

## PROPOSAL OF REARRANGEMENT OF PHYSICAL TRAINING AND SPORT SCIENCES METHODOLOGY ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES IN ITALIAN UNIVERSITY BODY

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Review paper

### Abstract

Following the transformation of the Higher Physical Education Institutes (Istituto Superiore di Educazione Fisica, ISEF) in 1998, the physical training and sports sciences in Italy have been part of the academic system since 2001, therefore the specific rules of university teaching, research and recruitment also contain the declaration of scientific identity by epistemological contents and rearrangement in the academic body. Actually, it is arranged simultaneously in the medical area and pedagogical one, generating international and national problems for the evaluation of research projects, scholars and university programs. The aim is to identify a solution through documentary analysis of the archival research method and the case study to give a solution to the problem. Several data of the evolutionary path of the period 2001-2020 are carried out, specifically various normative contradictions and atypicalities. For a timely and definitive solution to the problem, a ministerial act is required in accordance with the current legislative framework and could be issued using the model for modifying the arrangement of knowledge of the National University Council CUN. This solution is the responsibility of the Minister for University and Research with its own decree after the mandatory but non-binding opinion of the CUN. It would guarantee the rights of researchers who refer to medicine and pedagogy and would eliminate the problem by giving full dignity to the motor and sports sciences.

**Key words:** medical and pedagogical area, exercise and sports sciences.

### Introduction

Following the transformation of the Higher Physical Education Institutes (Istituto Superiore di Educazione Fisica, ISEF) in 1998, the physical training and sports sciences methodology academic disciplines have been part of the university body since 2001, therefore the specific rules of training, research and recruitment also contain the declaration of scientific identity of knowledge made by epistemological contents. Actually, it is arranged simultaneously in the medical area and pedagogical one, generating international and national problems for the evaluation of research projects, researchers' profiles and degree programs. The rearranged of Italian academic disciplines and of Italian degree program, invoked by many parties for the alignment requests to European Research Councils scheme, ERC, by the European Research Council Executive Agency, ERCEA, becomes irreproachable for the academic discipline of Physical training and sport sciences methodology. The urgency for these two academic disciplines is not motivated by the common problem of excessive fragmentation of them, that is anachronistic and rigid, or by the need for the modernization of study courses in alignment of the international demands and for greater effectiveness of the higher education level. The particular situation in which exercise and sports sciences find themselves is unique because it is unparalleled in the Italian university body. Misunderstandings and anomalies frequently occur that distort the specific field of scientific knowledge and training with spurious and isolated technical-administrative solutions. The problematic situation is so high that a timely ministerial intervention is urgently needed under penalty of systematization

of a paroxysmal university situation for which the professors structured on these two academic disciplines, pertaining to the recruitment sector 11D2 Didactics, special pedagogy and educational research. These professors ask a little bit modification to the ministerial decree about the redetermination of the academic disciplines and recruitment sector.

### Problem statement

The specific problem is the unique, spurious and isolated bilocation of this two academic disciplines: M-EDF/01 Methods and didactics of exercise activities and M-EDF/02 Methods and didactics of sport activities in two different recruitment sector, in two scientific areas of National University Council, CUN, and in two opposite area of National Agency Assessment of University and Research, ANVUR, so called bibliometric and no-bibliometric. Specifically as a result of the previous determinations and rearrangement, the last one of the DM 855 of 30 October 2015 (MIUR, 2015) and the recommendation of the National University Council, CUN, of July 2017 (CUN, 2017) sees the splitting of these two academic disciplines in the scientific area CUN and ministerial in six Medical sciences the scientific area CUN and ministerial eleven Historical philosophical, psychological and pedagogical sciences. This two academic disciplines are simultaneously related to the recruitment sectors, SC, 06N2 Exercise and sports sciences in the macro recruitment sector, MSC, 06N Health professions and physical exercise and sports sciences and 11D2 Didactics, special pedagogy and

educational research in macro recruitment sector, MSC, 11D Pedagogy. Finally, the ANVUR since the first round for the Scientific national qualification, ASN, of 2012 has divided these two academic disciplines in the bibliometric and non-bibliometric area because the SC 06N2 is in the bibliometric area and the SC 11D2 is in the non-bibliometric area. Which means that the professors, that are structured in this two academic disciplines, have to be evaluated in bibliometrics assessment and non-bibliometrics one. Such as a dichotomous ministerial position impoverishes the scientific and academic value (Raiola, 2019abc, Raiola et al, 2018, D'Isanto 2019) of a very young knowledge born from the reform of the Higher Institutes of Physical Education, ISEF, in 1998 which, from the post-war period until the first application of the reform (2001), saw the physical training and sports sciences on the margins of the Academy with a broader common meaning that saw the exercise and sports sciences positioned, according to a broader common understanding, in a limbo between the secondary school and the university education.

