



BRAZILIAN GYMNASTICS FEDERATION

GYMNASTICS FOR ALL: THE PROFILE OF GYMNASTICS FOR ALL UNIVERSITIES GROUPS IN BRAZIL

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Background and purpose: The university is responsible for the expansion of Gymnastics for All (GfA) throughout Brazil. Groups were created to fulfill the goals of the university's extension project. It has been proven that these groups have great potential to develop the abilities of teachers and coaches and to disseminate ideas within the country (PAOLIELLO, 2014). Identifying and analyzing the profile of these groups became the focus of this study, because it could guide and / or encourage the organization of other projects. **Method:** Semi structured interviews were carried out and questionnaires were given to the coordinators of nine university gymnastic groups. In addition, questionnaires were given to representative members of these groups, all of them undergraduate or graduate students in Physical Education Teacher Education and/or Coach Education Undergraduate Programs. The criteria used required that each group had participated at least once in the International Forum of Gymnastics for All (FIGPT), a major event of the GfA in Brazil. And these groups had to be registered in each of their own universities. The questionnaire and/ or interview were delivered together with the Ethical Terms that intended to present the research objectives, clarified doubts and guaranteed the privacy of the interviewees. **Results:** From the obtained data, we verified that the GfA university groups last for between 2 to 30 years. It is interesting to note that the participants of the groups attended the same type of event. Each group was inspired by a different medium to create their annual choreography. Some were inspired by themes, others by costumes, sport and/or non-sport equipment and still others by music that interested them. It was noted that the coordinator mediated the teaching-learning process, meaning that the composition and organization of classes took place in a collaborative and democratic environment, a unique aspect of GfA practice in Brazil. All GfA groups allowed



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members of the community outside the university to participate in the program, thus expanding the GfA practice. Most groups had a coordinator, who had been in the group since its inception. We observed that the groups were mixed, and that the female gender was more prevalent. In addition, the main groups surveyed represented different regions of the country: Southeast (6), Northeast (1), Central West (1), Southern (1). These were located in six Brazilian states, respectively, Espírito Santo, Minas Gerais, São Paulo, Ceará, Goiás and Paraná. It was interesting to note that most groups had a student who was responsible for the extension project's planning and mediation with the coordinator. Because the members interviewed participated in the project for four or more years, they were strongly engaged in its activities and development. The groups organized events such as the International Forum of Gymnastics for All, Festivals in Schools and University Festivals. They travelled both nationally and internationally to perform at World Gymnaestrada, Gym Brasil and SESC's Festivals. **Conclusion and applications:** We can conclude that GfA university groups have some unique characteristics that differentiate them from groups outside the university. Because these are groups are registered as extension projects and the participants are undergraduates and/or graduates in Physical Education and/or Sports, it allows the members different experiences. Performances in different events (scientific, cultural), creations of choreographic compositions, trips to and organization of festivals and events were experiences offered by university groups to their members. We found mediation to be the best strategy to use to foster the education and development of the teachers and coaches of GfA. It is critical that this research at the universities continue, because they are an important part of the education of the population and place for disseminating ideas in Brazil.

Keywords: University Extension; Gymnastics for All; Higher Education; University Groups.