

<sup>1</sup>Mihaela POPA

# THE IMPLICATIONS OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN REDUCING THE ABANDONMENT FACTORS OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES AFTER THE FIRST YEAR FOR THE STUDENTS FROM THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING HUNEDOARA

<sup>1</sup>University Politehnica of Timișoara, Faculty of Engineering of Hunedoara, Hunedoara, ROMANIA

**Abstract:** Academic activities have a huge impact on the lives of students, as long as they are involved in the course of studies that have decided to take. The success guarantee is accompanied primarily motivational involvement and interest and persistence motivational and behavioural objectives. A low commitment and low motivational factors may be the main cause of academic unsatisfactory results, without excluding the importance of other factors [parental support, support by teachers, competence perceived academic performance], leading to the decision to abandon their studies. Assuming that education must take in process all dimensions of human personality, the formation of the body, of instincts, of affection, of the will, shaping the thinking, attitudes, behaviours expressive, it is considered that all levels are important and they should be judged in an integralist way, individually and interdependent strategies encompassing, correlative and complete. Judgement is formed and strengthens through physical activities, as the intellectual shaping can reinforce positive attitudes towards psychomotor, corporality, health and physical integrity. In other words, any shaping horizon builds and settles a series of subsequent values exceeding the size of a strictly technical limited educational exercise [on intellect direction, emotional, moral, spiritual, and professional, etc.]. Practicing physical activity, for example, does not mean just physical gestures, mechanical bodily order performance for the sake of performance, but the restructuring of the whole personality in line with the values of the knowledge of self, desire to self, responsibility towards their own health, taking notice of otherness, fair-play in relation to competitor consistency act, moral integrity, respect and service to each other, etc. In this context, given the need to reduce the dropout factors of university studies after first year of studies, it is considered the subject theme as being a present issue.

**Keywords:** abandonment, reduction, university, physical education, students

## 1. INTRODUCTION

University dropout is an extreme form of school failure. The need to reduce the phenomenon of school failure implies at least four ways:

1. economic – economic efficiency is low due to professional incompetence of individuals;
2. Social - Weak labour training induce effects such as social marginalization, unemployment, social exclusion, delinquency etc.;
3. Individual - school failure takes into account the psychological effects, such as difficulty adjusting, individualization distrust in their own forces, anxiety, stress etc.
4. Pedagogical - school failure is the indicative of teaching inefficiency, of the shortcomings encountered in the education system. [3]

The transition, defined as the ability „to browse” the change that occurs in the transition from one educational cycle to another, from one way of learning to another [4], it is recently questioned in investigative studies regarding the transition to higher education, the manner in which children and young people transit from one educational cycle to another being more investigated.

Although involving major changes in the lives of young adults, both socially and in ways of learning, to interact with teachers, etc., the transition from high school to academic life is less investigated in Romanian literature, focusing on the transition from higher education to the labour market. [5]

Anticipating the trend of abandonment made through studies and modelling allowed identifying correlations between factors that contribute in making such a decision [6]. Among those factors are identified: age, sex, distribution per administrative environments, occupation and financial possibilities of the it funds research, type of the financial assistance they have [funded places / extra charge], specialty and form of education, type of school graduated [or route of qualification], the physical education, social level of interest in courses opted for [the nth option], the ability to manage time, employability status [whether working or not / full / partial], health, etc.

Reported to the requirements and authentic values, physical education can contribute a lot in this direction. In this sense, it must intervene in individual ownership rules, experimentation on their own requirements, criteria recognized values, mutual respect, and hierarchies demonstrated ratifications obvious in terms of proven performance. Thus, it can build and internalize rules at an elevated social level, or expectations can induce high level of individuals or society. Practicing physical activity helps psychological development of the individual, prevents mood swings, temper and shape attitudes, constituting a solid foundation for personality formation. Physical activities, together with natural - water, air, sun -

strengthens the body, generating also a natural shield for disease, cultivates patience, self-control, courage, initiative, perseverance, discipline, develop feelings of friendship, collective and competitive spirit. [7]

The development strategy and promotion of physical education is established in the European context, respecting and valuing legislation designed to increase its social role, regardless of the type of business you are promoting. [8] The young contemporary marked by the virtual world that chained him in the confined space of educational institutions or house, removed the nature of movement. The real and dangerous social phenomenon has long been a warning to those involved in the education of the younger generation. Physical activity is a factor strengthening resistance inconveniences of life, a deep wealth of character education. By movement the young experience success and failure, learning how to deal with the latter, in a constructive way. [9]

Forming a new vision of physical activities and only positive involved issues it is tried to ensure an effective prophylaxis primordial so little exploited and yet crucial in diminishing the abandonment of university studies after first year of studies.[10]

## 2. HYPOTHESIS

Investigative approach highlights the variable physical education of students in terms of reducing the factors of abandonment of university studies after first year of studies.

