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ORIGINAL

THE RECEPTION OF NORBERT ELIAS' WORK IN BRAZILIAN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

LA RECEPCIÓN DEL TRABAJO DE NORBERT ELÍAS EN LA EDUCACIÓN FÍSICA BRASILEÑA

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the process of reception and appropriation of Norbert Elias' work in the Brazilian Physical Education field. To achieve this objective, an analysis was made of the eight main scientific journals of the socio-cultural area in the country. After data collection, 452 studies were found that had some relationship with the author's reference. Among the main results, it is noted that the process of receiving the work of the sociologist began around the 1990s, being intensified only in the present decade. Although there has been a growth of studies in connection with Elias' contributions in the literature, when analyzing the sample texts, it was found that only 17.61% had a rigorous appropriation of the *eliasian* way of working. In addition, most studies were linked to sports and leisure, indicating the possibility of the author being explored in other contexts.

KEYWORDS: Norbert Elias; Physical Education; Scientific production; Sociology of Sport.

RESUMEN

Este estudio tiene como objetivo investigar el proceso de recepción y apropiación del trabajo de Norbert Elías en el campo de la Educación Física brasileña. Para cumplir tal objetivo, se realizó un análisis de las ocho principales revistas científicas socioculturales del país. Después de la recolección de datos, se encontraron 452 estudios que tenían alguna relación con la referencia del autor. Entre los principales resultados, se señala que el proceso de recepción del trabajo del sociólogo comenzó alrededor de la década de 1990, intensificándose solo en la presente década. Aunque ha habido un crecimiento de estudios en relación con las contribuciones de Elías en la literatura, al analizar los textos de muestra, se dio cuenta que solo el 17,61% tenía una apropiación profunda del *modus operandi elíasiano*. Además, la mayoría de los estudios estaban relacionados con el deporte y el ocio, lo que indica la posibilidad de que el autor sea explorado en otros contextos.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Educación Física; Norbert Elías; producción científica; Sociología del Deporte

INTRODUCTION

Norbert Elias was one of the great intellectuals of the sociological scene of the twentieth century (Dunning and Hughes, 2013). However, unlike other authors, the German sociologist faced consolidation difficulties in the academic field, being, in his own terms, an *outsider* in the context of the sociological establishment at that time (Elias, 2000, 2001a). In general, because his work was placed in a position of contradiction to classical sociology, especially with regard to the "individual" versus "society" tension, Elias' work was silenced for some time (Mennell, 2006). However, this was not related to the quality of his creative project, but because the sociologist presented a general theory of society that headed in a direction diametrically opposed to the sociological thinking in force at the beginning of the 20th century.

Thus, by setting himself in opposition to traditional sociology and announcing himself as an innovator in the field, Elias' work only came to be recognized more systematically around 1970 and, at first this reception was most pronounced in countries where the sociologist lived, namely, Germany, France, and England, which even served as the empirical laboratory for the composition of his great work, "The Civilizing Process" (Górnicka Liston and Mennell 2015; Oliveira, 2018). In this context, if the reception process took place late in the international context, some delay in the dissemination of Elias' work in Latin American countries, such as Brazil, was relatively foreseeable.

In this sense, in Brazil, the initial, most incisive movements on the circulation of Elias' work are reported in the mid-1990s, stimulated, to a large extent, by agents of the Physical Education (PE) field, in particular, by some researchers from the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP). These agents were responsible for a series of initiatives to disseminate the *eliasian* reference in the country, for example the consolidation of a relational network with the collaborators of a first intellectual generation who worked directly with Norbert Elias, that is, Johan Goudsblom, Eric Dunning, Stephen Mennell, and Cas Wouters, among others (Gebara, 2014).

It is important to recognize that this proximity of PE researchers with *eliasian* sociology did not arise at random. On the contrary, this relationship is also explained by virtue of the work that the author developed in the field of Sports and Leisure Sociology. In summary, from the 1960s until his death in 1990, Elias devoted a large part of his research agenda to the study of sports and leisure, leaving a general theory that allowed sophisticated and rigorous understanding of these important objects to the PE field (Souza, Starepravo and Marchi-Junior, 2014). This, in turn, is one of the decisive elements that influenced the reception of the author's work in the area (Oliveira, 2018), especially due to the need to broaden the possible horizons of understanding these phenomena, beyond isolated dimensions, that is, biological, cultural, psychological, political, and so on.

