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HOW DO SPORTS COMPETITIONS HELP IN THE PROCESS OF SOCIALIZATION OF STUDENTS (10-12 YEARS OLD)

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Abstract: Our study focused on observing the influence of sports competitions and motor activities on pupils aged between 10 and 12. The experiment started in september 2016 and was finished in june 2017, and had as samples two groups of children, the first group, the experimental group, consisted of 20 students aged between 10 and 12 years old, 12 boys and 8 girls, with whom we dealt with the 2 hours of physical education and sports from the curriculum and 3 more training sessions on initiation in basketball game; the second group, the control group, consisting of 20 pupils aged between 10 and 12 years old, 13 boys and 7 girls, with whom we spent 2 hours of physical education following the classical curriculum. The research methods were the study of the specialized bibliography, the observation method with observation sheets of pupils' behavior, the graphic and mathematical methods.The results of the research showed significant differences between the two groups of pupils in the adaptation parameters to the school environment, the degree of integration in the school, the level of communication, the behavior at the lesson, and the work style; regarding the item of participation in group life, we found insignificant differences.

Key words: sports competitions, level of socialization, motor activities.

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INTRODUCTION

Motor activities are considered the perfect framework for younger generations, being appreciated as a socializing factor with increasing importance in modern society. Both biological development and psychological traits shaped by the process of socialization contribute to continuous training as the summation and exercise of new social roles and the assimilation of new experiences.

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The motor activities, whether organized, the physical education and sports lessons, or sports training, either free or competitive, have at this age a strong ludic character, aiming both at developing motor skills physical and social skills.

It is agreed that organized out of school activities can be substantial in many domains of children's development (Mahoney et al., 2005).

The theory of social learning has demonstrated that socialization best done in the sports environment. In the opinion of specialists, practicing physical activities or sports influences the personality of young people and creates positive effects on the body and mind. As stated by authors Gavriluţă C. and Gavriluţă N. (2005) "sport cultivates the spirit of the team and increases self-confidence. Undoubtedly, the greatest gain of socialization in sport is that it develops within us the idea of social affiliation and team spirit".

Scientists also concerned on other filed competencies that are influenced by sports activities as psychological or sociological stating that children that take part in out of school activities with sportive preponderant have low level of anxiety and depressed mood (Barber et al., 2001; Brustad et al., 2001; Larson, 1994; Mahoney et al., 2002).

Team sport is useful in educating many abilities in young children. The first of these skills is the competitive spirit. In today's society, we are surrounded all over the competition. Adults face competition when they apply or keep a job, while children face the competition when it comes to the results of school and sports. Participating in competitive teams sports from early ages can offer children the opportunity to understand the right aspects of competition in a friendly environment. It has discovered that students of all ages participating in team sports are better able to compete in other areas of their lives (Yan & McCullagh, 2004).

The involvement in sports activities rate has increased over the years and know researchers estimate that over 20 million children are involved in various sports activities (Kleiber & Powell, 2005) (Landers-Potts & Grant, 1999)

Child development experts say that young people are interested in team games and are part of a team around the age of 5-8 years (Nonis, 2005).

Understanding the processes by which children become involved and maintain their active concern for out of school sports activities is very important, and scientists need to examine closer this particularities (Borden et al., 2005).

Some scientists specialized in early education believe that if children learn the importance of cooperating with colleagues at a young age, they will be socially more prepared for kindergarten or school. (Nonis, 2005). It is important to help children understand, develop and appreciate the spirit of collaboration promoted by team sports. Socialization and individualization are essential and fundamental processes for human development (Sopa et al., 2014).

Pilaget (1981) - is a progressive process "there is a process of socialization that is progressive and not regressive, so that despite the appearances, the individuality of the 7-year-old and older, though tends toward autonomy, is more socialized than the little child's ego".

Sport is by excellence psychosocial, which includes multiple relationships between individuals with feelings, emotions, attitudes, behavior ultimately manifested in specific environment (partners, opponents, supporters, etc.,) and the nonspecific linked to daily life, the game reflects social existence, of acquiring knowledge by motor and mental action, they reproduce social relations through written rules and unwritten, between cooperation and non-cooperation aimed at solving problems and overcoming them through action (Sopa & Pomohaci, 2016).

