

## THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EVERYDAY PHYSICAL EDUCATION AMONG UPPER PRIMARY PUPILS IN THE NORTH GRATE PLAIN

GÁBOR FINTOR<sup>1\*</sup>

**ABSTRACT.** Regarding physical education, significant changes could be detected in the educational policy with the introduction of the everyday physical education in Hungary. Thus the investigation of alteration in the field of Physical education and sport provides the main topic. Firstly, the appreciation of the fact was measured; on the other hand, we were searching the answer how the positive and negative attitudes toward everyday physical education appeared among the students (N=1153), concerning the aims of the National Curriculum 2012. Results show that the outstanding part of the students (95%) like PE lessons. Regarding gender differences in the appreciation, a significant difference can be pointed out as it is remarkably higher among boys ( $p=0,000$ ). The role of PE teachers and their motivating effect can be seen in our study.

**Keywords:** *primary school students, daily physical education, National Curriculum 2012*

### Introduction, the relevance of the topic and its theoretical background

The theoretical background of our paper was based on the implementing researches (Fazekas-Halász, 2012) and the investigations of curriculum theories (Hamar-Ladislav, 2008; Hardman-Marshall, 2009; Hamar, 2012; Rétsági, 2014; Rétsági-Csányi, 2014).

Implementing examinations are searching the answer for the question how the aims can be reached and not for that question what the exact target is. They do not investigate the decision itself but the progress. If the participants or interest

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<sup>1</sup> *University of Debrecen, Doctoral Program on Educational Sciences, Debrecen, Hungary*

\* *Corresponding author: fintor.gabor@gmail.com*

groups (actors, agents, stakeholders) of the interventions for public education are in the focus, we have to think on the interior characters of the school (leaders, pedagogues and other co-workers), the school users (parents and students) and the guiders of the development (governmental administration, local leaders). The representatives of the organisations supporting the development in the educational sector (pedagogical providers, consultants) can be mentioned in this section too who can have a significant influence on the implementation of the interventions. Measuring the levels of the implementation, it can be stated that macro level can be detected by the extensive level of the society (the role of health awareness in the educational processes in this case) while micro level can be detected by the individuals namely by the students and teachers. Progresses in these levels determine the success of the implementation (Fazekas-Halász, 2012)

The first National Syllabus was accepted by the Government 5 October 1995 which has changed several times since then. More researchers (Rétsági et al., 2011, 2014; Hamar-Derzsy 2002a; 2002b, Hamar, 2012) has investigated the different national curriculums (1995-NAT1, 2003-NAT2, 2007-NAT3, 2012-NAT4), alongside the alterations of public education and the educational law, highlighting the modifications of the content in the field of physical education and sport.

The latest National Syllabus was accepted by the Hungarian Government on the basis of the 110/2012 (VI. 4.) Government Regulation on 4 June 2012. In this, physical and mental health education is detected as a concrete aim. The shift in the education policy has had a mostly favourable effect on the field of Physical education and sport particularly because of the introduction of everyday physical education. § 27 of the law makes the organisation of everyday physical education mandatory for full-time education students which means five lessons per week. From the school year 2012/2013, everyday physical education is mandatory on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> years, after that on every year in uplink direction. From the school year 2015/2016, the introduction of everyday physical education became complete. It was determined too that the students should have the claim for appropriate nutrition, sport and healthy lifestyle. Proficiency in game and sport culture and the claim for developing a healthy, health-centred system is necessary for the implementation of the principles and aims. This field and school physical education in that has outstanding aims which are knowledge of the sport, development and enlargement of the sport skills, participation in leisure-time and sport competitions, regular physical activity and the formation of the values of healthy lifestyle. Analysing the four aim systems of the National Syllabus, it can be stated that it assumes from the required general values and principles (key competences) which surrounds the whole document and their validation in the system is the main point. Physical education always had an outstanding role in the field of health education. However, the subject has got into a new dimension

with the implementation of the everyday physical education which can create a new quality as the conceived aims make the educators of this field able to more efficient health education and the creation of the bases of the health culture (Rétsági, 2014). According to the National Syllabus 2012, the outstanding aim of the field of Physical education is that sport could have a serious role in the life of every student, socialising them on a lifelong, health-conscious and active lifestyle (Makszin, 2014).

