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*Professional lives of two Brazilian physical education teachers and researchers: matches and mismatches with collaborative practices*


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## PROFESSIONAL LIVES OF TWO BRAZILIAN PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS AND RESEARCHERS: MATCHES AND MISMATCHES WITH COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES

*VIDAS PROFISSIONAIS DE DOIS PROFESSORES DE EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA E PESQUISADORES BRASILEIROS: ENCONTROS E DESENCONTROS COM AS PRÁTICAS COLABORATIVAS* 

*VIDAS PROFESIONALES DE DOS PROFESORES DE EDUCACIÓN FÍSICA E INVESTIGADORES BRASILEÑOS: COINCIDENCIAS Y DESAJUSTES CON LAS PRÁCTICAS COLABORATIVAS* 

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this article is to explore the collaborative practices and socialisation experiences of two Physical Education (PE) teachers and researchers in Brazil. This qualitative and collaborative case study had as participants two Brazilian professionals working in schools and universities and two critical friends. Critical incidents related to collaborative practices were identified through charts and photo-elicitation in four online meetings. The results were analyzed in light of the theory of teacher socialisation and revealed that: (a) collaborative practices can be considered as complex and dialogical processes that provide different experiences (positive and negative) in life and career; and (b) socialisation as a non-linear process that can be enhanced with research and collaboration. The findings contribute to broadening the understanding of collaborative practices in support of sustainable and meaningful careers.

**Keywords:** Faculty. Teacher Training. Physical Education. Occupational Socialisation.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

There is a growing body of research on collaborative practices and the continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers which highlights the benefits for students, teachers and educational change (HARGREAVES, 2019; HARGREAVES; O'CONNOR, 2017). Collaborative practices have had an impact on teachers' CPD through the creation of learning communities, collaborative inquiry, collaborative action research, lesson study, school networks, self-evaluation processes, and peer review (HARGREAVES, 2019). However, it is still not clear 'what collaboration looks like, how it can vary, what are the relative benefits of different kinds of collaboration, and when collaboration can be harmful as well as helpful' (HARGREAVES, 2019, p. 604). It is argued that learning occurs collaboratively when two or more teachers are encouraged to share their learning and experiences and to offer mutual support when they face challenges along their career trajectories (CORDINGLEY *et al.* 2003; HARGREAVES; O'CONNOR, 2017). Teachers' collaborative practices are part of a *continuum*, from informal conversation sharing ideas about teaching, to more robust, interdependent relationships, characterised by shared planning and joint work (BORGES; LESSARD, 2007).

In this way, teachers' collaboration during their professional development can occur informally and spontaneously or induced through formal CPD programs or initiatives. However, when collaborative practices are imposed or forced, called 'contrived collegiality' by Hargreaves (2019), teachers tend to collaborate less. In the same way, when collaborative practices do not provoke questioning about current practices, beliefs, and reflection to solve common problems, collaboration between teachers becomes limited (HARGREAVES; O'CONNOR, 2017; KEAY, 2006). On the other hand, when collaboration arises spontaneously around teachers' interests and activities, motivation to participate increases.

In physical education (PE), collaborative practices have been a way to overcome traditional (often ineffective) CPD activities (HUNUK, 2017; KEAY, 2006; PARKER; PATTON, 2017; PARKER *et al.* 2022). In this body of research, collaborative practices, specifically learning communities and collaborative action research, have demonstrated changes in teachers' attitudes and beliefs (DEGLAU; O'SULLIVAN, 2006; OLIVER *et al.* 2018), the effectiveness of teaching practices (BEZEAU *et al.*, 2020), professional identities (LUGUETTI *et al.* 2019); and the development of a sense of community and empowerment (GONÇALVES *et al.* 2021; GOODYEAR; CASEY 2015; KEAY, 2006; TANNEHILL; MACPHAIL, 2017). In a recent scoping review, Parker *et al.* (2022) found 95 empirical studies in 12 languages between 1990 and 2020 about learning communities and CPD-PE, emphasising the exponential growth of research in the field. Yet, to date, there are few studies available in the literature examining the experiences of collaborative practices as CPD for Brazilian PE teachers (BRACHT *et al.*, 2005; GONÇALVES *et al.*, 2021; LUGUETTI; OLIVER, 2019).

To better understand the impact of collaborative practices within the context of two PE teachers' careers (Marcos and Luiz) we draw on teacher socialisation

which has been identified as a useful framework to understand teachers' professional lives and careers (IANNUCCI; MACPHAIL, 2018). Teacher socialisation is a field of scholarship based on occupational socialisation theory (TEMPLIN; SCHEMPP, 1989) that seeks to understand the dialectical process of 'becoming' a teacher and a participating member of the 'society of teachers' (ZEICHNER; GORE, 1990, p. 329). Teacher socialisation acknowledges that teachers' assumptions, beliefs, and practices are constantly (re)shaped by the contexts (for example, physical, political, social) and encounters (for example, people, collaborations, and incidents) throughout their experiences leading up to and including recruitment into the profession, their teacher education, and throughout the duration of their careers.

