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Abstract of the doctoral thesis

THE IMPACT OF MOTOR ACTIVITIES ON EDUCATING A
HEALTHY LIFESTYLE IN STUDENTS

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Introduction

Forming and educating the young generation should be a priority for the society we live in, which is constantly changing. Also, because of the stress and intellectual overexertion that are increasingly present in the daily life of each individual, the formation of man should aim at the mental, aesthetic, moral, physical development and not only, in accordance with social requirements.

Motivation for choosing the theme

The growing number of young people with a sedentary life, who have an unhealthy lifestyle, as well as the consequences of physical inactivity on man's life, with negative effects on the health of the body (manifested by: poor muscle tone, excessive weight gain leading to obesity, incorrect body posture, stiffening, increased body mass index, increased percentage of body fat tissue and visceral fat tissue, deformations of the spine etc.), have determined us to conduct an extensive research, with the intent to develop and implement an experimental preparation program using exercises specific to basketball game, with positive impact on a healthy lifestyle.

The doctoral thesis is structured in three parts:

- Part I: Theoretical background of the theme
- Part II: Preliminary experimental research
- Part III: Final experimental research

Part I contains four chapters:

Chapter 1, *Situation of the theme reflected in specialty literature*, refers to the positive effects of practicing motor activities on the health of the body. These effects were identified and analyzed by several international bodies, such as: World Health Organization (WHO), European Union (EU), International Federation of Sports Medicine (FIMS), International Federation of Physical Education (FIEP), and national bodies, such as: Romanian Medical Society of Physical Education and Sports, National Institute of Sports Medicine.

Chapter 2, *Conceptual delimitations*, deals with the concept of “healthy lifestyle”. The phrase “healthy lifestyle” is an important component of the “health” concept, which involves avoiding any kind of excess (alcohol, tobacco, non-rational nutrition etc.) and systematically practicing physical activities both in an organized framework and independently, for recreation during leisure time, while keeping to some nutrition rules etc. A healthy lifestyle is always associated with good health, with an active lifestyle.

Chapter 3, *Characteristics and methodical orientations of physical education in higher education*, highlights the importance of this subject in the Romanian educational system. In higher education, physical education aims to solve tasks specific to the field, among which we mention: multilateral development of physical qualities and motor skills, harmonious physical development, health improvement, development of mental indices etc., tasks that have a positive influence on the formation of future citizens and specialists.

Chapter 4, *Basketball game - a motor activity included in the physical education curriculum in non-profile higher education*, reveals the physical and mental benefits of practicing the game of basketball on students involved in the academic instructional and educational process. Practicing basketball game both in an organized framework and independently, as a leisure activity, contributes to the multilateral development of the young generation, in line with the requirements of a permanently changing society. It should be noted the contribution of basketball to developing and educating the young people’s initiative, ambition, will, desire to win by observing the game regulations, combativeness (which is educated depending on the specialization by position), qualities that also leave their mark on the positive conduct of daily life.

Conclusions drawn from theoretical research

- Specialized literature confirms that the systematic practice of motor activities, by its effects, has an essential role in forming an active lifestyle and preserving an optimal health status. The unanimously accepted opinion is that physical inactivity, along with any kind of excess (alcohol, tobacco, unhealthy diet), leads to obesity, respiratory, circulatory and heart diseases etc.

- “Healthy lifestyle” is a concept that should be promoted by the family, education institutions, medical professions and society, because young people need to be aware that forming and maintaining a healthy lifestyle is fundamental to have a healthy body, both mentally and physically. The practice of motor activities under any form, both in an organized environment and independently, during leisure time, is essential for the wellbeing of the body, for its physical and mental health.
- The young people in our country must be educated to practice physical exercise so that they become a healthy generation, and thus we could join the most developed countries in Europe and worldwide.
- Basketball is a sport that contributes significantly to forming the future adults, in accordance with the requirements of a constantly changing society.

Part II, entitled *Preliminary study on the opinions of students and teachers about the healthy lifestyle and the role of motor activities in implementing it*, starts from the following *premises*:

- Movement under its various forms is a component part of a healthy lifestyle, through the benefits to the body at the mental and motor levels, which matches the motto of the Romanian Federation of Sports for All: “Movement is life and life is movement”.
- Educating the young generation in the spirit of movement represents the desideratum of forming a healthy lifestyle in the context of contemporary society marked by sedentariness, overstrain and overeating.

Preliminary research aimed at the following *objectives*:

- To identify students’ opinions on the “healthy lifestyle” concept and the motor activities;
- To know students’ options for the practice of certain sports activities, in order to develop an instruction program according to their preferences;
- To identify teachers’ opinions on the “healthy lifestyle” concept, the physical education activities preferred by students and the motivational factors stimulating them to participate in physical education activities.

Preliminary research *hypotheses*:

- Knowing students’ opinions on motor activities and their connection with the construction of a healthy lifestyle provides us useful data for guiding the future approaches to teaching within the physical education curriculum.
- Knowing teachers’ opinions on the “healthy lifestyle” concept and the physical education activities preferred by students provides us necessary and useful information for improving and conducting the instructional and educational process in accordance with students’ preferences.

Preliminary research *methods*:

- Survey method;
- Statistical and mathematical methods and techniques for data processing.

Conclusions drawn from preliminary research

After applying the questionnaire and interpreting the responses, we have drawn several conclusions, among which we mention:

- Knowing students' preferences relating to the practice of curricular physical education activities is essential for conducting the teaching process in accordance with their options, which will lead to optimization of the instructional and educational process.
- Following the preliminary study, it is found that young people are aware and understand that the practice of motor activities has immediate and long-term effects on the human body.
- It is also found that students are concerned with building a healthy and active lifestyle.
- Social and moral values promoted within the curricular physical education activities are reflected in their social and professional life, according to the opinions of those investigated.

