show the orientation of the inclusive approach in their physical education curricula, which ensures equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their motor, social, affective and cognitive skills or abilities. This implies fostering a deep respect for differences in participation^[52] and the construction of new teaching strategies, activities and resources^[53].

Comprehensive approach. Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Uruguay and Venezuela, are oriented towards integral development, in which the complex and multidimensional being is determined^[54], including cognitive, emotional, social and motor aspects in learning, which prioritises the consideration of all dimensions of the individual for optimal growth and development in society.

Sporting approach. Bolivia and Paraguay apply the sportsmanship approach in their physical education curricula, focusing on classes where they develop technical, tactical and strategic skills and knowledge related to individual and collective sport; Posso-Pacheco et al.^[55] seek to improve physical performance and competence in sporting activities^[56] through practice and technical instruction.

Playful approach. Ecuador and Uruguay mention the application of the playful approach in their physical education curricula, i.e., they understand the importance of play and fun as a form of learning and integral development in all activities and exercises carried out in class. It can be added that play is an educational value that favours creativity, socialisation, learning rules and norms^[57], fundamental to their social development.

Human development approach. Colombia and Uruguay present the human development approach in their curricula, seeking the personal and social formation of students, promoting a holistic vision, contributing to personal growth, self-realisation and emotional and social well-being, for the promotion of physical activity and health culture^[58].

Transdisciplinary approach. Chile is the country that stands out for the application of the transdisciplinary approach in its physical education curriculum, which indicates that it addresses the complexity of human motricity in a holistic and globalising manner^[59], i.e., physical education cannot be understood in isolation, but must be integrated with the different areas of knowledge^[60] as a complete human motor system.

Traditionalist military approach. Only Bolivia is oriented to the traditional military approach in its physical education curriculum, focusing the exercises and practices of organisation, control, discipline, towards a formation of student military discipline; this is not common in modern physical education, which seeks to promote values such as participation, cooperation and collaboration, in a learning process where the student is the one who builds his own understanding of the environment, where the desired discipline can be reached by applying different active strategies.

4. Conclusions

This research was based on the comparison and analysis of the pedagogical perspectives and curricular approaches used in the competency-based physical education curricula in the nine South American countries, which will allow educational authorities to make informed decisions for the implementation of changes and improvements in the teaching-learning process.

This study revealed that the South American countries share similar pedagogical perspectives; these aspects highlight the importance that the educational process should take into account all dimensions of the human being, in search of comprehensive training and their development in society. In addition, the diversity of curricular approaches used in Physical Education is highlighted, seeking to promote the different aspects of the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of students.

This analysis provides an in-depth understanding of the competency-based Physical Education curricula in South America, which serves as a basis for teacher training in the area, enabling them to address more effectively and meaningfully the motor, cognitive, social and affective development of students in the South American context of new ways of teaching physical activity, body movement, sport and recreation, aimed at promoting an active and healthy lifestyle in today's society.

Author contributions

Conceptualization, RJPP and BSPV; methodology, RJPP and JCMÑ; software, MGCC; validation, JCMÑ, RJPP and MGCC; formal analysis, RJPP; investigation, RJPP, BSPV, MGCC and JCMÑ; resources, RJPP; data curation, RJPP; writing—original draft preparation, RJPP, BSPV, MGCC, JCMÑ and ORÁ; writing—review and editing, ORÁ and RJPP; visualization, RJPP; supervision, RJPP; project administration, RJPP; funding acquisition, RJPP. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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