### **In the light of the studies**

In Hungary, physical education is the part of the education from 1867. The idea of everyday physical education already appeared at the juncture of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (in the 1900s) but examples for it can be seen only from the 1980s. At the beginning of the century, in the 1910s the implementation of everyday physical education was urged. The director of the Physical Education College fought for it from 1925. In 1933, Bálint Hóman, the minister of religion and public education decreed its introduction in five schools in the capital city in 1933. Although the students of three schools in Csongrád county who took part in everyday physical education become more skilled and their concentration and reaction time improved (Szegfű, 1989), only in some schools was it introduced in the 1980s (Ivanics, 1993). In Szeged, the students welcomed enthusiastically the new possibility and regular physical activity became as a claim (Udvarhelyi, 1989). In Kecskemét, the pupils liked everyday physical education and their physical performance became better too (Grosán), however, the contribution of this system to the improvement of health and fitness was only partly confirmed in Hódmezővásárhely. Nevertheless, the subjective points obviously showed the efficiency of the program as it had a motivating effect on motion awareness. The evolvement of the desire for daily sport caused by the regular activity couldn't have been confirmed (Tózsza-Rigóné, 2011), however, the physical education five times per week contributed to the increase of the students' physical performance (Vári et al., 2012).

Hungary is unique in Europe with its physical education which contains five lessons per week thus we try to present some important investigations in international level, which demonstrate the positive effects of the everyday physical education. Its effect was measured in Pennsylvania with the involvement of nine control groups. This kind of active sport program has proved successful as those students who took part in everyday physical education developed in every aspect (regarding health and motion skills) in comparison to other students in whose schools were no everyday physical education (Erflé, 2014). Shepard et al. (2013) highlighted in a longitudinal investigation that daily sport in childhood had a

positive effect for the attitudes toward sport participation in adulthood as well. Barnett et al. (2008) confirmed as well that the value, if it is acquired in childhood, determines the lifestyle in adulthood as well. A Croatian study stated that daily sport develops the children's gymnastic skills (Culjak et al., 2014). 2043 children (between 9 and 13 years) were measured in a Greek representative examination with the assistance of 77 primary schools. It was pointed out that regular physical activity and the appropriate nutrition five times per day contribute to the evolvement and the fixation of the patterns of health behaviour (Moschonis et al., 2013).

Borbély (2014) claimed in a representative national research that more than 70% of the asked population agreed with the necessity of implementation of everyday physical education which means that the adult population (potentially the adults) felt it necessary. According to Rétsági (2015), everyday physical education creates bigger possibilities and the classroom physical education plays the leading role in the socialisation by sport. In particular, Mikulán (2013) elaborates that everyday physical education can provide a positive effect in long term. On the basis of these results we suppose that it is important to examine what pupils consider of this subject.

### **The liking and the importance of the subject**

Bakonyi (1969) investigated whether students like physical education and how many hours they would like to have from it. Regarding gender, no significant differences were detected. At the same time, primary school pupils would have liked to have more PE lessons than secondary school pupils. According to Bíróné (2004), physical education is one of the most favourite subjects. Báthory (1997) states that physical education excels in primary school students regarding the appreciation of the subjects, however, it adds that it decreases with the age and it has a more prominent place among boys rather than among girls. This is confirmed by the investigation of Hamar et al. (2012) who compared Transylvanian and Hungarian students in the school year 2006/2007.

