

# **IN SEARCH OF EXPERIENCES AND TRENDS OF SPORT FOR ALL WORLDWIDE**

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## **Introduction to book Worldwide Experiences and Trends in Sport for All Published by Meyer und Meyer**

"In the past, the practice of sports was an occasional pastime of the rich and idle youth. I worked thirty years for that practice to become a habitual pleasure of the petit bourgeoisie. Now it is necessary that this pleasure become part of the life of the young workers. All sports for everybody, sport for all – this is without doubt a formula that will be labeled of crazily utopian". Pierre de Coubertin (1).

These words, written in 1919 by the founder of the Olympic Movement of the Modern Era, represent a historical landmark of what is called today "Sport for All" (SFA), an umbrella term for recreation, sport development, mass participation programs and cultural recreation activities aiming to provide leisure opportunities and health promotion to their adherents (2). Coubertin not only coined the expression 'sport for all' but also gave sport a social value "for all". Today Sport for All refers to any kind of sport practiced without the pressures of top sport, which is usually represented by athletes dealing with measured performances and accepted rules. For this claim, it was put aside the selective character of sporting activities as often based either on talent for competition or on social status for participation.

This modern conception of Sport for All would be taken up five decades later in Europe as a simple, free and enjoyable access to sport (Trim Movement) and a right to citizenship (European Charter), as it is described in this book by the chapters of Germany and of Belgium-Flanders (3). Actually these propositions of social development had predecessors in other continents and in several countries. Traditional Games and locally created activities that popularized sport and recreational activities have been identified in the history of many nations either in the sense of communal belonging or in the sense of political mobilization (4). Sport for All is a new conception that goes back to the old tradition of facilitating the access of people to games and physical activities. It is also possible to observe that in recent years Sport for All, through the practice of physical activities, has also been a response to the crying need not only for more opportunities of leisure but also for the creation of means to promote health. It is exactly in the area of health promotion that lies the core meaning of SFA today, ratified by the contributions of the five continents included in this book.

The primary objective of the cross-national and comparative study of this book is reached by bringing together the successful initiatives of developing Sport for All and the tradition of popular sport practices found in many countries. In other words, this book is about practice and theory of "Sport and All": practice as a successful enterprise in its introductory phase and theory as a problem yet demanding clear and appropriate elaborations. Moreover, the texts were planned to provide joint observations of continental areas and further research developments of each participant country, groups of countries and categories of SFA practice scrutinized by the research.

Historically, SFA had assumed the meaning of democratization of sport in worldwide perspective as related primarily to sport, games and physical exercises practiced as social development tools for the benefit of its participants and of society as a whole. As such, SFA has been progressing with loose definitions mainly used to classify initiatives which offer access and opportunity of physical activities for people without motivation, awareness or/and means to participate in them.

These attempts, however, have been insufficient and therefore have not succeeded in establishing a theoretical framework of scientific validity that would account for the growing responsibility of SFA interventions that take place in the daily life and in the health of the different populations around the world.

## THE PROBLEM

The clear, coherent and direct claim of SFA has been facing sharp contrasts with the variety and complexity of the interventions needed to reach the expected results through the practice of physical activities since its outcome. This contradictory nature of SFA conception may be primarily approached as a fallacy in terms of logic. In other words, Sport for All is a petitio principii ("begging the question") in terms of scientific inquiry once the expression requests what is to be proved. Unsurprisingly, since the 1960s, SFA leaders all over the world have been advocating the need of sport for everyone while sport theorists from many disciplines of knowledge have tried to explain why and how. Nevertheless, both sides have never had a much-needed mutual understanding.

The lag between practice and theory regarding SFA development was openly argued in 1991 by Pekka Oja and Risto Telama in the book "Sport for All". These distinguished sport scholars forwarded the following critique after editing the Proceedings of the World Congress on Sport for All, held in Tampere, Finland, June 1990 (5):

"Until recently scientific efforts to study the foundations of sport for all have been non-systematic

and unorganized. It is therefore no wonder that the concept of sport for all remains vague and its directions blurred, objectives unspecified, and procedures groping”.

Yet in the preface of their book, Oja and Telama had given a special emphasis on the role of the Council of Europe, the International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education -ICSSPE and the International Olympic Committee- IOC for the advancement of SFA in international scope followed by a comment referred to other development focus:

“And not less importantly, impressive national, regional, and local programs promoting Sport for All have been conducted. Municipalities in many countries consider the construction of sport-for-all facilities a major responsibility and sport and other voluntary organizations provide more and more Sport-for-All services”.

For the editors of the present book, the above-mentioned Oja and Telama’s critiques are still valid today. Their review book has remained a key source for scientific approaches to SFA, again bringing to light the hypothesis of a lag that exists between practitioners and theorists, which seems to block the progress in this area of knowledge. It has also been possible to observe the continuous expansion of SFA at local, regional and national levels. SFA has also been promoted by specialized international associations (namely Trim and Fitness International Sport for All Association (TAFISA) and the Fédération Internationale du Sport pour Tous (FISpT) in order to maintain the original drive of Sport for All movement around the world. To these efforts it is also important to mention the continuous involvement of other international organizations in SFA developments as attending broader aims of sport, health, education and culture, such as UNESCO, WHO, IOC, ICSSPE, CSIT and FIEP.

