

PILOT STUDY CONCERNING THE LEVEL OF CIVIC SENSE OF STUDENTS IN THE 1ST YEAR, PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS, KINETOTHERAPY STUDY PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT. In a democratic society citizens should exercise their civic rights responsibly. Also a democratic society is based on fundamental values such as respect for human rights and human dignity, to the Constitution and laws, and willingness to engage in activities that support them; tolerance for individuals and groups who exhibit different values, opinions and beliefs; considering pluralism as a core value of democracy; active involvement in political life and civil society; civic responsibilities (personal, political and economic); to be a well-informed citizen, attentive to public issues ("Programă școlară pentru liceu. Educație civică", 2004). These values and attitudes are learned and internalized by individuals throughout their lives in social groups in which they operate. So in this process materializes in concrete the awareness of these civic values in the daily life of the citizens. In this study the main objective was to highlight the civic responsibility of students from the first year of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport in Cluj-Napoca. Also we were interested how practicing a sport branches influences the level of civic responsibility. The main research method was the test method, so we used a psychosocial test measuring the level of civic responsibility. (Neculau, A. et al., 1999, p. 79-81)

Key words: *physical education, sport, civic sense, students*

REZUMAT. *Studiu pilot privind nivelul simțului civic al studenților din anul I, programul de studiu Educație Fizică și Sport și Kinetoterapie.* Într-o societate democratică cetățenii trebuie să-și exercite drepturile lor cetățenești cu responsabilitate. Totodată societatea democratică se bazează pe valori fundamentale, cum sunt: respectul față de drepturile omului și demnitatea umană, față de Constituție și legi, precum și disponibilitatea de a se angaja în activități care le susțin; toleranță pentru indivizi și grupuri care manifestă valori,

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opinii și credințe diferite; considerarea pluralismului ca o valoare principală a democrației; implicarea activă în viața politică și societatea civilă; asumarea responsabilităților cetățenești (personale, politice și economice); a fi un cetățean bine informat, atent la problemele publice. ("Programă școlară pentru liceu. Educație civică", 2004) Aceste valori și atitudini sunt învățate și interiorizate de indivizi, pe parcursul întregii vieți, în grupurile sociale în care acționează. Astfel se materializează simțul civic care înseamnă conștientizarea concretă a acestor valori în viața zilnică a cetățenilor. În studiul de față obiectivul principal este de a evidenția nivelul simțului civic al studenților din anul I al Facultății de Educație Fizică și Sport din Cluj-Napoca. Totodată eram interesați de modul în care practicarea unor ramuri sportive poate influența nivelul simțului civic. Metoda principală de cercetare a fost metoda testului, astfel s-a folosit un test psihosocial care măsoară nivelul simțului civic. (Neculau, A. et al. 1999, p. 79-81)

***Cuvinte cheie:** educație fizică, sport, simț civic, studenți*

Introduction

We agree with the idea that "the pursuit of equity and social cohesion has been a growing political priority over recent years at" European level ("Citizenship Education in Europe", 2012, p.7). Encouraging young people, "to actively participate in social and political life has been seen as one of the principal means to address these issues; education has, consequently, been identified as a major lever in this aspect" ("Citizenship Education in Europe", 2012, p.7). We uphold that "students learn about citizenship not only in the classroom but also through informal learning. Citizenship education is therefore more effective if it is supported by a school environment where students are given the opportunity to experience the values and principles of the democratic process in action" ("Citizenship Education in Europe", 2012, p.13).