In this panorama, over the years, the author's contributions have gradually become increasingly visible in socialized studies in the PE field, especially in the main scientific dissemination journals related to the area (Pedraz, 2010; Souza, Starepravo and Marchi-Júnior, 2014; Alfrey and Gard, 2017; Righeto and Reis, 2017; Black and Fielding-Lloyd, 2017; Manrique Arribas, 2018; Lavega-Burgués and Navarro-Adelantado, 2019; Morales-Rosillo; Petro and Bonilla, 2019). However, although this use of Elias' work was verified in the research of the academic space under analysis, it is not clear in the literature how this reception occurred. This represents a gap in the literature, especially with regard to the reading of almost 30 years of immersion of the *eliasian* theoretical reference in Brazil. Thus, the present study aimed to verify the process of reception and appropriation of the work of Norbert Elias in some of the most relevant scientific journals of Brazilian PE.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

To contemplate the research proposed in this study, we selected as a source of data some of the main scientific journals in the PE area in Brazil. Among the selection criteria, we chose scientific journals that: [1] contemplated the reception of sociocultural studies; [2] presented Capes stratifications from qualities A to B2 (that is, well-qualified journals according to the criteria of scientific evaluation in Brazil); and [3] gave free access to all published numbers, as well as publications every three or four months per year. After defining this sample profile, we arrived at the choice of eight journals, namely: Journal of Physical Education (JPE/UEM), Revista Brasileira de Ciências do Esporte (RBCE), Revista Brasileira de Educação Física e Esporte (RBEFE), Revista Licere (RL), Revista Pensar a Prática (RPP), Revista Motrivivência (RMT), Revista Motriz (RMZ), and Revista Movimento (RM).

For all journals in the sample, we accessed the virtual platform and downloaded all available texts from the first edition to the last available volume. Subsequently, in possession of the documents and through the control find command, we defined the keyword "Norbert Elias" as the search descriptor. For the digitized texts, the search was performed manually to capture studies that had affinity with the descriptor. It should be noted that the search included all editions until the end of 2018 for each journal, with the exception of RBEFE which was discontinued in 2017.

After analysis of the documents, 452 texts were identified that included some reference to Elias; 426 articles, 15 abstracts, 10 reviews, and 1 interview. The journal that presented the largest number of studies was RM with a total of 114 texts (25,22%) followed, respectively, by RBCE 74 (16,37%), RL 70 (15,49%), RMT 44 (RM) (9,74%), RPP 40 (8,85%), RMZ 40 (8,85%), RBEFE 35 (7,74%), and JPE/UEM 35 (7,74%). With the mapped production, the information was tabulated and the data submitted to statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Science SPSS v. 23. The numerical incursion orbited around descriptive statistics, in particular, absolute and relative frequency analysis.

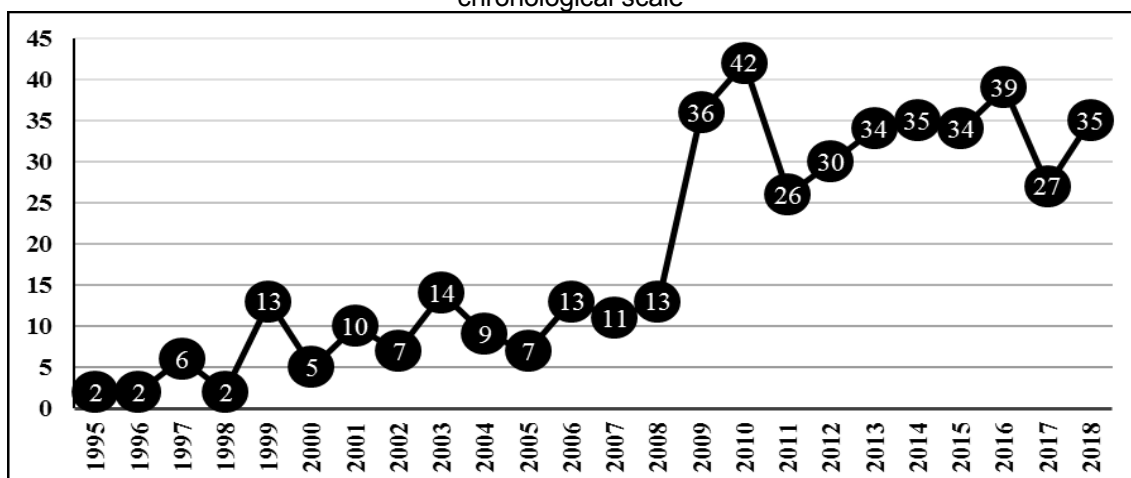
In general, throughout the current study, we verify the reception process of the works that cite Elias, the agents and institutions that most mobilize the work and that seem to have a closer relationship with the work of the sociologist, the most cited works of the *eliasian* framework, the appropriation of Elias' work, and finally, the main themes in which Norbert Elias theory has been used. This information is presented through quantitative incursions in relation to the qualitative interpretation of the data.

