

STUDY ON THE PRACTICE OF PHYSICAL EXERCISES AT THE AGE OF 14, DURING LEISURE

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Abstract: This study has as main purpose to highlight the importance of practicing physical exercises at any age and also to reveal to what extent secondary level students practice physical exercises independently.

One of the important problems of modern society is overweight among children, youth and adults, mainly due to unhealthy diet and lack of exercise.

In this study we found a few solutions that can help correct this problem in the secondary schools.

Introduction

Sport means health, physical quenching, energy and working capacity, recreation and relaxation, and compensation of intellectual efforts. Sedentary lifestyle and the lack of physical exercise are considered by many experts as one of the great enemies of human health in these times.

The beneficial effects of physical exercises and sport on health, strength and physical beauty should be established considering the aspirations and needs of each individual. No matter how tired we are and no matter how hard is our life, we need to find a few hours a week for physical activity, even if it may seem that we are really busy and have little time. If physical education solves the problems of health maintenance and of normal development of children, than physical exercises during leisure could settle these problems in the case of the general population.

A study on a sample of 2166 people with ages over 18 years old, published by the I.R.S.O.P., showed a certain preference for various types of sport i.e. football 19%, gym 11%, jogging 7%, ping pong 8%, tennis 9%, swimming 6%.

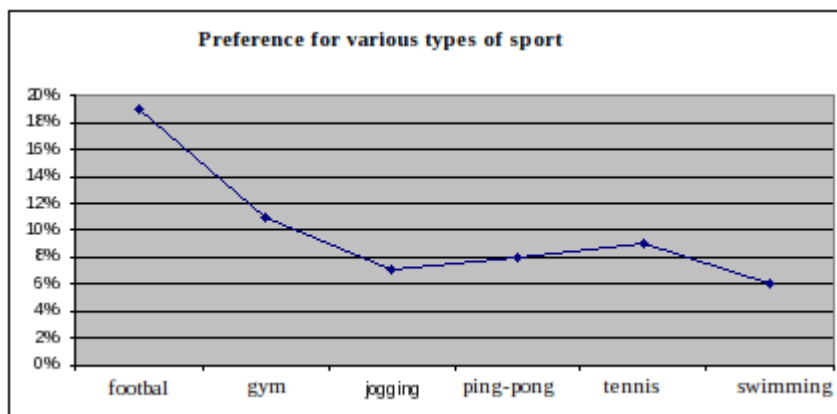


Diagram 1

The question 'Which form of movement a person should practice?' should have only one answer: 'the movement that best fits that person.'

The **hypothesis** that stands at the basis of this study is that people, regardless of age, do not practice physical exercises independently. Therefore, society today faces a growing number of overweight people.

Through this study we wanted to highlight the importance that physical exercises have on the body, but also how much sport do the children of 14 years old practice overall.

The **purpose** of this study is to highlight the students' interest in the practice of certain disciplines, physical tests and sports events during school activities, but also in the practice of physical exercises independently.

The tasks of this paper are:

- Identifying the methods and possibilities of inducing the habit to practice physical exercises freely;
- Determining the content of the questionnaires and presenting them to the students we decided upon;
- Statistical processing of data resulting from the analysis of responses to questionnaires;
- Analysis and interpretation of data.

Methods and means:

- ❖ Bibliographic study;
- ❖ Observation method;
- ❖ Survey method;
- ❖ Statistical and mathematical methods.

The research was conducted in the city of Suceava, at the School "Miron Costin" and the School no. 10, on a sample of 260 students – 145 girls and 115 boys – enrolled in the 8th grade.

To find out how much physical exercises these students practice, we distributed a questionnaire consisting of eight questions to each student.

The questions contained in this questionnaire are:

1. What is physical education?
2. What is leisure sport?
3. Do you practice physical exercises or sports during leisure?
4. What do you like to do during the physical education class?
5. Do you think physical education and sports during leisure are helpful and in which way?
6. What is the sport you want to practice in your spare time?
7. Do your parents encourage you to exercise in your free time?
8. Do you practice leisure exercises individually or in a group?

The results

The questionnaires revealed a number of positive and negative aspects regarding the treatment, understanding and individual approach to physical exercises by secondary school students.