Sport and physical benefits

The physical benefits of participating in sports are the most relevant. Children often spend too much time in front of the TV or playing computer games. However, practicing team sports offers children the opportunity to practice and maintain their physical form and health. Team sports also help children preserve their physical well-being. Children who are actively involved in

sports can describe as being in good health toward those who do not participate in team sports. (Piko & Keresztes, 2006). There is little research into the risk of injury to young children participating in team sports. (Spinks & McClure, 2007). Also, young people with a strong constitution are more likely to be aware of healthy nutrition and choosing healthy foods than children who are not actively involved in sports (Pyle et al., 2003).

The social benefits of sport

While the importance of the health benefits of sport is undeniable, welfare benefits may be what attracts children to the sport. Given that they can spend more time with friends outside the school, it is more important to the child than being physically active. Skills useful to life through social interaction in sports activities can be extraordinary (Harrison & Naraya, 2003). Through social interaction in team sports, young people learn: collaborating with colleagues, resolving conflicts and communicating effectively with their colleagues.

Sports specialists say that motor activities are a valuable resource, unused, in building the human personality and diminish the negative influences 6 of today's sedentary lifestyles. So, if at the beginning of the nineteenth century motor activities served limited purposes, being more used for recreation or as a recreation method after intense intellectual activities, in order to maintain their health, today these activities, through its various forms of practice, is one of the main means of achieving the ideal of education (Sopa & Pomohaci, 2017).

An essential focus given to building a team, some skills are needed in succeeding in the construction of a team such as working and accepting the others, accepting other viewpoints, accepting and allowing others space to be whom they are, recognizing and accepting individual differences, and working together toward a common goal (Larson et al., 2005). Sports can provide opportunities to develop problem-solving, communication, and leadership skills (Murnane, 2004; Weiss et al., 2005).

Time has validated the benefits of physical and motor activities on many skills like confidence in self, the level of self-esteem, level of anxiety, mood, and level of energy, reduced level of depression, tension and stress (Turcu & Todor, 2010).

Physical benefits of sport are well known and very important, but the social part attracts children in practicing a sport. They are happy that they can meet their friends and spend time with them outside of school, and this is more important than knowing they are physically active (Sopa & Pomohaci, 2015).

Rodriguez, Wigfield, and Eccles (2002) analyzed changes in children's sport competence beliefs, the perceived value of athletics, and self-esteem. Children learned that they were not as competent in athletics as they once believed, perhaps contributing to a decline in the value of athletics in general (Rodriguez et al., 2002). There were mixed findings regarding the hypothesis that participation would increase self-esteem; there was a general increase in years 1 and 2, but none between any other years (Epps, 2016).

Another study (Sopa & Pomohaci, 2014a) highlights the importance of sports competition in students' faculty's programs. Concluding that this kind of activities unites children and develops intragroup relationships, communication level and helps in socialization with other colleagues, and building strong and long lasting friendships. On the other hand students like this kind of activities because it improves health parameters and also because they like to play team sports with their close friends and to fight against them in a volleyball game. Also, other findings of the same scientists (Sopa & Pomohaci, 2014b) affective relationships observed in this sports groups go on the idea that students with better volleyball skills are preferred among the group and elected as leaders of the group that will require them to take decisions.

Some other findings in scientific research papers show that higher performances are obtained by those who participate more frequently in sports activities or art lessons compared with those kids that are not involved at all; or that children who are part of some clubs or youth sports

groups performed better at school compared with those that are involved in lower levels and also compared with the kids that activate in sports at a high level were rated as exhibiting fewer problem behaviors by their teachers (Simpkins et al., 2005; Fredricks et al., 2002).

In the present study, we concerned with surprising of some aspects and phenomena that characterize the social groups of the students' teams in different moments of activity: sports competitions, physical education lessons, sports activities, extra-curricular activities, sports training, etc. The observation, combined with various discussions with these groups of students, has helped us to obtain information about the affective relationships existing in these groups of students, the communication among students, the decision-making in the group, the resolution of the various conflicts concerning the group, the degree of socialization.

The problem of roles in the group is a highly significant research in the social sciences, but also extremely useful in analyzing current educational teams. In the teaching practice, is observed not only a combination that leads to a simple and practical approach to the phenomenon (Sopa & Pomohaci, 2016).

During the observation that coincided with the competition period, we noticed that the students developed an emulation around these events, the motivation for sports activities, either physical education lessons, sports training or competition training, increased considerably, children being enthusiastic both to the opportunity to participate and to give as much as possible and for the chance to compete with other schools, to know and to "measure their strengths" within the limits of sportiness and fair play. At the same time, the opportunity to participate in competitions outside the school and on different arenas or sports grounds has raised interest and curiosity, many of them want to get out of the "school daily schedule" and to get acquainted with new students, to relate, communicate and socialize with them.