To verify the type of appropriation (qualitative content analysis) performed in the documents analyzed, we used the classification suggested by Catani, Catani and Pereira (2001). In this typology, the researchers suggest the existence of three forms of appropriation of theoretical references: [1] the "incidental", consisting of more basic use, qualified by quick quotes or just allusions to the author in the body of the text (the referenced author usually appears in footnotes or only cited in the references); [2] the "conceptual topic", characterized by conscious use, although not systematic (the researcher mobilizes some concept or citation of the referential to reinforce their arguments); and [3] the "working mode", which points to a systematic mobilization of the theoretical referential (the researcher cites more works, employs more concepts, in short, makes the theory work).

PANORAMA ABOUT THE RECEPTION AND APPROPRIATION OF NORBERT ELIAS' WORK IN SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS OF BRAZILIAN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The first result displayed refers to the chronological reception process of studies that present any citation with reference to Elias' work in the body of the text. For this type of analysis, the 452 texts were considered. The data are expressed in absolute frequencies in the following graph.

Figure 1 – Number of documents with a mention of Elias in the scientific journals of PE on a chronological scale



In general, it is possible to see that Elias' reception in the main scientific journals of the PE area in Brazil began around 1995. In that year two texts were found, one in RMZ and another in RM. The first reference to Elias in RMZ is evidenced in a critical review developed by Mauro Betti (1995) in relation to the book "Of the culture of the body" by Jocimar Daolio. In the course of the text, Betti cites Elias, mentioning the work "The civilizing process". The text present in RM, is an article about sport and body, entitled "young-old athletes forever?" by Antonio Jorge Gonçalves Soares (1995). In the text, the researcher extensively mobilizes the *eliasian* referential, in particular, the works "The civilizing process", "Loneliness of the dying", and "What is Sociology".

In 1996, two further texts were published, one in RBCE and the other in RBEFE. The first occurrence refers to a text also by Betti (1996), entitled "Television and the Pacaembu War: "people" versus "citizens"". In this article, the researcher makes theoretical use of the two volumes of the work "The civilizing process" and two chapters of the collection "Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process". The other text, in 1996, in RBEFE, was proposed by Helder Guerra Resende and Antonio Jorge Gonçalves Soares (1996) with the title "Knowledge and specificity of Physical Education from the perspective of body culture". For the elaboration of this text, the authors also made use of the book "Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process".

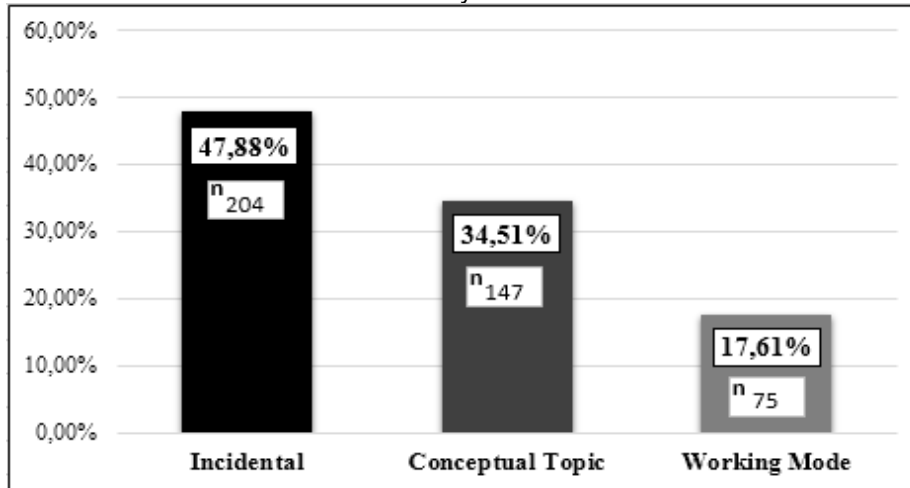
With regard to the data cited above, it is interesting to note that between 1995 and 1996 there were already researchers mobilizing Elias' theoretical reference before starting the more systematic process of receiving the author's work, which took place largely through the creation of the International Symposium of Civilizing Processes (SIPICs) (Gebara, 2011, 2014). Therefore, it can be seen that in the early 1990s there were researchers in contact with the referential, probably stimulated by the author's first publications in Brazil, especially the translations to Portuguese by the publisher Jorge Zahar (Souza, Starepravo and Marchi -Junior, 2014).

