

# NEW PHYSICAL EDUCATION PARADIGM – FOLLOWING IN PROFESSOR MATIĆ'S FOOTSTEPS

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## SUMMARY

This paper analyses the current position of physical culture in the society. It points out the social changes that have substantially suppressed the term physical education and replaced it with the phrase, physical education and sport. In the light of need to reinstate this term into the professional discourse, there was a reminder of the importance and the social scientific contribution to creation of the Theory of physical culture by Milivoje Matic. The critical analysis of the current state of physical education was also conducted. In order to improve physical education classes, a new paradigm of physical education, that will be based on installation of the functional system of physical education and curriculum reform, has to be created. New physical education paradigm signalizes the return to the physical culture - following in professor Matic's footsteps.

**Keywords:** physical education, paradigm, curriculum

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## INTRODUCTION

Physical education is all around. Always present, but differs from the time when professor Matic was strolling down the rows of this (HIS) amphitheater. He was also MY professor. I have learned from him, in fact, I have adopted his views and ways of thinking regarding this profession, views that are still part of me, while trying to make my humble contribution to the development and

improvement of this profession. It is Matic's dialectics that maintains my general attitude and guides me in my efforts to keep physical education going. However, physical activity and its benefits have gone out of fashion! For it is very easy, with a stroke of a quill pen, to write a new name, cut out a part, erase all... but it is hard to create and go forward. What is this all about? Is it about physical culture, physical education, ..., sport, recreation or...? In the labyrinths of these ideas, professor Matic skillfully weaves a web .....and creates a THEORY. He, as well as, some others before him, and indeed others succeeding him... If he was still with us, he would never agree with my point of view that THE CRISIS OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION is present. I think he would probably say it is just a development phase, an ongoing process. Let's reexamine ourselves, my dear professor.

Are we pedagogues of physical culture? Are we not physical education teachers (I beg your pardon: I do not intend to offend- physical education professors )? Are we, by some means, sports trainers? Perhaps instructors (...someone even becomes an animator)?

**" I, being a physical culture pedagogue, am skilled in animation, coordination, programming and operationalization of physical activities."**

I remember I graduated, in this building in 1998, from the Faculty of Physical Culture, and had a successful defense of my master's thesis in 2002, also in this building (in a different cabinet), from the Faculty of Sport and Physical Education. The term physical culture vanished somewhere (... now, it is nothing but a category in the Constitution ). Not only this term, but also this profession, has undergone many changes since my graduation and the professor's retirement from the university.

Consequently, physical education is an independent professional discipline that exists in the space between the field of education and physical culture. While the foundation of physical education in the educational frame is undisputable and has clearly defined borderlines, the field of physical culture, on the other hand, is in a transitional process, and open to scrutiny of its theoretical fundamentals, and different interpretations from the academic community. Physical education is, in addition to moral, aesthetic, cognitive and working education an integral part in the schooling process, and it has been present throughout the history of the human civilization, regardless of the different social systems. However, physical culture, as a separate study, faces challenging, even outright rejection and cancellation. Its name is frequently changed with the phrase physical education and sport... **This incomplete theoretical changes, without scientific grounds and systematic coordination with different types and parts of physical culture, also produce unique opinion crisis in this department.** In professor Matic's time, physical culture was composed of authentic physical education, sports and recreation and their mutual relation. And nowadays? How will it work in practice?

Nowadays we are reforming the reforms. And it has been going on for twenty years...it started in the twenties, probably with the removal of the health education (Decline of the physical and health education, 1991, T. Ackovic); continued with, previously mentioned, name change of the faculty that in charge of educating experts in the field of physical culture (I do not wish to go further with this, I have a bitter taste in my mouth); it reached its peak with a new legislation which introduced a sports activity as a compulsory elective class and removal of the physical education class from lower forms of the primary school's curriculum; consequently, we are in this situation, at this point... And where is our profession nowadays? What is the condition of the physical education (considering there is no physical culture)?