In the Romanian educational system, at high school level curriculum we can find a discipline entitled "Civic education". In our opinion the problem is that this discipline is an optional one and it is at the schools decision to introduce it or not in the high school student's curriculum. In the National Syllabus of high school, Civic education discipline is specified that with three main competences – The foundations of democracy, Politics and democracy and The civil society and its role in democracy – are the foundations in the realization of the values and attitudes for what the civic education stands for. These are respect for human rights and human dignity, to the Constitution and laws, and willingness to engage in activities that support them; tolerance for individuals and groups who exhibit different values, opinions and beliefs; considering pluralism as a core value of

democracy; active involvement in political life and civil society; civic responsibilities (personal, political and economic); to be a well-informed citizen, attentive to public issues. ("Programă școlară pentru liceu. Educație civică", 2004)

In the Europe Union context the notion of "Education for democratic citizenship" stands for "Civic education" in the Romanian context. In EU context "Education for democratic citizenship means education, training, awareness-raising, information, practices and activities which aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviour, to empower them to exercise and defend their democratic rights and responsibilities in society, to value diversity and to play an active part in democratic life, with a view to the promotion and protection of democracy and the rule of law" (Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7, 2010, p.2). So Education for democratic citizenship "focuses primarily on democratic rights and responsibilities and active participation, in relation to the civic, political, social, economic, legal and cultural spheres of society" (Recommendation CM/Rec (2010)7, 2010, p.3).

In the previous paragraphs we have presented some arguments concerning the importance of civic education in high school. Developing our thematic furthermore, we consider that the subjects of our research (students in the 1st year, Physical Education and Sports, Kinetotherapy study program), at least on theoretical level, have the civic competences needed to be able to actively exercise citizenship. According to EU these competences focuses on "a knowledge of basic democratic concepts including an understanding of society and social and political movements" (Citizenship Education in Europe, 2012, p.8). Moreover these civic competences also require some practical skills such as "critical thinking and communication skills, and the ability and willingness to participate constructively in the public domain, including in the decision-making process through voting. Finally, a sense of belonging to society at various levels, a respect for democratic values and diversity as well as support for sustainable development are also highlighted as integral components of civic competences" (Citizenship Education in Europe, 2012, p.8).

Material and methods

In our research we have used the following research methods: bibliographical study, test method, statistical analyses. We have used Chi Square test and Fisher exact probability test at the level of $p = .05$ significance. We also use Pearson correlation. The data was analyzed with the SPSS IBM 19 statistical program. In this study we used a psychosocial test measuring the level of civic sense. This test had 15 items concerning the practical knowledge about the values and attitudes for what civic education stands for (Neculau, A. et al., 1999, p. 79-81).

In our study were engaged a number of 112 students (N=112) from Babeş Bolyai University, Physical Education and Sport Faculty. Starting from gender criteria we had 51 females and 61 males, and the age average of the female subjects was 19,55 years and the male subjects was 20,05 years.

Results

The gender differences related to practicing sports in the past have been highlighted in Chart No 1. According to the Fisher exact probability test

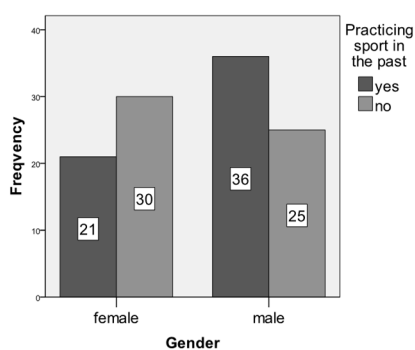


Chart no 1 - Practicing sport in the past - by gender

($p = 0,045$) it is a statistically significant difference between female and male regarding practicing sport in the past. From the data we can deduce that no. of 36 male subjects have practiced sport in the past, meanwhile only 21 female subjects have practiced sport.

The gender differences related to the practicing sports in the present have been highlighted in Chart No 2. According to the Fisher exact probability test ($p = 0,045$) it is a statistically significant

difference between female and male regarding practicing sport in the present. From the data we can deduce that no. of 16 male subjects are practicing sport in the present, meanwhile only 6 female subjects are practicing sport.

