

## **A STUDY ABOUT THE IMPACT OF MEDICAL CERTIFICATES ON SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS` PARTICIPATION TO PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT ACTIVITIES**

*Ioan Drăgoiu<sup>1</sup>  
Dumitru Irimia<sup>1</sup>*

*<sup>1</sup>School no. 3 Suceava, Romania*

**Key-words:** Physical education, Sedentariness; Healthy body, Physical exercise, Harmonious growth, Movement.

**Abstract:** “Life is movement, repose is death” is the essence of the idea according to which it is necessary to habituate children and young people, through physical education and sport, with a healthy and organised life, based on hygienic, ethical and moral principles. Our love for the young and the responsibility for forming healthy young people who are harmoniously developed, both physically and mentally, made us approach this topic which is meant to be a signal for all the people involved in the education and teaching of tomorrow`s future: family, school, society, government.

The increasing number of the students who have medical certificates should worry us all and make us look for the causes and find the solutions to prevent this phenomenon from growing, find alternative and varied solutions to impede the effects of incipient diseases. It is well known that movement is one of the most important factors which builds, polishes and structurally maintains the organism. When we prevent a child from the physical education classes, we endanger the health of the teenager or growing young person, who is threatened by the whole spectre of physical and organic deficiencies. Physical exercise equally contributes to the forming of one`s strong personality, which is deprived of prejudices and inferiority complexes.

**MOTTO:** “Our existence is movement, repose is death” **Blaise Pascal**

### **Introduction :**

The old and wise Latin saying “Mens sana in corpore sano” comprises essentially the idea of habituating children to practise physical exercises from an early age in order to grow harmoniously and have a healthy, organised life, based on hygienic, ethic and moral principles.

Any educational activity means, first of all, knowing the participants to the teaching and forming activity, both from a physical and mental point of view.

Our love for the young and the responsibility for forming healthy young people who are harmoniously developed, both physically and mentally, responsibility we have as teachers, made us approach this topic which has a major impact in the present and in the future. This topic of medical certificates for the physical education classes is even more important in the context of our contemporary life, which is dominated by disturbing factors, such as sedentariness, stress, overweight, etc., factors which are the result of the absence of any physical exercise or form of movement.

Both physical education teachers and parents notice that many of our children are sedentary, obese or stressed because the psychic effort is bigger than the physical one, and the number of medical certificates is growing with every year.

For years, we have been facing two types of students excused from physical education classes: fake ones and real ones. In the first category, there are healthy students who say “I can` t” and get certificates, which are doubtful if we look at the diagnosis given by the doctors. Boys and girls who have a beautiful body prefer to do anything else than participate to physical education classes-insufficient in the school curriculum- even if youth and health, which are on their side, are maintained with physical exercises! We are not arguing about the reasons, as they belong to different factors, but we want to point out the gravity of the fact that their parents are unaware of the consequences of this attitude, encourage them and help them to get these certificates which are not justified in reality. The question is how such parents do not understand that such an approach can affect many generations by weakening the nation` s health estate.

Unfortunately, there is a second group of children who are really ill, suffering from serious diseases which destroy their bodies. Many of them can be praised, as, despite the fact that they are not allowed to do any physical exercise, they take part, emotionally, to the classes and support their classmates morally.

Starting from these observations, we wanted to make an analysis of the medical certificates presented by the students, but mostly of the diagnosis indicated by doctors.

## **Materials and methods :**

The study was made during the school year 2004-2005 and it took into account 37 secondary schools from town and villages which belong to the Physical Education Teachers` Group from Suceava area.

There were 18,804 students in this study, 6,066 from the urban area and 4,638 from the rural one. There were 5,359 boys and 5,445 girls.

After centralizing all the medical certificates, we identified 1,210 students who were excused from physical education classes, among whom 781 from the urban area and 429 from the rural area, while 347 students were partially excused from these classes: 201 in the urban area and 146 in the rural area.

We can notice that the number of students excused from physical education classes is bigger in the town, namely 64.5 % to 35.4 %, and most of the students are girls, 712 to 498 boys.

This study was made according to the “Methodology of issuing medical certificates for physical education to pupils and students and the Standard of the diseases that require such certificates” approved by the order of the Ministry of Health number 694 from 1997.