During the 1990s and early 2000s, in parallel with the increase in dissemination initiatives of Norbert Elias' work, the number of investigations that mobilized *eliasian* theory continued to grow. However, it was only near the end of the first decade of the 2000s that studies using or citing the sociologist's reference intensified in the scientific journals of the investigated area. Obviously, although there was also an increase in the number of annual editions of the journals, this does not invalidate the argument that the circulation of texts that cite or effectively operate from the *eliasian* referential began gaining space in the PE field.

In other words, it can be stated that over the last decade, Elias' theoretical framework has come to support many works developed in the socio-cultural subarea of PE, reaching various objects and themes in the field. However, although the number of studies citing Elias in the revised PE journals increased, this does not mean that all articles share the same use of the author's

contributions. On the contrary, if the texts are analyzed based on the typology offered by Catani, Catani and Pereira (2001), it is possible to identify that the theoretical appropriation carried out in each article is different, as can be seen in the following figure.

Figure 2 – Theoretical appropriation of the eliasian referential in the articles analyzed



First, it is appropriate to mention that, for the appropriation analyzes, only the texts in article format were considered. This methodological decision was made because these documents tend to be denser and require more theoretical investment compared to abstracts or reviews (Brazil, 2018). In this sense, as observed in Figure 2, of the 426 articles examined, approximately 48% referred to Elias “incidentally”. That is, in these texts, Elias' theory was little cited and when there was mention of the author's work, it was fleeting, with little or no connection to the more general precepts of his "working mode”.

Considering a more balanced use and with more heterodox mobilization, 147 articles were found that satisfied the conditions of appropriation understood as "conceptual topic". In these studies, greater communication with the referential was verified, although clearly distanced from more systematic use. In general, these data suggest difficulties of appropriation or even a theoretical eclecticism that interferes with these productions, since the researchers cite several authors, often without justification, in an extrapolated way and without commitment to a certain theoretical orientation.

Logically, it is not possible to generalize these analyzes, considering the existence of situations in which appropriation can be explained by other variables. When examining the types of appropriation from the distribution of articles in each of the researched journals, some interesting relationships are noted.

Table 1 – Number of articles and theoretical appropriation type in the investigated journals

| Journals | Articles | Appropriation Type | | |
|-----------|----------|--------------------|------------------|--------------|
| | | <i>Incidental</i> | Conceptual Topic | Working Mode |
| RM | 111 | 47 (42,3%) | 45 (40,5%) | 19 (17,1%) |
| RBCE | 73 | 39 (53,4%) | 22 (30,1%) | 12 (16,4%) |
| RL | 67 | 29 (43,3%) | 19 (28,4%) | 19 (28,4%) |
| RMT | 42 | 26 (61,9%) | 10 (23,8%) | 6 (14,3%) |
| RPP | 37 | 17 (45,9%) | 15 (40,5%) | 5 (13,5%) |
| RBEFE | 35 | 13 (37,1%) | 17 (48,6%) | 5 (14,3%) |
| JPE (UEM) | 34 | 18 (52,9%) | 12 (35,3%) | 4 (11,8%) |
| RMZ | 27 | 15 (55,6%) | 7 (25,9%) | 5 (18,5%) |

In table 1, it can be seen that the journal containing the most articles in relation to the descriptor Norbert Elias is RM, followed by RBCE, two important journals in the academic scene of Brazilian PE. In short, these journals have great “functional weight” in the structure of the academic field (Bourdieu, 1968), exerting force that ends up, in some way, attracting more agents to publish in these journals, especially in RM which has conditions (Qualis A, JCR) allowing it, in a big way, to be the dominant pole if we consider the structure of the field presented by Bourdieu (1990). Thus, the greater the "functional weight" of the journal, the greater the power exerted within the relations of academic interdependence (Elias, 2010). Perhaps this is one of the reasons why more articles associated with Elias were found in RM and RBCE.

In parallel to the two mentioned journals, it is necessary to recognize the importance of RL in the reception process of *eliasian* studies. Although this journal has fewer articles than RM and RBCE, RL has the highest percentage of articles with "working mode" appropriation of the German author. This suggests that leisure researchers have tried to apply analytical rigor to their efforts, possibly supported by the use of the work "Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process" (Elias and Dunning, 1992) in which the sociologist provides a general theory for understanding this phenomenon, which constitutes the central scope of RL.