The following assumptions were made:

- Reported values and authentic demands physical education has the role to induce high expectations at the level of individuals or society.
- Identifying some aspects of the level of physical education at students can be a viable support for the development of optimization strategies to reduce dropout factors of undergraduate studies after the first year.

## 3. RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

Investigative approach, part of a larger study aimed at abandonment factors of undergraduate studies after the first year, was approached from the perspective of level of physical education, given the integrated nature of the student's social development. The paper comprises a theoretical part consisting of a theory review of the literature and the empirical part which involved the creation of a quantitative research by using surveys. The research instrument used is the standardized questionnaire, applied for first year students during the second semester of the academic year 2017-2018.

The questionnaire „an investigative tool consisting of a set of written questions” [11], was used to obtain necessary information for accurate knowledge of specific aspects of university dropout issue after year, on the students of the Faculty of Engineering of Hunedoara. Studying the information contained in the literature on “questions’ typology” [12], the administered questionnaire included 25 questions and 5 closed questions, divided into 30 items. Students were selected from the five majors with at least five attendances at the Seminar of physical education per semester.

At the end of the study the information was processed from a number of 96 respondents from 186 first year students, meaning 52%. The items 5, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26 refer to information about the subject's physical education. Interpreting the data with the help of a graphical method allowed the creation of a relevant image of the studied phenomena and the relations among them.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The integration and adaptation of students to academic life requires proactive support to motivate and empower to meet the requirements. First year students need to feel that they are a part of a support learning community, that they are valued, being designed and developed qualitative interactions with the academic staff and peers outside of the classroom / seminar to compensate alienation and anonymity lectures in large auditoriums where students participate in many courses, designed as bases bringing together several groups of students.[13] Also students' tutors in the first year must lead them multidimensional to optimize the creation of the student's identity.[14]

For the Hunedoara Faculty of Engineering, the student's abandonment rate after the first year is of 23% in the last 5 years, with a growth of 10 per cent at the level of the studied university year. [Figure 1]

The subjects of survey respondents based on questionnaires are students of the Faculty of Engineering Hunedoara, presenting the following identification:

- delimitation after gender shows 68 male respondents; 28 female respondents;
- the age range of the respondents: up to 25 years-75 respondents; 26-40 years -16 respondents and over 40 years-5 respondents.

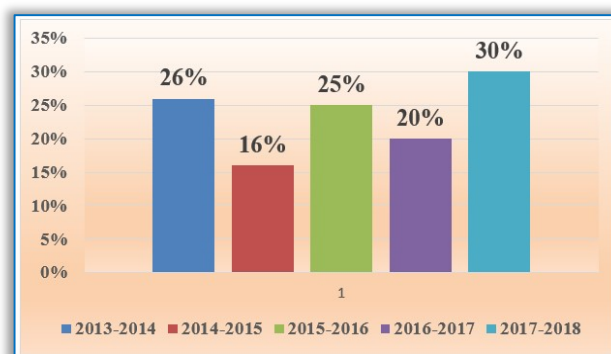


Figure 1. The variables of the abandonment rate after the first year

— the distribution on administrative environments delimitates: urban-66 respondents; rural -30 respondents.  
A first approach was to identify the health status of the respondents. Item5. [Figure 2]

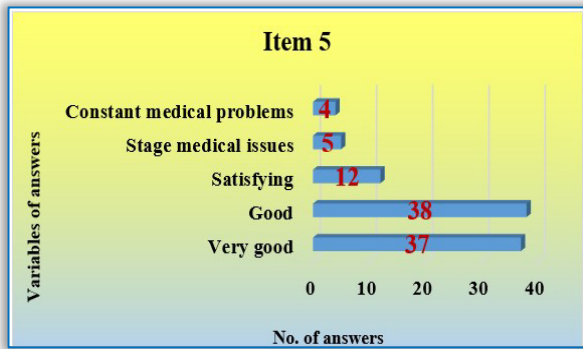


Figure 2. Item 5 – The variables of the respondents’ health status



Figure 3. Item 22 – Competition according to respondents

In this way, from the total responses it is revealed that 90,6% are physically fit. Processing the information in Item 22, which outlines the significance of competition according to the investigated subjects, presented in Figure 3 shows that for 52% competition teaches them to persevere in professional, 19% say they have a winning spirit, and 12.5% want to compare with others. The 16% who do not like competition, it is believed they did not understand the complexity of the term.