According to Templin and Schempp (1989), there are three phases in the teacher socialisation process: *acculturation*, *professional socialisation*, and *organisational socialisation*. *Acculturation* spans from birth up until an individual begins their formal teacher education training. *Professional socialisation* spans the course of an individual's formal teacher education training. This is followed by the *organisational socialisation* phase whereby teachers are continuously learning how to be a teacher 'on the job' through experiences such as navigating the socio-political context of schools. A more recent addition is a 'fourth' phase of teacher socialisation which is referred to as *secondary professional socialisation* (LEE; CURTNER-SMITH, 2011). *Secondary professional socialisation* describes the socialisation experiences of teachers who are seeking careers in academia (RICHARDS; EBERLINE; TEMPLIN, 2016) such as graduate students in the process of completing a PhD and through the years leading up to securing a tenured position.

In this way, teacher socialisation provides a framework to better understand the professional lives and experiences of teachers throughout the course of their careers. Like the professional lives of mid-career teachers of PE (IANNUCCI; MACPHAIL, 2018), there is very little research on the socialisation experiences of mid-career academics (members of the professoriate). Further, studies demonstrate several factors that influence PE teachers' professional lives and careers (RICHARDS *et al.*, 2014), yet there is a gap in the literature on how collaborative practices might influence PE teachers' socialisation. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to explore the experiences of collaborative practices throughout the socialisation of two dual-role PE teachers and researchers at universities in Brazil. Particularly, this paper seeks to answer the following research questions: (a) What occurrences of collaborative practice have Marcos and Luiz experienced as continuing professional development throughout their careers?; and (b) What characteristics of collaborative practice matched and mismatched their individual socialisation process?

## 2 METHODS

This qualitative and collaborative research used a case studies methodology (FLYVBJERG, 2006; YIN, 2015) based on narratives of real-life experiences of collaborative practices in the professional lives and careers of two Brazilian PE teachers and researchers.

## 2.1 CONTEXT AND PARTICIPANTS

The study was developed in Brazil, a context where social inequalities directly impact the quality and development of education. Teachers are usually paid less than other professionals with the same level of education. Because the salary teachers receive in most regions of Brazil is low, they tend to work in multiple schools in order to earn enough money for a living. In addition, almost half of the Brazilian teachers are without on-going teaching contracts or are not permanent teachers, which further limits their work rights, salaries and stability (GATTI; BARRETO; ANDRÉ, 2011). Regarding the process of becoming teachers, legally, all teachers must be trained in teacher-education programmes (minimum of four years). Brazil adopts a mixed system of public (funded by federal or state governments) and private universities (for-profit or not-for-profit).

Participants included two Brazilian PE teachers and researchers (Marcos and Luiz). They work in schools and are also teacher educators in Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) programmes. They both have PhDs and experience engaging with collaborative research internationally. Both Marcos and Luiz have received the International Association for Physical Education in Higher Education (AIESEP) Developing Country Scholar Award<sup>1</sup> for their research contributions in the field (Marcos in 2021 and Luiz in 2022). They live between two “worlds”, the school and the university.

Luiz is a 33-year-old white male, teacher, researcher and teacher educator. He studied PE at a public university in São Paulo state where he also completed a master’s degree and his PhD. He has been working for the past 10 years as a teacher both within public schools and private universities and also outside the school environment (e.g., sports manager and coach). Marcos is 44 years old, white and has 22 years of professional experience. He graduated in PE and obtained a master’s degree at a public university in a Brazilian middle-west state, then he obtained his PhD from a university in Canada. He has been a teacher in public schools since 2000 and has worked as a teacher educator at universities and CPD programmes.

Participants also included two critical friends, Carla and Cassandra who are teacher educators and researchers working and living in Australia. Carla is Brazilian who shares a deep understanding of the Brazilian educational and social context as well as experience in researching collaborative practices. Cassandra is Canadian and has experience with the methodology implemented as well as an understanding of socialisation theory. Their interactions, questions and provocations made it possible to expand the understanding and elicitation of contextual specificities to better understand the circumstances in which the study was developed. Currently, many researchers in PE have used the critical friend as a form of interactivity and collaboration between researchers and teachers or teacher educators (FLETCHER; NI CHROININ; O’SULLIVAN, 2016).

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<sup>1</sup> The AIESEP Developing Country Scholar Award is intended to support scholars from a developing country to attend the AIESEP conference in order to recognize their scholarly work and create stronger connections between AIESEP and developing countries.

## 2.2 DATA COLLECTION

Data were collected through the identification of critical incidents (using living graphs and photo-elicited dialogue) across four collaborative meetings in English and Portuguese. We collected the data through online collaborative meetings (through Zoom) between the two PE teachers (Marcos and Luiz) and the critical friends (Carla and Cassandra).

In these meetings, Marcos and Luiz presented their narratives related to collaborative practices throughout their socialisation process. The focus of the narratives was on the identification of critical incidents of collaborative practice throughout their career (ABRAMIS, 2001; TRIPP, 1993, 1994). Critical incidents (ABRAMIS, 2001; IANNUCCI, 2018; TRIPP, 1993; 1994) can be understood as any event or situation that marked a significant change in the life of a person, institution or social phenomenon. Such incidents may include common events in everyday classroom life (or teaching work), not just dramatic or apparent situations to be discovered (ABRAMIS, 2001). These incidents are not time-limited, they can last for a short time or evolve over the course of a year.