Still exploring the reception process and appropriation of *eliasian* work in the Brazilian PE field, it was also possible to establish the researchers who most commonly published texts related to the theoretical referential in question:

Table 2 – Researchers who cite Elias most in PE journals

| Researcher | Articles | Appropriation Type | | |
|--------------------|----------|--------------------|------------------|--------------|
| | | Incidental | Conceptual Topic | Working Mode |
| MARCHI JUNIOR, W | 32 | 10 (31,3%) | 7 (21,9%) | 15 (46,9%) |
| SOUZA, J. | 18 | 5 (27,8%) | 4 (22,2%) | 9 (50,0%) |
| STAREPRAVO, F.A. | 17 | 6 (35,3%) | 3 (17,6%) | 8 (47,1%) |
| MAZO, J.Z. | 16 | 7 (43,8%) | 8 (50,0%) | 1 (6,3%) |
| CAVICHIOILLI, F.R. | 14 | 1 (7,1%) | 6 (42,9%) | 7 (50,0%) |
| SOARES, A.J.G. | 13 | 5 (38,5%) | 4 (30,8%) | 4 (30,8%) |
| STIGGER, M.P. | 13 | 4 (30,8%) | 4 (30,8%) | 5 (38,5%) |
| CAPRARO, A.M. | 12 | 2 (16,7%) | 8 (66,7%) | 2 (16,7%) |
| VOTRE, S.J. | 11 | 5 (45,5%) | 4 (36,4%) | 2 (18,2%) |
| VAZ, A.F. | 10 | 5 (50,0%) | 4 (40,0%) | 1 (10,0%) |
| MEZZADRI, F.M. | 10 | 3 (30,0%) | 4 (40,0%) | 3 (30,0%) |
| SILVA, P.P.C. | 10 | 4 (40,0%) | 6 (60,0%) | 0 (0,0%) |
| FREITAS, C.M.S.M. | 9 | 4 (44,4%) | 5 (55,6%) | 0 (0,0%) |
| LOVISOLO, H.R. | 9 | 6 (66,7%) | 2 (22,2%) | 1 (11,1%) |
| REIS, H.H.B. | 8 | 2 (25,0%) | 4 (50,0%) | 2 (25,0%) |

As shown in table 2, among all the researchers cited, Wanderley Marchi Junior of UFPR is the author with the largest number of articles that mobilize the *eliasian* theory in the area. It is important to mention that Marchi Júnior completed his doctoral degree under the guidance of Ademir Gebara between the late 1990s and early 2000s at UNICAMP, where he most likely was able to intensify his contact with Norbert Elias' literature within the demands of his thesis (Oliveira, 2018). The same can also be said of Souza and Starepravo, who, when carrying out their *Stricto Sensu* formations at UFPR, were exposed to Elias' referential through disciplines, participation in study groups, and guidance dynamics. These are important movements that suggest a constitution process of an intellectual generation that began in UNICAMP through the historian Ademir Gebara and, in sequence, reached other locations in Brazil (Gebara, 2014; Oliveira, 2018).

In addition to the effort to reassemble the genesis of this generation, it is also interesting to pay attention to the way in which these agents make use of the theory. As we have been able to locate in the data, the heirs of this family appear among the researchers who operate the most from the *eliasian* “working mode”, suggesting that, to some extent, the contact of this generation with the referential represented advances for the general appropriation process in the area. Metaphorically speaking, where the winds of the figurational approach blew harder, agents could better be sensitized to these contributions, unlike other places where the use of *eliasian* theory is still limited or unknown. Giving continuity to the presentation of the results, the number of scientific works by institution is shown below, as well as the type of appropriation made in the articles.

Figure 3. Number of articles associated with Norbert Elias by institution in Brazil