PURPOSE

The aim of our study was to highlight the factors that influence socialization and the impact of extra-curricular activities and sports competitions on the social integration of students.

OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of the present study is to highlight the importance of motor activities, especially sports competitions, in student socialization, the development of combative but also fair play, group interrelation, communication, and assistance, especially the development of the idea of social affiliation and team spirit. The main objective of the experiment was to know the different aspects of the interaction process of the groups studied using the psycho-pedagogical observation sheets and knowing the formative-educational values of the motor activities.

HYPOTHESES

Starting from the observation that groups of students participating in sports competitions, motor activities and sports events where students meet, compete within the limits of fair play, tell their experiences, there is the possibility of developing new friendships, socializing, learning group notions, group membership and team spirit development, sports activity is more effective, our research aims to study these social relationships that sports competitions develop.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In the present study, we used as research methods the scientific documentation through the study of the specialized literature, the method of observation with observation sheets of the behavior of the pupils at the physical education and sports training.

In the initial analysis of the two research groups, the experiment group, and the control group, we used the observation method, which is one of the most commonly used methods of

psycho-social studies, relatively easy to organize and apply, can be quickly adapted and utilized in the most diverse situations in the analysis of group evolution, and can be used in various ways, regarding the objective of research or on the nature of the group. Through this method, we have tracked and recorded behavioral manifestations of pupils in different social, individual or psycho-social situations, and we have analyzed the psychological particularities of the whole group or a particular individual.

We used observation sheets for observation of the two groups, elaborated for pupil psycho-pedagogic analysis, both in the experimental group and in the control group. The purpose of using these observation sheets was to track the reactions and feedback generated by the use of training programs in the experiment group, analyzing student behavior and the relationships created by the demands of the motor activities.

In the present study we were concerned with the surprise of some aspects and social phenomena of the two groups at competitive activities.

The observation, combined with various discussions with these groups of students, has helped us to obtain information about the affective relationships existing within the two groups, student communication, group decision-making, solving the various conflicts concerning the group, the relationship between formal leaders and informal and class group.

THE SAMPLE OF THE RESEARCH

The sample of the research consisted of two groups as we can see in Table 1: the first group was the experimental group, consisting of 20 pupils with the aged between 10 and 12, 12 boys and 8 girls; and the second group, the control group, composed of 20 pupils aged between 10 and 12, 13 males and 7 females. Within the experimental group, we started with basketball game initiation; students were doing 2 hours of physical education per week, we added 3 basketball training sessions and participating in two school competitions. The control group followed the structure of the classical physical education and sports curriculum.

Table 1. The distribution of the samples on gender and work program

Group of students	The age of the students	Gender		The program with which we worked
		Male	Female	
Experiment group	10 ± 2.4 years	12	8	2 hours of physical education and sports +3 training initiation in basketball
Control group	10 ± 2.1 years	13	7	Classical: 2 hours of physical education and sports respecting the classical school curriculum

RESULTS

The main objective of the experiment was to know the different aspects of the interaction process of the groups studied using the psycho-pedagogical observation sheets and knowing the formative-educational values of the motor activities with effects on the pupils.

During the observation we had several goals:

- observing the behavior and reactions of students in the experiment group following the implementation of training programs;
- tracking and analyzing the relationships created by the motor activities and their effects on behavioral features such as helping, cooperating, communicating and social inclusion;
- analyzing the students' harmonious physical development, forming skills specific to motor activities;
- analyzing the formative-educational values developed following the implementation of training programs that include, as a matter of priority, playful motor systems.