Analyzing each question of the questionnaire I could point out the following aspects:

Most of the answers for question 1 - '**What is physical education?**' - were similar to the following formulation approaches:

- **34.61%** of the students think that it refers to 'gym';
- **17.07%** of the students think it is 'a school subject';
- **15.00%** of the students believe that it is 'the class during which the students are moving';
- **13.30%** of them consider it 'an activity in which students practice different sports';
- **14.61%** of them perceive it 'as a leisure activity';
- **5.38%** of the students say that 'it is the class during which they learn many games'.

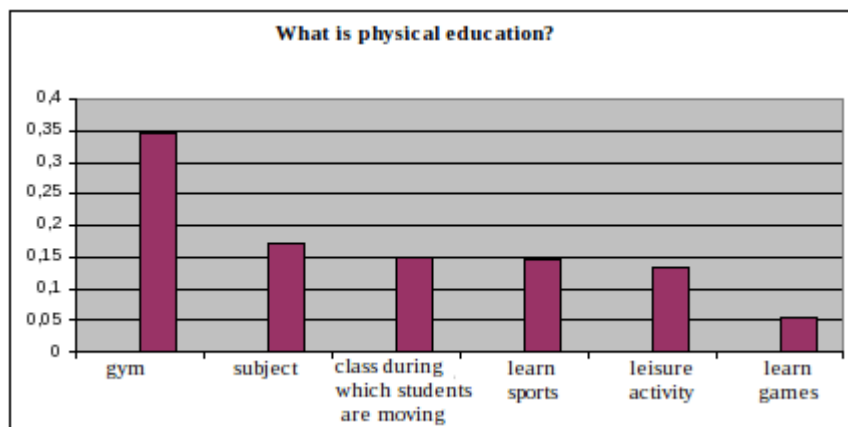


Diagram 2

As we observe from the way the students formulate their responses, none of the 260 students has a clear understanding of physical education. As can be seen from the chart above, most students confuse the term physical education with 'sport' and some consider that during the physical education class they are taught various games.

14.61% of the students have observed the recreational nature of physical education, but do not know the most important aspect of this activity - a harmonious physical and mental development.

These responses highlight the need for theoretical physical education lessons in which to present some important theoretical content regarding this discipline. The action of taking notes should be left at the discretion of the students.

To the second question - '**What is leisure sport?**' - students responded as follows:

- ❖ **67.69%** believe that leisure activities are those practiced by some people in their spare time;
- ❖ **20.38%** answered 'physical activities that you practice with your friends when you want it';
- ❖ **8.84%** of them responded that it is 'physical education';
- ❖ **3.07%** believe that leisure sport refer to 'various types of sport: soccer, dance, basketball, handball etc.'

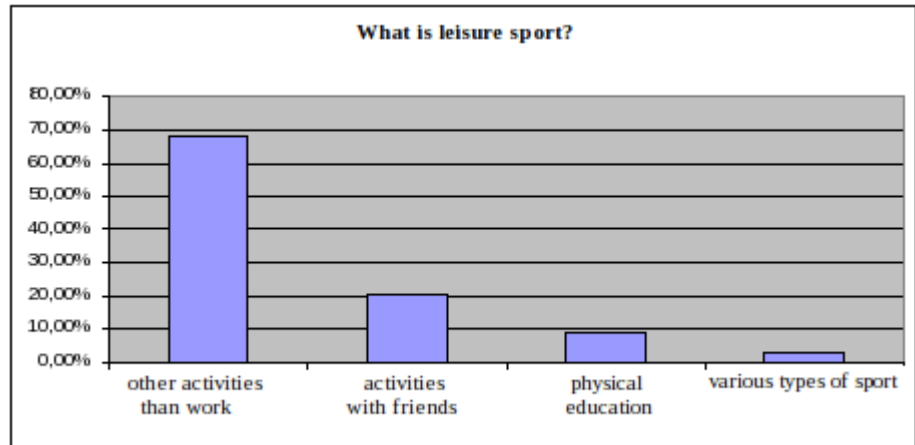


Diagram 3

The student responses emphasize that most of them distinguish between physical education activities in school and extracurricular activities. They also know that sport is a leisure activity and is made by free will. A small percentage of 8.84% of the respondents consider that leisure sport is 'physical education', which led us to believe that they do not differentiate between school activities to leisure sport.

