

## SURVEY REGARDING THE IMPORTANCE OF SPORTS TO MAINTAIN A STATE OF GOOD HEALTH

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### Abstract

*Every day we realise that movement prolongs life for another 5-10 years. Therefore we consider it especially important among students. To see how important sport is for students we have applied a questionnaire by means of which we aimed to highlight the benefits of sport, a useful spending of free time and attitudes that manifest during exercise practicing.*

**Key words:** well-being, education, sports, movement, free time.

### INTRODUCTION

The dictum "Mens sana in corpore sano" sums up a true philosophy regarding education for physical, moral and spiritual health. Both family and school owed and always will owe this to the children. Because of the changes and reforms that have been made in Romania over the past few years, the population's health has been influenced negatively and its indicator has shown a drastic decrease in the past 10 years.

We consider that it is our responsibility to help the students through school to understand that they represent an important element in a community the health of which is given by the health of each individual member. Health must be seen as a priceless gift, which we have the moral duty to preserve.

Physical activity, sport practicing since the earliest years benefits the building of a healthy body.

The positive effects of physical activity on the human body are:

- intensified metabolism;
- weight loss;
- toned muscles
- loss of fat excess;
- decreased appetite;
- adjustment of blood pressure and fat

metabolism (less triglyceride and more "good cholesterol");

A healthy life-style means daily physical activity (Valois et al., 2004; Fox, 2000).

Physical activity is, next to a balanced diet, the basis of a healthy life-style and is also very important for keeping healthy. In addition, physical activity is the perfect remedy for stress because it helps us relax and have a good night's sleep (Ninot et al., 2000; Mcauley et al. 2005).

### METHODS

#### *Participants*

The questionnaire has been applied to a number of 198 test subjects (122 girls and 76 boys), students in the 6th grade at schools and colleges in Galati, between between October 1, 2013, and October 15, 2013.

#### **Research methods**

The questionnaire represents a sum of logic, strict questions that allow fast and accurate student answers on paper. It is considered the raw material for the surveys and interviews. This method is based on the subjects' self-reporting on their own perception of attitudes and behaviours.

Chelcea (2001) defines the questionnaire as "a logic and psychological sequence of questions or graphic images that play the role of stimulants, comparing to the research's assumption which determines a verbal or nonverbal behaviour that is about to be listed.

Our research has used this questionnaire which refers to information that could be analysed directly. Its purpose is to gather not only the viewpoint of those questioned, but also their motivations, attitudes, vocation and expectations.

The questions regard aspects that concern the subjects' personal opinions and their inner universe. This type of information can only be obtained by means of oral communication with the people in question. Some questions are accounted for significant information in such queries and also imply major difficulty in evaluating their accuracy and checking how much of the real opinion coincides with those stated in the answers.

This type of questions do not have right or wrong answers, but only real, honest or not answers.

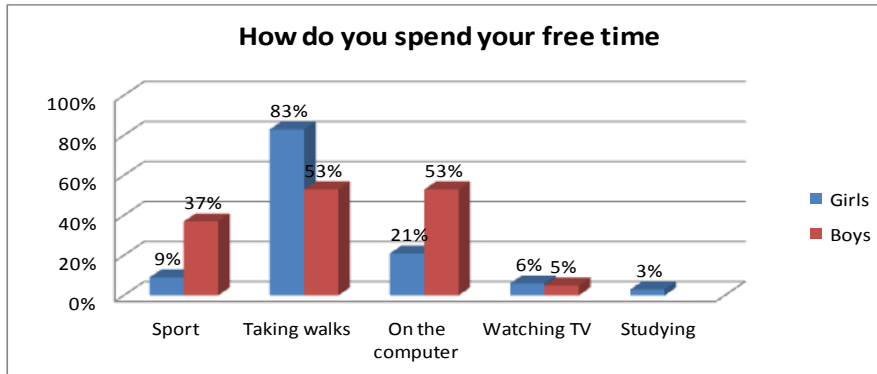
The 15 questions of the questionnaire are distributed as follows: the first 8 questions regard healthy eating; the next few questions refer to how relevant physical activities are in maintaining our health. The questionnaire includes both closed-ended questions (numbers 13, 14) and open-ended

questions (numbers 9, 10, 11, 15), as well as multiple answer questions (numbers 9, 10, 11, 15).