In the physical education and sports lessons conducted with the experimental group in which we have applied training programs that include, as a matter of priority, playful and agonistic motor systems, using dynamic games and team conquests to meet the objectives and themes of the lesson either aiming at developing motor skills or of the motor skills, we followed the feedback provided by the pupils, their reactions from the point of view of many characteristics as we can see in Table 2:

Table 2. Characteristics tracked by experimental group and control group by observation method

A. Adaptability level in the school environment	- inadaptable, insufficiently adaptable, adaptable, easily adaptable, very easily adaptable
B. Degree of integration into the collective	- rejected by the collective, unintegrated in the collective, almost integrated into the collective, easily incorporated into the collective, incorporated into the collective
C. Level of communication	- isolated, self-contained, little communicative, detached, communicative
D. Behavior at lesson	- passive and unimpressed, waiting to be asked to get involved, conscious and active participation, active and cooperative, involved and willing
E. Work style	- commodious or lazy, uneven in leaps, inconsistent, diligent, systematic and organized
F. Participating in group life	- more withdrawn, isolated, less communicative; participates in the group's activity only if requested, accepts the group but prefers executive tasks, actively seeks contact with the panel, sociable, communicative, come with ideas; actively communicating, good organizer and group animator

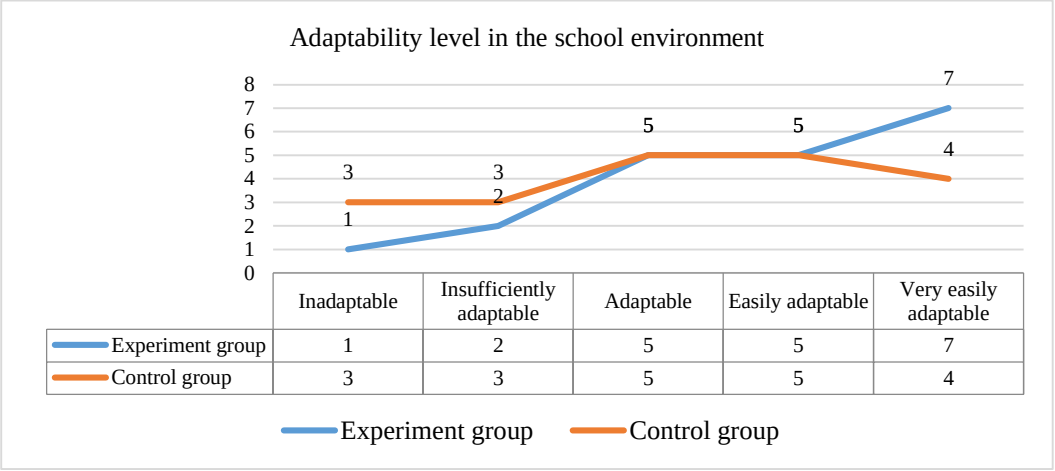

Figure 1. Item No. 1 - Adaptability degree in the school environment

As far as the adaptation to the school environment indicator is concerned, we can see in Fugure 1 that within the experiment group pupils have a better adaptation compared to the pupils within the control group, so we can see that in the experiment group only one pupil remains inadaptable in the school environment (representing 5% of the total number of pupils) compared to the control group where we encounter 3 such cases (representing 15% of the total number of pupils). Insufficient students adapted to the school environment were 2 in the experiment group

(representing 10% of the total number of pupils) compared to the control group where we meet 3 such cases (representing 15% of the total number of pupils).

For students adaptable to the school environment, we find an equal number of cases for both the experimental group and at the control group we observe 5 pupils (representing 25% of the total number of both groups). Easily adaptable students in the experimental group were 5 (representing 25% of the total number of students) compared to the control group where we encounter a total of 5 such cases (representing 25% of the total number of pupils).

The number of highly adaptable pupils in the experimental group was 7 (representing 35% of the total number of students) compared to 4 pupils in the control group (representing 20% of the total number of pupils).

Thus, we can see that the total number of pupils adapted to the school environment is higher in the experimental group compared to the control group (17 pupils tailored to the experimental group compared to 16 pupils suited to the control group).

Applying the T significance test, we noticed that the value of t was 4.8189 and p of 0.0001, $p < 0.05$, indicating a significant difference between the two groups.

P value and statistical significance: The two-tailed P value equals 0.0001. By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be statistically significant. Confidence interval: The mean of Group One minus Group Two equals 0.55. 95% confidence interval of this difference: From 0.31 to 0.79. Intermediate values used in calculations: t = 4.8189, df = 19, standard error of difference = 0.114