On account of these contrasting circumstances, the chief editor of the present book had proposed the elaboration of an internationally joint effort to describe and analyze SFA experiences and trends from all continents in order to give more scientific content and legitimacy to national and local interventions. This proposal, which was presented during the 15<sup>th</sup> TAFISA World Congress held in Malaysia, November 1997, immediately had the support of TAFISA Board.

The argument favoring an updated international review was not referred only to SFA all-encompassing conception or its excessive trust in practice but the vicious circle established by the international congresses promoted by IOC (being Tampere, Finland, 1990, a typical example) and even by TAFISA and FISpT, which have been accepting and accumulating contributions from a variety of countries and areas of knowledge without further consequences. Very often, distinguished contributors of these events have been asked to present successful pieces of SFA from which legitimacy to spread models of activities might be inferred. As a result, SFA remains a confusing aggregation of explanatory attempts and of theoretical interpretations often based in individualistic criteria.

Overall, this epistemological fragmentation lies behind the procedure of sharing experiences among SFA leaders. Although this collective construction of empirical ways of intervention is surely valid, it does not yield generalizations or lead to comprehensive theoretical explanations. Because of these impediments, scientific research in SFA area has had narrow delimitation with a few contributions addressing contexts, specially the cultural ones (6).

#### THE BOOK AND ITS RESEARCH

Once the Board of TAFISA agreed with the proposal and supported it, the project was then outlined aiming at developing a comparative study that could primarily yield relationships and their foundations for building theoretical explanations. Moreover, this cross-national research should emphasize experiences from national contexts. Oyen (1992) referred to both of these options in her statements on the nowadays value of international comparative research which (a) presents a continuous renew of theoretical, methodological and epistemological challenges; (b) seeks uniformity versus uniqueness that points to the peculiarities of a country; and (c) responds to the growing demand of knowledge on globalization issues (7).

Oyen is straightforward in relation to the limitations of comparative studies, generally "filled with unknown variables" despite the fact that the "demand for comparisons across countries is formidable" (8). However, on account of the decision of having a comparative methodology as a basis to review the fragmented knowledge on SFA, the next step consisted of the elaboration of pre-set categories to frame countries' reports. For this purpose Broom (1987) pointed out a theoretical groundwork just as he had identified 12 categories in comparative studies of sport area when examining its state of the art (9). In the less explored field of SFA, the category selection corresponded to two preliminary tasks for starting up the book project: (a) the elaboration of a standard framework for cross-national comparisons

of SFA initiatives, and (b) the selection of authors according to their experience in research or/and capability for cooperative work with SFA leaders.

The first step was also planned accounting for the descriptive format that usually shapes country's reports in international comparative investigations. To fulfill this requirement, the recommendation of Powell et al. (1991) was adopted for the evaluation of physical activity programs, based on scientific methodological procedures. Powell and collaborators had proposed (10):

" As part of these research efforts, a standardized and systematic format for the description of physical activity promotion programs, in fact, of health promotion programs in general, is needed. Programs cannot be repeated if they have not been described. Efforts to measure the outcomes of health promotion programs are important but are only half the task. Adequate descriptions of the programs are also necessary. An additional aid will be efforts to identify and codify the individual elements of health promotion programs."

As far as a typology of SFA interventions is concerned, Powell's proposal had precedents in sport-related areas such as the UNESCO model for international overall assessment of education. Adapted to Physical Education activities, this model was also submitted to a trial by ICSSPE at the end of the 1980s (11). Yet, the planned task (b) was then an attempt to conciliate tradition with scientific ongoing developments in Sport for All - type activities.

During the negotiation phase at the beginning of 1998, UNESCO joined the project in a partnership with TAFISA. After these institutional arrangements, an investigation to set up a typology framework for SFA started after consultation with 12 leaders and scholars who had at least ten years of experience in the field. The objective of this inquiry was to obtain the necessary validity for the categories of comparison. Basically, the outcome of the assessment of the process of validation was referred to the UNESCO-ICSSPE model (1980) and the foregoing Powell model for intervention in health promotion campaigns (12). Table 1 summarizes a comparison of the formats of the three models, including the number of countries participating in the present book.

TABLE 1  
 MODELS FOR A TYPOLOGY OF INTERVENTIONS BASED IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

SOURCES	ICSSPE	POWELL et al	DaCosta
YEAR	1980	1991	1998
FOCUS	Physical Education	Health Promotion	Sport for All
TEST OF VALIDITY	—	—	12 experts - framework model
TEST OF APPLICATION	56 countries - short descriptions in juxtaposition	4 countries - analysis of cases	36 countries - comparative research
CATEGORIES	Aims & Objectives Organization Management Programs Personnel Professional Preparation Facilities & Equipment Research Evaluation	Strategies Settings Target Groups	History Institutions Marketing Culture Sponsorship and Finance Target Groups and Activities Settings and Activities Strategy and Activities Social Changes

#### ORGANIZING FOR COMPARATIVE RESEARCH

Another reference for the model-building process defining both the book and the research work across countries was the set of recommendations for comparative studies developed in 1998 by the Board on International Comparative Studies of Education - ICSE, when advising the National Center for Education

Statistics and the National Science Foundation on the participation of the United States in international comparative studies of education (13). This institution located in Washington D.C., U.S.A., has long-term experience in promoting and funding research projects with similar approaches of the intended SFA international comparative study, which was considered a significant entry into the study plan of the book. Following there is a selection of ICSE position statements which have helped to outline this book's contributions and respective investigation:

- The board encourages the conduct of international comparative studies across a wide range of research strategies, formats, and procedures and a broad range of nations.
- For appraising comparative education studies, we refer to less theoretically oriented studies as descriptive, and those that are explicitly grounded in particular theories as explanatory. At one end of a continuum are theoretically based or explanatory studies intended to build or test complex models linking educational resources, practices, and outcomes. At the other end are descriptive studies, intended only to monitor or document critical facets of educational systems, practices, or outcomes.
- Comparative studies also vary in their reliance on objective measurement, quantification, and narrative description and on use of statistical methods or systematic observation. There is no sharp division between these latter two research approaches, but we refer to the first approach as quantitative and the second as qualitative. Some studies use both quantitative and qualitative methods; in fact, qualitative strategies can be embedded in quantitative studies to illuminate relationships.
- Case studies can be used initially to document relationships that, once understood, can then be translated to survey formats; and survey results, in turn, can stimulate in-depth case studies. A special type of qualitative study is documentation relating to the history of education systems. Historical studies are very important for understanding the conditions that account for particular structures of schooling and achievement levels and can aid in developing realistic policy alternatives.
- Many studies are cross-sectional, obtaining data for only one point in time. Others are longitudinal, obtaining information on the same sample at various points in time, for example, at the beginning and end of the school year. Other contrasting approaches are large-scale, randomized surveys of entire nations versus smaller, localized, but intensive observational studies. The board believes there is value in all these different varieties of inquiry and does not

hold any particular research strategy, descriptive or explanatory, quantitative or qualitative, longitudinal or cross-sectional, to be uniformly superior.

- There is probably no perfect proposal or perfect study. Consequently, researchers are encouraged to consider which principles are most relevant to their own investigations and to view these principles as ideals to strive for as they inevitably balance competing demands and practical constraints. Certainly all principles should be carefully considered in the design of any study.
- Clearly, the board has specific and particular concerns with the utility of cross-national studies to audiences within its own nation and therefore encourages proposals for studies of potential value to educational practice, policy, and research.
- A proposed international study should display sensitivity to the cultural contexts (e.g., language spoken, religion, laws, implements used, values held) for the education dimensions to be assessed. The study plan should be reviewed by an individual in each participating country who understands how educational influences and cultural context shape and are shaped by policy.
- Descriptive surveys, intended to chronicle the conditions of two or more nations on one or a few dimensions should strive to provide information regarding the context--country wealth, value placed on technology, and so on--in which such conditions are embedded in each of the nations included in the sample.
- A proposal that is technically sound but that largely ignores past studies or is disconnected from existing bodies of knowledge in the study area, or in which intellectual elements of the research are fragmented or contradictory, may be inadequate.
- Although it is important to safeguard against biases, actual differences (political, ideological, gender, and even religious) present challenges in comparative research that must be recognized. Such differences are often meaningful sources of cultural variation.
- A standardized research design across countries is essential, although national or international options can be added. Other modifications of the standardized design should not be permitted, since they can have serious consequences for validity or comparability.
- Consideration may also be given to reporting at multiple levels of aggregation if that is appropriate to the design and intent of the study.

#### AUTHORS AND AIMS

The book had its first public announcement in November 1998, in Barcelona, during the 7<sup>th</sup> IOC World Congress of Sport for All. For this occasion, a forty-page



booklet had been put out by Universidade Gama Filho - Rio de Janeiro, the partner for the editorial work of this book. Its title described the phase in which the project was entering (14): "TAFISA and UNESCO Announce a New Book and Call for Authors".

Actually, the public commitment of TAFISA, UNESCO and Universidade Gama Filho as published and advertised in the late 1998 has only come to an end with the first edition of this book. So far, it is worthwhile to trace the original purposes of the project, which have remained the same throughout the editorial work during the entire years 1999 and 2000. They are here presented as the aims of this publication:

"This book is about Sport for All. In the last three decades Sport for All movement has been growing more from practical approaches than from theoretical interpretations. In reality it is still little studied and poorly understood in worldwide perspectives especially because of the difficulties in understanding cross-cultural experiences. The rationales of Sport for All today tend to be more related to the health and leisure aspects of people who are engaged in sport almost ignoring the real roots of the movement. It is time then that Sport for All change the old "ought-to-be" framework to the new "be" framework. We then need to build a state-of-the-art book, which aims at providing:

- A body of knowledge able to point out adequate ways and means of developing Sport for All in the upcoming 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- A central focus on comparative analysis to illuminate connections built on the shared conception of Sport for All in different cultures, then proceed by placing them into a larger and updated scope of social needs and scientific knowledge.
- Status-trends of Sport for All by means of understanding how it has developed and may be developed in the future, either in poor or in rich countries.

- Explanations of the building up and expansion of Sport for All in different historical contexts.
- Descriptions of the long-run evolution of Sport for All to deepen and to broaden the meanings of common highlights of accomplishments in different cultures.
- Concerns related to local appropriateness and global significance of Sport for All.
- Distinctions of focuses on leisure, health, social development, Olympic education, education for leisure, cultural legacy, environmental protection etc. to map out diversions and convergences”.

#### THE RESEARCH PLAN

The framework for SFA as displayed in Table 1 was proposed in view of assessments and analytical studies done by means of comparisons. Under this condition, the contributions for this book should primarily be considered as answers to an international research besides being a test model to conduct these answers from each contributor. As such, this large-scale cross-national comparative project of investigation envisaged five stages as described in Table 2.

