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Preliminary communication

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STUDY OF THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION, THE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM AND THE PARENTS' HOPES CONCERNING THIS SCHOOL SUBJECT AT PRIMARY SCHOOL LEVEL

INTRODUCTION

The assessment, seen as one of the three parts of the educational system, is a necessary step which constitutes a method for validating the accuracy of the educational sequences, of the component parts of the educational process and a way of delimiting and interfering with the educational contents and objectives (Cucuș, 1996), Dragnea (2000), (Badiu, 1998; Cârstea, 2000; Stoica, 2001; Tudor, 2001, etc.).

The objective of this paper is to carry out a study concerning the importance, the knowledge and the interest manifested by the parents in the physical education lesson and the assessment system for this school subject.

Hypothesis of the research

We suppose that physical education and its present-day assessment system are known by the parents and are in accordance with the parents' hopes for their children in primary school.

Subjects and terms of the research

The subjects were parents of primary school children, selected randomly in 4 different towns in Moldova: Bacău, Roman, Piatra Neamț and Onești. 825 parents were invited to take part in this study. The survey was based on a questionnaire with 33 items (yes/no questions and semi-structured questions) between 15 March 2010 and 21 June 2010. The questionnaire included 12 fundamental items, 7 control items, 10 dissemination items and 4 identification ones.

The questionnaire was delivered and filled out with the help of 18 volunteers.

Data presentation and analysis

After the period of time devoted to filling out the questionnaires, the data processing stage followed. During the first step, out of the total number of

questionnaires, 27 were excluded for inaccuracies or mistakes made while filling out the forms, mistakes which could lead to the misinterpretation of the results.

After gathering all the data, the following graphical representations were made according to the answers to the 12 fundamental items:

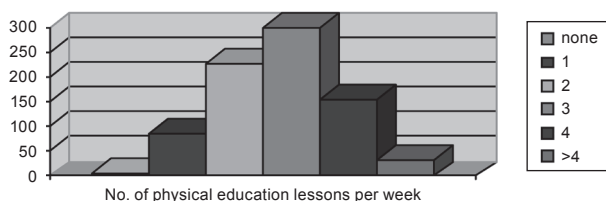


Figure 1. Answers to item no. 8 „How many physical education lessons do you think your children should have per week?”

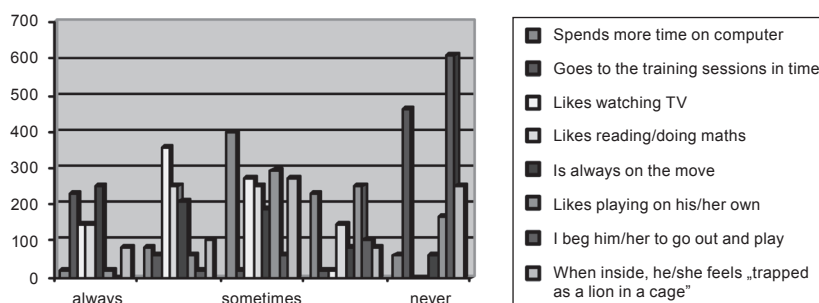


Figure 2. Answers to item no. 11 „My child.....”

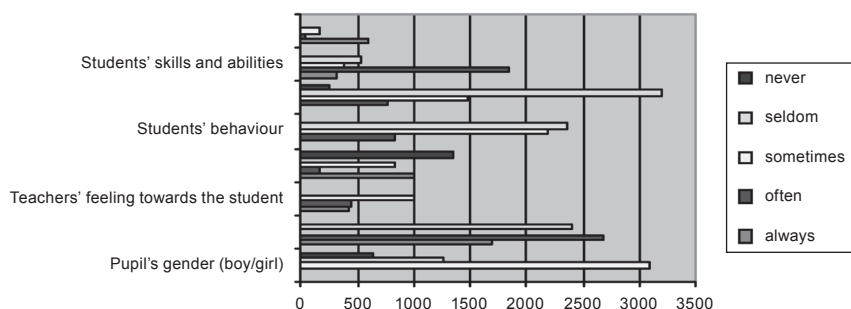


Figure 3. Answers to item no. 14 „I believe the factors that influence the accuracy of the assessment are”