**REVIEWS AND RESULTS**

Free time for pupils is very important because it means doing something else than learning. This is also proved by the pupils' answers. We can see that 83% of the boys, and 53% of the girls spend their free time with their friends, and only 37% of the

boys and 9% of the girls practice sports in their free time. Analysing the data in Chart 1, we can see that free time is usefully spent only by those who practice any sport, and the other preferences, such as computer games or TV do not bring any benefits to our wellness.

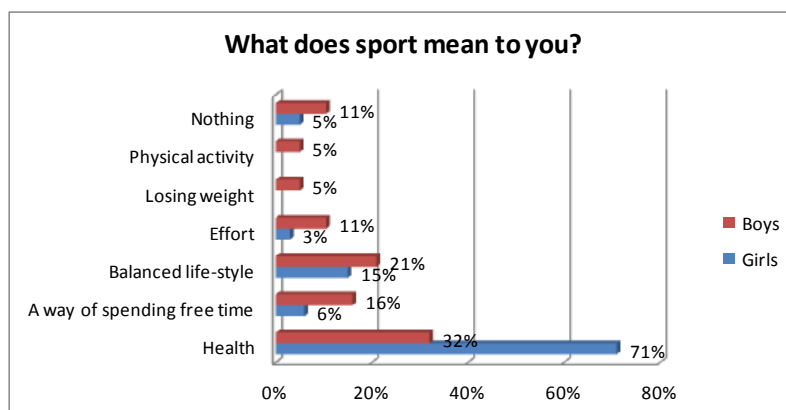


**Chart 1.** Graphical representation of answers to the question “How do you spend your free time?”

Sport is important not only for physical development, but also for taking care of our wellness. To this question, not only boys, but also girls had different answers: 71% of the girls, 32% of the boys believe that sport means health; 21% of the boys, 15% of the girls believe that sport is part of a balanced life style; 16% of the boys and 6% of the girls believe that it is a way of spending your free time. On the other hand, sport also means physical activity for 5% of the boys, losing weight 5% of the boys, and effort 11% of the boys, and 3% of the girls.

Comparing these two questions, “How do you spend your free time?” and “What does sport mean

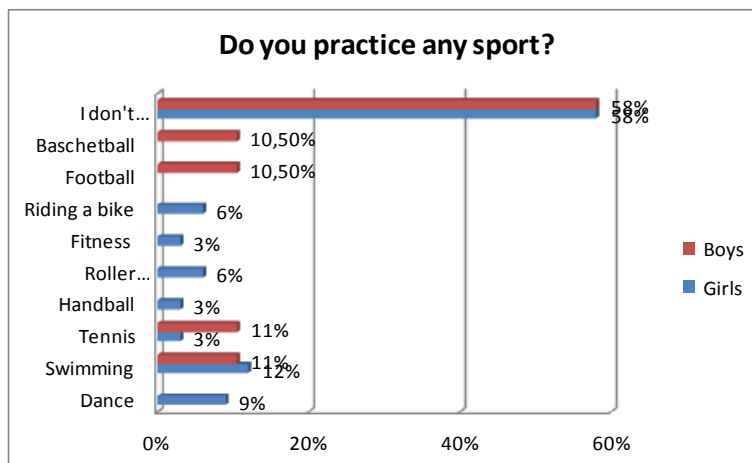
to you?”, we can see that the answers are adequate. Comparing the 37% of the boys who do sport in their free time, to the 5% of the boys who answered that sport means physical activity, and the same percentage answered that sport means losing weight, we can conclude that boys practice sport more often than girls and they practice it as a way of spending their free time and for their wellness, being aware of the fact that putting on weight is not healthy. Girls are not willing to do physical activities, because only 9% of them practice any sport in their free time, and 6% of them believe that sport is a useful way of spending your free time (Chart 2).