Authors were encouraged to go through stage 1 according to the instructions found in the booklet “Call for Authors” while the editors got ready to proceed to stages 2, 3 and 4. Stage 5 is the long-term perspective of the expected results of this book, making SFA a specialized area for research similar to other dimensions of today’s sport activities.

A selected part of the instructions to prospective authors is transcribed below. Expectations coming from stage 1 are explicitly forwarded (pages 14-15 of the booklet):

“Each chapter should refer to a particular country and should be prepared by one or more authors. Its content should fit a specific model so that it could be submitted to comparative analysis. For this reason the Editorial Staff is proposing a framework for the first part of the book to help organize the writing process. It should aim at providing consistency of presentation in view of past and present meanings of Sport for All in each national context (...) Once the Sport for All experience of each country has its peculiarities of time, space, cultural

background and technological possibilities, the length of descriptions, the appropriate level and the limits of analysis and interpretation are to be set by local authors. It is also important to make a plan in order to fit existing knowledge on Sport for All locally related to the suggested components of the framework”.

The procedures for putting into practice the planned cross-national investigation of Table 2 were based on the classic model for international comparative research developed by Bereday (1964), mostly applied to macro analysis in the educational area (15). In addition, the model for comparative research in sport sciences elaborated by Haag (1998) was used to update the investigation design with specific outcomes related to SFA (16). Moreover, ICSE recommendations from previous sections had outlined a strategic base for the implementation of the research. Also, the previously referred framework developed by DaCosta (1998) has been adjusted to the indications of Table 2.

The contribution of TIMSS model is discussed in the next section as it is a basis for the methodological choice related to sport area. The chapter " Conclusions" of this book presents the final report of the comparative study including detailed definitions of the above-mentioned procedures.

TABLE 2  
WORLDWIDE SPORT FOR ALL COMPARATIVE RESEARCH STRATEGY (\*) STAGES OF PRODUCTION (1999-2001)  
(n = 36 countries – 5 continents)

(STAGES) - PARTICIPANTS	MAIN TASKS	REFERENCES	FOCUS	OUTCOMES (YEARS)
(1) Authors	Description and analysis of context (i)	Framework's categories (v)	National context (iii)	Case study in words and numbers (ii) (1999-2000)
(2) Editors	Interpretation (i)	Data base in words and numbers (ii)	Historical, social, cultural and management knowledge (i)	Identification of variables (ii) (2000 - 2001)
(3) Editors		Variables	Similarities and	Longitudinal

	Juxtaposition analysis (i)	(ii)	differences (i)	analysis of variables (iii) (2001)
(4) Editors	Simultaneous Comparison – 36 countries (i)	Variables (ii)	Primary comparative analysis (iv)	General trends – five continents (iii) (2001)
(5) Authors, Editors and other adherents	Point-specific comparisons by selected countries and/or categories (iii)	General trends – five continents (iii)	Secondary comparative Analysis (iv)	Trends in context – specific relationships (iii) (2001 onwards)
(*) Sources: (i) Bereday; (ii) Haag; (iii) ICSE; (iv) TIMSS; (v) DaCosta.				

#### METHODOLOGICAL CHOICES AND TESTS

The decision of combining a macro vision design with a micro and multivariate approach for SFA comparative research internationally was based on the comparisons needed either from joining five continents or from scrutinizing relationships in the contexts of the selected countries. Behind this last option, there were the lessons learned from the Third International Mathematics and Science Study - TIMSS.

According to Lindquist (1997), the TIMSS is the largest and most complex international comparative study ever undertaken, aiming at the improvement of the process of learning mathematics within worldwide and comparative perspectives. Significantly, it comprises the following stages: (a) description – questionnaire – 40 countries; (b) data collection for identification of relationships; (c) identification of contextual factors in selected countries; (d) further investigations in an ongoing process of comparison involving countries and point-specific relationship with contexts (17).

Therefore, the TIMSS developed a dual approach encompassing primary and secondary comparative analysis as those included in the methodological choices of Table 2. Stages 4 and 5 of Table 2 adopted the same prescriptions from TIMSS, which experienced a comparative study with a large number of

countries, but it has also built an ongoing and multiple investigations with them by selection of geographic areas and contexts. All this means that TIMSS practical experience stood for SFA research as a completion of the overall strategy adapted from ICSE model.

The decision of following TIMSS example in SFA was also due to insufficient results provided by comparative studies in the sport area in worldwide scale. Here the hypothesis refers to difficulties in combining macro with micro levels approaches, as revealed by past sport investigations when adopting comparative methodology. Actually, the lack of a standard model to collect data - as above quoted in Powell - may be acting hypothetically as an impediment to any comparative analysis on multiple levels in the area of physical activities. Some support to this thesis is found in Olafson (1991), when he proposes to mix qualitative and quantitative methods in comparative studies of sport and SFA, reaching the conclusion that "consistent with this focus is the need to develop a system of data-gathering from different countries and cultures. There is a need to create a classification system to order comparative research and thought" (18). Symptomatically, in leisure studies a similar claim is forwarded by Hantrais and Samuel (1991) (19).

In short, despite comparative descriptions delineated by Carl Diem in the classic book "Weltgeschichte des Sports", published in the 1930s, or by Pierre Seurin in his "L'Education Physique dans le Monde", issued three decades later, today there are only few and incomplete cross-national studies in the sport area comprising large groups of countries or comparisons between continents.