Analyzing the statistical data, as well as the discussions and conclusions presented above, we can state that the preliminary research hypotheses, namely "Knowing students' opinions on motor activities and their connection with the construction of a healthy lifestyle provides us data for guiding the future approaches to teaching within the physical education curriculum" and "Knowing teachers' opinions on the 'healthy lifestyle' concept and the physical education activities preferred by students provides us necessary and useful information for improving and conducting the instructional and educational process in accordance with students' preferences", have been validated.

Part III, entitled *Experimental research regarding the impact of motor activities on educating a healthy lifestyle in students*, starts from the *premise* according to which the practice of motor activities positively influences the construction of an active and healthy lifestyle in young people.

Consequently, we aimed to improve motor skills, develop a harmonious body, increase the body's ability to adapt to physical effort and harmoniously develop the young people's personality, which is necessary and useful for their optimal socio-professional life.

Experimental research had the following *objectives*:

- Students' knowledge of the necessity to practice regularly and constantly physical exercises and their benefits on the body;

- Students' knowledge and awareness of the positive effects induced by the practice of motor activities on the human body;
- Building in young people a positive attitude towards the systematic and regular practice of motor activities;
- Educating/ forming a healthy lifestyle among students, by implementing a preparation program based on exercises specific to basketball game.

Experimental research *hypotheses*:

1. Implementing a motor activity program in accordance with students' preferences favors the manifestation of a pro movement attitude among them and creates the premises for building a healthy lifestyle.
2. Introducing in the motor activity program some objectives aimed to promote socio-moral values has a positive impact on students' personality traits.
3. Applying an optimized motor activity program based on basketball-specific means leads to educating some components included in the "healthy lifestyle" concept.
4. The higher the students' awareness of the benefits derived from practicing basketball on the body, the more the premises for practicing this sports game as a leisure activity are likely to exist.

Research subjects

The subjects included in the experimental research are students at the Technical University of Civil Engineering of Bucharest.

Experimental research *methods*:

- Bibliographical study method,
- Survey method,
- Measurement and evaluation method,
- Experimental method,
- Statistical processing and interpretation method.

Dissemination of the research results

- ❖ *Theoretical approaches to building a healthy lifestyle through the practice of physical activities.* International Congress of Physical Education, Sports and Kinetotherapy, UNEFS Bucharest, 13-14 June 2013, ISBN 978-606-8294-61-2;
- ❖ *The contribution of education to socializing the young generations.* National Session of Scientific Communications "Education for movement - from social necessity to educational reality", UTCB, 17 May 2013, ISBN 978-973-100-274-3, Bucharest, Conspress Publishing House;

- ❖ *The healthy lifestyle in students' opinion.* International Congress of Physical Education, Sports and Kinetotherapy, UNEFS Bucharest, 11-13 June 2014, ISBN 978-606-8294-90-2;
- ❖ *Theoretical approaches to the practice of physical education and sports in non-profile higher education.* International Session of Scientific Communications "Priorities and perspectives in physical education and sports", University of Bucharest, 14 March 2014;
- ❖ *The benefits of practicing judo as an extracurricular activity on the human body - Theoretical delimitations.* International Session of Scientific Communications "Priorities and perspectives in physical education and sports", University of Bucharest, 14 March 2014;
- ❖ *Motor activities and leisure time - Theoretical aspects.* National Session of Scientific Communications "Education for movement - from social necessity to educational reality", UTCB, 23 May 2014;
- ❖ *Motor conduct/ behavior - Theoretical aspects.* National Session of Scientific Communications "Education for movement - from social necessity to educational reality", UTCB, 23 May 2014;
- ❖ *A comparative study between the opinions of students and teaching staff regarding the formal physical education activities preferred by students.* International Scientific Conference "Perspectives in physical education and sports", Ovidius University of Constanta, 22-23 May 2015;
- ❖ *Essential values for building a healthy lifestyle - Teachers' opinion.* Session of Scientific Communications "Pluri- and interdisciplinarity: current approaches" organized within the International Conference "Quality of Life: A Challenge for Social Policy" by the Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy, 22 April 2015, Bucharest;
- ❖ *Forming a pro movement attitude among young people following the practice of physical education activities.* National Session of Scientific Communications "Education for movement - from social necessity to educational reality", UTCB, 29 May 2015;
- ❖ *Theoretical approaches to building a healthy lifestyle through the practice of physical activities.* Published in Elsevier Journal, 2013;
- ❖ *A comparative study between the opinions of students and teaching staff regarding the formal physical education activities preferred by students.* Published in Science, Movement and Health Journal, Volume XV, Issue 2, Series Physical Education and Sport / Science, Movement and Health, Ovidius University of Constanta, June 2015;
- ❖ *The healthy lifestyle in students' opinion.* Published in Medimond Journal, Monduzzi Publisher, International Proceedings Division, July 2015;

- ❖ *The effects of practicing basketball game on young people's personality.* Published in Discobolul - Physical Education, Sports and Kinetotherapy Journal, Volume XI, no. 3(41), 2015;
- ❖ *Forming a pro movement attitude among young people following the practice of physical education activities.* Published in Discobolul - Physical Education, Sports and Kinetotherapy Journal, Volume XI, no. 3(41), 2015.

Conclusions

The results obtained by the experiment group subjects at the end of the research, compared to the control group subjects, respectively the results achieved after applying the opinion questionnaire to the experiment group subjects, following the statistical analysis and interpretation of the responses, confirm the hypotheses formulated in the experimental research.

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