To identify and talk about critical incidents, two techniques were used, living graphs (IANNUCCI, 2018) and photo-elicitation (BOUCHER, 2017; BRYMAN, 2012; HARPER, 2002). Living graphs are a tool for mapping the significance and perceived impact of critical, self-identified incidents over time on participants' career paths (IANNUCCI, 2018). In the case of this research, critical incidents related to collaborative practices experienced by participants in the schools or universities where they worked were identified. In this way, the living graphs functioned as an opportunity for participants to structure and reflect on their career paths before sharing it during the meetings. In the same way, photo-elicitation was a useful strategy adopted by the participants to facilitate the recall memories and depth of dialogue when sharing their respective critical incidents. This was especially useful when sharing their experiences of each critical incident in English, an additional language for both Marcos and Luiz. Participants selected images of their life story that could represent some of the points in the living graphs. They presented their photos during the meetings which were discussed together with the critical friends.

Throughout the research planning and data collection process, participants and critical friends exchanged emails to organise the collaborative work, share artifacts produced for the research (e.g., PowerPoint slides, texts in Word documents), scholarly papers, suggestions, and additional information not mentioned during the meetings.

## 2.3 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis involved inductive and iterative analysis using thematic analysis methods (BRAUN; CLARKE, 2019). Through deep and prolonged data immersion, thoughtfulness and reflection, themes were produced. The analytical process was framed by the research questions: (a) What occurrences of collaborative practice have Marcos and Luiz experienced as continuing professional development throughout their careers? and (b) What characteristics of collaborative practice matched and mismatched their individual socialisation process?

The data were organised chronologically and filed by session date, and the analysis proceeded through several steps. All authors read all data sets and first individually then collaboratively (two one-hour meetings) engaged in the process of coding where statements and ideas were developed as data was read and re-read. Marcos, Luiz, Carla, and Cassandra separately identified codes based on the collaborative analysis meetings. Finally, all authors engaged in a collaborative process of constructing the themes, considering the socialisation theory approach.

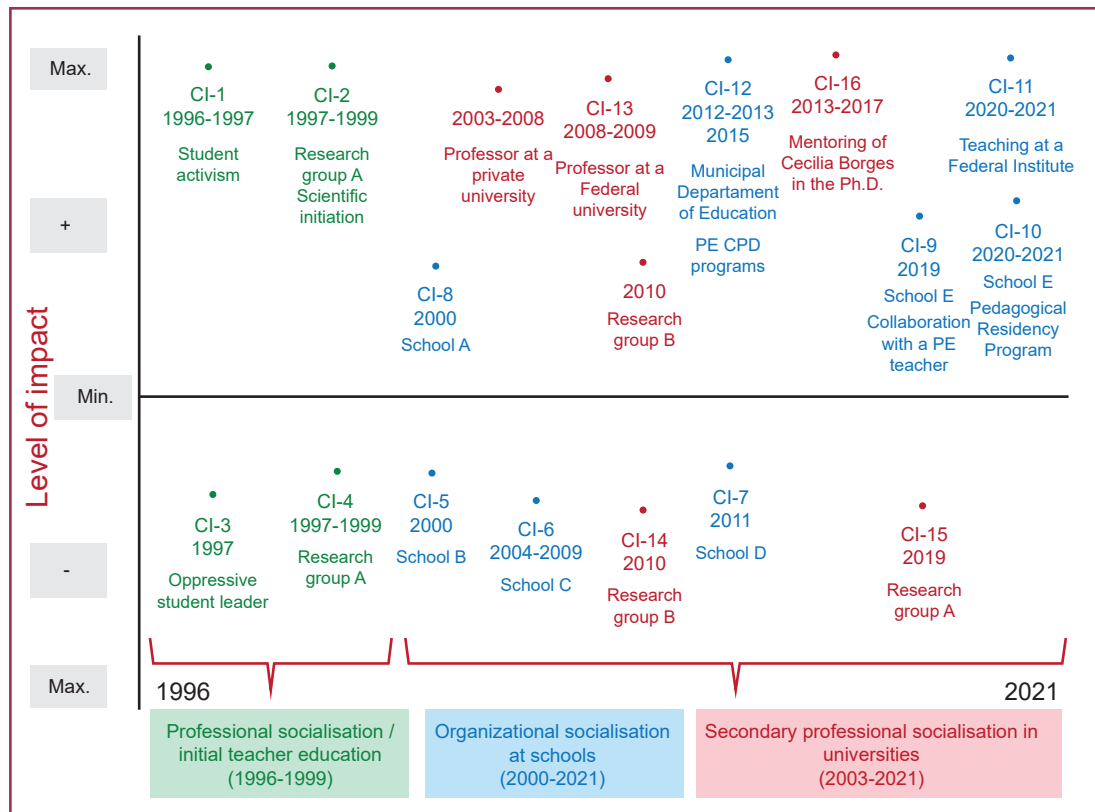
### 3 FINDINGS

In the findings section, we present the collaborative practices and professional lives and careers of Marcos and Luiz separately in order to emphasise the uniqueness of their experiences. We decided to use first-person voice in this section to allow the reader a sense of intimacy with the views and experiences of collaborative practice as describes by each participant. The critical incidents (CI) are identified by using numbers (e.g., CI-1) to help the readers locate the CI in the living graphs.

