



## Physical education program in a competency-based approach in secondary school in Benin

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### Abstract

This historical study, but which leaves room for an intrusion of sociology, is part of the concern about the evolution of physical education and sports programs, since the adoption of the competency-based approach as a new teaching model. learning. The research question was: Has there been significant progress, in terms of pedagogical teaching programs for PE, in secondary school, that can be noted since the advent of the competency-based approach? On this subject, we have put forward the following research hypothesis: the Beninese secondary school is very rich in PE programs since the new reforms and the advent of the competency-based approach. And to test this hypothesis, we had the general objective of exposing the changes and progress known by the teaching of physical education in terms of study programs since the advent of the APC. And we have as specific objectives: to expose all the PE programs developed since the first program of the APC era; and analyze progress in the occurrence of programs.

This qualitative study conducted in the field through documentary research and interviews resulted in a confirmation of our hypothesis. Concretely, concerning physical education and sports, the new programs of the skills-based approach began with the first form in 2005, with their application guides. And gradually from the sixth to the terminal from 2005 to 2011 each class had its program and its Guide. After observing a break in 2012, the same scenario resumed from first form in 2013, to arrive in seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) class in 2019 where this time a report was ordered in 2020 and delivered in 2021 This report was presented in 2021 at a national symposium. In the end, PE in Benin is rich in school programs for each class from the sixth to the final year, and these programs have even experienced a rapid grooming without it being known, unfortunately, for what reasons, on what bases, to correct what and to make what improvements?

**Keywords:** physical education, evolution, program, advent, competency-based approach

### Introduction

Education is a key and essential sector for a country and its development, which is why it is a constant concern for each member of a people as well as leaders. In doing so, because in each country the contexts and realities: cultural, social, geographical, political, economic, etc., are not the same, each of them executes, among many others, a model of education of its population. From 1990, when Benin turned the page of an "a-democratic" socialist political past to open that of democratic renewal, its people decided to do the same with its educational model. The recommendations of the historic conference of the living forces of the nation organized in Benin in February, went in the direction of carrying out new reforms in the education system, to adapt new political orientations based on democracy and the rights of the man to the type of man to be formed. They led to the organization of general meetings on education and the definition of new teaching programs instead of the programs by objectives in force, hence the advent of new educational programs (NPE) and the competency-based approach (APC).

Within the framework of this article, we wanted by a historical study which allows the intrusion of sociology, to reconstruct events concerning the PE program from this decision to change the model to the present day.

Following this introduction, a first phase relating to the context of the research is developed. Then is presented the

literature review and the problem with the formulation of hypotheses. The third part focuses on the methodological approach and outlines the research methods, investigation tools and data processing. Finally, we present the results before concluding.

### 1. State of the problem

PE in Benin is at the heart of tensions resulting from contradictory forces that affect its functioning. Among these, we can isolate the contradictions ordered by sociological, sociopolitical or even educational approaches. They are played out between the local, national and transnational levels, between traditional culture and modern culture, between the permanence inherited from the past specific to Beninese society, and the requirements of modernization.

From the balance of power generated by the interaction between these vectors, stems a hegemony of modern culture over traditional culture, which manifests itself among Beninese teachers, by the subordination of PE to modern-type physical and sporting activities, to the detriment of traditional body practices. With regard to the precise repercussions of this policy, only a specific sociological analysis can make it possible to measure the real consequences (Gouda, 1993)<sup>[8]</sup>.

Physical Education since the colonial period has used gymnastics and then sports activities. And since the

beginning of the 2000s, while it is the pedagogy by objectives (PPO) which was in vogue since the end of the 80s, the approach by competence (APC) takes power, even if its application was progressive. This situation raises concerns about the evolution of PSE programs since the adoption of this competency-based approach as a new teaching-learning model.

Has there been significant progress, in terms of pedagogical teaching programs for PE, in secondary education, that can be noted since the advent of APC?

In this regard, we have formulated the following research hypothesis:

Hypothesis: Beninese secondary education is very rich in PE programs since the new reforms and the advent of the competency-based approach.

And to test this hypothesis we had as general objective:

General objective: To expose the modifications and progress known by the teaching of physical education in terms of study programs since the advent of the APC.

And more precisely: specific objectives

- expose all the PE programs developed since the first program of the APC era
- analyze progress in the occurrence of programs.

The following methodological approach allowed us to test our hypothesis and achieve our objectives.

