

**ABSTRACT OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS BY Ms. GULAP MONICA
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THESIS SUBMITTED TO:

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS

Bucharest, Romania, 2015

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TITLE THESIS:

**STUDY REGARDING THE CONTRIBUTION OF SPORTS
DISCIPLINES ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THE STUDENTS
FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST**

Keywords: *sports disciplines, students, quality of life.*

INTRODUCTION

Although lately it has been observed an impressive increase in the number of articles, studies and research concerning the vast issue of quality of life, we appreciate as interesting an approach of those aspects of quality of life which can be influenced by participating in the Physical Education lessons by the students of the University of Bucharest and which we consider relevant in the present preparation and future becoming of these young people.

"The diagnosis of quality of life is a difficult approach, given its complex structure and the numerous types of indicators that provide data on: health, income, working and living conditions, family, group and interpersonal relationships, quality of education, health care, social protection, access to services for the population and the opportunities of employment, perception and conflict management, trust in people, in institutions, the level of participation in political and social life ".

From the point of view of the specialists in physical education and sport the policies regarding the quality of life are unthinkable, without implementing preventive or curative strategies focused on health, on optimization and on recovery of capacity of motion, on improving fitness, on amplifying self confidence and on social integration of people, all of these programs being based on exercise as a means and context of well-being and of quality of life.

MOTIVATION OF CHOOSING THE THEME

My approach to demonstrate the influences of practicing sports disciplines within an organized framework, in the context of physical education

lessons included in the curricula of faculties of the University of Bucharest, on certain indicators of quality of life, represents the capitalizing on the scientific level of an experience of 8 years which I acquired as a teacher in the Department of Physical Education and Sport at the University of Bucharest.

All this time I focused to choose the most efficient methods and means, to appeal to the most attractive approaches, so as to contribute to the successful achievement of the objectives/goals which physical education is expected to fulfill: improving health, the ability to move and work, physical condition, level of self-confidence, combating stress, social integration of youth. All these landmarks are listed as indicators of the well-being and of the quality of life.

Without considering we venture, we believe that the training programs with specific content within aerobics and table tennis, which we developed and applied, have multiple beneficial effects and can be easily extrapolated to the independent activity of the students, so their contribution to the improvement of the quality of life parameters be more significant.

Also, the use for the first time in Romania, at the youth category of the battery of tests - Bruininks-Oseretsky, Second Edition, in the context of an experimental research, represents in addition to an original initiative, and a good opportunity to get some extremely valuable information regarding a series of psychomotor characteristics of the students of the University of Bucharest. The specific soft of battery analyzes, interprets this information and presents it in the form of written reports that can be of real value for both physical education teachers and other education stakeholders, all being part of the paradigm of a modern educational strategy.

THE PURPOSE OF THE PAPER AND THE RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The purpose of the research:

In our study we followed identifying opinions and attitudes of the students from the Bucharest University enrolled in the Physical Education course, regarding:

- the motivation to practice physical exercises;
- the objectives which they follow through the enrollment at the physical education course;
- the importance of physical education lessons from a psychological, physiological, social perspective etc .;
- the level of satisfaction regarding some aspects of participation in physical education course.

The objectives of the research:

- setting up a well structured framework regarding the theme.
- theoretical delimiting of the concepts: quality of life, the psycho-motor features of the investigated subjects, the sports disciplines practiced in physical education classes at the University of Bucharest.

- determining the influences that the sports disciplines practiced in an organized framework (table tennis and aerobics) had on the personality of young people.
- setting the level of manifestation of the main psychomotor skills necessary to practice sports disciplines mentioned above.
- getting important information about the students' attitudes, opinions, feelings on the quality of life.
- identifying the risk factors for the health of students from the University of Bucharest.

The research hypothesis

The specific means of the chosen sports disciplines, applied during the lessons, lead to higher indices of expression of the motor abilities Strength and Speed, to a better ability of adapting to effort and to a positive influence of the psycho-behavioral states.

There is an inverse relationship between the frequency of participation in physical education lessons and the level of perceived stress and directly proportional to the index of physical activity as an indicator of lifestyle.