Students answered to the third question - **'Do you practice physical exercises or sports during leisure?'** as follows:

- ❖ **60.02%** answered 'yes';
- ❖ **39.08%** answered 'no'.

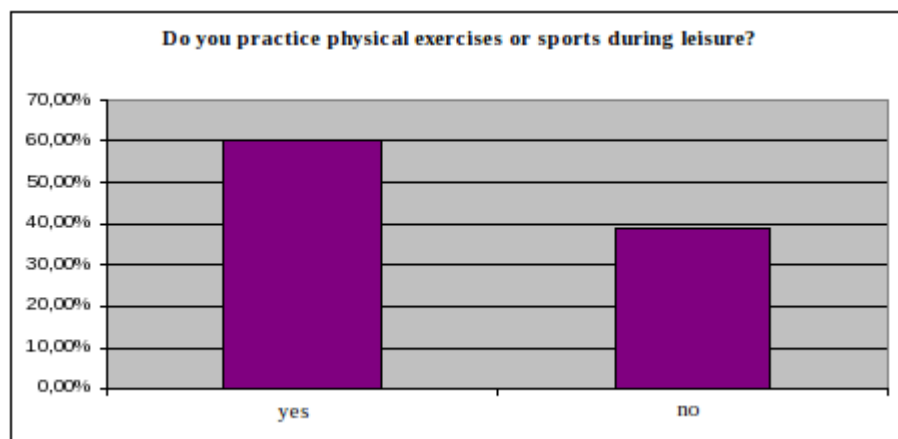


Diagram 4

The fact that 60.02% of the students responded that they practice leisure sport is a good thing, but almost 40% of the students responded that they do not practice any form of leisure sport, feeling satisfied only with the physical activity in school. Of those nearly 40%, 23.67% said they are exempted from doing any sports at school or at home on medical grounds, which is something extremely worrying.

The responses for the fourth question - '**What do you like to do during the physical education class?**' were as follows:

- ❖ 36.92% of the students answered that they like to 'play football';
- ❖ 40.38% of them prefer 'to play volleyball';
- ❖ 14.23% of the students like to 'play basketball';
- ❖ 5% 'do gymnastics';
- ❖ 1.92% prefer 'to move, to do anything';
- ❖ 1.53% like 'to run'.

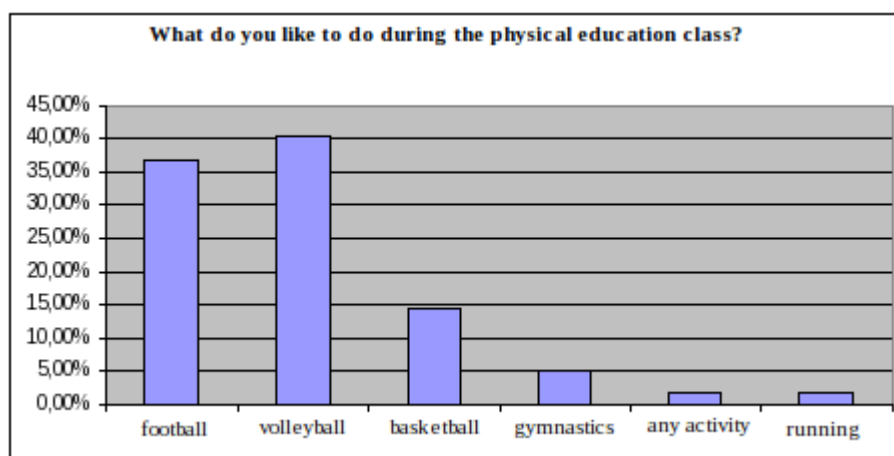


Diagram 5

From the answers mentioned above we can observe that the majority of students prefer games like football, basketball and volleyball. A small percentage of the respondents just want to move, regardless of the physical activities. These choices highlight the educational and training dimension of physical education, which is based on controlled and directed movement.

