

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT IN THE CAMPANIA REGION

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### Abstract

*The didactic of physical activities in the school, while exercising the individual technical skills, never loses sight of the unity of knowledge and invites the child to reflect on his actions, on his mental and physical changes, but also on his knowledge. For this reason, the school differs from sports federations and associations, and it must rise to the role of leadership in the sport education. After these necessary preambles, it seems now particularly interesting to introduce the scenario laid out by ISTAT (Italian Statistics Institute) survey "100 statistics to understand the country we live in". The ISTAT analysis shows how Campania is the region after Sicily with the highest percentage of people with a sedentary lifestyle. It seems that in Campania, the primary school fails in its leadership role with regard to the sports education and the motor practices and in supporting non-sedentary lifestyles. In fact, in Campania the sport practice is very low and the level of giving up is particularly high. This discussion starts from this point and should be considered as a pilot study to evaluate a possible contributory cause of the status here outlined, i.e. the perception that teachers have of their own basic and technical skills in the motor field. It is not forbidden to think that, if this survey shows a widespread perception of lack of ability, this will adversely affect the motor teaching and be at least partly responsible for the situation described herein. Therefore the aim of this research is to monitor the level of the basic skills and of the motor teaching skills of primary school teachers in the region Campania, and the way they perceive the movement, highlighting any possible critical factor.*

**Key words:** *physical education, movement, knowledge, sport, didactics, Campania*

### Introduction

In the last decades we have been witness of a deep change of the Italian education and training systems, particularly with regard to the teaching strategic choices and practices. Today, the previous models, primarily based on the transferable feature of the information and aimed to ensure knowledge and skills, do not seem to be feasible because of social, cultural and scientific changes, that, in an even quicker and more frequent way, are questioning knowledge and information. No wonder then, that, to restore value and meaning to the educational system, the attention of the theoretical paradigms has gradually shifted "from teaching to learning" because "it is not enough to teach, but you have to teach to learn". This theoretical change is reflected in all the teachings whose methods should be reconsidered in the light of learning and not as mere transmission of information (Malizia & Cicutelli, 2009). In this context, it seems clear that the teacher's role should be seen in a perspective which mainly focuses on the role of "constructor of learning environments" (Varani, 2002). In this theoretical framework, the teacher's educational choices play a key role in helping learners to start a personal educational route. Therefore, the teacher has not only to transfer information but also to encourage the student to reflect in different disciplines. Particularly, by examining the teaching of motor skills in primary school, the teacher's role is not only oriented to the transmission of the knowledge of motor practice, but also to the

reflection on one's own relationship with his/her body and with the knowledge and to the maintenance of good motor habits. Hence, the teaching in this subject area should practically be oriented to "make children live beautiful and meaningful experiences to learn the importance of movement" (Bertagna, 2004). On the other hand, children aged between 6 and 10 years have a strong development of their motor skills and are particularly keen to learn through the game and the movement. Therefore, avoiding using this opportunity for the individual's global education and for his mental and physical development would be a serious failure from an educational point of view. Hence, the school, while exercising the individual technical skills, never loses sight of the unity of knowledge and invites the child to reflect on his actions, on his mental and physical changes, but also on his knowledge. For this reason, it differs from sports federations and associations, and it must rise to the role of leadership in the sport education. To guide the students in this process, the teacher's role is that of a constructor of knowledge and it necessarily requires the possession of a portfolio of skills that take into account not only the specific knowledge and techniques related to his/her subject area but also basic skills (Sibilio, 2003) that promote interaction with learners and make it possible to start their personal training programs. After these necessary preambles, it seems now particularly interesting to

introduce the scenario laid out by ISTAT (Italian Statistics Institute) survey "100 statistics to understand the country we live in". The ISTAT analysis shows how Campania is the region after Sicily with the highest percentage of people with a sedentary lifestyle. In particular in Campania 56.5% of people over the age of 3 states not to practice any physical activity; this datum appears particularly high when considered in relation to the Italian average which is equal to 36.1%. In this survey the sporting phenomenon seems to involve only the youth; in fact, more than 60% of those who practice physical activity in Italy is aged between 6 and 14 years. From what stated till now, it seems that in Campania, the primary school fails in its leadership role with regard to the sports education and the motor practices and in supporting non-sedentary lifestyles. In fact, in Campania the sport practice is very low and the level of giving up is particularly high. This discussion starts from this point and should be considered as a pilot study to evaluate a possible contributory cause of the status here outlined, i.e. the perception that teachers have of their own basic and technical skills in the motor field. It is not forbidden to think that, if this survey shows a widespread perception of lack of ability, this will adversely affect the motor teaching and be at least partly responsible for the situation described herein. The aim of this research is to monitor the level of the basic skills and of the motor teaching skills of primary school teachers in the region Campania, and the way they perceive the movement, highlighting any possible critical factor.

