

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH  
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**ABSTRACT OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS**

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**Title of the thesis: MOTOR ACTIVITIES SOURCES OF  
SOCIALIZATION AT PRIMARY SCHOOL LEVEL**

**Keywords:** socialization, physical education, motor activities, primary school level, group cohesion, sociometry.

**Introduction**

Motor activities are considered the perfect setting for young generations, being appreciated as an important factor of socialization with increasing importance in the modern society. Both developing biological and psychological characteristics shaped by the socialization process contributes to the continued evolution in the measure of summation and execution of new social roles and acquire new experiences.

The idea from which we started the creation of this paper was caused on the one hand to our particular interest in the area of sport and motor activities as a resource of priority to improving the quality of life and increased human performance (as professionals and teachers in physical education) and secondly to the concern for the motor activities done in the primary educational level and their socialization effect.

The option for such a theme for designing the doctoral thesis was mainly influenced by the current context of modern society, my desire for professional development and the fact that motor activities are an important source of socialization for primary school pupils.

The present thesis through its contents tries to make a connection between the practice of motor activities at primary school level and the psychosocial

phenomena, we focus on socialization and social integration through sport. Besides family, the first and most important social group, other groups contribute to the socialization of individuals: schoolmates, friends group and later professional staff. One of the ways that socialization within the group of friends or colleagues is done is sports. Individuals learn through sport to work together, to assume certain roles within the group and to define themselves within the group.

The doctoral thesis titled „**MOTOR ACTIVITIES SOURCES OF SOCIALIZATION AT PRIMARY SCHOOL LEVEL**”, is structured on three parts, comprising **15** chapters, **54** subchapters, **67** tables and **89** figures.

### **Stages of the research**

**PART I – „Theoretic foundations”**, is structured on five large chapters as it follows:

*Chapter 1 – The contribution of motor activities on the socialization process of students* – chapter in which are presented the following:

- The motivation for choosing the theme;
- The actuality of the theme and its coverage in the speciality literature;
- Critical analysis of covering the topic in the specialty literature;
- Scope, objectives and tasks of work;
- The stages of the research.

*Chapter 2 – The motor activities at the primary school level* – having as main parts the following:

- Conceptual issues regarding the motor activities and socialization in the primary school level;
- Physical education in the context of formative education (the definition of physical education, the ideal and its functions, the place of physical education and sport in the development of personality, concepts on physical education and sports in relation to personality);
- The role and importance of physical education at primary school level;
- The contribution of physical education and sport to the bio-psycho-social development of pupils (ontological aspects, motor ability at young school age, the genesis of psychosomatics through motor activity).

*Chapter 3 – The specific age particularities of primary school student* – including the following sections:

- The characterisation of “small student age”;
- The somatically-function particularities correspondent to the age of students from the primary school level;
- Landmarks of psychosocial development of small scholar.

*Chapter 4 – Socialization through sport*

- Theoretical approaches regarding socialization through physical education and sport (universality of socialization, the socialization scope, the typology of the socialization, the socialization goals)

- Physical education and sport factor of socialization and social integration;

#### *Chapter 5 – Conclusions of Part I*

- Conclusions of the theoretic foundations.

#### ***The conclusions of the first part***

Scientific literature, both national and international, in the area of motor activities is large addressing relevant topics of interdisciplinary science, trans disciplinary and co-disciplinary. Research in the field confirms that motor activities contribute to the social integration of students, sports representing an ideal setting in which they socialize and create their new friendships, they integrate more easily into the collective.

The practice of motor activities contribute to the development of primary school students both physically and functionally and especially psychologically and socially, bringing their contribution, adjacent to the other disciplines included in the curriculum, to the integrating process of children.

Regarding the socialization through motor activities at primary school level, the scientific literature is quite limited, very few research focusing in this direction. So we decided to highlight the formative - educational values towards socialization and biometric development that these activities provide for children.

We consider the small school period an ideal setting for the emancipation of these intergroup relationships and socialization, representing a good opportunity to meet new kids and socialize with them.

Age peculiarities highlighted in previous chapters represent an opportunity to analyse the contributing and limiting factors of social integration of students in the new school groups, the transition from pre-school to primary school can be a barrier to the adaptation of young people to the new system or both being a good opportunity for socialization and interrelation.