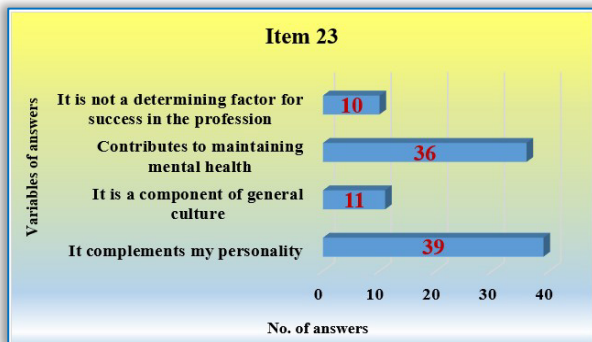


Figure 4 Item 23 – Variables of the perception of the respondent’s physical fit.

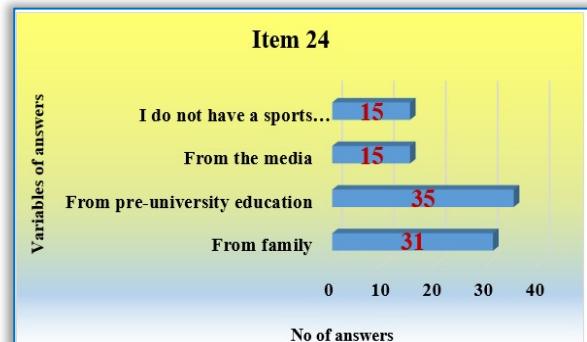


Figure 5 Item 24 – The physical education sources of the respondents.

The perception of the impact of good physical training in personal development, Item 23, emphasized by 40.6% of answers the contribution of personality, while for 37.5% of respondents, it helps to maintain a mental health. Noticeable is the percentage 11.5% of students who associate with the level of physical preparation with the general knowledge of the individual. [Figure 4]

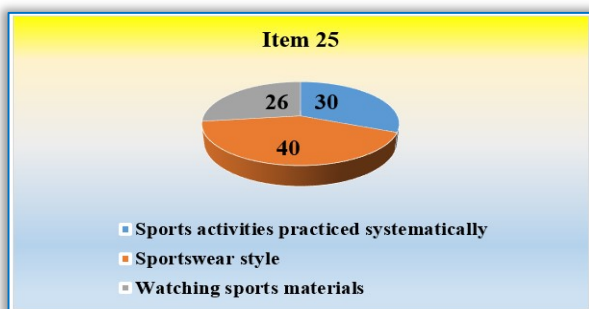


Figure 6 Item 25 – Variables of the origin of the movement advocate of the respondents.

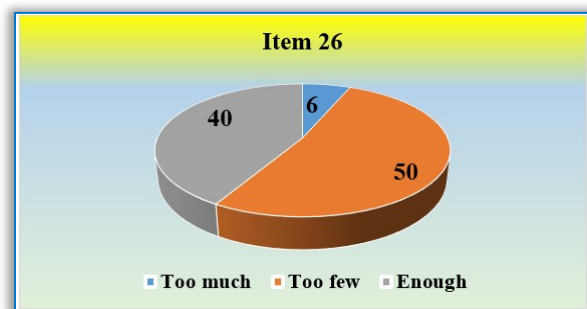


Figure 7 Item 26 – Opinions about the physical education classes in the licence study programme.

Item 24 seeks to identify sources of sport education of the respondents. [Figure 5] The application outlines the existence of sports education by 36.5% of respondents who formed it during undergraduate studies, 32.3% of families and 15.6% of them were motivated by the media to obtain a physical education. The 15.6% percentage of those who claim to have a physical education is due to a certain level of knowledge. Data on origin of the movement advocate, Item 25, 42% highlights that the status of the subjects is related to the style of sport clothing, 31% shall acquire it on account of sports practiced systematically, while some, 27%, are followers of the movement because they are watching sports materials. [Figure 6]

The importance of physical education classes in the licence study programme, Item 26, is for 52% of subjects small, enough for 42%. 6% of the number of hours that considered too high is insignificant. [Figure 7]

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The research has shown that the physical education level is an essential support for the completion of undergraduate studies and for the access to the labor market.

