

Theses of Doctoral Dissertation (PhD)

**IMPLEMENTATION AND ATTITUDES OF
STUDENTS**

*The Function of Everyday Physical Education in the
Schools of a Disadvantaged Region*

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1. Objectives of the dissertation, circumscription of the subject

The success of interventions in public education with development purposes is defined by the implementation processes that they are characterized by. We can learn about the current state of the process and the stage of its realization through their examination. When assessing a reform process in education, the most important aspects are the adequate tools and methods that lead to the desired outcome; instead of priorities of improvement, their realization in practice is what is in the focus of the study. People involved in the changes during the implementation and the adaption process of the system are the elements that are taken a closer look at to learn how feasible of an intervention the introduction of the development is, if it can fulfill its function, if it is successful and relevant. This is why we chose as the theoretical frame of our dissertation the study of implementation.

The educational reform measure we studied is the Act on Public Education that came into force in 2011 and the 2012 National Core Curriculum based on this Act created a

fundamentally new situation for the educational field of Physical Education and Sports. Studies in connection with the sport habits and health of the Hungarian population justify the urgent need for change. Tamás Simon (2007:9) uses three words to describe the factors that threatened and threaten health: ignorance, irresponsibility and poverty. Researchers agree that teaching the future generation how to be responsible and health conscious is an essential social duty. Quality tuition of the educational field of Physical Education and Sports in the framework of everyday PE can serve as a solution for the problems mentioned above with the creation of the psycho-motoric and theoretical knowledge base of body culture. Physical Education plays a crucial role in the healthy growth and maturation of students, and also in the founding of their health conscious behavior. It positively affects the whole of one's lifestyle and based on its direct impacts, basic conditions of physical, spiritual, social health and health behavior are facilitated.

Before the introduction of everyday Physical Education classes, numerous studies had dealt with the sport habits of adolescents and in connection with them, their health

behavior (Sallis et al. 2000, Barnett et al. 2008, Minarro 2009), so it can be stated that the fact that Hungarian adolescents do not do physical activity even despite international recommendations is a social problem. International research proves that there is a connection between a child's activeness and his or her future health (Barnett et al. 2008, Shepard et al. 2013). The target of our analysis is the age group that is at the turning point of psychosocial development.

In the theoretical chapters we demonstrate the conceptual approach of Physical Education, as well as aims, tasks and criteria connected it. We study the Hungarian curriculum – embedded in European and American perspectives – along the changes of the target system defined in the National Core Curriculum. In our dissertation we introduced the questions which are in the center of the goals of PE as a subject, sport habits of students, health conscious behavior and research data reinforcing the positive impacts of sports. These issues helped demonstrate approaches of initial theories, implementation researches and sport socialization. The main question of our empirical research, that is, the spirit

that the introduction of everyday PE finds the school and primary school students in, is novel for many reasons. Our study deals with a timely issue that affects the whole society. Students in grades 5-8 in the three counties of the northern part of the Great Plain have not been much researched from the aspects of sport habits and attitudes toward Physical Education. On the other hand, systematic research in connection with everyday PE in the short period since its introduction has not been launched. Our empirical work is novel because of both its content and methodology. It is also unique in an international perspective, too, since there is no other country where daily Physical Education would be compulsory. We also examined the effect of socio-demographical and socio-cultural factors, such as gender, year, type of settlement, educational qualification of parents as well as current and childhood sport habits of parents on Physical Education, all analyzed along frequency variables. We mapped the health behavioral habits of students in years 5-8 in the northern part of the Great Plain; we also examined their attitude toward the educational field of Physical Education and Sports, the role, importance and relevance of the

subject. We also expose factors that indicate the role of regular physical activity done in spare time and outside of compulsory Physical Education classes. Our objective is to highlight aspects of socialization that influence the frequency with which students practice physical activity, along with which we emphasize its function in aiding the formation of a healthy lifestyle. We hereby state that we did not conduct a survey on impacts since our database does not facilitate the assessment of causal relations or the tracking of changes. We inspected the nature of alteration and alternation processes in which the realization of an education political intervention (the introduction of everyday PE in a phasing-out system) was targeted. We could of course only see these through the biased eyes of the ones (students) being involved in the process. Nevertheless we could find out about the current state of the process and its realization.

2. The outlines of the applied methods

The selection of institutions and classes was based on a multistage, stratified sampling, and the likelihood of being included in the sample was determined the PPS (Proportionate Probability to Size) method which in our case was equal to the number of students in years 5-8. Accordingly, the likelihood of being included in the sample of every student in years 5-8 in the region is known, therefore the sample on an institutional level can be called a probability sample. The questionnaires of the quantitative research were filled in by students in the presence of teachers between January and March of 2016. The sampling frame of the research included each institution of the three counties of the northern region of the Great Plain (Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County, Hajdú-Bihar County, and Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County) where primary school years 5-8 are available.