## Methods

The adopted methodology has provided the following phases:

1. Analysis and selection of the skills required to the Italian Primary School teachers of Motor and Sport Education.

2. Preparation of a multiple choice questionnaire on specific skills by the School of Sport of CONI. The questionnaire was designed to allow the self-assessment of the skill levels identified through 15 multiple choice items on a 5 levels scale. The skills analyzed in the test took into account not only the knowledge of the motor activity teaching, but also the *basic skills*. According to what stated above in the introduction, they especially focused on verbal and social skills, which are necessary and essential to dialogue with learners.

3. Test administration and statistical processing of data.

4. Interpretation of the data collected.

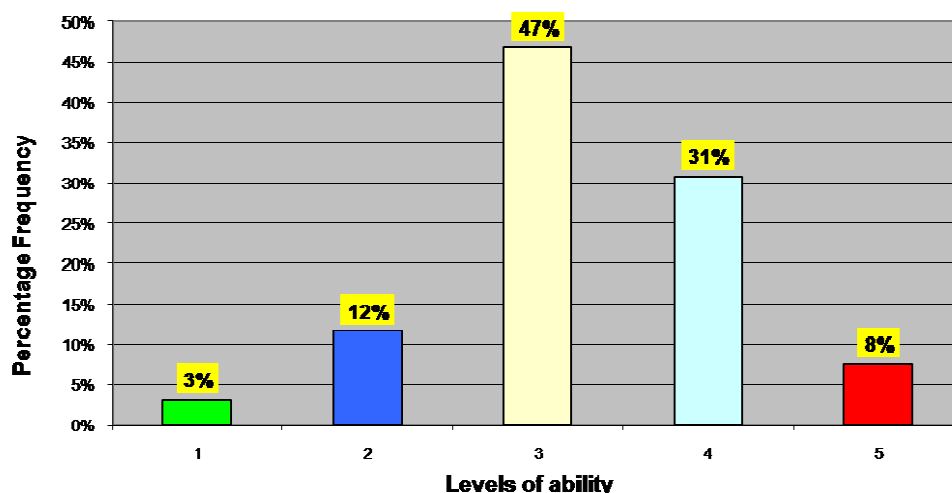
### Sampling

The survey was conducted on a group of 120 primary schools teachers. Sixty primary schools in the provinces of Naples and Benevento and affiliated with the Department of Educational Sciences of the University of Salerno have been involved.

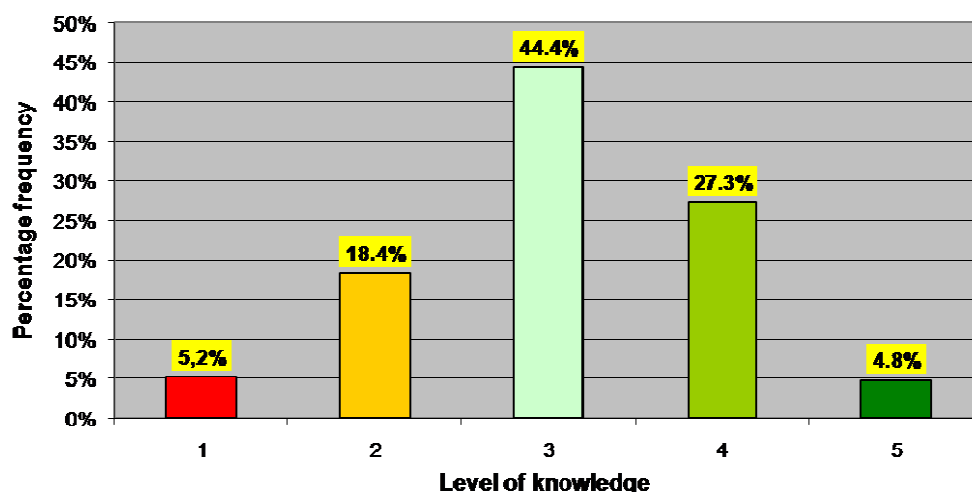
### Data Analysis

Graph 1 shows the levels of basic skills as they have been perceived by the tested teachers. It is possible to note that this phenomenon tends to concentrate around the average and above it. Approximately 47% of teachers think their basic skills are in the average and about 39% of teachers feel that their basic skills are above the average. Only about 15% of teachers reported their basic skills as insufficient.