### **Analysis of physical education condition - the way we are nowadays Professor**

Physical education in schools, as a basic form of physical education encounters difficult problems and a specific crisis, while in the process of transition. The process of educational reform also involves physical education thought in schools, sadly, changes that are made are incomplete and, to a considerable extent, scientifically groundless. Thus, we are in a situation where there are two classes of physical education a week, both in secondary and primary schools. In truth, special subject-compulsory elective one-chosen sport, has been introduced in primary schools, with one class a week. In this way, already, insufficiently present physical education, is further divided heading toward total degradation. It is important to emphasize that this subject lacks variety of topics, thus, in reality, it is treated as a "third class" of physical education. In laymen's words, this subject is the same as physical education, with minor differences. The compulsory elective subject-chosen sport is usually taught by the same teachers that teach physical education class. Therefore, only physical education teachers mark students in two different school subjects (there are plenty of A marks). At the same time, due to regulations, so called "lower form physical education class" was made impossible, hence the physical education classes, in lower forms of primary school, are entirely taught by classroom teachers. Despite the decades of academic community's calls for attention to the necessity of improving the quality of physical education classes in lower forms, physical education teachers are excluded from this part of education. The scientific fact, that there are greater possibilities for a positive reinforcement of the child's physical development in this development stage (sensitive stage), is not being used, due to the classroom teacher's clear avoidance to holding a physical education class, whether there is an objective circumstance (no available space to teach a physical education class at this age), or subjective one, that implies, replacing physical education classes with other classes (that are considered more important) by classroom teacher. I

do not want to give a sweeping or unfounded statements, but when the physical education classes in lower forms of primary school are in question, it is, basically, a casual playing(often). I am sorry to say, but schoolroom teachers who adequately conduct classes, represent a small minority and they are honourable exceptions.

It is intriguing how the reform process, of our society and educational system, have never taken place in school curriculum content. The reform that started in 2003,was suspended and took a different course, and curriculum suffered some minor surface changes. Insisting on games, still continues in the first two forms of primary school, without specific guidelines and emphasis on a larger number of various games. Different sports are mastered in classes, even though this kind of system is outdated (in reality we often encounter this division fourth form - football, fifth form - handball, sixth form - basketball, seventh form - volleyball, eight form - "whatever" ... ). Basic sports, as their name implies, that are fundamental for further training, were put on the shelf. The number of children non-swimmers is alarming!!! Gymnastics is usually thought doing floor exercises and vaults, and equipment is in a bad shape, with no indications of being repaired or replaced by new ones. Athletics is partially thought and is the best example of discordance between curriculum scope and its pragmatic application. Space requirements are limiting factors to the physical education class realization. Overall, school gymnasiums are in bad condition, and a school timetable that suggests two joint classes, puts on additional strain. It is not that great...but ithasnever been...however...

Could we perhaps do something?

### **Following in professor Matic's footsteps - New physical education paradigm**

In this current state of the society, physical education struggles with a large number of difficulties, and the attempts of reformattempts made at random and very unprofessionally. The complete comprehensive analysis of physical education and a clear formulation of physical education development strategy for short, medium, and long term period,is required.

#### **"Physical education is a system within a systems with inside systems."**

When talking about physical education our starting point is the physical education system that is clearly defined theoretically and its elements are: pre-school,primary, secondary and higher schools physical education. The problem lies in the fact that this system is not functional.

System ineffectiveness can beseen most clearly in the case of pre-school physical education. Namely, even though this is the right age, in the development of human individual, to easily accomplish required results in the physical education field, there is the absence of professionally designed and organized

plan of physical education in pre-school institutions. Children, at this age, are left to play games or play with toys without a proper guidance. Even though, playing method is vital at this age, it should not be exclusive, physical education, should not be left, above all, unrestrained and unorganized. The degree of professional competence is on a rather unsatisfactory level and its necessary to proceed with the reform of training for physical education teacher, as well as the involvement of physical education experts in this segment of education.

On the other side - on the pole of physical education system- physical education of university student population, is a pretty obvious example of the physical education crisis, because the organized physical education of higher educational institutions do not exist.

Currently the only light at the end of the tunnel, in the system of physical education, is special physical education that can be found in the army and police forces, but it is very closed and nontransparent for the whole physical education system.