We centralized the medical certificates following the 15 disease groups and we noticed that the biggest number belonged to the group of endocrinal and metabolism diseases, namely 349 situations, which represented 28.8 % of the total number of medical certificates. The following ones came from the circulatory system field-15.4 % and then from respiratory diseases, 170 situations which represented 14.1 %. The diseases of the bone, articulation and muscular system were found in 85 cases, of the nervous system in 76 cases and of the digestive system and traumatic lesions in 64 cases.

## **Results:**

The analysis of these certificates and the discussion with the colleagues from the schools involved in the study led us to some conclusions:

1. Most of the medical certificates given by doctors are entirely justified as they reveal with objectivity the diagnosis of serious diseases and are accompanied by the doctors` recommendations which consist of a special exercises programme that can diminish or at least maintain the patient`s health condition at a level closed to the optimal one. On the other hand, there are situations in which these certificates have no real ground and such doctors have a very unprofessional attitude and show no respect for professional deontology.

Unfortunately, there are still people who have no confidence in the good effects of physical exercises, and most of the are unaware parents,

who advise their children not to do physical education classes and thus they deprive them from the effects which movement has on body and mind. We have the duty to teach young students the love for body activity which ensures them a harmonious growth.

2. The higher percentage of town students excused from physical education classes could be explained as a consequence of life conditions which are specific to this community. Our contemporary society is dominated by the explosion of technical and information progress, which creates some work facilities, but, at the same time, it restrains considerably physical effort in favour of intellectual effort. While their country mates do housework or work in the fields with their parents, town children spend hours in front of the computer, searching the internet and ignoring physical exercises and sports.

3. The number of medical certificates for endocrinal and metabolism diseases is alarmingly high. The dominant diagnosis are tetanus and spasm. A slight absence of calcium in the body is specific to the growing period between 11 and 15 years old, but major deficiencies should not be neglected, as they require special treatment. The number of circulator and respirator system is also quite high. Experience has shown that functional deficiencies disappear after rational practice of physical exercises and correct effort dosage.

4. Another explanation of the increased number of medical certificates could be associated with the limited offer of educational services for physical education and sports, which is not always attractive and varied or stimulating. This situation is caused by the precarious sport material resources in schools: no playgrounds, no gyms, few apparatuses and sports supplies.

5. In the country, the financial situation of some children does not allow them to get the necessary sport equipment, but we should not forget that sometimes, the parents' old mentality can be the cause of the students' absence from physical education classes.

6. There are also situations when some teachers' assessment of the students is too severe and does not take into account different skills of a class. In order to keep a high average, so important in the present high-school entrance exam, some students prefer medical certificates. The relationship teacher-student can also be a cause if the teacher does not show flexibility and pedagogical abilities to encourage the ones who are less talented.

7. The physical education teacher can and must act efficiently to maintain a correct segmentary and global attitude so that the number of bone-articulation system medical certificates (scoliosis, lordosis,) could

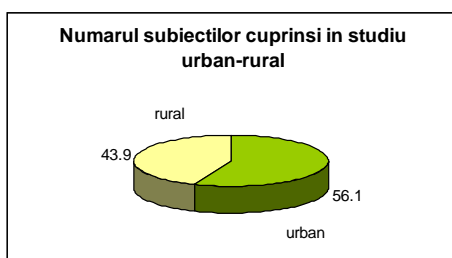
be as small as possible and the correction of physical deficiencies which overcome the degree of vicious attitude and the recovery of those which have an organic nature could be done by specialists.

### Discussions:

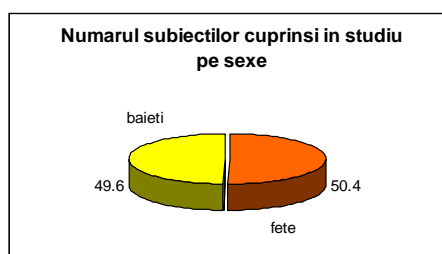
The fundamental duty of our job is to contribute to the harmonious growth of the young generation and to turn the concept of medical certificate into an isolated and exceptional fact. Let`s not forget that movement is the most important factor which builds, forms and maintains our body from a structural and functional point of view. It does not only help to prevent or recover from some physical deficiencies, but also addresses the psychic, contributing to the forming of a strong personality, which is deprived of prejudices or inferiority complexes.