Hamar-Karsai (2008) measured the affectivity to physical education among 11 to 18-year-old students (n=2840) in a cross sectional analysis. In this, boys showed a more accepting attitude and mind-set than girls; furthermore, positive emotional saturation shows a decrease with the age especially among girls. PE teacher has an attitude forming role at school as well. The positive emotions evolved during teaching and learning of the subject can increase the pedagogical efficacy not only in physical education but in the whole education progress. The decreasing of liking was detected with the increase of the age too. The opinion regarding the number of PE lessons was more unfavourable among

those who had only two lessons compared to those who had four lessons per week. Nevertheless, investigating all of the students, it can be seen that 77.8% of them would like to have four or more PE lessons per week. On this basis, it can be laid down that students have a favourable opinion about PE.

The results of another representative investigation measuring the lifestyle and physical education of 8<sup>th</sup> year students show that less than the half of the responders liked physical education lessons. The main reason of the antipathy was marked in the content of the lessons, then in the teacher itself and the exhausting nature of the lesson (Rétsági-Ács, 2010).

In our previous longitudinal research, we excavated the changes regarding the attitudes toward physical education among 6<sup>th</sup> year students (n=131) in three small towns in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County after a year. Concerning the evaluation of the importance of the PE lessons, no significant differences could be detected between the two examinations on the basis of the crosstabs analysis, however, 52.7% of the student had a different statement in 2014 than it had in the previous year. In the biggest ratio, they evaluated the situation of physical education as important as the other subjects. Analysing those who had a different claim during the two examination, it can be detected that the number of the statements of 'it is incomparable with other subjects' decreased in the biggest ratio (to  $\frac{1}{4}$ ). 75% of them stated that physical education is as important as the other subjects while 16.7% of the evaluated it more important than the others. Regarding those students who evaluated PE more important in the first examination, 71.4% of them thought that PE become as important as other subjects and 14.3% evaluated it more important than the others. It can be stated that the subject conserved its stability and the evaluation of the importance of the physical education lessons did not decrease after one year namely since the students take part in everyday physical education on the basis of our research (Fintor, 2014; Fintor-Szabó, 2013).

## **Aims and methods**

In present study, the primary school pupils' relation to everyday physical education was measured. According to the literature, the researchers are hopeful and expect a positive attitude from the implementation of everyday physical education (NAT, 2012; Mikulán, 2013; Rétsági, 2015); furthermore, previous examinations showed a positive image (the experiences of the 1980s, Tózsa-Rigóné, 2011)

In international destinations it can be stated regarding the literature that everyday physical education has not implemented in other countries except in Hungary, however, many international investigation highlighted the positive effects of daily sport. Some of them were introduced and regular physical activity and

everyday physical activity become comparable on the basis of their results (Shephard et al., 2013; Moschonis et al., 2013; Culjak et al., 2014).

In our investigation, which was examined with a self-made Likert scale questionnaire, the answers replied for the group of questions were analysed which present the opinion of the pupils about the aims and exercises of the everyday physical education lessons, stated in the National Syllabus as well. This group of questions consists of 28 statements where the pupils had to express their agreement or disagreement on a 1-to-4 scale (1 meant absolutely not true, 2 meant rather not true, 3 meant rather true, 4 meant fully true).

## Hypotheses

- We hypothesize that significant majority of the respondents has a positive opinion about physical education; however, a significant difference is expected regarding gender, for the boys (H1).
- We hypothesize that significant differences will be pointed out regarding gender and the appreciation of the lesson, in case of the group of questions concerning the implementation of everyday physical education (H2).

## Material and methods

From the participants of the implementation, the views of the students are discussed in our investigation. The number of the participants involved into the examination is 1153 which shows a balanced distribution regarding gender as 45.3% of the participants is boy while 52.2% of them is girl. 15.0% of the sample do not play sport, 17.5% of them play some kind of sport once per week, 19.3% of them play sport twice per week and 48.0% of them play sport at least three times per week<sup>2</sup>.

