



Physical Literacy (PL) has gained popularity and progressive importance worldwide in recent years, contributing to the definition of paths in educational research, internal and external school projects, connections with sports, and other educational contexts. PL has been described as a *gateway* to physical activity participation across different ages and educational settings such as schools, sports, leisure time, and the health sector for the prevention and treatment of non-communicable diseases.

In many countries, not only in Europe, models of PL are now present, with varying degrees of definition, characterizing not only interpretations of education through physicality and motor and sports activities but also the level of institutional presence and impact. Various studies have recently been published expressing syntheses and positions on the topic.

In a time when various technologies are often at the forefront of attention for studying their real contribution to the educational and learning process, it is crucial not to overlook the importance of physical literacy in the lives of children and youth. PL goes beyond motor and sports skills or the development of physical efficiency, framing itself as an educational process, a teaching model, a methodological approach, and a lifestyle.

Physical literacy encompasses motivations, confidence, motor skills, knowledge, and awareness that enable the maintenance of a physically active lifestyle. A student possessing a high level of physical literacy can move with motor mastery consciously and creatively (Whitehead, 2013).

The multiple definitions of PL found in the literature highlight how scientific research and educational practices often proceed in a fragmented and non-uniform manner, with studies and experiences not always interconnected and continuous. This often involves an analytical rather than a holistic approach to the individual's educational process. PL is a multidimensional concept that lays the foundation for understanding the lifelong benefits of physical activity. It implies the acquisition and mastery of basic motor skills, an understanding of the principles of physical efficiency, the rules of games and sports, and the ability to make informed decisions about physical activity in various contexts.

Studies and research, especially in the neuroscientific field, have emphasized the educational contribution of motor activities as "accelerators" for the physical, cognitive, emotional-relational, and social development of children, promoting functional bonds and interconnections.

Currently, there are numerous definitions and interpretations of the concept of PL in the literature, leading to a lack of consensus on how to implement it in practice. Starting from the definition provided by Whitehead (2013), subsequent definitions and interpretations, seemingly overlapping, highlight both the individual factors—motor, cognitive, emotional-affective, and social—constituting PL and the contexts in which it is realized.

In various countries, such as England, Canada, Australia, etc., models and methodological applications for PL have been developed. Several scholars have analyzed PL, providing definitions and approaches that would require analysis and comparisons; unfortunately, linguistic and semantic differences sometimes hinder the sharing of methodological implications. The orientations vary widely and are not always complementary.

Theoretical conceptualization provides an excellent framework for understanding physical literacy, emphasizing the person-environment-task relationship. The term PL is not new (Cairney et al., 2019), but it



has gained greater attention and momentum after the studies by Whitehead (2013). In recent years, PL has gained importance in the fields of education, sports, physical activity, leisure, and public health (Rudd et al., 2020; Edwards et al., 2018).

However, PL definitions have been interpreted and transformed into educational practices through different methods in various contexts and countries (Shearer et al., 2018). The most commonly identified factors in early studies focused on motor functions (basic motor skills, motor abilities), psychological factors (motivation, self-perception, enjoyment), cognitive factors (knowledge), behavioral and social factors (interaction with others, inclusion), interaction with socio-cultural contexts, and education for lifelong physical activity. PL emphasizes an approach to the unity of the individual, and its constitutive factors overlap with those of motor competence in the Italian pedagogical and didactic tradition.