An increased level of the effort capacity and of the psychomotor abilities can positively correlate with an increased level of the other indicators of quality of life, from the emotional and social sphere.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

The research methods

The study of the specialized bibliography

The bibliographic study was the basis of the theoretical foundation of the whole approach of research and consisted in studying the materials of a general nature, the papers, the magazines, the manuals, the books, and the publications in Romanian, English, the communications and the papers presented at some sessions scientific.

The pedagogical observation

Within our scientific approach, the observation method was the direct presence of the researcher at the didactic activity both outside the training process by assisting in lessons and through effective participation in teaching the table tennis, aerobics and basketball lessons.

The survey method - provides to the researcher explanations on the views, attitudes, realities, interests and states of those investigated.

Within our scientific approach we used the following questionnaires:

- ◆ The Perceived Stress Scale ("Perceived Stress Scale" developed by Cohen et al, 1983) - translated and adapted;

- ◆ The questionnaire for quality of life related to health and lifestyle
The questionnaire for health-related quality of life, derived from a model used in the project KIDSCREEN, in Ireland, which aimed to evaluate children's

opinions, attitudes and feelings about perceived health, measures seven dimensions of health-related quality of life, covering the following major areas:

- Physical well-being (5 items) - explores physical activity, energy and fitness.
- Psychological well-being (6 items) - analyzes positive emotions, satisfaction with life.
- Moods and emotions (7 items) - examines how young people manage depression, emotions and stressful situations.
- Self-perception (5 items) - examines whether respondents perceive their physical appearance as positive or negative.
- Autonomy (4 items) - concerns the subjects' possibility of having free time.
- Social and colleague/ family support (6 items) - examines the nature of relations with other young people and their family members.
- Academic environment (6 items) - aimed at young people's perception of cognitive skills, concentration and learning capacities, feelings about school.

The questionnaire for health-related quality of life evaluates the seven dimensions of the quality of life, each of them using 5-point Likert scale. For most dimensions of the questionnaire, the highest step (e.g. 5) receives the highest score indicating higher indices of the quality of life. The last part of the questionnaire asks the respondents to assess the quality of life from a global perspective, using a 7-step scale.

According to specialists, the subjective representation of health (perception of one's health) is a key-element to monitor the health of a population.

Using such a questionnaire can help monitor the subjective health and the well-being (physical, mental, emotional) of young people, to identify social factors and behavioral determinants of health and to identify subgroups with poor physical or mental health.

The second part of the questionnaire applied aimed to collect data on the lifestyle of the students from the University of Bucharest. Through this we were able to know and to analyze the explanations and the interpretations of subjects about their lifestyle.

The experimental method

The experiment that we propose in our study is the observant – ameliorative type.

The test method

- For testing the effort capacity we used the Ruffier-Dickson test.
- The battery of tests Bruininks-Oseretsky, Second Edition (BOT-2) - for evaluating the psychomotor capacity.

The statistical method

Statistics is a branch of mathematics that later became a separate science and method. As a method, it produces statistical connections between things, phenomena. As a method of processing data collected by observation, questionnaires, experiments, statistics imposed as a research method and have become indispensable.

The graphical method

The graphic representations have expressed very eloquently the picture of the recorded results and of the processed data. They also have been used as a means of analyzing research results.

Stages of the research

Our scientific approach was developed during several stages:

◆ In a first step we sought to identify the perceived stress level, the physical activity index and the students' motivation for enrolling to the physical education course, demarche that we have achieved within 6 to 17 May 2013.

◆ Another step was conducting the experiment, collecting data and conducting the training programs which were performed as follows:

- The experimental group:

The initial testing took place from 14th to 18th October 2013 and was aimed to knowing the initial values of the investigated parameters - the dependent variable.

The final testing took place from 19th to 23rd May 2014 in order to highlight the changes in the investigated parameters after attending the sports disciplines programs - aerobics and table tennis.

- The control group:

The initial testing took place from 7th to 11th October 2013.

The final testing took place from 12th to 16th May, 2014.

◆ A final stage consisted in applying the questionnaires for quality of life and lifestyle, conducted in the week 24th to 28th March 2014.