Different sport levels were categorised namely school sport, hobby sport and competitive sport/in sport clubs were separated. Thus 43.5% of the sample play sport as a hobby, 17.4% of them do it in school frames and 23.8% of them do it in organisational frames in a sport club. The distribution of the pupils was balanced regarding the year.

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<sup>2</sup> We asked the participants to mark their choices as motion which takes at least 30 minutes and which is outside the mandatory everyday physical education.

The sampling frame was meant every institute in the North Grate Plain region where the upper primary students are educated in full-time. The sample can be regarded as a representative sample regarding the counties, the type of the settlements and the number of the pupils. The sample is a multi-stage, stratified sample. In the results, the change in the number of the participants is caused by the non-response questions.

## Results

To test our first hypothesis, the answers in connection of the appreciation of the physical education subject were analysed (Table 1).

**Table 1.** The distribution of the appreciation of the physical education subject regarding gender (N=1074)

	Boy	Girl
<b>I like it very much</b>	56.4%	36.2%
<b>I like it</b>	38.7%	53.9%
<b>I dislike it</b>	2.0%	8.1%
<b>I dislike it very much</b>	2.9%	1.9%

It can be stated that the appreciation of the subject is high in both cases as almost 95% of the students like or like very much the physical education subject. Nevertheless, a significant difference can be pointed in the liking out regarding gender ( $p=0,000$ ). 56.4% of the boys signed that they 'like it very much' while among girls the option 'I like it' could be seen in such a high rate (53.9%). Such a difference in liking PE between boys and girls confirms our first hypothesis. Thus it can be seen that the boys' relation to physical education is still outstandingly better in comparison with girls so this relation has not changed since the implementation of everyday physical education, compared to the literature.

Furthermore, the statements of the group of questions are analysed which relate to the implementation of everyday physical education and to the aims and exercises formulated in the National Syllabus 2012. This group of questions contained 28 statements (Table 2).

**Table 2.** The means of the statements related to the implementation of everyday physical education (N=1153)

<b>How likely are the following statements for the physical education lessons in your school?</b>	<b>Mean</b>
1. We practise only one kind of sport (e. g. handball) in the PE lesson.	1.52
2. The PE teacher is stricter than the other teachers.	1.88
3. We get difficult tasks from the PE teacher.	1.98
4. Because of the PE lesson, I am tired during the day.	2.08
5. The PE teacher has high expectations.	2.16
6. I like sport programs and sport coverages on the television and on the Internet because of the PE lessons.	2.39
7. I listen to the nutrition because of the facts which I heard from the PE teacher.	2.42
8. The PE teacher use to talk about healthy lifestyle as well.	2.68
9. Because of the PE lessons, I do fancy to play some kind of sport after school too.	2.80
10. We play diverse games on the PE lessons.	2.86
11. We regularly get evaluation on PE lessons (the teacher gives oral evaluation, give us red points or marks etc.)	2.88
12. We warm up with interesting gymnastic exercises on PE lessons.	2.89
13. The PE lesson always consists of a warming up, a main part and a finishing part.	3.03
14. I become very tired at the end of the PE lesson.	3.05
15. On the PE lessons, I recognise the competition rules of the different kind of sports.	3.07
16. I became much more skilful while we have PE lesson every day.	3.12
17. We regularly play on the PE lessons.	3.13
18. PE lesson teaches me how to cope with failures (defeats).	3.14
19. The mood is always good on the PE lessons.	3.15
20. We hear a lot of thing about the importance of exercise and sport.	3.17
21. On the PE lesson, I am evaluated on the basis of my individual abilities.	3.19
22. I get on well with my PE teacher.	3.20
23. On the PE lesson, we learn more type of sport.	3.21
24. The PE lesson teaches us to collaborate in a team.	3.21
25. I feel that I can be heathier because of the PE lessons.	3.23
26. Because of the PE lesson, I avoid harmful habits like smoking and alcohol consumption.	3.33
27. The PE teacher wishes that everybody can learn the learning content thus he/she helps to everybody.	3.35
28. On the PE lesson, those students can be successful too who have worse achievement on other lessons.	3.45