In the last twenty years there has been a tiring construction of the scientific community which, with the application of Law 240 of 2010, as called Gelmini in the name of the then university minister (Official gazette of Italian republic, 2011), has also had to endure a first distribution in 2011 (MIUR, 2011) of these two academic disciplines in nine (nine) SC and MSC, positioned in 3 different CUN scientific areas: 5 Biological Sciences, six Medical Sciences and eleven Historical, Philosophical, Psychological and Pedagogical Sciences. Then the next one in 2015 which reduced the nine SC to two ones, however, they are always divided and so generating distortions. They are related to the evaluation of European research for the dual alignment in the area of human and social sciences, SH, and of life sciences, LS, and also nationally with the recent decree on the guidelines for the evaluation of the quality of research 2015-2019, as called "Evaluation of Quality of Research", VQR<sub>3</sub>, which does not include these two academic disciplines but only recruitment sector, splits the scientific products of the same scientific knowledge of the related to the identical this two academic disciplines in the medical sciences in scientific area 6 CUN and in the pedagogical ones in the scientific area 11 CUN. In this way, it is being consolidated the equivocal and paroxysmal effect of the past ministerial decisions.

Unfortunately, this division is also reflected in the ministerial administrative practices that have long associated the scientific classification of the CUN in 14 areas with a homologous administrative classification, as called ministerial area. Thus, the researchers are structured on this two academic disciplines, related to SC 06N2 in a ministerial area 6 in defiance of the CUN founding law of 2016 (Official gazette of Italian republic, 2016) "*The National University Council (CUN) is the representative body of the university system and is*

*made by: a) professors and researchers elected to represent scientific areas of specific academic disciplines, in numbers not exceeding fourteen, by decree of the Minister of Education, University and Research. For each area a full professor, an associate professor and a researcher are elected"* which assembles the academic disciplines, SSDs, into fourteen different scientific areas and the each academic discipline has to be in only one scientific area. Therefore, these two academic disciplines have to be in area 11 CUN and not in CUN 6 area and not even in Minister of University and Research administrative correspondent areas. In conclusion, it was made the division of the Physical training and sport sciences methodology academic disciplines into the two CUN scientific areas: 6 medical sciences and 11 historical-philosophical-psychological-pedagogical sciences, so splitting Exercise and sport sciences knowledge in exact-hard sciences and in human-soft sciences. The aim is to find a solution with current legislation without further law modification that implies a lot of time and the method of research is archival research with a documentary approach to the laws, rules, decrees, regulations and scientific determination of the CUN.

### **Hypothesis of solution**

This division can be, as previously mentioned, by making a modification to the Ministerial decree of redetermination of recruitment sector and macro-sector without any modification to the law n. 240 of 2010 because they are non-regulatory acts of direct ministerial enactment and can be done with the sole opinion, mandatory but not binding, of the National University Council. The part of the scholars, structured in area 11 of the historical, philosophical, psychological and pedagogical sciences, within the declaration of the recruitment sector of didactics, special pedagogy and educational research and in the macro recruitment sector of pedagogy claims the absence of the minimum required levels about the declination of exercise and sports sciences knowledge because the declaration reports "... education in exercise, physical and sports activities", poorly coordinated with the other contents of the other academic discipline included in the recruitment sector (M-PED / 03 and M -PED / 04), and also lacks the necessary titles of the two SSDs, as in the specific case, for the other two parts of the recruitment declaration of the other two SSDs M-PED / 04 and M PED / 03.