The subjects and the research venue

● *For the first stage* of our scientific approach, the sample was composed of 50 students (first and second year), of which 28 girls and 22 boys enrolled in various faculties of the University of Bucharest, who opted for the sports disciplines Table Tennis, Aerobics and Basketball- within the physical education classes. The applying of the questionnaires to assess the perceived stress was done in the gym Pitar Mos, and their collection was done at the end of the lessons.

● In order to conduct the experiment, the sample was composed of 100 students, from the University of Bucharest, freshmen, aged 18-21 years, divided into two groups:

- The experimental group composed of 50 students enrolled in various faculties of the University of Bucharest who opted for aerobics (25 students) and table tennis (25 students).

- The control group composed of 50 students of first year at the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures, University of Bucharest, which don't participate in the activities during the lessons of physical education, but who have sportive preoccupations in their free time and who agreed to be participants in this scientific endeavor.

The survey based on questionnaires regarding the quality of life and the lifestyle has involved a number of 205 students from the University of Bucharest, of which 120 are enrolled and participate in physical education lessons (table tennis, aerobics, basketball, dance, football) and 85 students - not enrolled in the physical education optional course. For the latter, the administration of the questionnaires was conducted both online and through ASLS and their colleagues participating in our activities.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS

The adaptation of the body to effort, determined by the Ruffier test, undergoes changes due to the training process. These changes are reflected in a more rapid recover to the normal values of the pulse for the trained subjects. The experimental group shows statistically confirmed results demonstrating that at the end of the experiment, they obtained a better adaptation to the effort than the control group, due to the proposed training program, with specific means of aerobics and table tennis.

The comparison of the results of the two tests: initial and final, and also of the final data obtained from the final testing of the two groups highlights the efficiency of the operational structures included in the training programs, validating the research hypothesis number one.

The validation of the hypothesis was based on *the scale score* obtained through the software of BOT 2 ASSIST™, Scoring and Reporting System, by converting the raw scores achieved by the subjects during the tests.

After the final testing there were found significant differences between the two groups (on the scale score), both at the subtest of Running speed and agility, and at the subtest of Strength.

In both subtests, the values of the motor age are making good progress from a test to another, and the comparison of the average motor age, appropriate to the two groups, shows statistically significant differences.

The average of the perceived stress level reaches a score of 16.85, which is translated into a "medium stress", only among the girls we identified a higher percentage of those who fall in the "high stress" category.

We may say that in order to be more efficient, it is recommended that the practice of physical exercises be held 2-3 times a week, in an organized framework, on a pleasant musical background (aerobics, dance), that induces pleasure and relaxation. Also, sports games (ex. Table Tennis, Basketball) with direct opponent, which requires thinking, imagination for the creative and efficient solving of the various game situations, is a practical solution for combating stress and sedentary life.

The comparison of the results obtained for each dimension of quality of life contained in the questionnaire applied to the two groups shows that, in general, students from among those enrolled in physical education course obtained higher scores compared to their peers in group B (student volunteers, who are not enrolled in the optional of physical education), indicating a better quality of life. Interestingly, of all the components of the questionnaire, the most negative attitudes (valid for both groups) has met the "Academic". This must draw an alarm signal to all stakeholders.

Among lifestyle factors that negatively affect the health of students, there have been noted:

- Failure of a rational schedule of meals;
- Insufficient sleep duration;
- Inadequate hydration;
- Physical activity rather low;
- Smoking, drinking alcoholic drinks.

Although the proportion of students who adopt a behavior closer to the concept of "healthy lifestyle" is higher among those enrolled in physical education course, still remains a priority the recommendation of sportive activities as "behavioral patterns", viable for anyone who wants to improve its lifestyle.

CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

In the conclusions and perspectives we are entitled to state that the hypotheses were confirmed.

Also, we believe that promoting the positive effects that participation in an organized framework at the activities during the lessons of physical education at the University of Bucharest - highlighted by our study results, could help to the reconsideration of the position of decision makers regarding the status of this disciplines, these becoming "allies" in proposing our efficient and relatively inexpensive solutions for a positive influence of some indicators of the students` quality of life.

Acknowledgements

This paper is made and published under the aegis of the Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy as a part of programme co-funded by the European Union within the Operational Sectorial Programme for Human Resources Development through the project for Pluri- and interdisciplinary in doctoral and postdoctoral programmes Project Code: POSDRU/159/1.5/S/141086.