#### 3.1 COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE AND CAREER OF MARCOS

My critical incidents of collaborative practices are presented in three parts: professional socialisation (initial teacher education), organisational socialisation, and secondary professional socialisation. Below is my living graph and the description of the main CIs of collaborative practices in my career (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 - Marcos' living graph



Source: Prepared by the authors.

### 3.1.1 My professional socialisation: student activism and scientific initiation

The most important experiences with collaborative practices in this period involved student activism and scientific initiation. In student activism (CI-1), these practices included the participation and organisation of student assemblies, demonstrations in defence of improvements in the PETE program or demanding more investments for public universities, and in the organisation of student academic events.

When a new president of the Academic Centre of PE was elected who proved to be authoritarian, I decided to leave this group (CI-3) but remained a participant in student activism at the university. During this period, I learned the importance of the political processes of organisation, discussion, decision, and collective engagement in defence of public education and social justice. However, there are situations in which it is not worth staying, as they are very exhausting.

In scientific initiation (CI-2), the most significant collaborative practices took place during my participation in research group A, where there were studies of the scientific literature and I participated in a research project, collaborating with the collection and analysis of data, and presented at scientific events. In this group and I learned about research in education and that doing research requires teamwork and collaboration. Yet, there was a very strong hierarchy, relationships were tense and, sometimes it was uncomfortable (CI-4).

### 3.1.2 Becoming a teacher in schools: from isolation to collaboration with other PE teachers

During my organisational socialisation phase, my main responsibility was teaching PE in primary schools. There were no formal CPD programmes, nor did I have any PE colleagues to informally engage in dialogue and exchange experiences with. In addition, the facilities and equipment were precarious and there was not always support from the school principal. In this way, I experienced feelings of isolation and marginalisation (CI-5, CI-6, and CI-7). Collaborative practices occurred mainly when: I sought to exchange informal experiences with PE teachers from other schools; I received support, guidance, and encouragement from the school's pedagogical coordinator (CI-8; I planned and evaluated teaching collectively with a PE teacher at the school (CI-9); or with a group of pre-service teachers, participants of the professional induction program called Pedagogical Residence (CI-10).

The most positive collaborative experience I had in schools was at the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology<sup>2</sup>. In this period, the classes moved to an online format due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Collaboration between teachers intensified, it was necessary to research more, plan collectively, use and experiment with digital tools in teaching, exchange experience, and to support each other overall. With support of the PETE pedagogical coordinator, we organised open online classes in high school. I also coordinated an online CPD program with external guests, who worked voluntarily. The Institute's teachers collaborated and gave support to the realisation of this program.

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<sup>2</sup> It is part of the federal network of professional, scientific and technological education, which offers vocational High School, Higher Education and Postgraduate programs.



At the Municipal Department of Education, I had the opportunity to coordinate PE-CPD programmes (CI-12) in partnership with university professors. Collaborative practices were at the heart of these programmes such as: studies on the new curriculum, workshops, collective planning opportunities, reports and exchanges of experience, and peer education. However, these programs suffer from changes in governments and are often interrupted for lack of political support.

Although I felt isolated at the beginning of my teaching career, experiencing collaborative practices since then has shown me another possible reality. These contrasting experiences showed me the importance of CPD as opportunities to empower teachers to overcome the struggle for legitimacy of PE. When I work in these programs, I play the role of teacher educator sensitive to the training needs of teachers. I strongly believe in the importance of CPD programmes for teacher empowerment and development. However, my experience has taught me that it is necessary to have continuity and work with smaller groups to establish more meaningful links and exchanges.

### 3.1.3 Learning to be academic: encounters with (un)supportive leaders

Since my initial teacher education phase, I wanted to work in schools and universities, so I invested in an academic career that supports the dual-role nature of being a teacher and a researcher. I studied for a master's degree and started working at universities parallel to my career at schools. In this process of secondary professional socialisation, an important collaborative practice was the participation in the events of Brazilian College of Sport Sciences. Some of the events were organised by me, and other college members from different universities, who worked on the organising committee, on scientific committee or were lecturers. The objective of these congresses was to promote scientific exchange and a moment of continuous training.

Participation in research groups is a reoccurring critical incident throughout my process of becoming an academic. Two CIs related to collaborative practice took place in the research groups B (CI-14) and A (CI-15). The work in these groups was well organized, but sometimes I noticed situations of injustice and I felt exploited. In addition, the CI-14 took place in another Brazilian state, I felt very little welcome or support. This experience highlighted for me that not all research group participants have the same intentions for participation. In this group, some researchers prioritised particular people in the group that did not question situations of oppression. This reinforced my understanding that the people who engage in collaborative practices need to have aligned personal values and professional integrity.