### Interpretation of the data obtained

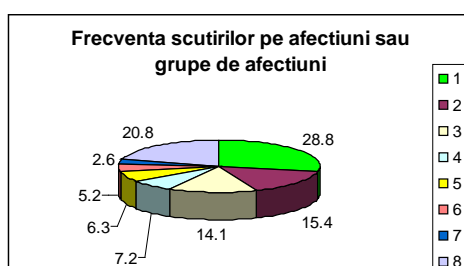
The number of subjects of the study urban-rural distinction



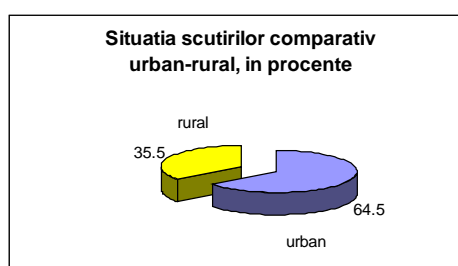
The sex distinction of the number of subjects of the study



The frequency of medical certificates following different diseases



The percentage of medical certificates in the comparison urban-rural



- 1 - Endocrine and metabolism diseases – 349
- 2 - Diseases of the cardio-vascular system – 182
- 3 - Diseases of the respiratory system - 170
- 4 - Diseases of bones and articulation system – 85

5 - Diseases of the neural system -76

6 - Diseases of the digestive system-64

7 - Traumatic lesions – 32

8 - Other diseases – 252

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**Titlu:** Studiu privind impactul scutirilor medicale asupra participării elevilor din ciclul gimnazial la activitățile de educație fizică și sport

**Cuvinte cheie :** educație fizică, corp sănătos, dezvoltare armonioasă, sedentarism, exercițiu fizic, mișcare.

**Rezumat:** Viața este mișcare, repausul reprezintă moartea” cuprinde în esență ideea necesității de a-i obișnui pe copiii și tineri, prin educație fizică și sport, cu o viață sănătoasă și organizată, bazată pe principii igienice, etice și morale .Dragostea față de tânăra generație și răspunderea pentru formarea unor tineri sănătoși, dezvoltați armonios din toate punctele de vedere, fizic și psihic, ne-a determinat să abordăm tema de față prin care vrem să tragem un semnal de alarmă celor implicați în educația și instrucția viitorului de mâine al națiunii : familie, școală, societate, guvernanți.

Numărul crescând al elevilor cu scutiri medicale trebuie să ne pună pe gânduri, să căutăm cauzele și să găsim soluții de a preveni ca acest lucru să se perpetueze , să găsim soluții alternative, diversificate pentru a combate efectele unor boli incipiente. Este binecunoscut faptul că mișcarea este unul din factorii cei mai importanți care clădește, cizează și menține structural organismul. Privându-l pe copil de orele de educație fizică nu facem altceva decât să periclităm sănătatea

adolescentului și tânărului în formare , amenințat de întregul spectru al deficiențelor fizice și organice. Exercițiul fizic contribuie și la conturarea unei personalități ferme, lipsită de prejudecăți și de complexe de inferioritate.

**Titre:** Etude sur l'impact des certificats médicaux sur la participation des élèves du collège aux classes d' éducation physique et sport

**Mots-clé:** Education physique, Sédentarité, Corps sain, Exercice physique, Développement harmonieux, Mouvement.

**Résumé:** “La vie signifie mouvement, le repos, c'est la mort” est une phrase qui comprend l'essentiel de l'idée de la nécessité d' habituer les enfants et les jeunes gens, à travers l' éducation physique et le sport, à mener une vie saine et organisée, basée sur des principes hygiéniques, éthiques et moraux. Notre amour pour la génération jeune et la responsabilité pour la formation des gens sains, développés harmonieusement du point de vue physique et moral, nous a déterminés d' approcher ce thème qui veut être un signal pour tous ceux qui sont impliqués dans la formation de l'avenir du pays: famille, école, société, gouvernement.

Le nombre agrandi des élèves qui présentent des motivations médicales doit nous faire réfléchir et déterminer d' en chercher les causes et de trouver des solutions pour empêcher la perpetuation de ce phénomène, de trouver des solutions alternatives, diversifiées pour combattre les effets des maladies en état initial. On connaît bien le fait que le mouvement représente l'un des facteurs les plus importants de la construction et de la maintenance structurale de l'organisme. Empêcher l'enfant de participer aux classes d' éducation physique signifie endommager la santé de l'adolescent et du jeune homme en formation, menacé par le spectre des déficiences physiques et organiques. L' exercice physique contribue également, à la formation d'une personnalité forte, dépourvue de préjugés et de complexes d'infériorité.