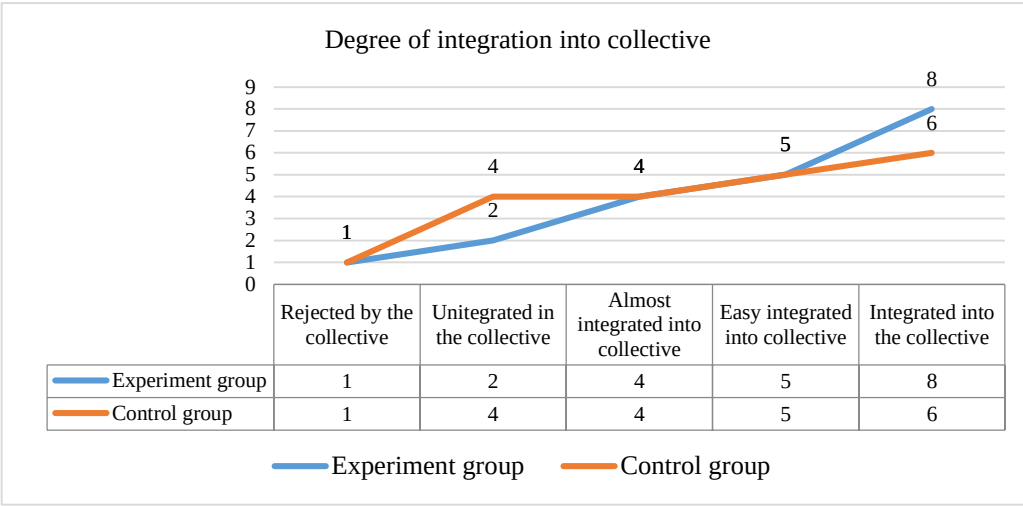

Figure 2. Item No. 2 - Degree of integration into collective

In the case of item "the level of integration in the group", we observe in Figure 2 that within the experiment group pupils have a higher degree of integration in collective compared to the students from the control group, so we can see that in the experimental group and also in the control group just one pupil is rejected by the collective (representing 5% of the total number of pupils). The non-integrated students were 2 in the experiment group (representing 10% of the total number of pupils) compared to the control group where we encounter 4 such cases (representing 20% of the total number of pupils).

In the case of almost integrated students, we find an equal number of cases for both the experimental group and the control group. We observe 4 students (representing 20% of the total

number of both groups). Easily integrated students within the experiment group were 5, the same to the control group (representing 25% of the total number of students).

The number of integrated pupils in the experimental group was 8 (representing 40% of the total number of students) compared to 6 pupils in the control group (representing 30% of the total number of pupils).

Thus, we can see that the total number of pupils integrated into the panel is higher in the experimental group compared to the control group (13 pupils incorporated into the experimental group compared to 11 pupils integrated into the control group).

Applying the T significance test, we noticed that the value of t was 2.8536 and p of 0.0102, $p < 0.05$, indicating a significant difference between the two groups.

P value and statistical significance: The two-tailed P value equals 0.0102. By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be statistically significant. Confidence interval: The mean of Group One minus Group Two equals 0.30; 95% confidence interval of this difference: From 0.08 to 0.52. Intermediate values used in calculations: t = 2.8536 df = 19 standard error of difference = 0.105

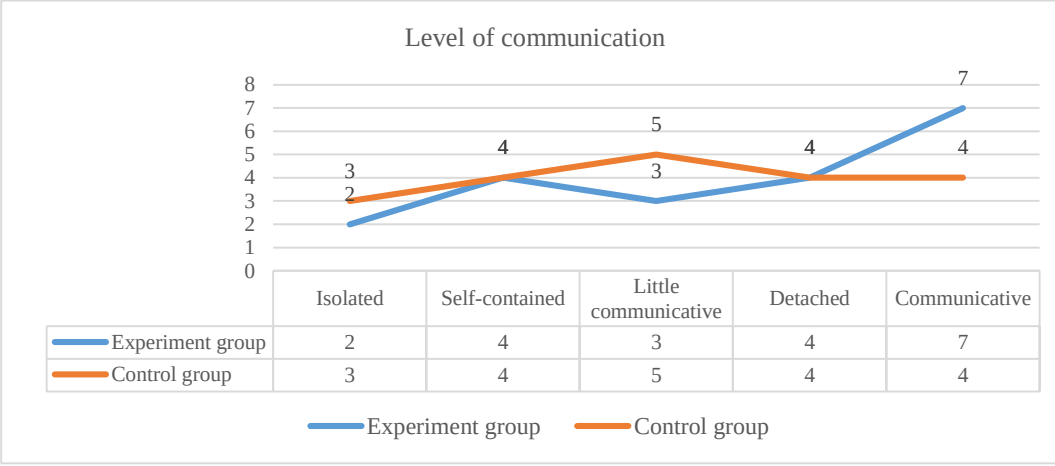

Figure 3. Item No. 3 - Level of communication

At the communication level indicator, we observe in Figure 3 that within the experiment group pupils have a better communication level than the students in the control group, so we can see that only 2 students are rejected by the collective in the experiment group (representing 10% of the total number of pupils) compared to the control group where we meet 3 such pupils (representing 15% of the total number of pupils). In the case of self-contained students, we find an equal number of cases, both for the experimental group and for the control group, we observe 4 pupils (representing 20% of the total number of both groups).