In a contrasting experience, I had the pleasure of meeting and working with supportive and democratic leaders, such as Professor Cecilia Borges, who was my doctoral advisor and a mentor to me (CI-16). She always encouraged me to participate in congresses and collaborative projects which helped me to expand my professional network and influenced my future collaborative practices. I also highlight the work and partnership with a professor who coordinated the PETE program at the Federal Institute (CI-11), as she was a supportive leader, who encouraged the development of innovative projects, stimulated partnerships and always supported me. In both

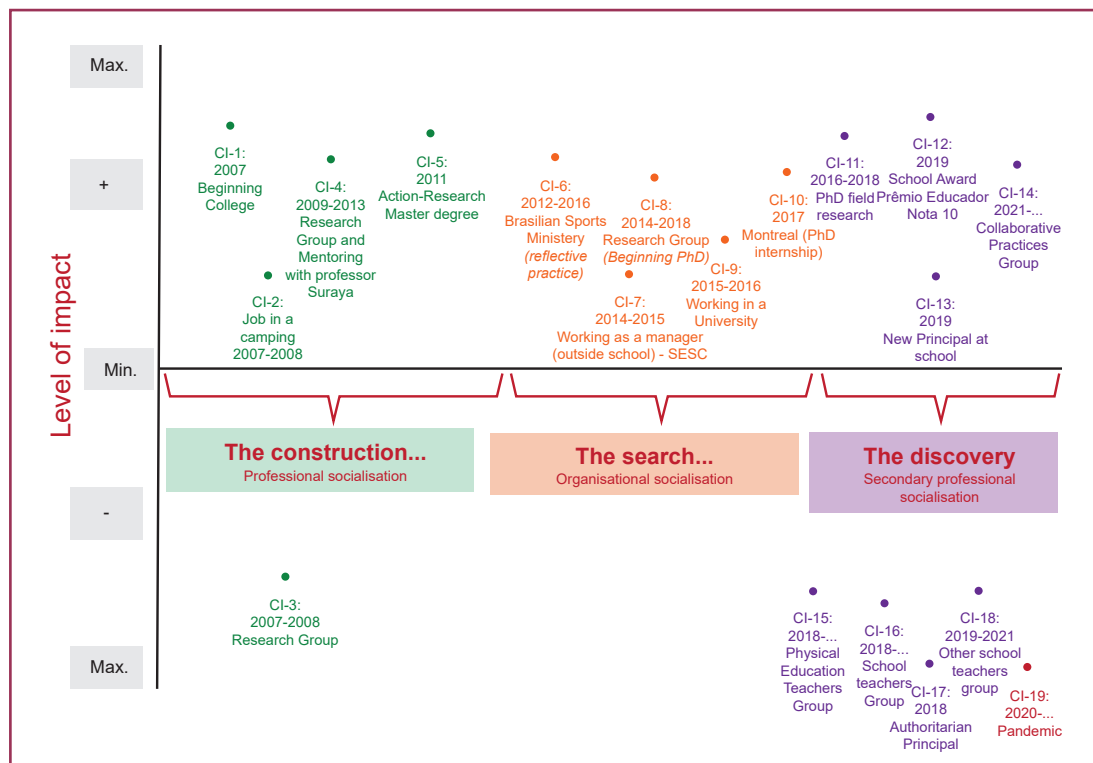
situations, I was under the leadership of enthusiastic, sensitive, and supportive people, in a welcoming and stimulating context. These experiences highlighted that working with people who have values and dispositions synergistic with ours facilitates collaborative practices.

During this time, I worked as a teacher and teacher educator with temporary contracts at the university. Working in large schools and universities provided more opportunities to collaborate, whereas, in small schools I collaborated less. A challenge evident throughout my organisational socialisation phase was ‘navigating’ school politics. I collaborated in school sports and cultural events, but I was not always supported when I needed teaching materials for PE. These CIs emphasise the influence of the characteristics of the leader and the members of the collaborative group, the working conditions and context (e.g., time available to plan together, sufficient budget for the projects, democratic management) on the dynamics of collaborative practices. In Brazil, working conditions at universities are better than at schools, but it has been rapidly deteriorating under an ultra-right government.

### 3.2 COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE AND CAREER OF LUIZ

Throughout my career, I have been trying to organise my professional life and career between school and university fields (see Figure 2). It means that my experiences are related to both of these “worlds” represented by the academic field (researching, research groups, conferences, etc.) and the school field (relationship with students, other colleagues and managers such as school coordinators and principals, school groups, and meetings, etc.).

Figure 2 - Luiz’s living graph



Source: Prepared by the authors.

### 3.2.1 Professional socialisation: building experiences and learning how to be collaborative in practice

During my professional socialisation phase, I worked hard on the “opportunity of my life, with no plan B”. In this sense, I tried to put myself in as many experiences and learning situations as possible inside and outside the “classroom” (CI-1). I had a strong connection with the university campus and colleagues: “I can still smell my university”. The most significant collaborative practices through this phase of my career were my experiences of community projects related to the teaching of martial arts as well as participating as part of a research group under the supervision of Professor Suraya Darido (CI-4). As a member of this group, there were multiple moments that helped me to develop a strong understanding of what it means to engage in ‘successful’ collaborative practices. For example, Suraya taught me how to work as a leader of collaborative practices, such as a democratic way to lead research groups where everyone had the opportunity to speak.