**Physical education that should have institutional function, from pre-school to higher education institutions is now primarily seen, if not only seen, as a school physical education.**

Vision - functional system of physical education

During the creational process of physical education's functional system, our guideline has to be a clear distinction among physical education, sport and recreation. This distinction is necessary in order to be able to grasp the uniqueness of all three entities and their unmistakable influence on physical culture of every individual. As, nowadays we have a unique sportization of physical education...and not just that. In some legal documents (Sports act bill) it is sport recreation and school sport that is spoken about. Interesting...**Conceptual confusion...**

It is obvious, that the structural elements of physical culture are:  
**" PHYSICAL EDUCATION is (...) ACTIVITY OF BECOMMING OURSELVES.  
SPORT is (...) activity of CONFIRMATION OF OURSELVES.  
RECREATION is (...) ACTIVITY OF EMBRACING OURSELVES."**

Physical education has to be institutionalized. In every institution that is involved in upbringing and education there has to be physical education as a basic subject, domain, starting point.

In order to form a new paradigm of physical education, we have to begin by creating a functional system of physical education.

**1. Physical education system:**

- Physical education in pre-school institutions
- Physical education in primary school

- Physical education in secondary school
- Physical education in higher education institutions

Physical education system based on this concept must have functionality depending on the state and society as a whole.

## 2. Curriculum reform

..in the curriculum, there should be exactly defined number of lessons of educational content denoting which one is compulsory and which is optional or elective.

*It would be good if it were true:*

Compulsory physical education in nursery schools one lesson a day, in lower primary school forms three compulsory classes and one optional per week, in higher-forms two compulsory classes and two optional per week, in secondary schools three compulsory elective classes of physical education per week, at university one compulsory elective class of physical education in first term, one elective class of physical education in second term. WE ARE TALKING ABOUT PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES!!! Not sport, nor recreation, these are the second and the third "line" of the railways... (**Conceptual confusion**)

**PHYSICAL CULTURE IS** a social phenomenon, namely, from the generic roots of man came his conscious, planned, free, purposeful, creative social action (necessity and task!), and with that came self-determined properly-educated (meaning: theoretically-epistemologically-methodologically-pragmatic) self-consciousness, and (therefore), EDUCATION FOR MASTERING (hence: and usage, preserving, upgrading and multiplying, that is to say, for the knowledge and management) material spiritual HUMAN ASSETS (not related to production, essential) PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES operationally (in social reality) structured as physical education, sport and sport recreation.

Physical education implemented thus into institution of education and upbringing primarily demands awareness of the vast social community regarding the need for creating and preserving of healthy and capable nation. Analysis should be conducted and education institution network established, and accordingly create the prognosis of personnel required to cover the whole system??? (HOW MANY NEW JOBS, IS EVERYTHING GOING ON BUDGET, HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO MAKE THIS PLAN SUCCEED...)

We have always wanted more physical education classes, is that really possible? Not at the moment; but... in the vicinity some changes are taking place (Hungary), there are many ways (increasing the scope of extra curriculum activities) we have to INITIATE something.

The initiative for the changes of curriculum!?! The disharmony between school curriculum and demands imposed by modern way of life is apparent. THEREFORE: Offer three modules that would take in consideration geography-climate conditions, regional characteristics, as well as every school individuality (technical-material conditions.) Clear reconstruction of curriculum content in regards to today's way of life.(... when were the school curriculums approved...?), opportunity to put forward the idea of using the equipment and floor exercises with lower forms of primary school (are these exercises necessary for the seventh and eighth forms of primary school and insecondary school?...in my opinion, the way the gymnastics classes are thought, nowadays, there is no need for them), to allow students at this age to learn different types of basic games (. and, not just "dodgeball game") and lastly" WHY DO WE NOT HAVE VOLLEYBALL CLASSES IN THE FIFTH FORM, OR FOOTBALL OR BASKETBALL, why do we only have handball classes?

### **2.1. Homogenous groups**

Even though, educational reforms are omnipresent in a public discourse, class-subject-time schooling system withstand all the changes. Physical education classes are ideal for implementing real changes - introduction of homogenous groups (...the right to have variety of subjects to choose from in the seventh and the eighth form)...for, physical education is not just school subject, it is a sphere of education(domain). Formation of this homogenous groups requires financial stability of the country (let us respect students choices - employ another teacher..). It is pointless debating and lamenting if we are not strong enough and adequately prepared to invest in prevention, not in correction.