In the first stage we examined the proportions of the regions county by county, that is, the proportion of questionnaires needed to be filled in in each county.

In the second stage we drew up three groups for the counties based on their size of settlements, and within this

grouping we defined the number of settlements to be chosen. In this stage we did not take into consideration traditional ways of grouping based on the size or types of settlement (city, village or number of inhabitants), but we separated groups with respect to the number of schools found in the settlement.

In the last stage of the sampling we chose the school through simple, random sampling and then with cluster sampling we inserted one class from each year (5-8) into the sample.

At the end of the data collecting stage, we received 1177 questionnaires from 15 schools of the three counties. Hereinafter the full sample size was 1153.

The sample, based on the viewpoints used, can be seen as a representative sample of the northern part of the Great Plain on the level of counties, settlements and number of students. With the inclusion of retrospective questions in the cross-section study we tried to uncover the cause-effect processes. The processing of the data happened with the help of the 21st program packet of SPSS. The tested

schools represented the proportions of institutions maintained by the state, church or ministry.

In our empirical work we processed data with frequency studies, cross-table analysis, cluster analysis, factor analysis and regression analysis in line with three groups of questions. They encompassed the relations of the factors such as the goals of health behavioral habits, the Hungarian National Core Curriculum 2012, the educational field of Physical Education and Sports, as well as behavioral factors that define health.

3. Enumeration of results as theses

The results show that those students who are very fond of Physical Education classes consider their health important in a much higher proportion, and boys describe themselves to be in an excellent state of health in a higher proportion than girls. Those who live in larger settlements, consider themselves to be in improved health status. The larger the settlement is, the better health status is reported by students living there.

The most common health problems that occur among the students are stress and fatigue but girls experience more significant problems in all areas. In higher grades the incidence of these problems increases in case of both sexes. It is considered that boys are more satisfied with themselves, accepting their appearance more. We highlighted that people who consider themselves to be healthier are happier with their appearance. In terms of adverse health behavioral factors, students "are doing well" regarding smoking, and there is no significant difference between gender or grades, so overall the proportion of smokers is not too high. The situation is different in terms of consumption of unhealthy drinks,

boys drink more energy drinks, in addition, similarly to alcohol consumption, the amount of unhealthy drinks consumption increases in higher grades. As for the health protecting factors, the results show higher scores for breakfast consumption at weekends, while on weekdays the rates are at very low level, less than half of the sample enjoys breakfast every day, and it is concerning that fruit and vegetable consumption is lower and lower as age increases. According to our results, in an international perspective we are lagging behind.

The way they spend their spare time is to a large extent shaped by the media, especially at weekends. Our research reveals such high proportions of screen-usage (both sexes) that leads us to assume that we should make use of the media in promoting outdoor lifestyle through autonomous learning, whereby health-conscious lifestyle could be a natural part of the everyday life of young people.

We consider regular physical activity as a protective factor an important achievement. The proportion of those who regularly do extra-curricular sports is high, even if most of them practice it as a hobby. Among influencing factors, the size of settlement and parental role stand out. In terms

of gender, the impact of media is present in case of boys; on the other hand it is also an important factor that they can exercise in the schools for free in the afternoons, which may indicate the disadvantaged position of the region. We call attention to the fact that in the field of sports girls are seriously handicapped compared to boys. In contrast with other research, we consider it to be an achievement and a positive change that sporting spirit does not decrease significantly in higher grades.

91% of our sample has five classes of physical education per week. Our results show that a significant proportion of students like Physical Education and miss it if it is cancelled. PE is more popular among boys (girls do not like to change or sweat) but this – similarly to most other surveys – decreases with the increase of grade.

The regularity of doing sports in the childhood of parents correlates with the popularity of the subject. According to our interpretation, students clearly classify the importance of Physical Education in relation to other subjects; they

place it above skill subjects, but below theoretical subjects.

We examined the infrastructural conditions only partially, but it is clear that there is a shortage of gyms in the territory we examined.

As a result of the attitude analysis in connection with daily Physical Education (where we examined the objectives set out in the National Core Curriculum), in case of boys extracurricular achievements and engagement in physical activity, while in case of girls less extracurricular sports and fatigue are accentual, however, girls still recognize the benefits of PE. It can be concluded that the role of teachers appears in highlight in our study, the function of the teachers' institutional role can be detected in the examined institutions.