The less communicative students were 3 in the experiment group (representing 15% of the total number of students) compared to the control group in which we find 5 pupils (representing 25% of the total number of pupils).

In the case of detached students in the experiment group, they were 4 in the same way as for the control group (representing 20% of the total number of pupils).

The number of students communicative in the experimental group was 7 (representing 35% of the total number of pupils) compared to 4 pupils in the control group (representing 20% of the total number of pupils).

Therefore we find that the total number of students with an increased level of communication is higher in the experimental group compared to the control group (11 students with an excellent degree of disclosure in the experimental group compared to 8 students in the control group). Applying the T significance test, we noticed that the value of t was 3.5590 and p of 0.0021, p <0.05, indicating a significant difference between the two groups.

P value and statistical significance: The two-tailed P value equals 0.0021. By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be statistically significant. Confidence interval: The mean of Group One minus Group Two equals 0.40; 95% confidence interval of this difference: From 0.16 to 0.64 Intermediate values used in calculations: t = 3.5590; df = 19; standard error of difference = 0.112

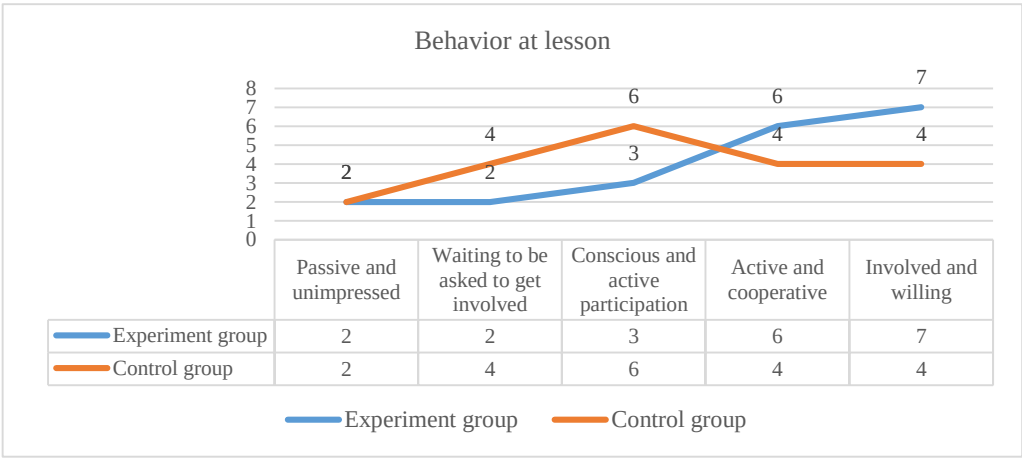

Figure 4. Item No. 4 - Behavior at lesson

In the case of the conduct at the lesson indicator we can see in Figure 4 that in the experiment group the pupils have a more active behavior compared to the students in the control group, so we can see that we have two passive and uninvolved pupils in both groups (representing 10% of the total number of students). Regarding the students waiting to be asked to get involved, we have 2 pupils (representing 10% of the total number of pupils) in the case of the experimental group compared to the control group where we have 4 such cases (representing 20% of the total number of pupils students).

Students who have a conscious and active participation in the lesson were 3 in the experiment group (representing 15% of the total number of students) compared to the control group in which we have 6 pupils (representing 30% of the total number of pupils).

For the active and cooperative students in the experimental group, there were 6 pupils (representing 30% of the total number of pupils) compared to only 4 pupils in the control group (representing 20% of the total number of pupils).

The number of pupils involved and willing in the experimental group was 7 (representing 35% of the total number of pupils) compared to only 4 pupils in the control group (representing 20% of the total number of pupils).

Thus, we can see that the total number of students with active behavior at the lesson is higher in the experimental group compared to the control group (13 pupils with an active behavior in the experimental group compared to 8 pupils in the control group).

