

STUDY ON THE ATTITUDE OF STUDENTS FROM THE AIR FORCES SYSTEM REGARDING MILITARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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Abstract: *In the context of a strong dynamic society, the adaptation of the school curriculum to its needs is a desideratum of any institution. All the changes have as objective the efficiency of the didactic process, having in its center, the beneficiary of all the interventions, the student. In this sense, the research aimed to identify the options of practice, time, effects and impact of different means of physical education on the specifics of the military profession. The study had as subjects the third year students from the Air Force Academy from Braşov and was an initial stage in carrying out interventions on the content of the school curriculum in the discipline of military physical education. This discipline has some peculiarities in military institutions, given its importance in vocational training and even in the performance of duties. Among the most significant results are the intention to practice basketball and self-defense elements, increasing the number of hours allocated to the discipline and awareness of its importance in training.*

Key words: *physical education, students, military, questionnaire.*

1. Introduction

Military physical education is a subsystem of physical education and sports; it is compulsory and formative, included in the academic curriculum, with a number of three courses of 90 minutes per week for all years of study (I, II, III) of the “Henri Coandă” Academy of Air Forces, completed with individual training classes [1]. Military physical education, as well as physical education and sport, has a purpose, objectives, characteristics,

functions [2, 7], principles adapted in accordance with the specific requirements of the “Graduate Model”. The goal, in Stănciulescu's opinion [3], is defined as the general line that guides the actions of training and development of the personality of the future officer. It serves as a guide in selecting the general and specific objectives of the formative process and aims at the finality of the educational action [8, 9].

The realization of the university curriculum in the discipline “military

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physical education” takes into account two purposes: the achievement of professional competencies in graduates and the morpho-functional development in the period of accumulation and formation of skills [6]. The vast majority of specialists in the field consider that morpho-functional indices are the most important component of the instructive-educational process of military physical education. The priority objective is: the harmonious development of the human body [4], [9]. Therefore, what is pursued on this coordinate is to obtain superior and harmonious indices, which are in optimal agreement with the particularities of growth and development of the organism at different ages [5], [8] (military students in our case).

2. Material and Method

In order to ascertain the opinions of the students from the “Henri Coandă” Air Force Academy regarding the content, organization and importance of military physical education lessons, a questionnaire with nine items was designed. The questionnaire was designed to contain mixed questions (closed and open). It was applied to a sample of 120 students of the “Henri Coandă” Air Force Academy, from the third year of study. The questions were open and projective, with answers in graded scales of evaluation (very much, much, easy, enough, etc.). Our goal was focused on the interest of future officers in certain disciplines practiced in classes and, last but not least, information on the importance of military physical education classes. It was preferred to question a sample of students from the last year of

study due to the experience gained by them during the three years.

The use of this method aimed to highlight the students' opinions, obtained by survey, on the optional sports that can be practiced in military physical education lessons, accepted and approved by the Ministry of National Defense, including the “Henri Coandă” Air Force Academy.

The study was based on several hypotheses, including:

- We believe that students are aware of the importance of practicing physical exercise for vocational training;
- One of the students' preferences is the desire to practice contact sports in order to form self-defense skills;
- The most important motor quality of students is strength.

3. Results and Discussions

The results of the applied questionnaire were centrally processed, presented and interpreted and for some options measures have already been taken to meet the wishes of students.

To question 1 “Which of the following disciplines would suit you best: handball, basketball, football, tennis, volleyball, shooting, martial arts, archery, swimming,” as shown in Figure 1, basketball is on the first place in the students' preferences (25%), due to the dynamism and beauty of the game, the fact that it does not involve a large space and last but not least the media coverage. Another reason would be the possibility of practicing in mixed teams, which is a means of socialization. The second position is occupied by martial arts (23%), due to its versatility, complexity and educational and formative value, due to the fact that any person associates them

with fighting, with confrontation. Another reason why such a sport is preferred is the possibility of individual training and the satisfaction of one's own success. At the same time, knowing the elements of self-defense is an objective evaluation criterion, which influences the final grade and students are interested in obtaining higher grades in the discipline of Military Physical Education. The next position, third place (20%), at a difference of 3% of martial arts is occupied by football, which

is so popular and, at the same time, the subjects are not only male.

These disciplines are followed by two other team sports, quite popular in Romania: volleyball and handball for which 12%, respectively 10% expressed their desire. Although it is present in the program of the military physical education discipline, swimming obtains a percentage of 7%. Probably there are other students who prefer to practice more swimming due to its applicative character but also to its formative values.