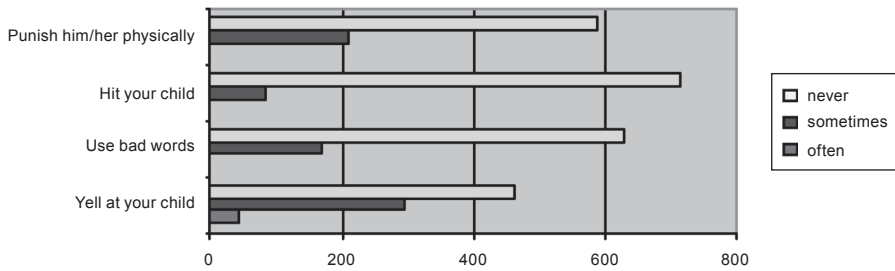


Figure 4. Answers to item no. 17 „How often did the physical education teacher happen to”

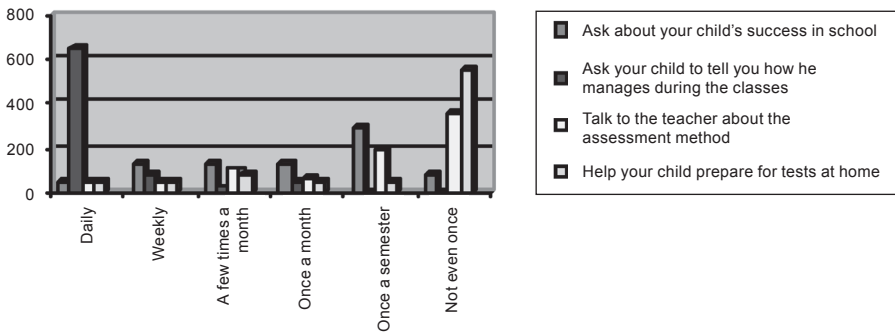


Figure 5. Answers to item no. 18 „Concerning the physical education: how often do you”

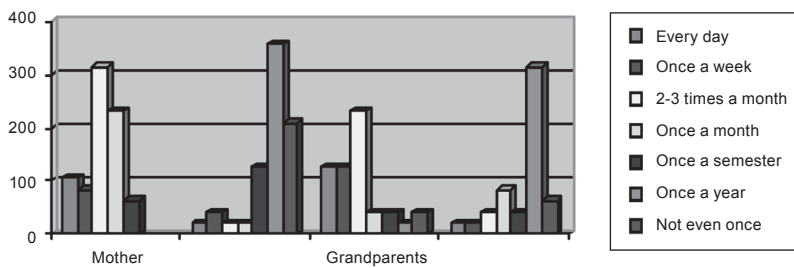


Figure 6. Answers to item no. 19 „Who comes to school more often?”

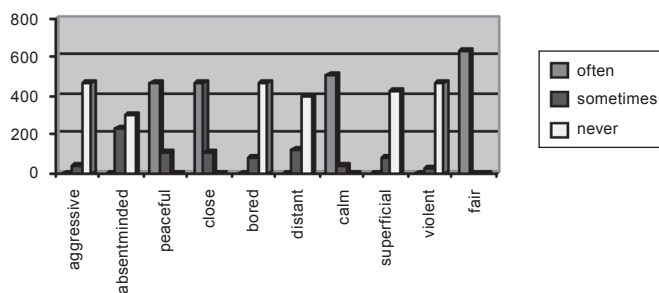


Figure 7. Answers to item no. 22 „The physical education teacher is.....”

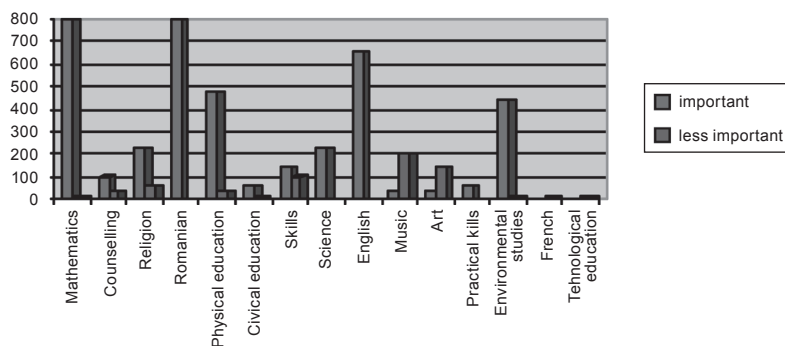


Figure 8. Answers to item no. 24 „Please state 5 of your child's school subjects that you consider to be.....”