For the most part, these new attempts have remained in the aforementioned stage 1 - Table 2, as far as their final results were admittedly the creation of a basis for comparative appreciation. Taking the Kamphorst & Roberts' book "Trends in Sports - a Multinational Perspective" (1989) as an example (20), the editors declared in their conclusions that "we cannot directly compare most of the quantitative data in the various chapters because the methods of collection and measurement were not standardized". Nevertheless, Kamphorst & Roberts had finally concentrated their efforts on general trends arguing "that no such objections exist to comparing the main trends in sport in the fifteen countries". In addition, these editors predicted the future possibility of developing primary and secondary comparative analysis as consolidated in Table 2:

"Out of the rich and diverse country-wise descriptions it is possible, in our view, to identify

some general trends. Some appear to be truly worldwide. Others are more regional or tied-up with specific cultures. "

Accordingly, Chalip et al. (21) in their study with 16 countries in 1996, as well as De Knop et al. (22) putting together 20 countries in 1997, raised similar arguments to Kamphorst & Roberts' acknowledgements. But both comparative trials in sport area have remained in stage 1, previously defined in this chapter, while keeping the advantages of comparative "foundations" or "approaches" (23). In Chalip et al., for instance, this methodological solution for "thinking critically and comparatively" was forwarded as a search of meanings by making interpretations (24):

"Cross-national studies provide the kinds of contrasts and comparisons that help to illuminate assumptions, values, attributions, and expectations. Another nation's differing premises and perceptions can become the ground on which one's own national presuppositions stand out in juxtaposition."

Another current interpretation of the insufficiency detected in international comparisons of sport issues in continental scale is related to the complexity of methodological requirements, as pointed out by Haag (25). But a counterpoint to this interpretation is found in Chick (2000), in whose work sport researchers have not yet noticed the advantages in the use of the comparative method (26).

To the editors of this book, both former (Haag) and latter (Chick) positions represent an opportunity to improve the methodological solutions to sport research, in general, and to SFA scientific development, in particular. Additionally, the comparative study made by Hartmann - Tews (2000) on SFA types of intervention in Germany, France and Great Britain reinforced the strategy chosen to develop contextual researches based on macro interpretations of Sport for All. The comparative investigation on sport participation in cities and municipalities of Belgium - Flanders, as carried on by Van Heddegem, De Martelaer and De Knop (2000), also illuminated the thematic approach of the contextual understanding of SFA (27).

The next chapters comprise description and interpretation of national SFA contexts from five continents according to a standard framework, complying with the stages 1 - Table 2. A chapter containing conclusions follows these national reviews under the format of research report, representing the stages 2, 3 and 4 found in Table 2. This concluding report also brings trends in context from selected countries or groups of countries in order to provide clues for further investigation, in accordance to the tasks and outcomes of stage 5 (see Table 2).

The adequacy of the requirements of stage 5 in relation to stages 2, 3 and 4 was additionally submitted to a test in 2000 still during the elaboration of the texts. For this purpose, Traditional Sport and Games - TSG - were chosen as a contextual factor of most countries included in the international comparative research in SFA in order to identify topics for in-depth investigations (28). So far, TSG have become pivotal in a survey questionnaire aimed at providing point-specific relationships having continental comparisons as a preliminary basis. A total of 35 respondents from 28 countries and five continents took part in the investigation using the network of contacts established by the editorial work of this book.

The results were presented and discussed in the Symposium "Games of the Past-Sports for the Future?", promoted by the International Society for the History of Physical Education and Sport - ISHPES, TAFISA and ICSSPE, and held in Duderstadt-Germany, in June 16-19, 2000. The research was named " Mapping Worldwide Trends of Traditional Sports and Games", having as author the chief editor of this book. The full text of the research report is published elsewhere (29); however, the trial was considered satisfactory in view of the outcomes showed by the conclusions. The data gathered through the survey finally produced general trends (continents) and trends in context (national-local and thematic relationships). The following are examples from both viewpoints as far as stage 5 (Table 2) is concerned:

General Trend: "Modernization of society and globalization have been affecting TSG because of a decrease in the offer of activities, but today it is already possible to observe that these influences are keeping some practices steady or even increasing others";

Trends in Context: "Institutions often show indifference to TSG but new trends of promotion and preservation have emerged in spite of being located in specific countries or areas. Consequently, Sport for All is becoming a visible means of promotion favoring those typical activities as opposed to top sport, which presupposes some constraint".

The dual perspective of trends as here proposed is a "strategy of comparative methodology", able to "explore alternative ways of establishing a meaningful dialogue between ideas and evidence", according to Ragin (1987). For this social scientist, general trends are often referred to case-oriented and historical comparisons while trends in context are variable-oriented (30). Moreover, Ragin suggests that the complexity of comparative research emerges facing a large number of cases or broad comparisons as an attempt to shape generalizations. In addition, this argument had the following remarks (31):

"While the case-oriented approach is limited in this way, it has many features that are well worth preserving, even in studies that span many cases. First, case-oriented methods are holistic - they treat cases as whole entities and not as collections of parts. Thus, the relations between the parts of a whole are understood within the context of the whole, not within the context of general patterns of covariation between variables characterizing the members of a population of comparable units. Second, causation is understood conjuncturally. Outcomes are analyzed in terms of intersections of conditions, and it is usually assumed that any of several combinations of conditions might produce a certain outcome. These and other features of case-oriented methods make it possible for investigators to interpret cases historically and make statements about the origins of important qualitative changes in specific settings".