**Chart 2.** Graphical representations of answers to the question “What does sport mean to you?”

Preferences for sports practiced by the pupils are different. Girls prefer riding a bike, fitness, roller skating, handball, swimming, and dancing, and boys prefer basketball, football,

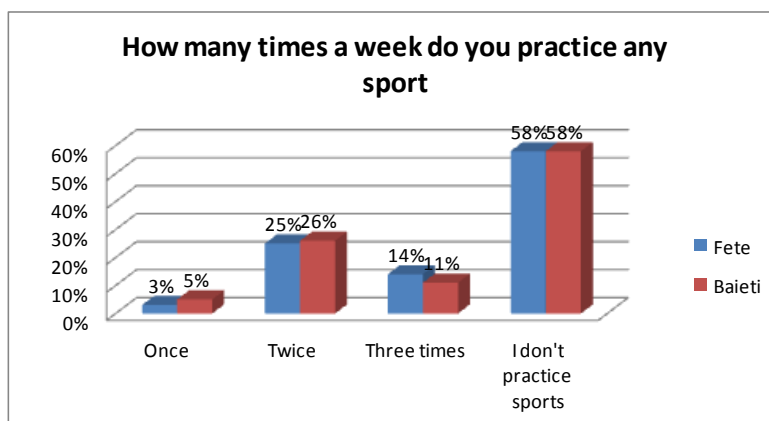
tennis, and swimming. 52% boys and girls do not practice any sport, not even riding a bike, roller-skating or dancing (Chart 3).



**Chart 3.** Graphical representation of answers to the question “Do you practice any sport?”

Taking into account that 58% of the pupils we questioned do not practice any sport, 25% of those who do practice sport twice a week, 14% of the

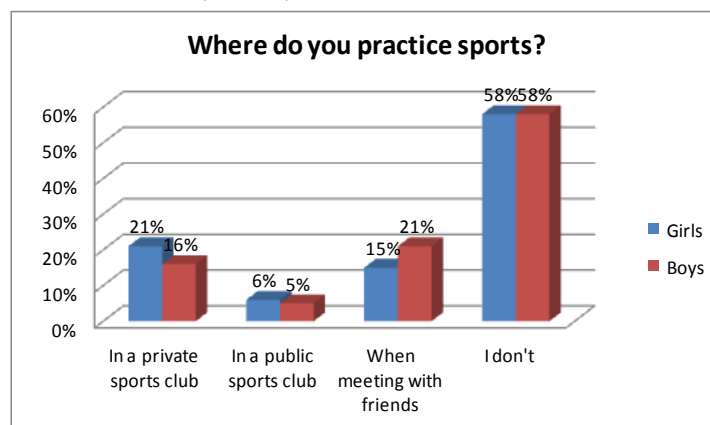
girls practice sport three times a week, while only 11% of the boys do that.



**Chart 4.** Graphical representations of answers to the question “How many times a week do you practice any sport?”

Sport can be practiced in a sports club/centre, public or private, or at a meeting with your friends. To this question 21% of the girls answered that they practice sports at a private sports club, and the same percentage of the boys answered that they practice sports when they meet with their friends (Chart 5).