## 2. Methodological approach

This study is of a qualitative nature since it does not give figures but rather analyzes the occurrence of school programs. The population is largely made up of documents (archival documents, etc.) supplemented by people who testify to the period of the advent of the APC. The resource persons have the particularity of having experienced the period of Pedagogy by Objective and the Approach by Competence while having a relationship with teaching by APC.

To collect the information, we used two (02) techniques: content analysis and interviews and 02 types of tools, namely: the research grid/document collections and the interview guide. The grid has facilitated a search and a systematic analysis of all the documentation relating to PE in general and to the execution of PE since the advent of APC in particular. This documentation can be grouped into two parts, namely: the official texts; and vulgates (theses, dissertations, EPS journals, articles, internet research, preparation sheets).

The interview guide made it possible to record, on the same specific topics, 02 PE inspectors. The themes focused on: the philosophy of the new programs; the development of PE programs from the first to the current ones; and expectations. Equipped with an audio recorder, we administered our interviews to our resource persons. And we proceeded to a transcription of what was recorded during the various interviews. And the contents of these transcriptions were analyzed and then classified by operational objectives. These data were cross-checked with the data from the documents.

Throughout our research, we were entitled to sympathy, benefited from a warm welcome, support, and fraternal collaboration from our subjects. However, He will undoubtedly say that any human project presents difficulties relating to its start, its development and its maturity. Thus, the unavailability of certain subjects who claim lack of time did not allow for more in-depth investigations.

## 3. Results

### 3.1 The genesis of the new programs and the competency-based approach

The genesis of the study programs designed according to the competency-based approach dates back to the holding of the conference of the vital forces of the nation in February 1990. This national conference, among other decisions, had recommended the organization of the general states of education held in Cotonou from October 2 to 9, 1990 and strongly hoped that the study programs would be reviewed. Within this framework, the government in January 1991 adopted, then published the framework document of educational policy which engaged the entire Beninese education system in a process of reform. The implementation of this reform started in 1994 at the primary level and it was not until 2001 that it will reach general secondary education in 2001, with a range of experiments. This desire has been translated into concrete facts by the development of fifteen action plans grouped into three components: the educational component, the institutional component and the planning component (Codjo, 2021) <sup>[5]</sup>. Prior to 2004, EPS had not been structured on the basis of recognized and accepted official texts. In the new curricula, the preferred conception of learning is inspired by educational policy and pedagogical foundations. It guides the choice of skills and proposals for planning teaching or, more specifically, learning situations. It is about making choices that should allow students to adapt to a constantly changing world and build the skills and attitudes needed to prepare for life. With regard to the content of learning, the emphasis is on the development of skills, abilities, strategies and knowledge.

### 3.2 The evolution of the development of programs and teaching guide

From the analysis of secondary study guides and programs, it appears that they have been published every year, from 2005, starting with the sixth grade. In 2006 it was the turn of the fifth, 2007 the fourth and 2008 the third. 2009 saw the accession of the development of guides and programs to the second cycle of secondary school, by the second class. In 2010, teachers and learners had the guides and programs for the first class and in 2011, the loop was closed with the program and the guide for the seventh class.

After this frantic race during which each year guide and program of a class was published in a progressive way, in 2012 we notice a break, before resuming in 2013 the same scenario with new program and guide of the sixth class. 2014 was the year of the fifth; 2015 that of the fourth; 2016 that of the third; 2017 that of the second; 2018 that of the premiere; and finally 2019 that of seventh.

In 2020, a report had been commissioned by the ministry in charge of education with regard to secondary education, under the impetus of the Department of the Pedagogical Inspection for Innovation and Quality (DIPIQ) and the management of secondary education. And in 2021 during a meeting this report was presented by Inspector Codjo.

Since this foundation, no program or guide has been developed. But while we deplored the non-existence of a physical education manual, which is why some Beninese, even the most highly placed, such as Minister Mahugnon Kakpo said that physical education had no importance to claim, in September 2022, nineteen (19) works are offered to the political-administrative authorities. The reasons for

this sudden logorrhea in textbooks deserve a study to have the final word.

In terms of guides, the introductory part is identical for all classes. The different programs are structured as follows: 1° General orientation; 2° Skills; 3° Cross-cutting skills; 4° Cross-disciplinary skills; 5° Disciplinary skills; 6° Learning situation.