The final report of the international comparative study on SFA presented in this book adopts Ragin's aforementioned conceptions not only to fulfill the requirements of stage 5 (see Table 2) but also to give theoretical basis to interpretations from national cases.



## PROFILE OF AUTHORS AND RELEVANCE OF STUDY

The call for authors of this book, which had started in Barcelona, November 1998, had excess of applications from Europe and North America but insufficiency in relation to Africa, Latin America and Asia. As a result, the editorial work has also become a task of research & development, making associative assemblages and continuous changes among contributors. By the end of 1999, there were 44 countries involved in the project, but in December 2000 the total had gone down to 36 countries due to dismissal of low quality papers. Unfortunately it is also necessary to mention the fact that three distinguished authors passed away in the period of 1999-2000.

The above-mentioned aim of bringing SFA practices to a scientific scrutiny can be considered successful facing the group of authors selected for the 36 chapters, as listed below according to academic status or function:

Asia: 15 - 10 PhDs, 2 Ms and 3 leaders or managers.

Africa: 4 - 2 PhDs, 1 Ms and 1 leader.

Europe: 35 - 26 PhDs, 3 Ms and 6 leaders or managers.

Latin America: 21 - 7 PhDs, 9 Ms and 5 leaders or managers.

North America: 2 - 1 PhD and 1 Ms.

Total: 87 authors - 46 PhDs (52,8 %); 16 Ms (18,3 %) and 25 (28,7 %) leaders or managers.

In terms of countries from which these authors were selected, the comparative study can also be considered relevant for covering 47 % of the world's population (Table 3). In spite of the fact that this percentage has no relation to the participation of SFA worldwide, the number and distribution of countries that came out of the selection of authors and development of the content guaranteed the planned comparisons between continents.

TABLE 3

SPORT FOR ALL BOOK – PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

PROPORTION OF POPULATION BY CONTINENTS – 1999(\*)

(NUMBER OF COUNTRIES) x 1000

CONTINENTS	TOTAL POPULATION	POPULATION BY COUNTRY	PERCENTAGE OF CONTINENT'S POPULATION
ASIA	3 664 294	(8) 1 490 759	40,60
AFRICA	766 623	(2) 50 186	7,72
EUROPE	728 934	(17) 572 753	78,57

		)		
L. AMERICA	511 346	(7)	385 532	75,39
N. AMERICA	307 202	(2)	307 075	99,95
TOTAL (n=36)	5 978 402		2 815 305	47,00

(\*) Source: "World Population Prospects", United Nations - UN, 1999.

It is important to mention that the quantitative relationships shown in Table 3 hypothetically refer to the relevance of SFA in each continent. This assumption is based on the contacts that the editorial staff made with prospective authors who were usually originated from countries having SFA traditions or ongoing experience. Once most of the preliminary contacts with authors had involved TAFISA affiliate countries, again the selection of these writers for the various chapters reflected mostly the readiness of some experiences of SFA to be reported. In the Belgium-Flanders chapter of next sections, there is a discussion on this way to pin SFA case studies down, when approaching the so-called "Matthews' effect".

Theoretically speaking on the theme of comparative studies, the selection of countries by their experience in SFA interventions is valid, as ascertained in Teune (32) or Parker (33). The former author raised multidisciplinary approaches of comparative studies and the latter reviewed the leisure studies under a globalization focus. To both reviewers comparing countries is always selective. For SFA concerns, contrast of experiences represents input for the simultaneous comparisons within the strategic construction of Table 2. Thus, the broad representative and selective option slightly marginalizes the quantitative validation.

In this context, only two countries represent Africa in the book. Of course, there is not quantitative significance on this participation but the methodological requirement of putting forward similarities and differences between continents enhances the qualitative meaning of this inclusion. The necessary delimitation of continental trends with the partial involvement of Africa is discussed in the concluding chapter of this book.

By tracking through the definition of comparative study prescribed by the International Society for Comparative Physical Education and Sport - ISCPES, the inclusion of two African countries in the research may be initially considered pertinent in methodological sense. ISCPES, in effect, "defines comparative study as that which investigates and compare two or more units (countries, cultures, ideologies, regions, states, systems, institutions, populations). Most often this will involve different geographical settings. Examples of phenomena to be compared include: school systems of P. E. (or elements) and sport models in a macro or micro context. Such phenomena are universal but cross culturally and cross nationally

they differ in focus and substance. Comparatists study how and why they differ. Comparisons are used by those directing or initially proposing to explore the suitability of new elements from other culture for inclusion in their program" (34).

Summarizing, the narrow participation of Africa in the comparisons gains legitimacy by differences in focus and substance, which might illuminate accomplishments of other countries in other continents and their own initiatives, as depicted above by Chalip. In terms of cultural studies, the inclusion of less acknowledged practices in universalistic methodologies is often to avoid "imperialistic projects" as well as "clustering together all sense-making practices"(35).

Moreover, the criteria for the inclusion of countries in continents were taken from the reference source of Table 3, which lists countries by continents following United Nations (UN) standards. Nevertheless, Australia and Israel were included in Asia in respect of their affiliation to Asiana Sport for All Association - ASFA (36). Also, Latin America replaced the terminology of South and Central America of UN convention in order to avoid the isolation of Mexico in the adopted continental criteria.