### **2.2.Evaluation in physical education**

How to evaluate? Two school subjects? Are there any research studies that tell us of the average mark in physical education or compulsory elective class - chosen sport? There are none. Is it on account of fact that there is, perhaps, an epidemic of A marks? It could be that these classes are used to create straight A students, "vukovci"? (students who receive a special certificate for complete A marks in all subjects in primary and secondary schools.)Once, it was like this...professor: "Excessiveness in evaluation is so enormous, the outer circles are also pointing out to the problems created in this way: subjective opinion of the teacher, giving vast number of week marks, sending students to retake exams, establishing arbitrary norms for students, etc. This kind of circumstances has brought this profession under the scrutiny of the public eye, and parents often help their children be excused from the physical education classes without a real reason, to avoid receiving bad mark."It is not the same nowadays, but how it should be? Models of evaluation should exist! It is crucial for the teacher to be offered with a possible evaluation model in physical education classes (domains:

motor skills, motor abilities and affective domain)... Above all, we have to determine the evaluation purpose in physical education classes. Evaluation, as well as observing and assessing are a part of the wider process of evaluating physical education. The arising issue is whether the students' evaluation in physical education classes is identical to evaluation in other school subjects? It is not identical at the moment (see Regulation on Evaluation...). The purpose of the marking system in physical education needs to be reexamined...and...a clear criterion has to be established. We objectively evaluate motor skills, motor abilities motor knowledge or giveunmerited high marks...I'm afraid there is no other option!

Hence,

New physical education paradigm covers

1. Creation of the functional system of physical education
2. Curriculum reform that implies redefining of the curriculum content
  - 2.1. Homogenous groups (class "dispersal") that are formed from (for example) seventh form of the primary school, and so one...
  - 2.2. Evaluation in physical education defined clearly and IDEOLOGICALLY directed
3. To put in practice, the transition from conceptual confusion to conceptual reform, not just in theory...

Professor, all of this implies forward and back from profession to science. It is returning of PHYSICAL CULTURE to nature. Return of graduates from the Faculty of Sport and Physical Education.)!

No sportization of physical education, no recreation of children, no partial theories lacking PHYSICAL CULTURE THEORY... New physical education paradigm signalizes the return to the physical culture (FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF PROFESSOR MATIC) with a clear distinction between structural elements of physical education, sport and recreation, regard for their mutual relationship and the attempt to overcome the shortcomings in the physical education class praxis, and with creation of the curriculum that acknowledges needs of the present-day student.

## **НОВА ПАРАДИГМА ФИЗИЧКОГ ВАСПИТАЊА – ПУТЕВИМА ПРОФЕСОРА МАТИЋА**

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САЖЕТАК



У раду се анализира данашњи положај физичке културе у друштву. Указује се на друштвене промене које су у знатној мери потиснуле физичку културу као појам и заменили је синтагмом физичко васпитање и спорт. У светлу неопходности враћања овог термина у стручни дискурс извршено је подсећање на значај и научно стручни допринос успостављању Теорије физичке културе од стране професора Миливоја Матића. Такође, извршена је критичка анализа тренутног стања физичког васпитања. У циљу унапређивања наставе физичког васпитања потребно је изградити нову парадигму физичког васпитања која ће се заснивати на успостављању функционалног система физичког васпитања и курикуларној реформи. Нова парадигма физичког васпитања представља повратак физичкој култури – путевима професора Миливоја Матића.

**Кључне речи:** физичко васпитање, парадигма, курикулум

## **НОВАЯ ПАРАДИГМА ФИЗИЧЕСКОГО ВОСПИТАНИЯ – СЛЕДУЯ ОПЫТУ ПРОФЕССОРА МАТИЧА**

### **АННОТАЦИЯ**

В данной статье анализируется текущее положение физической культуры в обществе. В ней указано на социальные изменения, которые в значительной степени не охватываются термином физическое воспитание и заменившей его фразой – физическое воспитание и спорт. В свете необходимости восстановления данного термина в профессиональном дискурсе, стало напоминание о важности и общенаучном вкладе в создание теории физической культуры Миливоя Матича. Также еще не был проведен глубокий критический анализ современного состояния физического воспитания. В целях совершенствования занятий физической культурой должна быть создана новая парадигма физического воспитания, которая будет основываться на внедрении функциональной системы физического воспитания и реформировании учебных программ. Новая парадигма физического воспитания знаменует возвращение к физической культуре – следуя опыту профессора Матича.

**Ключевые слова:** физическое воспитание, парадигма, учебный план.

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