The sense of belonging, the possibility to assume responsibilities and to be the protagonist in some moments were what I highlighted as the most significant in this process. On the other hand, I had some experiences of ‘not so collaborative’ practices in the university context, in another research group with an authoritarian leader (CI-3). Despite leaving this other group, I learned so much about human relationships through all these experiences. It taught me an important lesson: if one day I would become a leader of collaborative practices, I would choose always a democratic approach, as the way I learned with Professor Suraya.

### 3.2.2 Challenges in organisational socialisation: when theory meets practice

In my first professional experiences, I sought collaborative practices in both work activities and in the research field. As a young researcher and a teacher at the beginning of my career, I had difficulties understanding the context and the power relations between all the agents in the fields where I worked. This was the moment to seek experiences, putting myself in situations of growth and challenge, sometimes in a “trial and error” approach. This phase was essential for my understanding of collaborative practices. It was like a “paradigm change” when I understood that collaborative practices were the most efficient way to grow and develop myself and my colleagues. One example of this change is written in the preface of my master’s dissertation, based on an ancient African proverb that said: “if you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go with someone”.

One example of collaborative practice was my master’s action research project where I investigated collaborative practice with PE teachers (CI-5). Together we wrote a textbook and enacted strategies for teaching martial arts. This was one of the first times in Brazilian literature that teachers at school were invited to be also the authors of a book like this. The whole process was very significant for me (learning with them, visiting their schools and context, learning from their students, etc.). I also learned not only about action research, but about the importance of listening to teachers and learning with them.

Another collaborative practice was my professional activities in the Brazilian Sports Ministry (CI-6). I participated in and coordinated, together with other teachers and researchers, a project to offer sports in socially vulnerable contexts. I learned a lot by watching the practices and visiting the places where the project occurred. I was also responsible for the education of the professionals. At this moment, I learned together with some friends about reflective practice, a moment where we changed the way the education process used to happen to a more active and collaborative way, where everyone's voice is valued, including students.

### 3.2.3 Secondary professional socialisation: between collaborative and competitiveness in the "wild world" of professional practice

I called this moment "the discovery". This was the moment for me to become "who I am". I searched for spaces, partnerships, other experiences, and new findings and tried to consolidate myself in the fields of school and university. This was a moment where new doubts and hope appeared, as well as other opportunities for collaborative practices. There were a lot of changes in my life as a school teacher and a teacher educator. I had to move to new cities and find other jobs. In this sense, I had to lead a "walking" and changeable perspective (sometimes like a lone wolf), once there were some "displacements" in the feeling of belonging, at the same time that new challenges enabled growth and professional maturity not previously experienced.

The most significant collaborative practice that emerged was the work at school as a PE teacher when I was also researching my own practice. The involvement with contexts of social vulnerability allowed me to review most of my trajectory and experiences. I realised, sometimes, that a large part of what I had studied was of little help in times of chaos and intensifying problems. At this moment, there was a great change of paradigm: I tried to learn more from the students and understand their feelings and contexts. The most significant collaborative practice was with my students. For me, that changed everything in my professional life as a teacher. I gradually began to engage with more opportunities for collaborative practice with my students. It allowed me to develop projects in school, some of which were recognised on a national level (as the Educator Nota 10 Prize of 2019) (CI-12). The challenges in Brazilian schools are enormous, however, there are a lot of opportunities to try to change the realities and transform our practice (even if it was only at a micro-level in our PE classes). My activities in the university had increased during this phase and I could teach my students about the reality and the possibilities in the school context. It is important to highlight, however, that sometimes I work in four or more schools in a year, usually in two or three different cities with a high workload per week (which is still quite challenging).

The negative aspects of collaborative practices for me were related to school meetings and colleagues who were not interested in collaborating at all (CI-15; CI-16; CI-17). The place and the space for exchanging experiences sometimes became focused on general information, the "dos and don'ts" of the daily activities or "just to complain about the profession or about the students". For me, every meeting must be a place of mutual growth and development from a democratic perspective. It is

possible to conclude that no matter the context, the place or where: I considered myself a teacher: “I think this is the only thing I could do in my life”. I also tried to build collaborative practices when teaching in universities or teaching in schools (sometimes I was successful, sometimes not).

Collaborative practices that align with my values and beliefs about the democratic possibilities of education had the most significant impact on my professional life and career in a positive way. However, sometimes the “collaborative” practices I encountered were not collaborative. Sometimes, they were competitive or worked in a parasitic way. I also compared this kind of practice to ecological relations presented in biology, just like mutualism, cannibalism, and others. This anecdote could represent the volatility and disparity of what is done in the name of ‘collaborative practices’ even when they are not collaborative. I have learned that the ways collaborative practices “work” depends on the discourses and dispositions informing their development and enactment.

#### 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Although there are many benefits of collaborative practices in the CPD of teachers in the literature (CORDINGLEY *et al.* 2003; HARGREAVES, 2019; HARGREAVES; O’CONNOR, 2017), this paper sought to explore the experiences of collaborative practices and, through an occupational socialisation lens, how they contributed to the ongoing processes of being and becoming in their dual roles as teachers and researchers in Brazil.