Applying the T significance test we noticed that the value of t was 4.3589 and p of 0.0003, p <0.05, indicating a significant difference between the two groups.

P value and statistical significance: The two-tailed P value equals 0.0003. By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be statistically significant. Confidence interval: The mean of Group One minus Group Two equals 0.50; 95% confidence interval of this difference: From 0.26 to 0.74. Intermediate values used in calculations: t = 4.3589; df = 19, standard error of difference = 0.115

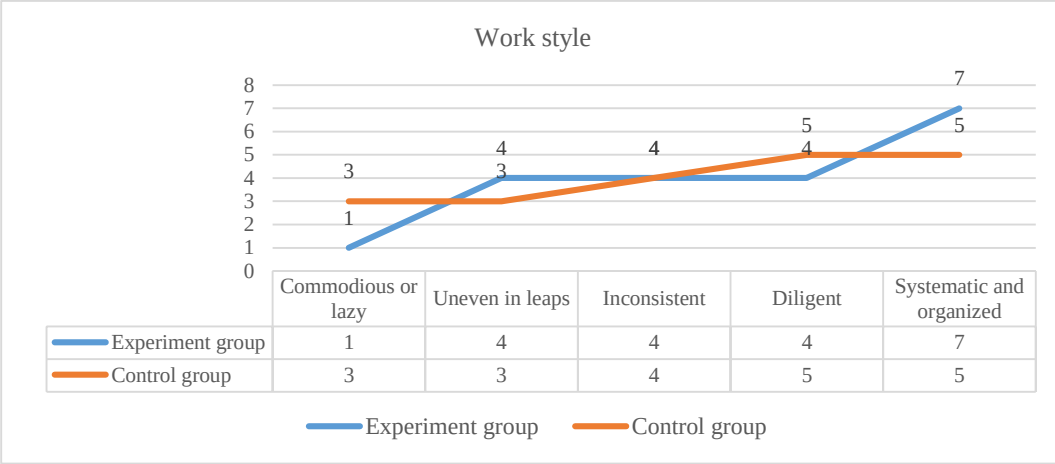

Figure 5. Item No. 5 - Work style

In the case of the indicator behavior at lesson we can see in Figure 5 that in the experiment group the pupils have a more active behavior compared to the students in the control group, so we can see that we have two passive and uninvolved pupils in both groups (representing 10% of the total number of students). Regarding the students waiting to be asked to get involved, we have 2 pupils (representing 10% of the total number of pupils) in the case of the experimental group compared to the control group where we have 4 such cases (representing 20% of the total number of pupils students).

Students who have a conscious and active participation in the lesson were 3 in the experiment group (representing 15% of the total number of students) compared to the control group in which we have 6 pupils (representing 30% of the total number of pupils).

For the active and cooperative students in the experimental group, there were 6 pupils (representing 30% of the total number of pupils) compared to only 4 pupils in the control group (representing 20% of the total number of pupils).

The number of pupils involved and willing in the experimental group was 7 (representing 35% of the total number of pupils) compared to only 4 pupils in the control group (representing 20% of the total number of pupils).

Thus, we can see that the total number of students with active behavior at the lesson is higher in the experimental group compared to the control group (13 pupils with an active behavior in the experimental group compared to 8 pupils in the control group).

Applying the T significance test we noticed that the value of t was 4.3589 and p of 0.0003, $p < 0.05$, indicating a significant difference between the two groups.

P value and statistical significance: The two-tailed P value equals 0.0102. By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be statistically significant. Confidence interval: The mean of Group One minus Group Two equals 0.30; 95% confidence interval of this difference: From 0.08 to 0.52. Intermediate values used in calculations: t = 2.8536; df = 19, standard error of difference = 0.105

