

Sports Practice in the Favela: the Perception of Children and Teenagers

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Introduction:

The different campaigns organized by the media seek to influence people so that they can assimilate positive beliefs about the regular practice of sports, in the hope of making them active participants instead of mere spectators.

The research in Brazil on the phenomenon of sport for the lower classes approached the topic from the perspective of people involved in the projects. However, it can lead to wrong overestimations, such as indicating only people's adherence to the program, without taking into account dropouts and the high turnover of participants in the projects (Vianna & Lovisolo, 2009a).

Sports projects still do not seem to incorporate the evaluations carried out and still focus on public policies from the perspective of managers (Nogueira 2011; Oliveira et al, 2016; Kravchychyn & Oliveira, 2016), without considering the expectations of practitioners, which suggests alternative explanations in relation to the high rates of non-participants or dropouts (Vianna & Lovisolo, 2009a).

The main objective of this work is to analyze the contradiction between social representation in the benefits provided by physical activities and the withdrawal or abandonment of sports practice.

Data base

Studies published in Brazil that demonstrate care with sport participants were analyzed. This work has registered, analyzed, compared and interpreted the perception of kids and teenagers practice of sports in the favela. It has been focused on the exploitation of the universe of values, patterns and representations of these individuals from their experiences in their activities.

Results

We were able to evaluate that the permanence in the activity or the change to another modality depends on a personal evaluation, which is determined by the experiences during the practice. In this sense, the perception of the results achieved may seem to interfere with the participant's decision to continue practicing a certain sport, but also to change or even abandon. In fact, this reveals that self-assessment is a relevant issue when trying to explain dropouts or staying in the activity.

In the perception of those involved, sports qualification can represent a means of achieving personal goals and social success for these low-income populations (Vianna, 2003; 2007).

There is consistent evidence about the penetration of the dream of becoming an athlete or sports teacher in the imagination of these people (Vianna & Lovisolo, 2009a; 2009b), as they feel that the practice of sports in the favelas is the starting point to achieve such aspiration.

Young people seek in the projects the necessary systematization for the development of knowledge and skills in sport (Zaluar, 1994; Vianna & Lovisolo, 2005, Medeiros, 2020) - in order to increase the chances of

participating in competitions and the possibility of being invited by sport clubs.

We can then assume that, the sports projects that do not meet the expectations of the participants with regard to the chances of professionalization in the sport helps to increase the number of dropouts (Vianna, 2007; Vianna & Lovisolo, 2005).

While urban violence imposes a code of conduct that increases social oppression and limits the autonomy of residents, sports can be seen as an "exit" mechanism, whereby individuals leave the place where they are being oppressed and seek another place in its search for self-realization (Vianna, 2003).

Young people believe that talent and personal investment in alternative solutions to those that are socially valuable can be seen as opportunities to improve their lives. However, the lack of resources and adequate infrastructure to participate in competitions and, especially, the lack of support in the case of transportation, food, family assistance, etc. can undermine the desire of talented young people to succeed.

Dropouts appear when sports activities do not fulfill the aspirations of most followers who want to learn, deepen their skills and grow through sport (Vianna, 2007; Vianna & Lovisolo, 2005; Vianna & Lovisolo, 2009a; 2009b; Medeiros, 2020).

Final considerations

When projects' proposals that use sports as a mean of socializing and building citizenship are far from the expectations of individuals, the extent and depth of these projects are reduced. Although in these cases children are taken off the streets for a relatively short period, this is not enough to involve them in a relevant socialization process, and this should not be overlooked by managers and public policy think-tanks.

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