The purpose of physical education at this age level, is to strengthen and maintain a state of optimal health, development of skills and qualities through motor activities, harmonious physical development (proportionality between somatic and functional indices), developing qualities and intellectual traits, moral, aesthetic, behavioural, stimulate creativity, increase interest in the independent practice of these activities, but also social integration through sports activities and the effects of socialization and the development of group cohesion.

In the process of acquiring social behaviour, children, and young people learn the elements of socialization especially through observation and identification following the behaviour of persons they take as a model. Very important are these models that will influence or provide the adoption of specific social behaviours. Active participation of young people at motor activities,

physical education, and sport contributes to the social development of the individual.

Therefore, the characteristics of these motor type activities, recommends these activities as an important factor in the development and implementation of individual socialization in the group.

## **PART II – „Preliminary research on the contribution of motor activities in the socialization process of students”**

In the second part, one that included the preliminary research, we proposed, starting from the levels of social integration (physical, functional and social), to demonstrate that motor activities are an important framework for social, functional and physic development of students in the social group, and that the specialist in physical education and sport disposes of a series of instructional strategies capable of producing improvements in functional biometric and produce changes in individual behaviour, towards achieving the objectives of socio-motor and social integration.

The research was conducted at this age level because we believed that the most appropriate age for carrying of our intervention of improvement is the primary education, on the one hand, due to the "explosion" in somatic development and function of the individual, on the other hand, due to the fact that at this age pupils face a multiplication of social relationships, students are at the beginning of schooling, by increasing the number of people, but also the requirements, which the child must face at the first education cycle.

The preliminary research focused on an interdisciplinary approach in knowing the particularities at primary school level groups, also discovering formative educational values of motor activities at this age level and develop the cohesion and socialization of the group and reintegration of rejected subjects in the group. At the same time, it is a multidisciplinary research, intersecting fields such as psychology, sociology, physical education and pedagogy. Scientific literature is quite limited both nationally and internationally in terms of formative - educational values of the motor activities and the socialization in and through sport at primary school level, which gives us an opportunity to study human relationships at this age level and how motor activity can influence the development of socialization.

### **The research purpose and it opportunity of achieving it**

Through the preliminary research in the doctoral thesis entitled "The activities of motor activities sources of socialization at primary school level", we tried to surprise the beneficial aspects of the motor activities of physical education and sport type, both on the biological and physical development purpose, as particularly in terms of socialization and social integration of students through such activities.

The preliminary research aims to demonstrate that the primary motor activities have an important role in the development of formative and educational values as those of socialization and interpersonal communication at primary school level. Therefore we want to propose and check some training programs that include with priority playful and agonistic motor activities to primary school, to positively influence their degree of socialization. We also wish to propose different methods of training the students applying attractive lesson means, methods to motivate the group towards active participation in the development of motor activities ability to the children.

### **Preliminary research hypotheses**

Preliminary research hypotheses have focused mostly on methods of action through which we emphasized the importance of motor activities both in terms of bio-motor and especially in the development of social relationships at primary level. Such research hypotheses were as follows:

1. The application of training programs that include attractive and playful means may request the pupils from primary school level to a conscious and active participation in lessons causing accumulation on biometric level.

2. The structure of the group of students can highlight the existence of a bivalent relationship between the level of motor capacity development and the degree of social inclusion of primary school children.

### **The objectives of the research**

The objectives in the preliminary research was the following:

O1 – Delimiting the concepts and methods related to socio-formative character of motor activities playful and agonistic type at primary school level;

O2 – Knowing the features and characteristics that define the school group at the primary level of education;

O3 – Structuring a strategy for action in order to improve situations created and restore a collegial environment by promoting optimal motor systems that require teamwork from the content of motor activities the race or game type in the frame of pedagogical experiment;

O4 – Increasing school group cohesion by promoting the collaborative relationships for developing common motor tasks.

### **The research organization**

The decision for choosing this age group is justified by the multitude of meanings and somatic and functional changes essential for individual growth and the development of individual that occurs in the young generations of school groups, as the circumcision factors that strengthen the foundations of social behaviours - communication and relationship of students.