Graph 2 shows the levels of specific knowledge in the motor activity field. Even in this case the phenomenon is concentrated around the average. However, it is interesting to note that here the phenomenon is distributed differently with a higher share (equal to 23.6%) of interviewed who felt their knowledge in this field as insufficient.



Graph 1 Assessment of teacher's skills in Campania



Graph 2 Self-assessment of the levels of knowledge of Primary School Teachers in Campania Region

### Discussions and conclusions

The data in our possession and the exploratory nature of this article do not reach a firm conclusion or a comprehensive analysis of the causes that may have caused the state of Campania as described in the introduction. It is very likely that this also depends on factors outside the school such as socio-economic, cultural, and other factors that have not been considered here. Starting from the assumption that the practice of the sport activity and the sedentary lifestyles found in Campania were also determined by how motor activities are taught in primary school, this survey focused on the analysis and identification of possible critical points in teaching this subject that may have contributed to the scenario herein described. The data suggest that a possible problem of the teaching of motor activities in Campania may depend not so much on the *basic skills*, but on the

specific knowledge in the motor field. In fact, the data show a widespread lack of preparation on the motor activity subject. Almost one out of four teachers perceives his/her own training in this specific subject area as poor or at least inadequate. This may have had a negative impact on the motor activity teaching, both in the methodologies used and in the time dedicated to it. It may also have contributed to the disastrous state of the current motor-sport practice in Campania. Without further investigations, it is not possible to establish exactly how and how much this may have influenced the sedentary lifestyles and the motor activity teaching in primary schools in the region Campania. However, from the situation described in this article it would seem necessary to intervene with training and qualification courses that will enable primary schools teachers in Campania to increase and re-evaluate their skills and knowledge in the motor field.

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## TJELESNI ODGOJ I SPORT U REGIJI CAMPANIJA

### Sažetak

*Didaktika tjelesnih aktivnosti u školi, za vrijeme vježbanja pojedinačnih tehničkih vještina, nikad ne gubi iz vida jedinstvo znanja i poziva dijete da reagira na svoje akcije, na njegove mentalne i fizičke promjene, ali također i na njegova znanja. Iz ovih razloga škola se razlikuje od sportskih federacija i asocijacija i mora rasti do uloge vodilje u sportskoj edukaciji. Nakon ovih neophodnih pretpostavki, čini se od posebnog interesa predstaviti scenarij koji postoji u ISTAT (Talijanski Statistički Institut) kao anketa "100 statistika za razumijevanje zemlje u kojoj živimo". ISTAT analiza pokazuje kako je Campania regija koja poslije Sicilije ima najveći postotak ljudi sa sedentarnim načinom života. Izgleda da je u Campaniji, osnovna škola promašila u svojoj vodećoj ulozi u odnosu na sportsku edukaciju i motoričku praksu i isto tako u podršci nesedentarnom načinu života. U stvari, u Campaniji sportska praksa je vrlo niska a razina odustjanja jako visoka. Rasprava počinje od ove točke i treba sve biti razmotreno kao pilot istraživanje za evaluaciju mogućih uzroka doprinosa ovdje rečenom status i.e. percepciji prema kojoj učitelji imaju svoje temelje i tehničke vještine u prostoru motorike. Nije pri tome zaboravljeno da ako ova anketa pokaže jako rasprostranjenu percepciju nedostatka sposobnosti, to te će štetno utjecati na motoričko učenje i bit će zadnji dio odgovoran za prethodno opisanu situaciju. Dakle, cilj istraživanja je praćenje razine temeljnih vještina i vještina motoričkog učenja učitelja u osnovnoj školi u regiji Campania, i načina na koji oni doživljavaju gibanje, osvjetljavajući bilo koji kritični faktor.*

**Ključne riječi:** tjelesni odgoj, gibanje, znanje, sport, didaktika, Campania

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