Finally, they also complain about the insufficient part of the declaration which must refer to the theory and methodology of general training and for particular age groups and classes as well as the exercise and sport evaluation also of athletic performance. The other part of the scholars structured on these two academic disciplines is in area 6 medical sciences and is totally identified with the contents of the recruitment sector of the exercise and sport sciences with full and total overlap of the disciplinary bodies of the exercise and sports sciences because it consists only of the

SSDs M-EDF (01 and 02). However, there is a strong criticality because the macro recruitment sector of the health care professions and exercise and sports sciences that shifts the scientific axis towards the medical assistance cure aspects. This aspect generates health invasions and which also result in public clinical and welfare activities, with distortions that mix the scientific paradigm of performance and re-education with that of general health and the related aspects of recovery and rehabilitation after traumatic or chronic events, typical of health care professions. Thus a dichotomous situation is created in the declination of declaratory statements which generates ambiguity between the pedagogical and medical sciences with the consequent scientific subjection of the exercise and sports sciences to these two greatest and interfering scientific knowledge. The confusion is not only internal to the national academic body but also external because it undermines the international relationship in terms of research and evaluation of the related projects when participating in competitive call of tenders (grants) with the aim of winning the substantial international funds and the identification of the most suitable scientific profiles for referee evaluation.

The evaluation of the projects is based on a common scheme for all the countries of the European Union which is the ERC scheme consisting in areas, panels and subpanels. The allocation in two recruitment sectors orients and directs the evaluation choices towards that one of whom has the greater number of researchers, the SC 06N2, with the specific indicators of the evaluation (indexed articles, total citations and h-index) so as to exclude projects that do not fall in these parameters, i.e. those typical of area 11 and of the pedagogic subarea which are evaluated with a different system consisting of indicators, descriptors and weights and which see the use of scientific indicators of human sciences. Which means, number of articles published in journals classified class A,, classified scientific journals and contributions in volume or conference proceedings and, finally, monograph. In summary, the bilocation of the academic disciplines SSDs M-EDF (01 and 02) in two distinct scientific areas CUN actually changes the epistemology of the exercise and sports sciences, dividing it into two parts, without having made the mandatory scientific steps to share with the scientific community.

The bilocation of academic discipline without the consensus of the community that guarantees scientific identity and autonomy creates a double scientific identity of the same academic discipline. The different paradigmatic bases of the medical sciences and of the pedagogical sciences also amplify the spread of the same knowledge also for the opposing traditions of publication methods of research products: bibliometric and non-bibliometric. This is probably the most insurmountable obstacle. This division also generates local repercussions in terms of training

for the double formative soul for the perpetuation of the ambiguity with which the new generations of graduates are trained. In the current situation of confusion, a large and in-depth discussion is needed to develop a solution that satisfies the two scientific souls, otherwise it is essential to resort to the amendment to the existing legislative framework to detail and justify the existing classification of exercise and sports sciences knowledge, declaring and specifying the reasons for the exception with respect to the rest of the current classification of knowledge in academic body for the correct and legitimate application of the law who prescribes to combine the academic discipline in only one recruitment sector in only one scientific area. The ministerial decree applying the Gelmini law divides the scientific field of exercise and sports sciences into the pedagogical part in one hand and the performance and re-education part in other hand.

This modification presents illegitimacy because the Gelmini law 1. *"Within sixty days from the date of entry into force of this law the Minister, with his own non-regulatory decree, after hearing the National University Council (CUN), defines, according to affinity criteria, the competition sectors in relation to which the procedures for obtaining the qualification referred to in Article 16 are carried out. The competition sectors are grouped into macro-sectors of the competition. Each competition sector can be divided into scientific-disciplinary sectors, which are used exclusively for the provisions of articles 16, 18, 22, 23 and 24 of this law, as well as for the definition of the teaching systems referred to in article 17, paragraphs 95. and following, of the law 15 May 1997, n. 127.*" That is to say that the duplication of these two academic disciplines does not respect the normative dictation of the "affinities" and the consequent "articulation" in academic disciplines because the bilocation of these two academic disciplines divides knowledge and does not make it "similar" at all as, instead, the law prescribes in such "articulation". If the knowledge was divided into two 2 parts so that it could be supported respectively by the two parts from which they originate, medicine and pedagogy, tracing the same method of the affinities of annex D of the DM of 4 October 2000, a big error of merit as well as of form was made.