To question number 5 - **'Do you think physical education and sports during leisure are helpful and in which way?'** - students gave the following answers:

- ❖ **40.04%** believe that sports help them to 'spend time in a pleasant way';
- ❖ **29.61%** of students find sports helpful when it comes to 'recreation';
- ❖ **18.46%** of them believe that these activities help people to 'relax';
- ❖ **7.07%** think that physical education and leisure sport are helpful when it comes to 'good physical development';
- ❖ **4.23%** of the students consider that sport is helpful for those who 'participate in various activities and competitions'.

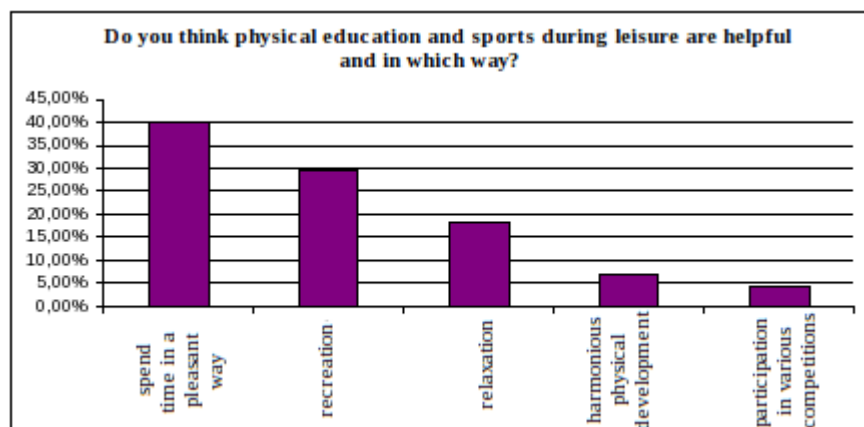


Diagram 6

Most students have recognized the recreational, playful and relaxing dimension of exercising. A small percentage of the students believe that exercising is important for a harmonious physical development, thus realizing the beneficial role that physical exercises have on the body, both physically and mentally.

The answers provided for this question are closer than others to the specifics of this activity, highlighting the playful and recreational character of exercising and the need for spending the leisure in a pleasant way.

Regarding question number 6 - **'What is the sport you want to practice in your spare time?'** - the responses are as follows:

- ❖ **40.38%** of the students preferred 'volleyball';
- ❖ **36.92%** of them like 'football';
- ❖ **14.23%** of the students have a fancy for 'basketball';
- ❖ **3.02%** of them prefer 'gymnastics';
- ❖ **2.21%** like 'other sports such as tennis, handball, ping pong etc.'

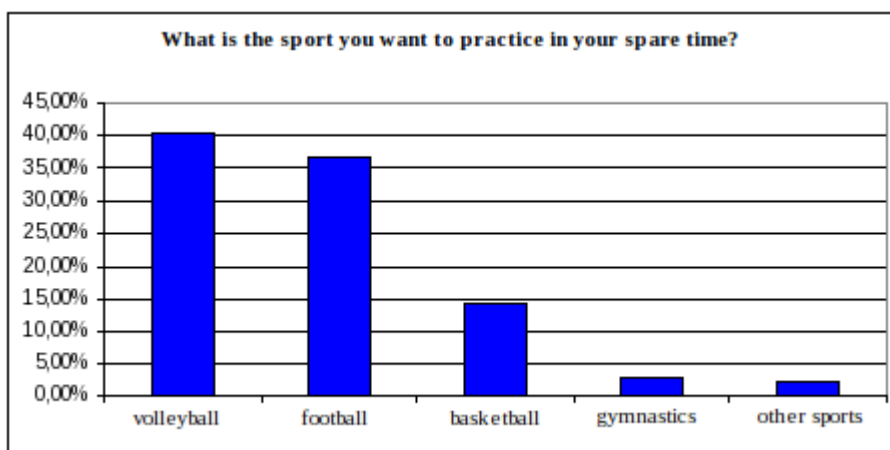


Diagram 7

When referring to physical exercises, students prefer to practice certain sport games during leisure. These games are football, volleyball, basketball and some other sports that are not so popular in our area.

