



Physical Education Textbooks in Primary Education: Analysis of Images and Stereotypes

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Abstract

Previous research has shown that images in physical education (PE) textbooks in the third stage of primary education (PRE) reproduced stereotypes in terms of gender, age, body, race and disability in relation to physical activity. Consequently, the sample needs to be expanded and this curriculum material analysed to see whether stereotypes related to the body and physical activity have been removed or are still in textbooks. The general purpose of this doctoral thesis is therefore to examine the images related to body stereotypes in physical activity which appear in PE textbooks in PRE. A descriptive study was conducted using content analysis as the main research technique. The sample consisted of 3,836 images, including drawings and photographs, from 34 PE textbooks for PRE by six Spanish publishers. Specifically, the publishers were: Anaya, Bruño, Edelvives, Santillana, Serbal and Teide, which published the textbooks under the Education Act 2/2006 of 3 May, better known as the LOE (Official State Gazette No. 106, 4.5.2006). The SAIMEF online tool was used to analyse the images based on two category systems (SC-I and SC-II) developed ad hoc in order to examine the images in which a person was performing physical activity – which was an adaptation of an instrument used in previous research – and the “other” images that appeared in these textbooks. The pilot test, the panel of experts and the inter-coders test on both instruments endorsed the scientific criteria of this tool. SPSS 22.0 software was used to process the information. Univariate and bivariate analysis was performed and Pearson’s chi-squared test was applied with a significance level of 5%. The results showed a predominance of male versus female figures, mainly white and without disabilities, who perform activities far from the sports elite and related to perceptual motor skills, representing mainly the “games and sports activities” content block in the PE subject area. This imbalance in the representation of the content blocks in the subject area does not comply with the minimum teaching requirements of Royal Decree 1513/2006 of 7 December (Official State Gazette No. 293, 8.12.2006) for the PRE stage in Spain.

Keywords: content analysis, image, stereotypes, physical education, primary education