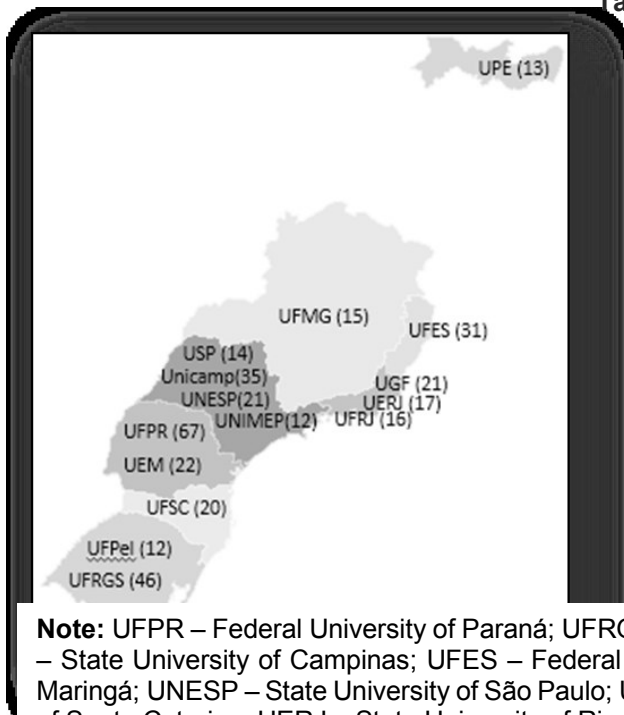


Table 3. Appropriation type used by institutions

| Institution | Appropriation Type | | |
|-------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------|
| | Incidental | Conceptual Topic | Working Mode |
| UFPR | 21 (31,3%) | 20 (29,9%) | 26 (38,8%) |
| UFRGS | 19 (41,3%) | 22 (47,8%) | 5 (10,9%) |
| UNICAMP | 21 (60,0%) | 9 (25,7%) | 5 (14,3%) |
| UFES | 14 (45,2%) | 12 (38,7%) | 5 (16,1%) |
| UEM | 8 (36,4%) | 6 (27,3%) | 8 (36,4%) |
| UNESP | 10 (47,6%) | 5 (23,8%) | 6 (28,6%) |
| UGF | 12 (57,1%) | 7 (33,3%) | 2 (9,5%) |
| UFSC | 11 (55,0%) | 6 (30,0%) | 3 (15,0%) |
| UERJ | 7 (41,2%) | 6 (35,3%) | 4 (23,5%) |
| UFRJ | 6 (37,5%) | 5 (31,3%) | 5 (31,3%) |
| UFMG | 8 (53,3%) | 7 (46,7%) | 0 (0,0%) |
| USP | 9 (64,3%) | 5 (35,7%) | 0 (0,0%) |
| UPE | 4 (30,8%) | 9 (69,2%) | 0 (0,0%) |
| UFPEL | 6 (50,0%) | 5 (41,7%) | 1 (8,3%) |
| UNIMEP | 3 (25,0%) | 6 (50,0%) | 3 (25,0%) |

Note: UFPR – Federal University of Paraná; UFRGS – Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul; UNICAMP – State University of Campinas; UFES – Federal University of Espírito Santo; UEM – State University of Maringá; UNESP – State University of São Paulo; UGF – Gama Filho University; UFSC – Federal University of Santa Catarina; UERJ – State University of Rio de Janeiro; UFRJ – Federal University of Rio de Janeiro; UFMG – Federal University of Minas Gerais; USP – University of São Paulo; UPE – University of Pernambuco; UFPEL – Federal University of Pelotas; UNIMEP – Methodist University of Piracicaba

As already seen in the results of table 2, it is possible to notice in the choroplectic map that UFPR is the institution with the most articles containing citations of the *eliasian* theoretical reference in the area. In addition, the university also presents the highest percentage of articles produced from the "working mode" appropriation of the author (table 3). With respect to collaborative networks, it is interesting to note that UEM exhibits a similar percentage for this type of appropriation, indicating that there are reliable works in the use of the precepts of the figurative sociology of Elias. These results, in turn, suggest a transfer of the *eliasian* theoretical patrimony in the PE field from one university to another, expanding the reach of networks of the author's sociological theory in the area.

In this configurational theoretical dynamic established in the PE area, it stands out that UFRGS has systematically operated from the *eliasian* framework, however in a way that we can consider more heterodox. The use identified in this institution indicates that the German sociologist's theory is not at the center of the researchers' discussions and there are other supporting references for the analysis of objects. Furthermore, it can be inferred that the circulation of Norbert Elias' work exerted orthodox appropriation effects with less intensity in UFRGS compared to UFPR, which, in a way, points to particular logics of performing social science in PE.

In a different dynamic from UFRGS, is UNICAMP, which not only had a long approximation with the *eliasian* theoretical reference through direct contact with the network of Elias' collaborating sociologists, but was also the epicenter in the process of expanding academic interdependence networks on the dissemination of Elias' work in the area. Therefore, through a process of exporting professionals in the PE field, the UNICAMP force was distributed to other regions of Brazil (Oliveira, 2018).

In this context, from the reality based on the data, it should be emphasized that the different uses of Elias' theory in the field of Brazilian PE point to the conformation of a power figuration by the legitimacy status of orthodox administration of theory, evidencing the existence of groups more concerned with the referential in question and who strive to match their modus operandi to the theoretical precepts of that intellectual family. In other words, unequal distribution of the theory, in some way, reverberates in an internal imbalance of power within the figuration (Elias, 2010).