To question number 7 - '**Do your parents encourage you to exercise in your free time?**':

- **28.07%** of the students said 'yes', their parents encourage them to play sports;
- **58.46%** of them answered that their 'parents do not care what sports they choose to practice or if they practice physical exercises at all';
- **13.46%** of the students responded 'no', the parents do not encourage them to practice sports.



Diagram 8

As seen from the students' answers, their parents' opinion can be the deciding factor in the practice or nor of physical exercises. It is difficult to understand why, considering contemporary times, only a small percentage of parents encourage the practicing of sports during leisure and why most parents often forbid or are indifferent to how their children spend their free time.

From these answers we can understand why so many young people and children are overweight or obese and prefer games on the computer than going out with friends to practice certain sports.

To the last question of the questionnaire - '**Do you practice leisure exercises individually or in a group?**' - the students responded as follows:

- **60.76%** of the students answered 'both ways: individually and in a group';
- **34.61%** of them responded that they prefer to do sports with friends, therefore the choice was 'in a group';
- **4.61%** of the respondents said that they prefer to do sports 'individually'.

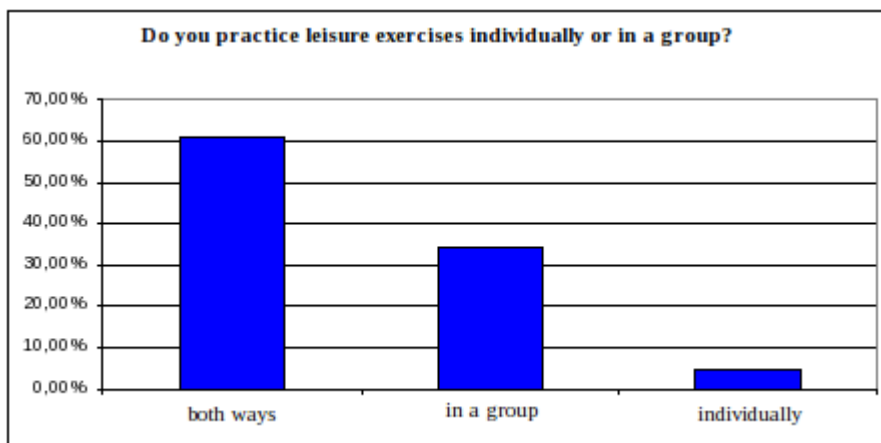


Diagram 9

Most students practice physical exercises individually and in groups, highlighting their good accommodation when it comes to exercising within a group, but also their desire and physical strength to practice physical exercises alone.

Some of them prefer only team sports, highlighting their tendency and their need to support one another, but also their desire for competition and race. A small percentage of students prefer individual sports and exercises practiced by themselves, aspect that emphasizes their high self-esteem and their sureness that exercising is really important.

I have to mention that 10% of the students surveyed are involved in sports activities with the purpose of achieving performance in a certain area.

Conclusions:

As noted in our analysis, most of the students surveyed are interested in physical education and sports and are fans of a certain sport in general.

A large number of students love exercising, but many of them still need guidance when it comes to independent organizing of certain games.

Many eighth graders have problems with their parents, especially when the latter stop them from practicing sports because they believe their children should use that time for learning. Unfortunately this mentality still persists and the adults do not understand the recreational role of exercising.

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Titlu: Studiu privind practicarea exercițiului fizic în timpul liber la vârsta 14 ani.

Cuvinte cheie: exercițiu fizic, timp liber, jocuri sportive, activități recreative.

Rezumat: Acest studiu are ca principal scop evidențierea importanței practicării exercițiului fizic la orice vârstă și de asemenea de a releva în ce măsură elevii de nivel gimnazial practică exercițiul fizic în mod independent.

Titre: Étude sur pratique l'exercices physique de loisir à l'enfant de 14 ans.

Mots-clés: l'exercices physique, temps libre, jeux sportifs, jeux de loisir.

Résumé: Cette étude a pour but principal de mettre en évidence l'importance de pratiquer une activité physique à tout âge et aussi de révéler à quelle pratique des étudiants de niveau de diplôme exercer de façon indépendante.