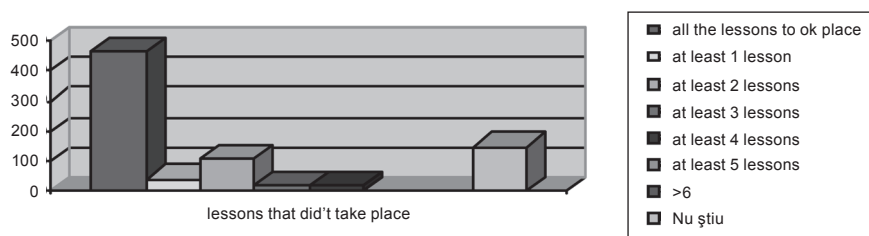


Figure 9. Answers to item no. 26 „The number of physical education lessons included into the timetable but that did not take place during the last semester”

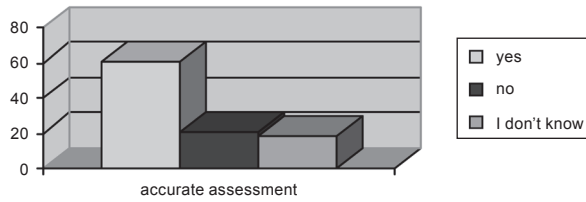


Figure 10. Answers to item no. 30 „Do you believe that your child's assessment during physical education lessons is accurate”

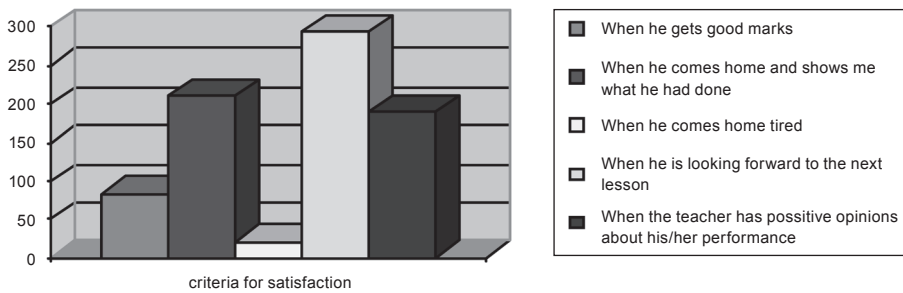


Figure 11. Answers to item no. 32 „How satisfied are you with your child's performance during the physical education lessons”

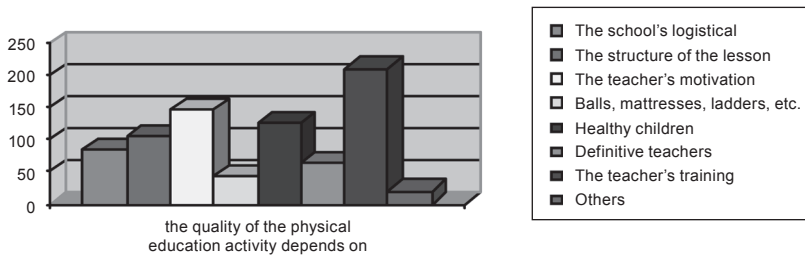


Figure 12. Answers to item no. 33 „The quality of the physical education activity depends on

CONCLUSIONS

We believe that the objective of this paper, „conducting a study concerning the importance, the knowledge and the interest manifested by the parents in the physical education lesson and the assessment system for this school subject”, has been achieved.

The hypothesis which was the starting point of the paper „We suppose that the physical education and its present-day assessment system are known by the parents and are in accordance with the parents’ hopes for their children in primary school.” was partially confirmed.

According to the data offered, the parents know aspects concerning the number of lessons taken by the children in school, but at the same time the data show dissatisfaction with the small number of physical education lessons included in the curricula.

The information concerning the children of the people interviewed emphasized the predominance of „active” children and their wish to inter-relate.

Questionnaire item no. 14. was „I believe the factors influencing the accuracy of the assessment are...”. The replies given led to the following hierarchy: 1 „the accurate assessment”, 2 „The teacher’s feelings towards the student”, 3 „the student’s skills and abilities”, 3 „the parents’ contribution to improving the educational activity”, 4 „the student’s gender(boy/girl)”, 5 „the student’s behaviour”, 6 „the student’s family”, in the last place was „the marks for the other school subjects”.