## Discussion

A solution could be attempted to solve the problem of the division in two of the motor and sports sciences that would put everyone in agreement and use the work that the CUN in 2018 (CUN, 2018) carried out, on the mandate of the MIUR and according to criteria of scientific affinity, a new model classifier of the SSD, SC and MSC, calling them disciplinary groupings. These are unconnected to the number of companies which may be even lower than the minimum lawfully required, from the CUN scientific areas and provide additional profiles that aim also to broaden the research field to

interdisciplinarity: In the case of these two academic disciplines, they would also compensate for the current pedagogical and medical drifts, also providing clinical-assistance activities in compliance with the acquired rights of those who already work as doctors in public hospitals. This model, even without changes in the law regarding the researchers' numerousness, could connect the exercise to sport sciences. From 2 recruitment sectors in 2 different scientific areas, a single SC could be established, which would be applicable for the ASN procedures of qualification, university recruitment as well as for periodicals and initial accreditation of degree programs.

This model also provides a connection to the international framework establishing the research domains so that an implementation for the procedures of the evaluation of the research and of the related researchers can be realized during the grants (Project research interest national, PRIN) or any other international project. Researchers would choose their scientific profile on the basis of the keywords defined according to the entire domain they belong to on the ERC scheme line with additional free-choice keywords of the researcher inherent to their own research lines and also to develop interdisciplinarity. This hypothesis could be already applied by grouping these two academic disciplines in a unique scientific area chosen from 06N2 medical area 6 and 11D2 in historical, philosophical, psychological and pedagogical area 11. This would overcome the current division preserving the rights of all the faculty members and bringing together the 2 scientific souls, thus compensating for the lack of application of the primary rule, the Gelmini law and the founding law of the CUN, which have never envisaged the division of scientific knowledge, even though the faculty of motor sciences has been part of the academy for only twenty years. The choice of the SC and MSC as well as the CUN scientific area must have really strong technical and legal reasons to secure the solution and be resistant to possible appeals to the administrative judiciary. Currently the permanence of the faculty members of sports and sports sciences in area 11 is in compliance with the CUN reorganization law of 2016 as well as the Gelmini law of 2010. This result was achieved after a long path started with the configuration of the disciplinary areas in the distant past 1980 which saw then the confirmation of the academic

disciplines and related declarations in the CUN disciplinary scientific areas of 2000 with the definitive arrangement of the separate SSDs in the fourteen CUN areas. Therefore, the unifying proposal must take into account the full and complete legitimacy derived from the norm that recognizes the primordial right of permanence in the scientific area CUN eleven, albeit with the provision of a new declaratory that is the synthesis of the two parts and also of the possibility of its own SC and MSC. Concerning the parametric question, mainly inherent to the scientific indicators of the evaluation, it is appropriate referring to the opinion of the CUN of 2015: "It is good that both extensive parameters (relating to global production) and intensive parameters (relating to production for a limited period of time) with particular reference to more recent periods". In this case, the inclusion of all the scientific indicators, bibliometric and non-bibliometric, so far adopted by both parties for a short period, will be then required to use only the scientific indicators of area six Medical sciences. The choice of the so-called bibliometric parameters could be used in the scientific area CUN eleven on a par with that already existing for the psychological sub-area or as the one emerging within the scientific area CUN thirteen for the VQR<sub>3</sub> which concerns the statistical economic sciences that distinguish from business economics. This distinction within the scientific area CUN thirteen was adopted with a simple non-regulatory decree inherent in the Guidelines for VQR<sub>3</sub>.

## Conclusion

The hypothesis is, in the current legal situation, to propose from scratch a recruitment sector in scientific area 11 (Sciences of history, philosophy, Psychology and pedagogy) as well as in ERC scheme in Social and humanities sciences area with the prerogatives of the disciplinary grouping, as suggested by CUN 2018, which also includes the possible interdisciplinary scientific profile coming from the medical area for the clinical-assistance part to guarantee the acquired rights for the few professors that job about medical-clinical-assistance activities. The declaration is rewritten including any scientific profiles with the provision in it of the ERC scheme (ERC, 2019) elements applied with the search domain methodology, using the CUN keywords.

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