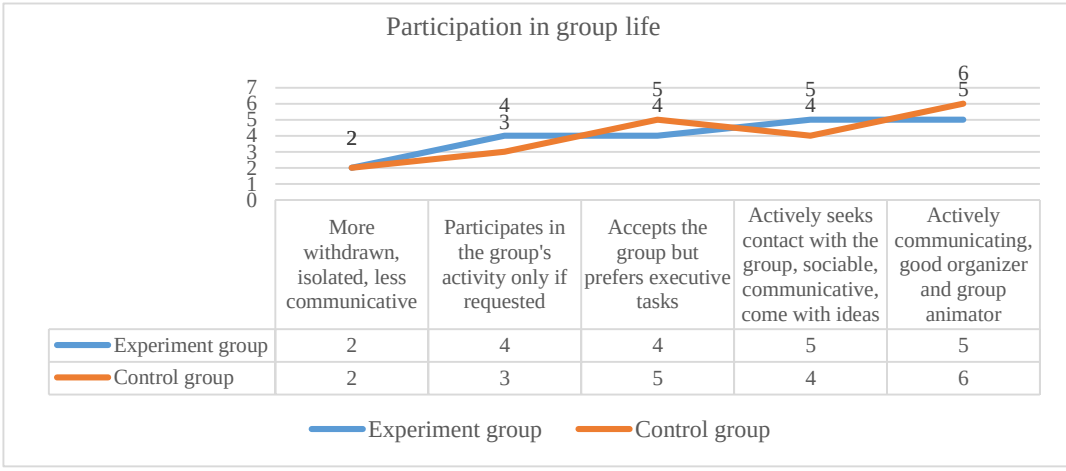

Figure 6. Item No. 6 - Participation in group life

At the indicator group participation, we observe in Figure 6 that in the experiment group pupils have a more active behavior compared to the students in the control group, so we can see that we have two pupils isolated and less communicative in both groups (representing 10 % of the total number of students). For students who participate in the group activity only if requested we have in the experiment group 4 pupils (representing 20% of the total number of pupils) compared to the control group where we record 3 such cases (representing 15% of the total number of pupils of students).

Students who accept the group but prefer administrative tasks were 4 in the experiment group (representing 20% of the total number of students) compared to the control group in which 5 pupils (representing 25% of the total number of pupils) found.

In the case of students seeking actual contact with the panel, sociable, communicative, come with ideas we have within the experiment group 5 students (representing 25% of the total number of pupils) compared to only 4 pupils in the control group (representing 20% of the total).

The number of active, communicating, good organizers and animators of the panel in the experiment group we have 5 examples (representing 25% of the total number of students) compared to 6 pupils in the control group (representing 30% of the total number of pupils).

Thus, we find that the total number of students with active behavior in the lesson is equal in both groups (10 students in the experimental group and 10 students in the control group).

Applying the T significance test we noticed that the value of t was 1.4530 and p of 0.1625, p> 0.05, indicating an insignificant difference between the two groups.

P value and statistical significance: The two-tailed P value equals 0.1625. By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be not statistically significant. Confidence interval: The mean of Group One minus Group Two equals -0.10; 95% confidence interval of this difference: From -0.24 to 0.04. Intermediate values used in calculations: t = 1.4530; df = 19, standard error of difference = 0.069

CONCLUSIONS

From analyzing the observation sheets at the physical education lessons and extra-curricular activities, we were able to observe the following:

The level of conscious and active involvement of students in proposed motor activities has increased in the experimental group. If at the beginning of the activity the students were more

reticent in the hours involved, during the lessons, the willingness to participate and their level of involvement increased considerably.

From the point of view of the temperament of the experimental group it was possible to notice, from the psycho-pedagogical observation sheets, a certain restraint at the beginning of the activity with the pupils, some of them were very timid and isolated from the group, others emotive but willing to participate in the competitions and the proposed activities, very few bold and detached, showing leadership and leading the group. During the program of the motor activities, the students in the experiment group managed to change their attitude and not be retained and inhibited, developing relationships of collaboration and friendship.

Regarding the communication level at the experiment group, we have seen at the beginning some minor misunderstandings, conflicts between students, disagreement on the organization of groups, they had no leaders of the team which led to weaker results regarding efficiency. We have managed to adjust these little misunderstandings and improve communication among students, to find group leaders

Concerning the competitive activity, we noticed that the students developed an emulation around these events, the motivation for sports activities or the physical education lesson, extra-curricular activities or training for the contest increased considerably, the children being enthusiastic about both the possibility of participation and the premiere, but especially the opportunity to compete with other schools, to know and to "measure forces" within the limits of sportiness and fair play. At the same time, the opportunity to participate in competitions outside the school and on different arenas or sports grounds has raised interest and curiosity, many of them wanting to get out of the "daily school schedule" and to get acquainted with new students, to relate, to communicate and to socialize with these.

Sport, whether in team or individual, is a tremendous activity for children, offering a variety of benefits in addition to physical activity. Participating in sporting activities can contribute to self-image and self-confidence, can motivate the child to excel academically and develop social skills.

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