In general, as noted so far, the *eliasian* theoretical reference has been echoed in the academic field, being present in several studies in the PE area. However, the increase in the number of projects in connection with Elias does not mean that the referential has been systematically managed. On the contrary, what happened within the regularities was a more heterodox or "incidental" use of the theory, characterized by more selective mobilization of the referential, as shown below.

Table 4: Eliasian works / texts most commonly used in the scientific journals of PE

| Works | n | f |
|---|------------|----------------|
| Quest for excitement: sport and leisure in the civilizing process | 222 | 46,44% |
| The civilizing process | 103 | 21,55% |
| What is sociology | 36 | 7,53% |
| The society of individuals | 29 | 6,07% |
| The established and the outsiders | 23 | 4,81% |
| The court society | 14 | 2,93% |
| Time: an essay | 14 | 2,93% |
| Mozart: portrait of a genius | 10 | 2,09% |
| The Germans | 8 | 1,67% |
| The loneliness of the dying | 5 | 1,05% |
| The symbol theory | 4 | 0,84% |
| Involvement and detachment | 2 | 0,42% |
| Writings and essays | 2 | 0,42% |
| On human beings and their emotions: A process-sociological essay | 2 | 0,42% |
| Human condition | 1 | 0,21% |
| Adorno's speech: respect and critique | 1 | 0,21% |
| Dynamics of sport groups with special reference to football | 1 | 0,21% |
| Norbert Elias by himself | 1 | 0,21% |
| Total | 478 | 100,00% |

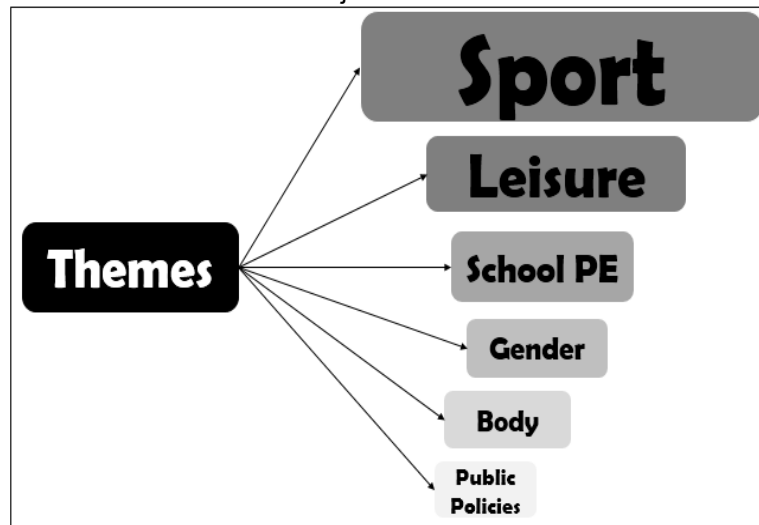
After determining the main references used by the authors, it was observed that the most cited work among the studies analyzed is "Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process", which appears in almost 50% of the articles evaluated. In this context, as sport is one of the most commonly

investigated topics in the area of PE, it is likely that this work provides important theoretical elements to portray sport sociologically. However, the collection "Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process" is, strictly speaking, a work that feeds on the theory of the civilization process and, in that sense, can and deserves to be read based on the discussions Elias undertook in texts such as "The Civilizing Process", "The Court Society", or "The Germans" (Elias and Dunning, 1992, Elias, 1993, 1997, 2001b, 2011). In a sense, Elias' main work, "The Civilizing Process" has received more systematic attention from authors who make use of the *eliasian* theory in the researched literature. The same cannot be said, at least based on the qualitative retaking of the articles reviewed here, for the other works mentioned.

In this context, it is also important to highlight that the book "What is Sociology", which represents an important pathway to access the sociological thinking of Norbert Elias, has been little cited in the PE field in Brazil, at least from the point of view of production and socialization of articles in scientific journals. The same can be said of works such as "The Court Society", "The Society of Individuals", and "The Germans" which, next to "The Civilizing Process", constitute the "hard core" of Norbert Elias' sociological theory. It is clear that this condition may vary among researchers and the fact that they are not cited in the articles does not mean that they have not been read. In any case, this discrepancy in the mobilization of Norbert Elias' books in the PE journals investigated herein, points to a dynamic that deserves a more careful look by those who teach, develop research, and intend to work from that theoretical framework.