The examination of the means of the statements, it could be detected that those statements got the highest means (with the highest agreement) which showed the helpfulness of the PE teacher concerning the learning content and which indicate the own success of the students. It is an important result that they regard this lesson that here everybody can be successful, even those students who achieve worse in other lessons. The statement indicating the recognition of the subject got the lowest mean which confirms that pupils really have the possibility to meet more type of sport on the everyday PE lessons. This is strengthened by the result which shows the high mean of the statement 'On the PE lesson, we learn more type of sport'.

After this, cluster analysis was made to categorise the statements which provided us groups where overlaps were allowed regarding the statements.

Thus three groups were interpreted:

Group 1: 1., 9., 10., 12., 13., 15., 16., 17., 23., Subject knowledge (mean=2.60)

Group 2: 4., 6., 7., 14., 18., 19., 24., 25., 26., Health awareness (mean=2.88)

Group 3: 2., 3., 5., 8., 11., 20., 21., 22., 27., 28. The role of the PE teacher (mean=2.79)

Thus the groups were formed in such a way where the statements could be classified around the aims seen in the National Syllabus 2012 as well. Regarding the first group (Subject knowledge), the didactic and educational aims of the PE lessons could be detected. In the second group (Health awareness), the statements in relation to the students' healthy lifestyle, personality development and health awareness were clustered. In the third group (The role of the PE teachers), the role of the pedagogue can be seen.

It was examined whether any significant differences could be detected in the analysis of the means regarding gender. It can be claimed that no difference can be seen in the groups regarding gender as an agreement could be pointed out.

Regarding the distribution of the appreciation of the subject, a significant difference can be seen in the different clusters ( $p=0,000$ ) (Table 3).

**Table 3.** The groups of cluster and the distribution of the appreciation of the physical education subject (N=933)

	<b>Subject knowledge</b>	<b>Health awareness</b>	<b>The role of the PE teacher</b>
<b>I like it very much</b>	10,8%	34,3%	54,8%
<b>I like it</b>	31,7%	40,5%	27,8%
<b>I dislike it</b>	80,6%	10,4%	9,0%

Pupils who like the subject very much marked the role of the PE teacher in the highest ratio (54,8%). Probably, the influence of the PE teacher can be detected as the most motivating factor regarding the appreciation of the subject. Concerning pupils who 'only' like the subject, the role of health awareness is outstanding (40.5%). They feel that the importance of this factor is the strongest aim after the implementation of the everyday physical education. Regarding students who dislike the subject, the statements of the subject knowledge can be seen in the biggest ratio (80.6%). They are the biggest most critical participants of the lesson who feels that the amount of the knowledge which it required to acquire is too high.

## **Discussion and conclusions**

A representative investigation was made among upper primary pupils in the North Grate Plain in the fourth year after the implementation of everyday physical education (2012 September). The students' attitude in relation to PE lessons and the appearance of the aims and tasks of the National Syllabus were examined. Rétsági (2014) claimed too that the subject can come into a new dimension with the implementation of everyday physical education. Furthermore, it can create a new quality while the conceived aims can enable the teachers of this field for more efficient health education and for the creation of the basis of the health culture.

Our results show that the liking of the subject is remarkably higher among boys compared to girls and this fact has not changed compared to the results of previous researches. An outstanding part of the students (95%) likes the physical education lessons. On the other hand, our hypothesis that a significant difference can be expected after the categorisation of the statements in relation to the implementation of everyday physical education regarding gender was not confirmed. However, it was confirmed in case of the subject liking means of the groups. Pupils who like the physical education subject very much marked the role of the PE teacher with the highest value, regarding their answers.

It can be claimed that the role of the PE teachers can outstandingly be seen regarding everyday physical education thus the institutional support role of the pedagogues can be highlighted in the examined instituted.

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