## **The research place**

The ameliorative experiment was conducted within the educational establishment: School Nr. 179 in Sector 1, Bucharest, where I work as a teacher of physical education and sport. The terms of the experiment were optimal, the school has a gym, two basketball courts and a soccer/handball court, four classes on level of education.

The date on which the experiment was started was 09/30/2013 and the experiment was performed over six months, during which we performed motor testing, sociological research, with questionnaires and conducting an observation of student behaviour in different situations (physical education lessons, optional sports activities, sports competitions).

## **The research sample**

The research subjects came from the School Nr. 179 in Sector 1, Bucharest, representing two classes II at school during the school year 2013/2014. We divided into two classes: an experiment group (class II A or Group A) and a control group (class II B or Group B).

### **The experimental group A was formed by:**

- Class II A – with 25 students with the age between 8 and 9, 13 boys and 12 girls;

### **The control group B was formed by:**

- Class II B – with 25 students with the age between 8 and 9, 14 boys and 11 girls;

## **Methods of research applied**

Research methods used in the preliminary experimental research, in order to develop the entire theoretical, practical and experimental approach, we used specific scientific research methods unanimously known in our field: bibliographic study, observation method, experimental method (with anthropometric measurements, motric evaluation) survey method (questionnaire method and sociometric test) statistical and mathematical method, graphic method.

## **The system of methods a means applied and its scheduling to the experimental group**

The control group performed two hours of physical education a week in which we followed the structure of the classic program of physical education and sports. Instead, the experimental group adjacent to the two hours of physical education and sport, in which we used playful and agonistic training programs with dynamic games, stage races, applicative trails tools, we included two hours

of playing team sports, boys played basketball and girls played volleyball, this group also participated in numerous national competitions and school competitions.

Training programs with a specific playful and agonistic methods, according to Annex No. 4, included mainly:

- Dynamic games for developing the motor skills or to develop specific and basic motor skills;
- Relays and sports competitions that have followed the correct and harmonious development;
- Practical utility tracks on teams, aiming to develop the physical and basic motor skills;
- Team sports which aimed to develop team spirit and improve group cohesion.

The training programs aimed primarily to develop motor and basic and specific skills, but especially to develop teamwork, socialization, communication, and cooperation, successfully expressing formative - educational values of the motor activities.

### ***Conclusions of the preliminary research***

Following the preliminary research we drawn a number of conclusions that we present below:

Taking into account the Hypothesis No. 1 according to which: "The application of training programs that include attractive and playful means may request the pupils from primary school level to a conscious and active participation in lessons causing accumulation on biometric level", we can say that was validated through the results obtained from motor samples and anthropometric intermediary measurements between the two tests of the preliminary study (initial and intermediate) can be observed significant differences in the experimental group and also find significant differences between the intermediate results of this group compared to the control group.

Anthropometric measurements analysis has shown that the differences between the two samples of students were insignificant at the beginning of the experiment, but after applying intermediate testing we found considerable progress in the experimental group compared with the initial testing and also compared to the control group

Regarding the Hypothesis No. 2 according to which: „The structure of the group of students can highlight the existence of a bivalent relationship between the level of motor capacity development and the degree of social inclusion of primary school children”, we can say that the hypothesis was validated according to sociological studies, sociometric questionnaire applied to the two groups of students.

The analysis and interpretation of the statistical sociological questionnaire applied on the two samples showed us that students like to communicate and collaborate during motor activities, also students demonstrate commitment to the classmates, found their best friends in the group, students like to practice with classmates during motor activities, prefer to carry out motor activities together than separately, help each other in sport outside school hours, spend more time socializing (telling stories, working together) before starting classes as and after their sporting activities require cooperation and mutual assistance.

Using the sociometry method we concluded that the groups of students have few divergences and mutual rejections, are weak cohesive groups, although having numerous isolated individuals or even rejected, there are plenty choices and mutual cooperation relationships.