While collaborative practices happen when two or more individuals are encouraged to share their learning and experiences and to offer mutual support (CORDINGLEY *et al.* 2003; HARGREAVES; O’CONNOR, 2017), it is not clear in the literature what collaboration looks like and their possible effects on teachers’ professional lives and careers (HARGREAVES, 2019). What makes a collaborative practice experience a ‘positive encounter’ is nuanced from person to person. Yet there were similarities and overlaps between the nature of collaborative practices Marcos and Luiz progressively sought throughout their professional lives as positive. For Marcos and Luiz, helpful and meaningful collaborations, or the ‘matches’, included student activism, academic events organisation, collaborative action research, the co-creation and delivery of CPD for teachers, supportive caring mentoring, and collaborative practices with students. On the other hand, ‘mismatches’ or harmful practices encompassed the feeling of isolation and marginalisation as PE teachers, some spaces of formal collaboration and having unsupportive and authoritarian leaders that offers little or no autonomy. It is argued that collaboration has often been employed as a tool of administrative control, especially in circumstances of top-down reform seeking political gains (HARGREAVES, 2019).

There are varying forms of collaboration such as learning communities, collaborative planning, collaborative inquiry, collaborative action research, and more (HARGREAVES, 2019). Results of this project point to collaboration as a complex and dialogical phenomenon that infers sharing and interaction, going a step beyond mere

cooperation (FORTE; FLORES, 2014). For example, mentorship emerged as an important collaborative practice in the socialisation of Marcos and Luiz. Their mentors and supervisors were supportive and caring, impacting the fostering of collaborative cultures and a sense of community in their research and teaching environments (FORTE; FLORES, 2014). However, it is important to be aware that some leaders are eager to engage their teachers in collaboration for strategic reasons, with purposes and activities other than what one's teachers might initiate themselves (HARGREAVES, 2019).

As Marcos and Luiz described, different forms of collaboration did not always lead to the expected effects of change. For instance, collegiality was not present in some of the collaborative practices where teachers or school principals were forcing collaboration, called contrived collegiality (HARGREAVES, 2019). For Marcos and Luiz, experiences of contrived collegiality were those that felt authoritative in nature. These experiences seemed to cause a division between the people involved, resulting in 'not so collaborative' experiences. In contrast, experiences of collaborative practices where there was more intentionality around sharing power, felt democratic and more aligned with their personal and professional values. Their experiences reinforce the importance of acknowledging that not all forms of collaboration are equally strong, desirable, or impactful (HARGREAVES; O'CONNOR, 2017). Some forms of collaboration are too vague, unstructured and focus only on bureaucratic issues related to teachers' work, without really concentrating on the joint work and collective sense of responsibility that is required to improve learning for all students, especially those who suffer from the greatest disadvantages (HARGREAVES; O'CONNOR, 2017).

Throughout various stages of Marcos' and Luiz's career, they identified the more democratic-like collaborative practices as positive encounters. The socialisation literature recognises the importance of positive encounters with people (for example, collaborating with colleagues, students or members of the school community) to reduce experiences of isolation (AUSTIN; MCDANIELS, 2006) in schools through the organisational socialisation phase (RICHARDS *et al.*, 2014) as well as in higher education through secondary professional socialisation (RICHARDS; EBERLINE; TEMPLIN, 2016). When Marcos and Luiz experienced moments of isolation or subject marginalisation, they were proactive in seeking collaborations, often between their school and their university contexts. These helped to resist their experiences of isolation and marginalisation that occurs in the teaching profession at schools. Collaborative practices between schools, students, and universities can be an antidote to experiences like isolation and marginalisation that have a longstanding history of haunting the professional lives and careers of teachers of physical education (ERBAS, 2021).

In addition to pursuing positive encounters through collaborative practices, Marcos' and Luiz's socialisation experiences highlight the importance of engaging in opportunities across the spectrum of formal to informal collaborative practice (BORGES; LESSARD, 2007). Marcos and Luiz both experienced formal and informal collaborative practices throughout their socialisation process. For example, they highlighted the positive and negative aspects of formal moments, such as schools'

meetings, courses developed by them, workshops, etc. As well as informal moments such as an exchange of experiences with colleagues, complaining about something with someone who can understand and help, and ‘corridor conversation’ during the transition between classes, etc. It became clear that engaging in a variety of opportunities at various points across the formal to informal spectrum of collaborative practices, supported their professional careers and became rich opportunities for learning what characteristics of collaboration they would seek or avoid in future experiences.