#### AUTONOMY OF AUTHORS AND FRAMEWORK OF TEXTS

In spite of the standards set to authors, the editors accepted additional approaches and content that could clarify their analysis, interpretations and conclusions. The far-reaching consequence of this editorial flexibility was ad hoc focus choices adopted in the elaboration of some chapters, which were finally addressed to the overall interpretation of Sport for All. Below a classification of that supplementary information is presented to the reader according to identification by country:

##### *Focus on some theory of Sport for All:*

Australia, Singapore, Japan, Korea, Israel (part one), South Africa, England, Belgium-Flanders, Germany, Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, Denmark, Brazil and Canada.

##### *Focus on international comparisons of Sport for All:*

Australia, Israel (part one), England, Belgium-Flanders, Germany, Bulgaria, Spain, France, Portugal, Austria, Hungary, Brazil, Uruguay, Colombia, Venezuela, U.S.A. and Canada.

*Focus on local traditions and government influences on Sport for All:*

China, Malaysia, Taiwan, Mozambique, South Africa, Denmark, Cyprus, Romania, Greece, Finland, Austria, Russia, Spain, France, Italy, Brazil, Uruguay, Colombia, Argentina, Chile, Mexico and U.S.A.

*Focus on ideological and/or political influences on Sport for All:*

China, Israel (part one), Italy, Russia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Brazil and Argentina.

*Focus on the international organization of Sport for All:*

Spain, England, Belgium-Flanders and Hungary (European Sport for All Academy).

#### ON THE USE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

On account of taking English as the language of this comparative study and of making this option suitable to international understanding, the following criteria have been adopted:

Style: the aim here was communicative writing. The audience includes any reader in the area of sports of any nationality who is able to read English. Therefore, the focus is on clarity of ideas, fluency and readability. Units of discourse (paragraphs and sentences) have been made simpler and more direct to make the text flow. Idiomatic expressions and regionalisms were kept to a minimum. Compact structures have been avoided. The main objective of such style is to share and spread information.

Use of American English: American English became the standard dialect used in this publication because it was the written version adopted by most of the authors.

Preservation of cultural characteristics: since most authors are not native speakers of English, the identity of the culture they represent has been preserved in the deep syntactic structures of their messages. Cultural features are values to be cherished and kept alive in Sport for All. Therefore, some dialectal differences that lead to cultural aspects have been maintained and the text was kept as close as possible to the original version.

#### REFERENCE AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL STYLE

Many authors of this book left behind (i) the style of references as required by the framework of contributions when facing the diversity of documentation and (ii) the need to keep the original denomination of government and some private

institutions sources. This flaw has directed the editorial staff to the option of maintaining prima facie the references presented by authors in their first draft. Regardless of the loss of academic value, to keep the original format of supportive documentation in international comparative studies is coincidentally recommended by the classic book of Bereday (37).

## **NOTES AND REFERENCES**

- (1) Coubertin, P. Lettres Olympiques (XI), Gazette de Lausanne, janvier 13, 1919, Numero 12 , p. 1. The original text in French follows: "Jadis la pratique des sport était le passe-temps occasionel de la jeunesse riche et oisive. J'ai travaillé trente ans à en faire le plaisir habituel de la petite bourgeoisie. Il faut maintenant que ce plaisir-lá pénètre l'existence de l'adolescence prolétaire. Tous les sports pour tous - voila sans doute une formule qu'on va taxer de follement utopique".
- (2) This definition is based in A. Goslin and A. R. Bush text on South Africa, found in this book.
- (3) The authors of the referred chapters are J. Palm & W. Baumann (Germany) and Vanreusen, Taks & Renson (Belgium-Flanders), who reported their national cases in the context of European SFA movements.
- (4) The popularization of certain social and cultural activities has been historically and sociologically analyzed by Imbert, M., Les Cultures Populaires: Sous-produits Culturels ou Cultures Marginalisé?. In Pujol, G. & Labourie, R. (eds), Les Cultures Populaires, Privat, Toulouse, 1979. Primarily, popularization according to this source is referred to large groups of people with identical origin, religion, traditions etc. Secondarily, popular traits are typical of part of the population with fewer resources and less education in a nation as a whole. Moreover, popular is an ambiguous term denoting both origin (as "Volks " in the German language) and minor values (as "populaire" in the French language). More recently, the meaning of "common citizen" as a synonym of popular has emerged in many languages and this sense has been taken as the option for SFA interpretations in this book.
- (5) Oja, P. and Telama, R. (eds), Sport for All. Elsevier Science Publishers, Amsterdam, 1991, p.5 - Preface.
- (6) See for further information on the lack of context analysis in SFA interventions: DaCosta, L. P., Toward a Cultural Meaning to Sport for All Promotions. 15<sup>th</sup> World TAFISA Congress, Malaysia, November 1997.