Some significant issues emerging from the data analysis:

- extrapolating the competition seen in the complexity of the concept, each event once lived becomes part of learning history, the consequences are likely utility and informative. [Figure 3]
- from the analysis, it appears that according to the respondents, acquiring physical education at a rate of 36.5% during undergraduate studies, reinforces the importance of physical education in all study programs. [Figure 5]
- respondents sources about physical education emphasizes by 32.3% also the undeniable role of the family for the success in future social and professional life.
- the investigation carried out identified the impact of a good physical training on personality of the subjects by 40.6% of the responses. [Figure 4]
- the opinions outlining the origin status "follower of the movement", emphasizes sport activities practiced systematically, on 31% of the subjects and tracking the sports materials, 27%. [Figure 6]
- analyzing the responses shown in Figure 7, 52% of respondents consider additional benefits for physical education classes.

Considering the size and dynamics of the abandonment of undergraduate studies after the first year, we can say that proactive identification, during the first year of studies, of difficulties adjusting to academic life can reduce the phenomenon. The physical activity is a factor of strengthening resistance to the inconveniences of life, an enrichment of the educational character. In this context, we consider the subject of this study as being up to date, especially since through movement the young experience success and failure, learning how to deal with the latter, in a constructive way. In conclusion, the study presented can bring a plus of knowledge with effects in professionalizing student behavior by improving factors that define his portrait.

## References

- [1] \*\*\*[http://www.psih.uaic.ro/activ/III\\_doctorat/teze/2017-09-22\\_Constantin/ConstantinLoredana-Rezumat\\_teza.pdf](http://www.psih.uaic.ro/activ/III_doctorat/teze/2017-09-22_Constantin/ConstantinLoredana-Rezumat_teza.pdf), p.5;
- [2] \*\*\*<http://www.constantincucos.ro/2018/02/de-ce-este-importanta-educatia-pentru-si-prin-sport/>;
- [3] \*\*\* [http://management.ase.ro/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Prezentare\\_Rose\\_proiect.pdf](http://management.ase.ro/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Prezentare_Rose_proiect.pdf);
- [4] Gale Trevor & Stephen Parker [2014] - Navigating change: a typology of student transition in higher education, *Studies in Higher Education*, 39:5, 734-753, DOI:10.1080/03075079.2012.721351;
- [5] Tulbure Cristina [2010] - Psycho-pedagogical determinants of academic success, Cluj-Napoca: Cluj University Press;
- [6] Van Sangodiah Anbusel, Prashanth Beleya, Manoranjitham Muniandy, Lim Ean Heng, Charles Ramendran Spr [2015] - Minimizing student attrition in higher learning institutions in Malaysia using support vector machine. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Information Technology*. Vol 71, no.3];
- [7] \*\*\*<http://basilica.ro/educatia-fizica-fundament-solid-pentru-personalitatea-in-formare/>;
- [8] \*\*\*<http://mts.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/STRATEGIE-SPORT-.pdf>, pag.7;
- [9] \*\*\*<https://psychologies.ro/anchete-si-dosar/educatia-sportiva-a-copiilor-2139335>;
- [10] \*\*\*[http://www.unefs.ro/custom\\_images/file/unefs/studii/rezumat%20teze%20de%20doctorat%20romana/Ganciu\\_Oana\\_Maria\\_rezumat\\_romana.pdf](http://www.unefs.ro/custom_images/file/unefs/studii/rezumat%20teze%20de%20doctorat%20romana/Ganciu_Oana_Maria_rezumat_romana.pdf), pag.10;
- [11] Chelcea, S., [2001] – Methodology of Sociological Research - Quantitative and Qualitative Methods, Economic Publishing House, Bucharest, p.177;
- [12] Marinescu, V., [2005] – Methods of study in communication, Publishing House. Niculescu, Bucharest, p.63;
- [13] Maher Marguerite, Helen Macallister [2013] - Retention and Attrition of Students in Higher Education: Challenges in Modern Times to What Works, *Higher Education Studies*; Vol. 3, No. 2; 2013, doi:10.5539/hes.v3n2p62];
- [14] Briggs A.R.J., J. Clark & I. Hall [2012] - Building bridges: understanding student transition to university, *Quality in Higher Education*, 18:1, 3-21, DOI: 10.1080/13538322.2011.614468.



**ISSN 1584 - 2665 [printed version]; ISSN 2601 - 2332 [online]; ISSN-L 1584 - 2665**

copyright © University POLITEHNICA Timisoara, Faculty of Engineering Hunedoara,  
5, Revolutiei, 331128, Hunedoara, ROMANIA

<http://annals.fih.upt.ro>