In short, through the data in table 4, it is observed that there is great potential for Elias' theory to be mobilized in the sociocultural field studies of PE, which to date has been little explored. Attention is called to works such as "The Society of Individuals" and "The Symbol Theory", in which Elias made use of his knowledge in the biological sphere to try to defend the global study of human beings, demonstrating that the dichotomization between biological and sociological dimensions is simply devoid of realism (Elias, 1994a, 1994b). That is, they are, strictly speaking, contributions from the *eliasian* theoretical heritage that have not yet been properly exploited and that could provide epistemological bases for the construction of a more realistic and concordant PE theory for the progressive transfer of reflexivity in the area (Souza, 2019). Perhaps a symptom of this forgetfulness is the distribution of the themes on which Elias' theory has been requested to guide and base the scientific activity of the field, as can be visualized in the organization chart below.

Figure 4 – Main themes linked to the *eliasian* theoretical framework in PE scientific journals



Through the process of ordering the documents, it was possible to verify that the predominant generative theme among the texts in which the *eliasian* theoretical reference is mobilized is sport, being present in approximately 60% of the manuscripts. In this scenario, studies on the history of sport, adventure practices, soccer, martial arts, mega events, and media, among others are highlighted. The second theme investigated appears in studies on leisure, including topics such as tourism, deviant leisure, activities in nature, and leisure history, among others. In sequence, there are investigations in the area of School PE, which have seen an increase in recent years. Among the topics contemplated in this segment, discussions about violence in the classroom, exclusion, childhood, and school management, etc were verified.

It is important to highlight that, although it was not the objective of the current work to deepen each of the fronts where the *eliasian* theory has been mobilized in the PE field, it should be taken into account that the contributions of this author have resonated significantly in the area and have informed many investigations that somehow seek to dialogue with the theoretical contribution of Sociology. However, this panorama, although encouraging, points to the supremacy of studies in the sports and leisure fields to the detriment of other themes that can and deserve to be investigated by the prism of Elias' sociological theory. An example of this is the very small number of studies about professional qualifications in PE based on the *eliasian* framework. In this sense, it can be affirmed that Elias' theory has been directed more to satellite investigations of PE than to the amplified study of the area in order to contribute to its epistemological and professional configuration.

CONCLUSIONS

Through the data analyzed in this research, it is remarkable that the reception of *eliasian* sociological thinking is ongoing in the academic field of PE. As noted, the first studies that mention Elias' work in journals from this area are from the

mid-1990s. Taking into account, therefore, the accumulated discussions in the article, it can be said that the reception process of Norbert Elias' sociological theory in the Brazilian context is recent and that the PE area was a decisive gateway for the dissemination of his work in the country (Oliveira, 2018).

In these terms, although we refer to a relatively new reception process, it is clear that it was systematically established in the PE field through an *eliasian* intellectual family that initially formed as a small configuration in UNICAMP and was then extended to other Brazilian institutions, especially UFPR which houses a large circle of researchers operating from the theoretical framework in question. It should be noted that the expansion of the configurations not only refers to the case of these two institutions, but, on the contrary, the *eliasian* legacy also reached other regions of Brazil, as analyzed throughout the text.

However, despite this expansion of work configurations around the *eliasian* theoretical framework, this does not mean that the rigor of the appropriation process corresponds to that growth. In fact, at least in the PE field, the data show that there is much more heterodox use of the theory than an appropriation of the *eliasian* "working mode". This means that the author's sociological theory has been very punctually evoked, which at first does not indicate a problem, except that a more systematic appropriation in structural field terms is still open, in order to pay attention to central aspects of the theory, as an example of the long-term dynamics little observed in the studies, the problematization of the parallel changes that take place in the structure of society and the personality of the individuals, the relations between the distribution of the balance of power and the control of emotions, not to mention the potential of that referential to support a PE theory that aims to overcome the polarization "nature" X "culture", so routinized in the area.

Finally, it is noteworthy that, regarding the distribution of Norbert **Elias'** sociological theory in the PE field according to the research themes and the chosen investigative objects, there is still a relative predominance of the mobilization of this referential to carry out sociological studies of sport and leisure. In this sense, it is understood that the most sophisticated areas of this theory are still to be appropriated and discovered in PE fields, namely, the potential to defend the human movement as a language (Elias, 1994b) and, above all, the possibility of structuring a synthetic, non-teleological, and realistic PE theory (Elias, 2010) in which the biological dimensions of the movement do not predominate over the cultural dimensions of the movement and vice versa, but rather constitute an integrative model (Elias, 1994a). Hence the relevance of studies such as the current work is clear, especially because this type of diagnosis allows us to rethink the state of the theory in the PE field and, in addition, to reflect if researchers promote more or less adherent theorizations to the area and which, in fact, safeguard the specificities of the profession.

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