### Discussion

At first, it took seven (07) years, from 2005 to 2011, for the PE teaching program from the first class to the last class to be complete. And this without anyone knowing or seeing the merits of this way of proceeding. And the same scenario resumed from the year 2013 to 2019.

We should have had a small assessment of the application of the programs for all these years 2005-2011, as they did in 2020. This assessment would identify the strengths and weaknesses and make proposals that would justify the enrichment or the improvement of the programs applied between 2005-2011 to give those of 2013-2019.

The other very important finding is that physical education programs find it difficult to disaffiliate from the colonial past and the influence of the world of sport. With the colonial past, we always see this reference to military preparation with a large place offered to activities reminiscent of military preparation. Indeed, under colonization, the military instructors called upon to teach PE used sports activities which also prepared for war with: throws for throwing grenades or other devices; gymnastics, jumps and races as the daily life of a soldier on the front.

The influence of the world of sport can be read with strict respect for the regulations enacted by sports federations even though they could well be influenced and adapted to contexts and environments.

Generally, the program is developed with the three types of competence, namely disciplinary competence, transdisciplinary competence and cross-curricular competence. After developing the program, the teacher's guide is developed to facilitate the application of the program. In this guide are proposals that we make to the teacher, proposal of activities that he can carry out to precisely achieve the skills expected of the student. What characterizes the competency-based approach is that the teaching objectives are no longer in the order of content to be transferred but rather a capacity for action to be achieved by the learner.

Until 2004, in fact, each establishment organized itself and made its establishment councils, and according to the material and the infrastructures chose the APS to teach. The new EPS programs have established with requirement, officially what to do in each class and each teacher knows the APSA that he must teach at such a period when he is in such a class, with proposals for knowledge and technique although it is debatable.

At the beginning, he had three PE learning situations and each had 8 weekly three-hour sessions. Over time the number of sessions has increased, then today we are at 13 weekly three-hour sessions. This evolved because the studies had shown that the 8 sessions were not enough, because it was just two sessions for each of the APS, and we found that the two sessions were not really enough to teach. The work showed this and then over time we started to increase the number. At one point, we went from 8 to 12 with a reduction in the number of APSAs in order to be able

to give more time to the APS being evaluated. Now we are at 13 sessions at the precise moment. Also, in the guide and program documents there are re-read and updated versions. Practically every year the documents evolved and took into account the observations. In short, we currently have 13 sessions and 02 learning situations instead of 03.

The diagnostic evaluation allows the teacher to see frankly where these students are in relation to what is expected in the program, which now facilitates their planning from the first session, and allows better organization over time.

### Conclusion

To conclude, we note that Benin began by reforming its education system following the national conference of February 1990, with the assizes on education, of October of the same year 1990 in a new democratic regime. These meetings had decided: that the "new school" of the old regime deemed "autocratic" be proscribed; that new teaching programs, adapted to a democratic regime, be developed with new learning approaches. These heavily funded reforms were immediately implemented, from the bottom, that is to say primary school, upwards, gradually climbing the ladder in secondary school to the seventh class.

Concretely, concerning physical education and sports, the new programs of the skills-based approach began with the sixth (6th) class in 2005, with their application guides. And gradually from the sixth to the terminal from 2005 to 2011 each class had its program and its Guide. After observing a break in 2012, the same scenario resumed from the sixth (6th) class in 2013, to arrive in Terminal in 2019 where this time a report was ordered in 2020 and delivered in 2021. This report was presented in 2021 at a national symposium.

In the end, PE in Benin is rich in school programs for each class from the sixth to the final year, and these programs have even experienced a rapid grooming without it being known, unfortunately, for what reasons, on what bases, to correct what and to make what improvements?

To arrive at these results, we carried out a historical study, but which leaves room for an intrusion of sociology. We started from the concern about the evolution of PE programs since the adoption of the competency-based approach as a new teaching-learning model. The research question was: Has there been significant progress, in terms of pedagogical teaching programs for PE, in secondary education, that can be noted since the advent of APC? On this subject, we have put forward the following research hypothesis: the Beninese secondary school is very rich in PE programs since the new reforms and the advent of the competency-based approach.

And to test this hypothesis we had the general objective: To expose the changes and progress known by the teaching of physical education in terms of study programs since the advent of the APC. And more precisely: expose all the PE programs developed since the first program of the APC era; and analyze progress in the occurrence of programs. This qualitative study conducted in the field through documentary research and interviews resulted in a confirmation of our hypothesis.

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