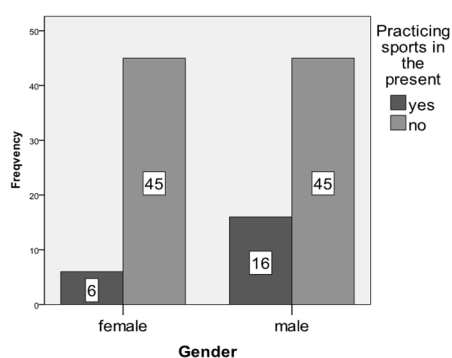


Chart no 2 - Practicing sport in the present - by gender

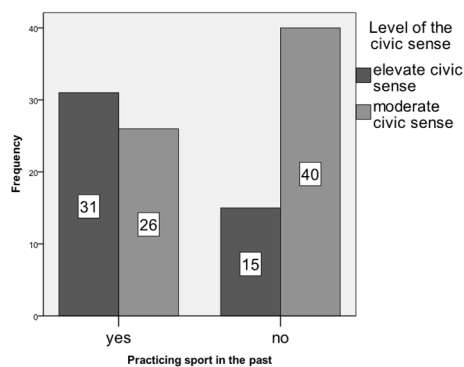


Chart no 3 - Practicing sport in the past and the level of civic ...

The relation between practicing sport in the past and the level of civic sense is presented in Chart no.3. It was a statistically significant difference between those subjects who practiced sport in the past and those who didn't practice sport activities ($X = 8.5$, $df = 1$, $p = 0,004$). Those subject who had practiced sport have an elevate level of civic sense from those who didn't practiced sport in the past.

It is a significant positive relation between practicing sport in the past and a high level of civic sense ($r = 0,276$, $df = 110$, $p < 0,003$). (Table no.1)

Table 1. Pearson Correlation - Practicing sport in the past and the level of civic sense

		Practicing sport	Level of the civic sens
Practicing sport	Pearson Correlation	1	.276**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	112	112
Level of the civic sense	Pearson Correlation	.276**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	112	112

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There isn't a statistically significant difference between the levels of income and the level of the civic sense ($X = 0,74$, $df = 1$, $p = 0,391$). (Chart no.4)

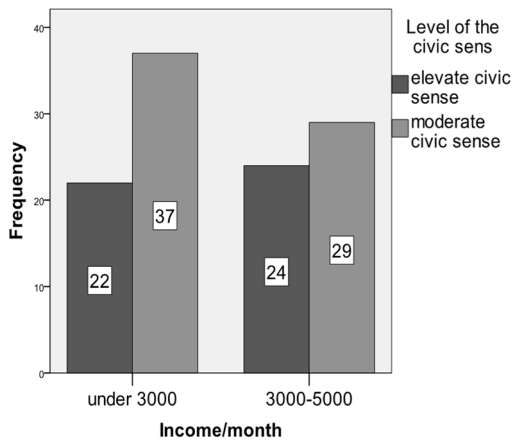


Chart no.4 - Incom/month and the level of civic sense

According to our results, the level of the civic sense is not influenced by the level of incomes.

There isn't a statistically significant difference between genders regarding their attitudes toward respecting the law only from fear of being punished ($X = 2,7$, $df = 1$, $p = 0,100$). Although analyzing the Chart no 5 we can conclude that 82 subjects from 112 declare that the majority of the people respect the law only by the fear of punishment.

There isn't a statistically significant difference between genders and their beliefs concerning that the people lie for their own interest ($X = 0,05$, $df = 1$, $p = 0,821$). Starting from our data we can sustain that 106 subjects of 112 are saying that the majority of the persons lie for their own interest. (Chart no.6)

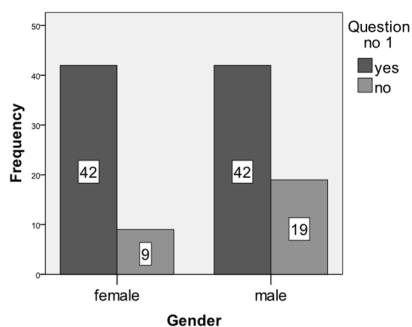


Chart no 5 - Respecting the law only by fear of punishment - by gender

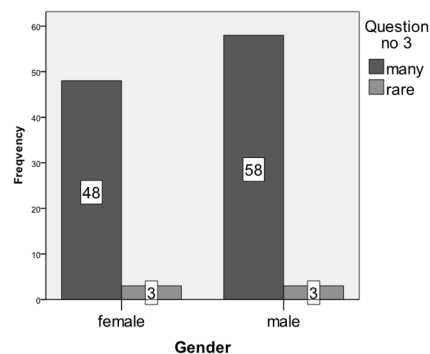


Chart no 6 - Persons who lie for their interests - by gender

Starting from our data we have realized that it isn't a statistically significant difference between genders and their feeling of being protected by the presence of the police forces in their community ($X = 2,25$, $df = 1$, $p = 0,134$). Although Chart no 7 emphasizes that 80 subjects of 112 are feeling protected by the presence of the police forces in their community.