Therefore for the first criterion "leisure time activity", the experimental group, showed a coefficient of cohesion of 0.03, and a cohesion index of 0.01, while the control group achieved a coefficient of cohesion of 0.03 and a cohesion index of 0.01, regarding to the number of mutual elections and rejections we had in the control group 10 elections and 8 mutual rejections, comparing to 9 mutual elections and 5 mutual rejections at the experimental group, the difference between the two groups was 1 mutual elections and 3 mutual rejections. We can say that both groups have the same degree of cohesion at the beginning of the experiment, a slight superiority for the experimental group regarding the difference between mutual elections and mutual rejections.

Regarding the coefficient of cohesion to the second criterion, there was the same amount of points, between the experimental group (with a coefficient of cohesion of 0.03) and the control group (with a coefficient of cohesion of 0.03), and in the case of the cohesion index has preserved the tie of 0.01 points to both the control group and to the experimental group, the difference was made in the case of the number of mutual elections and rejections (the experimental group had 9 mutual elections and at the control group we had 8 mutual elections) and mutual rejections (at the experimental group we had 5 mutual rejections, and at the control group we had 6 mutual rejections).

We may conclude that there is a close link between motor skills index and the degree of integration into the group of students, concerned social integration is proportional to the motor skills index.

Therefore students with a decreased motor skill index are less integrated into the social group, some are even on the verge of exclusion, on the other hand, preferred students, and team leaders, being in the top spot in terms of motor performance, so there is a reciprocal relationship between motor performance and the degree of social inclusion. Following statistical analysis of data, discussions, and conclusions presented above, we find that the preliminary study hypothesis regarding the group's cohesion and social integration are confirmed.



### **Part III – „Research regarding the formative and educational values of motor activities at primary school level”**

This research started from the premise that the social integration of primary school students is the result of an evolutionary process whose progress is conditioned by a number of factors: somatic, functional, psychological and social. We found it necessary to highlight the influences which the practice of motor activities have on children aged 6-10 years old.

#### **The experimental research hypothesis**

The research hypotheses focused on the importance of motor activities in developing social relationships at primary school level. Therefore the research hypotheses were as follows:

Hypothesis No. 1: The inclusion in the educational training programs, of primary school students of methods with an agonistic character of initiation into the practice of sports games positively influence the development of bio-motor ability and social integration of practitioners.

Hypothesis No. 2: The engagement of students in solving some common motor tasks and promoting the group actions influences its degree of cohesion.

#### **The objectives of experimental research**

The objectives of this present thesis, in the final part of the research, were as follows:

- Accessing new bibliography on the chosen theme;
- Starting a new research that takes into account the results of the preliminary research;
- The analyze of the trends in the development of bio-motor features and characteristics, defining the group at primary school level;
- Structuring certain programs that will seek through selected means to increase the value of the cohesion index within the experimental group;
- Knowing the degree of cohesion resulting from going through ameliorative program.
- Organizing the final research by establishing samples, determination of research location, stages, the main research methods and main instruments and equipment for measurement and investigation;
- Analysing test results at the anthropometric evaluation, of proportionality index and also to the results obtained at the motor assessments and comparing them to those of the initial tests, so we can see the progress or regression favored by the motor activities done;
- Statistical interpretation of data obtained in anthropometric testing and motor evaluation, graphic illustration of the compared results;

- Using Zuckerman-Kuhlman Personality Questionnaire through which we will analyse the two groups of students in terms of sociability and social integration, neuroticism, anxiety, impulsive thrill-seeking, aggression, hostility, and activity level;

- Statistical interpretation of data obtained from the Zuckerman-Kuhlman Personality Questionnaire and analysing the differences using the significance test T-test, so that to see if the results are significant or not;

- The presentation and interpretation of data obtained through sociometric method compared to initial testing;

- The analysis of the cohesion differences from the initial testing to the final testing of regarding the experiment group and the control group.

## **Organising and conducting the experimental research**

### **The place and subjects of the experiment**

The ameliorative experiment was conducted within the educational establishment: School Nr. 179 in Sector 1, Bucharest, where I work as a teacher of physical education and sport. The terms of the experiment were optimal, the school has a gym, two basketball courts and a soccer/handball court, four classes on level of education.

The date on which the experiment ended was 06.10.2015, and lasted 2 years, during which we took motor tests, sociological research, with questionnaires and conducting observation of student behaviour in different situations (physical education lessons, optional sports activities, competitions).