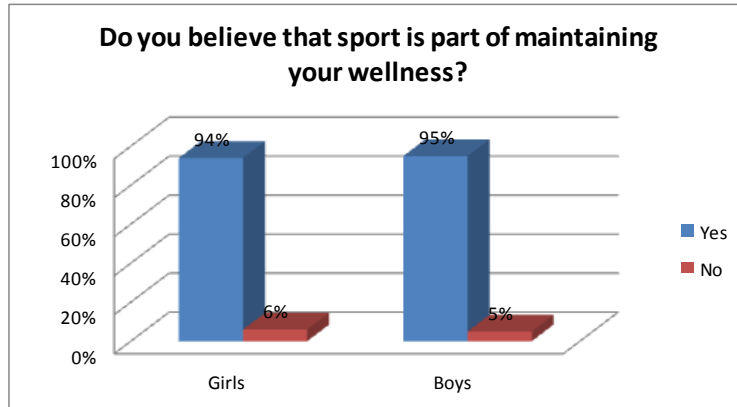
Sports clubs/centres are not preferred by pupils, and this thing is proved by the small percentage, of only 5%. The reason for that is the lack of a material basis adequate to the sport you practice.



**Chart 5.** Graphical representations of answers to the question “Where do you practice sports?”

95% of the pupils questioned answered that sport is part of maintaining our wellness, so they are aware that practicing sports is beneficial for wellness, physical development, and a balanced life style.

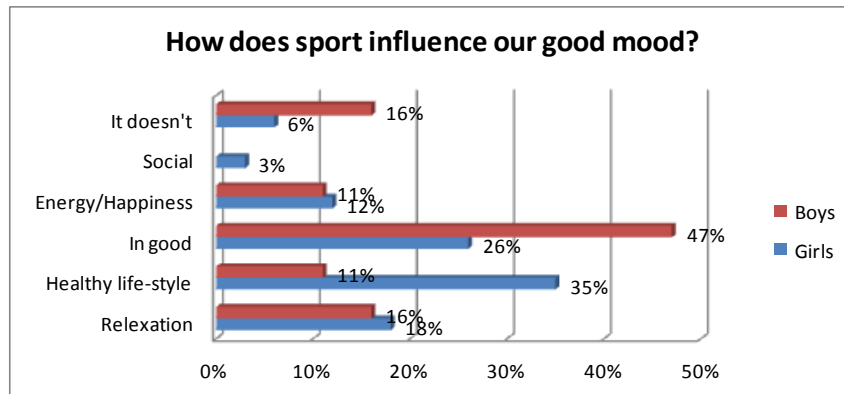
The high percentage proves that, in theory, pupils know the advantages of practicing sports, but they do not apply their theoretical knowledge (Chart 6).



**Chart 6.** Graphical representations of answers to the question “Do you believe that sport is part of maintaining your wellness?”

Practicing sports, and having a good mood, are two important factors of maintaining your wellness. This thing is proved by the answers to this question: 47% of the boys think that having a good mood is

an important part of practicing any sport - if you do not have a good mood, you cannot take up any sport, 35% of the girls think that sport influence our good mood through a healthy life style.



**Chart 7.** Graphical representations of answers to the question “How does sport influence our good mood?”

Small percentages of the pupils answered that sport influences our good mood through relaxation after practicing it: 16% of the girls and 18% of the boys. 11% of the boys and 12% of the girls answered that after practicing any sport they have more energy, and they feel happier. Only 3% of the girls practice sports in order to socialize, which makes them feel happier. On the other hand, 6% of the girls and 16% of the boys believe that practicing sports do not give them a good mood because to them it means too much effort and exhaustion.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Considering the questions and the answers, we could conclude that:

- The majority of the pupils know the advantages of physical activity but only a small percentage practice any sport
- Because sport is part of maintaining our wellness, pupils are aware of this, but they are also aware of the fact that physical activity also means relaxation, good mood, happiness, and energy.

Sport and wellbeing are two very important activities. In school we are taught that being healthy means having balanced eating habits and practicing physical activity at least three times a week or every day. By not doing this, our good mood can be influenced and then we feel tired, we put on weight, and we do not socialize with people anymore. This is why we believe that the education for wellness through physical activity should be

realised in school, during the "Education for health" class because it develops the future adults.

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