Further, Marcos’ and Luiz’s experiences of collaborative practices problematise the linear understanding of phases in the socialisation theory. Progressing through the three, sometimes four, phases of occupational socialisation is often considered a chronological process (RICHARDS *et al.*, 2014) whereby one experiences acculturation, then professional socialisation, followed by organisational socialisation until one leaves the profession, be it through retirement, career change, or returning to university to complete graduate studies which are when secondary professional socialisation occurs. Marcos’ and Luiz’s careers offer insight into the experience of concurrently engaging with two phases: organisational socialisation and secondary professional socialisation. Both Marcos and Luiz have maintained their positions teaching PE where they continue to learn ‘on the job’ in schools (the organisational socialisation phase) as well as learning to become and being a member of the professoriate in higher education and through their PhD and engagement with research (the secondary socialisation phase). Although Luiz refers to feelings of being between “two worlds” the nonlinearity of experiencing the organisational and secondary professional socialisation phases concurrently, for both Marcos and Luiz, has been a source of richness and had a positive influence on their career trajectories.

To understand this phenomenon, we revisit the socialisation literature which refers to the experience of pre-service teachers on practicum/field experience placements in schools during their professional socialisation phase as being “liminal” (RICHARDS *et al.*, 2014). Whereby they are occupying a position on both sides of the ‘threshold’ that is the transition from formal teacher education training and their teaching career. Turner (1969) suggested periods of liminality through teachers’ socialisation can, in part, encourage individuals to question their beliefs and values about teaching. With one foot in their teacher education programme and one foot in a school, the contexts and encounters of the university and the school become “joint supervisors” of the pre-service teacher (LAWSON 1983, p.4). Individuals who are in a state of liminality are more likely to be active (as opposed to passive) agents in their socialisation process and thus it is powerful in the socialisation of pre-service and beginning in-service teachers (RICHARDS *et al.*, 2014). As the benefits of being in a state of liminality, Marcos and Luiz are active in resisting or accepting the influence of socialising agents on their identities and practices in both of “the worlds” in which they reside.

Marcos and Luiz’s engagement with research activities and literature as collaborative practices serve as the bridge connecting both contexts and ways of being in schools and in universities as a teacher and a member of the professoriate

respectfully. Their research informs their practice, and their practice informs their research unifying recommended practices and what is happening in schools on a day-to-day basis by offering an example of how positions supporting academics to work in schools and in universities concurrently might be a possibility to address physical education's practice-policy gap challenge (MACPHAIL; LAWSON, 2020).

Overall, the findings of this study suggest that the professional partnerships and collaborative practices made available by concurrently teaching in schools and working in a university supported the quality of Marcos and Luiz's professional lives and careers. Therefore, policies and practices to not only support teachers' collaborations amongst stakeholders but to support ecosystems whereby bridging "two worlds" is a possibility for teachers/academics could support an optimistic future. In other words, the 'bridges' built by Marcos and Luiz based on their professional experiences, should be organised as a public policy and not only be part of individual initiatives like those we analysed in this manuscript.

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**Resumo:** O objetivo deste artigo é explorar as práticas colaborativas e as experiências na socialização de dois professores e pesquisadores de Educação Física (EF) no Brasil. Este estudo de caso qualitativo e colaborativo teve como participantes dois profissionais brasileiros que atuam em escolas e em universidades e dois amigos críticos. Foram identificados incidentes críticos relacionados às práticas colaborativas por meio de gráficos e foto-elicitación, em quatro encontros *online*. Os resultados foram analisados à luz da teoria da socialização docente e revelaram que: (a) as práticas colaborativas podem ser consideradas como processos complexos e dialógicos que proporcionam diferentes experiências (positivas e negativas) na vida e na carreira; e (b) socialização como um processo não linear que pode ser melhorado com pesquisa e colaboração. Os achados contribuem para ampliar a compreensão das práticas colaborativas em apoio a carreiras sustentáveis e significativas.

**Palavras-chave:** Docentes. Capacitação de Professores. Educação Física. Socialização Ocupacional.

**Resumen:** El objetivo de este artículo es explorar las prácticas colaborativas y las experiencias en la socialización de dos profesores e investigadores de Educación Física (EF) en Brasil. Este estudio de caso cualitativo y colaborativo tuvo como participantes a dos profesionales brasileños que actúan en escuelas y universidades y dos amigos críticos. Se identificaron incidentes críticos relacionados con las prácticas colaborativas a través de gráficos y fotoelicitación, en cuatro encuentros *online*. Los resultados se analizaron a la luz de la teoría de la socialización docente y revelaron que: (a) las prácticas colaborativas pueden ser consideradas como procesos complejos y dialógicos que proporcionan diferentes experiencias (positivas y negativas) en la vida y en la carrera; y (b) la socialización como un proceso no lineal que se puede mejorar con investigación y colaboración. Los hallazgos contribuyen a ampliar la comprensión de las prácticas colaborativas en apoyo a carreras sostenibles y significativas.

**Palabras clave:** Docentes. Capacitación de profesores. Educación Física. Socialización Ocupacional.

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### **CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in this study.

### **AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS**

**Luiz Gustavo Bonatto Rufino:** Desenvolvimento da proposta; Realização da pesquisa de campo; Análise de Dados; Escrita; Correção; Tradução.

**Marcos Roberto Godoi:** Desenvolvimento da proposta; Realização da pesquisa de campo; Análise de Dados; Escrita; Correção; Tradução.

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**Cassandra Iannucci:** Desenvolvimento da proposta; Realização da pesquisa de campo; Análise de Dados; Escrita; Correção; Tradução.

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### **EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

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