- (7) Oyen, E. (ed), *Comparative Methodology - Theory and Practice in International Social Research*. Sage Publications, London, 1992, pp.1-18.
- (8) *Ibidem*, p.1.
- (9) Broom, E.F., *Sport and Physical Activity in Out-of-school Settings: a Review of Comparative Research*. In Haag, H. et al. (eds), *Comparative Physical Education and Sport*. Human Kinetics, 1987, Champaign, pp. 195 - 211. This author groups the comparative works in sport focusing the following categories: sport system, government, funding, policies, Sport for All, youth sport, university sport, professional preparation, top level sport, geography of sport, provision, management and culture.
- (10) See Powell, K. E., Stephens, T., Marti, B., Heinemann, L. and Kreuter, M., *Progress and Problems in the Promotion of Physical Activity*. In Oja, P. and Telama, R.(eds), *Op. Cit.* 1991, pp. 55 - 76. Quotation from p. 71.
- (11) UNESCO-ICSPE, *National Policies and Practices Concerning the Role of Physical Education and Sport in the Education of Youth*. UNESCO contract no. 207 505, Paris, 1980.
- (12) Powell, K. E. et al., *Op. Cit.*, pp. 55 - 57.
- (13) *International Comparative Studies in Education, Recommended Principles for Appraising Proposals for International Comparative Studies in Education*. In site of Internet <[www4.nas.edu/webber.nsf/](http://www4.nas.edu/webber.nsf/)>.
- (14) DaCosta, L. P., *TAFISA and UNESCO Announce a New Book and Call for Authors*. Universidade Gama Filho, Rio de Janeiro, 1998.
- (15) Bereday, G. Z.F., *Comparative Method in Education*. Holt, Rinehart & Winston Inc., Toronto, 1964, pp. 53 - 156.
- (16) Haag, H., *Major Issues of Design for Comparative Research in Sport Sciences*. 11<sup>th</sup> Conference International Society for Comparative Physical Education and Sport, Leuven, 1998.
- (17) Lindquist, M., *The 3<sup>rd</sup> International Mathematics and Science Study*. In Beatty, A. (ed), *Taking Stock: What Have we Learned about Making Educational Standards*

Internationally Competitive? Summary of a Workshop. National Academy Press,  
Washington, 1997, pp. 1-4.

(18) Olafson, G.A., Triangulation in Comparative Research: Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods. In Standeven, J., Hardman, K. and Fisher, D. (eds), Sport for All: into the 90s - Comparative Physical Education and Sport. Meyer & Meyer Verlag, Aachen, 1991, pp. 39 - 44. Quotation from p.42.

(19) Hantrais, L. and Samuel, N. , L' Etat de la Recherche Comparative dans le Domaine du Loisir. *Loisir et Societe*, 14 (2), 1991, pp. 381 - 398.

(20) Kamphorst, T. J. and Roberts, K. (eds), Trends in Sports - a Multinational Perspective, Giordano Bruno Publishers, Voorthuizen - The Netherlands, 1989. Quotations are from page 384.

(21) Chalip, L., Johnson, A. and Stachura, L. (eds) , National Sports Policies - an International Handbook. Greenwood Press, Westport - CT, 1996.

(22) De Knop, P., Engstrom, L., Skirstad, B. and Weiss, M. R., Worldwide Trends in Youth Sport. Human Knetics, Champaign-III, 1997.

(23) Ibidem, pp.2 - 7.

(24) See Chalip et al, Op. Cit., pp. vii - viii.

(25) Compare with Haag ( 1998 ) cited in (12) , section "Concluding Comments".

(26) Chick, G., The Utility of the Cross-cultural Comparative Method in the Study of Sport.

In Tolleneer, J. and Renson, R. ( eds), Old Borders, New Borders, No Borders, Meyer&Meyer Sport, Oxford, 2000, pp. 31 - 48. Remarks are found pp. 44 - 45.

(27) It is important to mention that this book has authors who had been previously involved with comparative studies by Kamphorst, De Knop or Chalip: Foldesi (Hungary), Girginov (Bulgaria), Yamaguchi (Japan), DaCosta (Brazil) and Collins (England). Vera Guardia from Venezuela took part in the development of 1980 UNESCO-ICSPE model, cited in table 1 of this chapter. Moreover, the inspirational approaches to comparative interpretation of SFA in regional and thematic basis were taken from Hartmann - Tews, I., Sport for All ! ?,

- Variations of Inclusion in Germany, France and Great Britain, in Tolleneer, J. and Renson, R. (eds), *Ibidem*, pp. 257 - 267; and from Van Heddegem, L., De Martelaer, K. and De Knop, P., *The Evolution of Sport Participation in Flanders: a Comparison between Cities and Municipalities*, in Tolleneer, J. and Renson, R. (eds), *Ibidem*, pp. 269 - 273.
- (28) The relevance of Traditional Sport and Games in comparative studies of sport area was early suggested by Lueschen, G., *Methodological Issues in Comparative, Cross-national Research and the Study of Sport*. Paper presented in the International Workshop on Comparative Research of Sport, Cologne, 1977.
- (29) DaCosta, L. P., *Mapping Worldwide Trends of Traditional Sports and Games*. In Pfister, G. (ed), *Proceedings of Traditional Sport and Games Symposium, Duderstadt, Germany, 2000* (in print ).
- (30) Ragin, C.C., *The Comparative Method - Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1987, pp. viii - ix.
- (31) *Ibidem*, pp. ix - x.
- (32) Teune, H., *Comparing Countries: Lessons Learned*. In Oyen, E. (ed), *Op. Cit.* , p. 39.
- (33) Parker, S. , *Global Perspectives on the State of Leisure Research*. In Barnett, L. A. (ed), *Research about Leisure: Past, Present and Future*. Sagamore Publishing, Champaign, 1988, pp. 48 - 49.
- (34) See ISCPES website <[//iscpes.uwo.ca/index.html](http://iscpes.uwo.ca/index.html)>
- (35) Quoted in Gray, A. and Mcguigan, J. (eds), *Studying Culture*. Edward Arnold, London, 1993, pp.viii - ix.
- (36) ASFAA Secretariat, *Members List*. ASFAA Newsletter, Autumn 2000, Pusan - South Korea, pp. 9 - 10.
- (37) See Bereday, *Op. Cit.*, p. 12.