### **The sample of the final research**

The research subjects came from the School Nr. 179 in Sector 1, Bucharest, representing two classes II at school during the school year 2014/2015. We divided into two classes: an experiment group (class III A or Group A) and a control group (class III B or Group B).

### **The experimental group A was formed by:**

- Class III A – with 25 students with the age between 10 and 11, 13 boys and 12 girls;

### **The control group B was formed by:**

- Class III B – with 25 students with the age between 10 and 11, 14 boys and 11 girls;

### **Methods of research applied**

Research methods used in the preliminary experimental research, in order to develop the entire theoretical, practical and experimental approach, we used specific scientific research methods unanimously known in our field: bibliographic study, observation method, experimental method (with

anthropometric measurements, motric evaluation) survey method (questionnaire method and sociometric test) statistical and mathematical method, graphic method.

### ***The conclusions of Part III research***

Following the final research we came to the following conclusions:

Starting with the Hypothesis 1 regarding: „The inclusion in the educational training programs, of primary school students of methods with an agonistic character of initiation into the practice of sports games positively influence the development of bio-motor ability and social integration of practitioners”, we can say that was validated by the results of the final tests and measurements between the three tests (initial, intermediate and final) can be observed significant differences in the experimental group and also find significant differences between the final results of the experimental group comparing to the control group. Thus we find considerable progress in the experimental group compared to the first two tests and also compared to the control group.

Regarding the Hypothesis No. 2, according to which: „ The engagement of students in solving some common motor tasks and promoting the group actions influences its degree of cohesion.”, has been validated, we can say that students in the experimental group who completed the training program with motor activities, playful and agonistic games, are, according to the survey, more sociable, have a level of anxiety and nervousness lower than students from the control group, are calculated, more patient, more careful, with a higher level of discipline compared to the control group, a low level of aggressiveness and hostility compared with students from the control group, both groups of students meet the increased desire for activity, children are impatient to practice as many sports activities.

Regarding the cohesiveness of group we can see in the sociometric test that Hypothesis No. 2 is validated, therefore we registered the following results:

1. At the criterion A (+) and B (-) "Leisure time activities", at the experimental group, we see an increase in group cohesion coefficient of 0.03 at the initial testing, to 0.05 in the final testing, and also an increase in the number of mutual election from 9 in the first test to 16 mutual elections in the second test, and at mutual rejection we see a reduction from 5 mutual rejections in the first test, to 4 mutual rejections in the second test.

Regarding the group cohesion index at the initial testing, we recorded a value of 0.01 points, following to the final testing we see a progress to 0.04 points. The leaders of the group were students IS (11), LL (13), CR (6), which managed to keep close with most of their colleagues, with many mutual elections, so we can say that they were elected as formal leaders and have a big influence over the group members. So we can confirm the hypothesis no. 2 that say that training programs had positive effects on the experiment group.

In comparison, in the control group, we obtained a coefficient of cohesion, at the initial testing, of 0.03 points, and at the final testing, we obtained a coefficient of 0.04 points. Regarding the index of cohesion of the group, at the control group, we recorded the same values both at the initial testing and at the final testing, an index of 0.01 points. Thus we can conclude that training programs were more effective than traditional teaching, we can see at students from the experimental group, that cohesion coefficients are better from a test to another indicating their desire to spend more time together.

2. Within the criterion C (+) and D (-) "collaboration during motor activities", at the experimental group we observe an increase in group cohesion coefficient of 0.03 points at the initial testing to a 0.06 points in the final testing and also an increase in the number of mutual elections at 9 elections in the first test, to 16 elections in the second test, and regarding the mutual rejections we can see that they are reduced from 5 rejection in the first test, to 3 rejection within the second test.

Regarding the cohesion index, at the initial testing, we recorded a value of 0.01 points, following to the final testing to register a growth at a rate of 0.04 points. The leaders of the group were students IS (11), GM (9) and BM (1), which managed to get along with most of his colleagues, having many mutual elections, so we can say that elected as formal leaders these students have a big influence on the other group members.

Therefore we can conclude that teaching students and applying attractive means in lessons, motivates the group in the direction of their active participation with implications in motor capacity development, physical development, psychological and especially social integration and inclusion in the group.

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