The position of the physical education teacher is an important factor for the children as well as for the parents and for the school board. The answers given to item no.17 „How often did the physical education teacher happen to...” showed that in most cases (57.89%) the children were not yelled at but in 36.84% this „sometimes” happened and 5.26% stated that this kind of communication was „often” used. During the communication, the teacher did not use bad words in 78.94% of the cases, but 21.05% stated that „sometimes” offending words were used, a fact which affects the children. An aspect which nowadays should be completely excluded from the educational process, that is the teacher hitting the children, was denied by 89.47% but 10.52% stated that „sometimes” their child was hit by the teacher! Physical punishment has not been applied during the physical education classes for 73.68% of the subjects’ children, while for 26.31% of the subjects’ children this „correction” method is „sometimes” used.

Item 18 „During the physical education lessons: how often” intended to investigate the interest of the participants in some aspects of the physical education lessons. The answers showed that the interest in the child’s success in this field is manifested in most of the cases - 36.84% once a semester, 81.57% stated that they talk

to the children daily about the way they manage in school. It is hard to believe that this aspect is real, considering the fact that the item refers to physical education and there are only 2 physical education lessons per week and that is why we believe that this item was understood incorrectly. In 44.73% of the cases, the parents never speak to the teacher about the assessment method during the physical education lesson! However, 68.42% of the parents help their children in preparing for the tests at home.

The „family” contact with the educational problems showed that „mother” and „grandparents” (and seldom the „father”) get in touch with the school authorities.

The answers given to item no.22 emphasized an almost „idyllic” characterization of the physical education teacher, fact which can only make us happy.

The answers given by the subjects showed that the physical education is at the top of the parents’ list when it comes to its importance among the school subjects included in the curricula for primary school level.

The parents’ information concerning the children’s attendance at the physical education lessons, as well as the teacher’s presence during the lessons showed that in most of the cases (57.89%) all the lessons took place. However, the answers showed that in 5.26% of the cases at least one lesson did not take place, in 13.15% of the cases at least 2 lessons did not take place, 2.63% of the participants stated that at least 3 lessons did not take place, the same percentage stating that at least 4 lessons did not take place.

As to the way the children are assessed, 60.52% of the parents agree with it, 21.05% of them think that the assessment does not entirely reflect the qualities of their children, while 18.43% of them cannot answer this item.

The parents’ satisfaction concerning their children’s performance during physical education lesson was investigated through item no.32, and it showed that 10.54% are satisfied when their children get good marks, 26.31% believe that the fact that their children come home and show them what they had done during the lesson is a reason for satisfaction, 2.63% - when the child comes home tired, while most of the participants- 38.84% stated that their child’s looking forward to the next lesson shows the extent of his/her satisfaction towards the performance during the physical education lesson, and 23.68% considered teacher’s positive observations as a marker for their children’s performance during the lesson.

The item no. 33 was „The quality of the physical education activity depends on.....”, and the subjects could number 8 preset answers so that the most important item gets 8 points, while the least important one gets 1 point. This item emphasized the following results: in the first place was the „teacher’s training”, in the second place was the „teacher’s motivation”, in the third place was the „children’s health”, in the fourth „the lesson structure”, in the fifth „the school logistics”, in

the sixth the „definitive teachers”, in the seventh the equipment „balls, mattresses, ladders, etc.”, and in the last place „others”.

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ABSTRACT

The changes specific to our era also reflect upon the educational system in Romania, bringing the problem of quality and its assessment to the attention of the theoreticians, practitioners and the decision-makers.

The modern assessment in education refuses to assume the role of a scarecrow, does not admit assessing anything but what had already been taught and learnt, helps the student discover opportunities for learning, training and development, helps the students identify themselves through these actions, offering itself as a definitive factor of freedom in education.

The natural question that we all ask ourselves and to which this study tried to find an answer was if the parents also have knowledge concerning the role and the importance of the activity performed by their children during the physical education classes, if the assessment system for the physical education activity is known, and if the parents can recognize their children’s capacities and abilities within the rating system.

Key words: *physical education, assessment system, parents’ hopes, primary school level*