As our results show, boys are more conscious regarding physical activity than girls. As grade increases consciousness in eating habits reduces and harmful behaviors become more visible. The larger town a student lives in, the more health-conscious the student is. Parental role is particularly important in our research because the more sports the parents did or do, the more health-

conscious their children are, they avoid harmful health behaviors, they eat more consciously, do more physical activity and they are more satisfied with their health and appearance.

The importance of the educational environment must be emphasized as well, since students who are positively affected by Physical Education or Physical Education teachers are less likely to have harmful health behavioral habits.

Students, in case of whom difficulties in Physical Education classes are present to a higher extent, are less active in terms of their sport activities outside of school, and they consider their health status worse. Those who are more active physically and are satisfied with their body image, the influence of PE and values mediated by the PE teacher are present in higher proportion. That is, those who have a balanced diet, have breakfast regularly and eat more fruits perceive difficulties caused by physical education (exhaustion, high expectations) to a lower extent.

Overall, based on the students' statements we can say that results are rather positive, although it cannot be considered completely to be the result of the introduction of daily

Physical Education, since it was not impact assessment we carried out, no changes were examined but we have provided a "health check" after the changes. Based on our research, we can say that exploiting the potential opportunities of daily Physical Education (after studying its aims) is important to establish a healthy society.

4. iDEa (University of Debrecen Electronic Archive) certification of the author's works published or verified to be published in the topic of the dissertation including the issue numbers



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List of publications related to the dissertation

Hungarian book chapters (9)

1. **Fintor, G. J.:** A mindennapos testnevelés vizsgálata diákszemmel az észak-alföldi általános iskolákban.
In: A tanulás új útjai. Szerk.: Mrázik Julianna, Magyar Nevelés- és Oktatókutatók Egyesülete, Budapest, 91-101, 2017, (Hera Évkönyvek ; 4.) ISBN: 9786155657016[print]
2. **Fintor, G. J.:** A mindennapos testnevelés implementációja nyíregyházi általános iskolákban.
In: Sokszíni sporttudomány. Szerk.: Szmodis Márta, Szűts Gábor, Magyar Sporttudományi Társaság, Budapest, 48-62, 2016, (Magyar sporttudományi füzetek, ISSN 2062-9559 ; 14.) ISBN: 9786155187100
3. Nagy, Á., **Fintor, G. J.**, Borbély, S.: Az egyetemi testnevelő tanárok tevékenységprofiljára ható testkulturális változások.
In: Értékeremtő testnevelés: tanulmányok a testnevelés és a sportolás szerepéről a Kárpát-medencei fiatalok életében. Szerk.: Kovács Klára, Debreceni Egyetemi Kiadó, Debrecen, 123-138, 2016. ISBN: 9789633185971
4. **Fintor, G. J.:** Tanulói nézetek a mindennapos testnevelésről észak-alföldi általános iskolákban.
In: Értékeremtő testnevelés: Tanulmányok a testnevelés és a sportolás szerepéről a Kárpát-medencei fiatalok életében. Szerk.: Kovács Klára, Debreceni Egyetemi Kiadó, Debrecen, 24-35, 2016. ISBN: 9789633185971
5. **Fintor, G. J.:** Az egészségudatoság megjelenése nyíregyházi felső tagozatos diákoknál.
In: Tanárképzés és oktatáskutatás. Szerk.: Kozma Tamás; Kiss Virág Ágnes, Janszák Csaba, Kéri Katalin, Magyar Nevelés- és Oktatókutatók Egyesülete, Budapest, 633-649, 2015, (HERA évkönyvek, ISSN 2064-6755 ; 2.) ISBN: 9786155372315[print]



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6. **Fintor, G. J.**: A sportágválasztást és sportolási gyakoriságot befolyásoló tényezők az általános iskolásoknál.
In: Határtalan oktatáskutatás : Tanulmányok a 75 éves Kozma Tamás tiszteletére. Szerk.: Ceglédi Tímea, Gál Attila, Nagy Zoltán, DE FKFK, Debrecen, 69-79, 2014, (Régió és oktatás, ISSN 2064-6046 ; 9.) ISBN: 9789630889957
7. **Fintor, G. J.**: Az egészséges életmód és az elektronikus média kapcsolata a 10-14 éves korosztályban.
In: Oktatáskutatás határon innen és túl. Szerk.: Juhász Erika, Kozma Tamás, Belvedere Meridionale, Szeged, 396-418, 2014, (HERA Évkönyvek, ISSN 2064-6755 ; 1.) ISBN: 9786155372179
8. **Fintor, G. J.**: Testmozgás a közösségben, avagy a mindennapos testnevelés jelenléte Szabolcs megyében.
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9. **Fintor, G. J., Szabó, J.**: A televíziós sportműsorok hatása az egyes társadalmi rétegekre.
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Hungarian scientific articles in Hungarian journals (2)