We were interested about the subjects' attitudes regarding the enlisting in the military services. There isn't a statistically significant difference between genders and their attitude concerning military service ($X = 1,12$, $df = 1$, $p = 0,290$). Our data show us that the majority of the subjects ($n=76$) would enlist, in the military service, if it would be mandatory (Chart no 8).

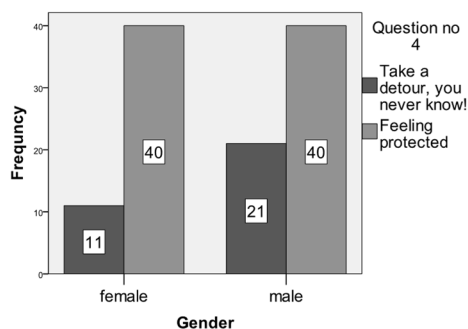


Chart no 7 - Attitude toward feeling protected by the presence of the police forces in the community- by gender

We were interested about the subjects' opinion regarding the fact that it is an interdiction of smoking in public places. It is a significant statistically difference between gender and smoking in public places ($X = 4,32$, $df = 1$, $p = 0,038$). More male subjects ($n=57$) than female ($n=41$) consider that it is normal to have an interdiction of smoking in public places.

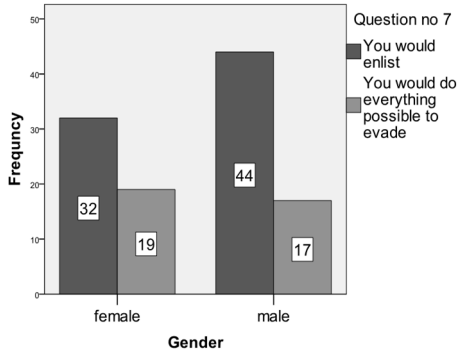


Chart no 8 - Enlisting in the military service - by gender

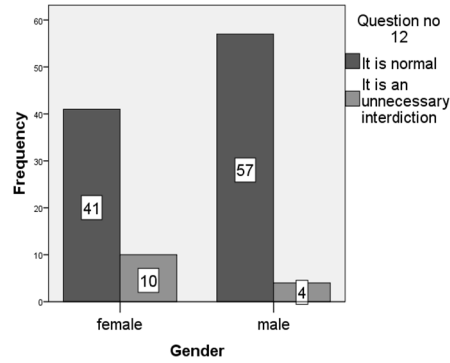


Chart no 9 - Smoking in public places - by gender

Conclusions

We were surprised, in a negative way, by the weak number of the students, even if their faculty has a sportive profile, regarding their attendance in the sport performance field. In totally, only 22 subjects (16 male and 6 female) from 112, declare that they still practicing sport performance activities.

As we have expected, through this study, we found a positive correlation between practicing sport activities, even in the past, and a high level of civic sense.

We thought that the level of civic sense is influenced through a high rate of incomes, but in our study we didn't find a significant difference between the level of incomes and the civic sense.

When compulsory military service was suppressed, several teenagers were very content. Contrary to our expectations, a lot of young people, even the girls, said that they would enlist in the military service. This answer means that the young people still have a patriotic sense regarding their country.

We have expected that the confidence in police forces, in our days, is weak, but the data show us that the subjects are feeling protected by the police forces presence in their community.

In civilized countries the citizens respect the law, because this behavior comes from inside (probably after a lot of studies/experiences achieved in their family and school educational system), instead our results show us that the major part of the subjects, involved in this study, agreed with the fact that the majority of the persons respect the law just by having fear of an eventual punishment.

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