10. **Fintor, G. J., Szabó, J.**: A sportolást befolyásoló tényezők az általános iskolásoknál.
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Foreign language scientific articles in Hungarian journals (2)

12. Nagy, Á., **Fintor, G. J., Borbély, S.**: Változó értékek a testkultúrában, a mindennapos testnevelés jelentősége a fiatalság szemléletformálásában I. rész = Changing Values in Body Culture ; Significance of everyday Physical Education in Shaping Young Adults' Views on Sports and Health First Part.
Recreation. 5 (2), 23-26, 2015. ISSN: 2064-4981.
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21486/recreation.2015.5.2.1>





13. Nagy, Á., **Fintor, G. J.**, Borbély, S.: Változó értékek a testkultúrában, a mindennapos testnevelés jelentősége a fiatalság szemléletformálásában II. rész = Changing Values in Body Culture Significance of everyday Physical Education in Shaping Young Adults' Views on Sports and Health Second Part.
Recreation 5 (3), 24-27, 2015. ISSN: 2064-4981.
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Foreign language scientific articles in international journals (2)

14. **Fintor, G. J.**: The Implementation of Everyday Physical Education among Upper Primary Pupils in the North Grate Plain.
Stud. Educ. Art. Gymn. 62 (1), 81-93, 2017. ISSN: 1453-4223.
DOI: [http://dx.doi.org/10.24193/subbeag.62\(1\).08](http://dx.doi.org/10.24193/subbeag.62(1).08)
15. **Fintor, G. J.**: Everyday physical activity of students in Nyíregyháza.
Practice Theory Syst. Educ. 10 (2), 115-130, 2015. ISSN: 1788-2583.
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Hungarian conference proceedings (1)

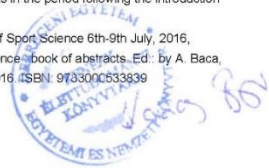
16. **Fintor, G. J.**: A szocializációs ágensek hatása a serdülők fizikai aktivitására.
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Foreign language conference proceedings (1)

17. **Fintor, G. J.**, Szabó, J.: Appearance of conscious health behaviour among elementary school students in Nyíregyháza.
In: Mozgás, környezet, egészség. Szerk.: Karlovitz János Tibor, International Research Institute, Komárno, 87-102, 2014.

Foreign language abstracts (1)

18. **Fintor, G. J.**: Health behaviour of 10-14 year old students in the period following the introduction of everyday physical education.
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List of other publications

Hungarian book chapters (1)

19. **Fintor, G. J.**, Borbély, S.: Nyírtelek: Egy fiatal város sportélete.
In: A mozgás szabadsága! : a szabadidősport társadalmi, gazdasági és egészségügyi megközelítései : elméletek és kutatási eredmények a gyakorlat szolgálatában. Szerk.: Perényi Szilvia, Debreceni Egyetem Gazdaságtudományi Kar, Debrecen, 258-263, 2014. ISBN: 9789634737032

Foreign language international book chapters (1)

20. **Fintor, G. J.**: The Relation between the Healthy Way of Life and The Media at the Ages of 10-14
In: Questions and perspectives in education. Ed.: János Tibor Karlovitz, International Research Institute, Komárno, 236-245, 2013. ISBN: 9788097125189

Foreign language scientific articles in Hungarian journals (2)

21. **Fintor, G. J.**, Szabó, J.: Correlations of sport levels and popularity of sport programmes among elementary school students. Utánközlés másodközlés,
Recreation 2, 11-16, 2014. ISSN: 2064-4981.
22. **Fintor, G. J.**: Correlations of Sport Levels and Popularity of Sport Programmes among Elementary School Students.
HERJ 3 (3), 67-76, 2013. EISSN: 2064-2199.

Hungarian conference proceedings (2)

23. **Fintor, G. J.**: A sportolási szint és a sportműsorok kedveltségének összefüggései általános iskolásoknál.
In: Interdiszciplináris pedagógia és a fenntartható fejlődés: A VIII. Kiss Árpád Emlékkonferencia előadásainak szerkesztett változata. Szerk.: Buda András, Kiss Endre, Kiss Árpád Archivum Könyvtára, DE Neveléstudományok Intézete, Debrecen, 334-344, 2014, (Kiss Árpád Archivum könyvsorozata, ISSN 1587-1150) ISBN: 9789634737308





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24. **Fintor, G. J.**: Sportra nevelés a televízió segítségével?

In: Tavasz Szél 2014. Szerk.: Csizsár Imre, Kőmíves Péter Miklós, Doktoranduszok
Országos Szövetsége, Debrecen, 461-468, 2014. ISBN: 9789638956088

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