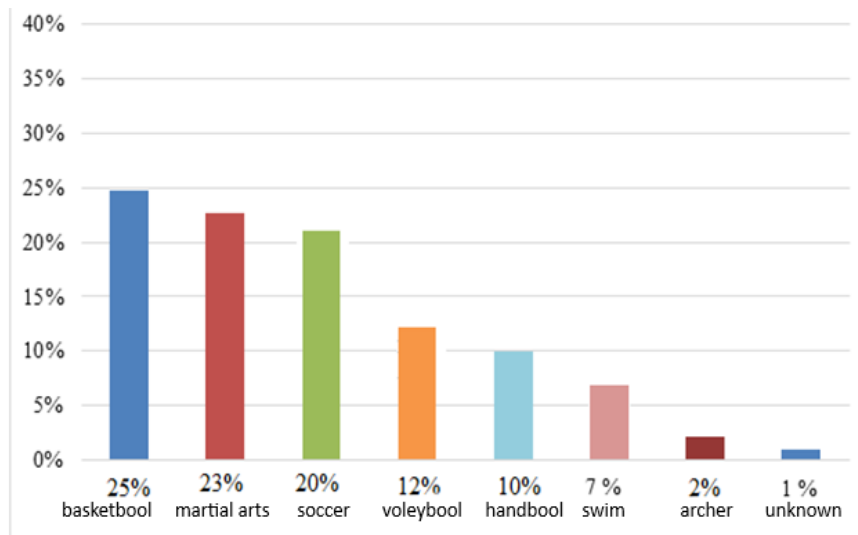


Fig. 1 . Students' options for sports

In item no. 2 ("Do you consider that the number of hours allocated per week to military physical education and sports is sufficient?") we find from Figure 2 that 55% of respondents consider that military physical education and sports hours are not enough, 25% consider that their number is small, for 9% time is enough, 8% say it is not exaggerated, and 3% do not know.

Probably, if the students knew the reality in the general university environment, respectively the optional

character of the discipline physical education, but also the low share [6], they would be much more reserved in this aspect. This highlights the fact that students are aware of the importance of practicing physical activities for both their age and their future profession. However, we cannot fail to notice the wide range of different opinions that highlights the fact that not all young people are aware of the importance of exercising.

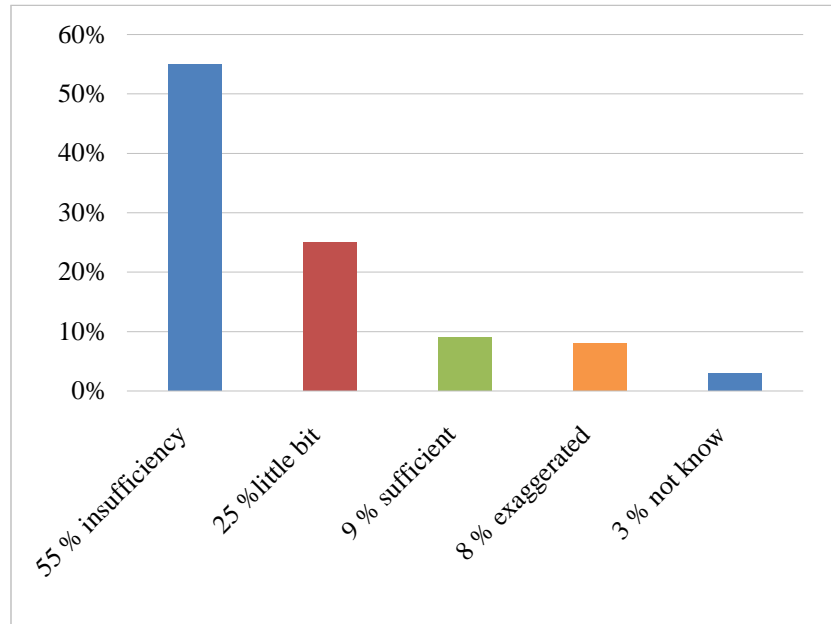


Fig. 2. Assessment of the number of hours

This aspect is all the more important as for the future profession the level of motor skills is a reference criterion.

From question 3 "How much do you think you could allocate from the free time, from the budget of a day, for the activity of military physical education and sports?", given that their number is sufficient, according to Figure 3, it results that 60% of respondents choose for the allocation of more than two hours a day, 30% two hours, 9% one hour and 1% are undecided. This indicates that students at the Air Force Academy would like to engage in daily physical activity even if the difference in choice from one hour to more than two hours is large.

It should be noted that military students have allocated other 20 minutes a day for physical activity every morning during the refreshment program. This is probably a less appreciated thing for many of them.

For item no. 5 "Do you consider that progress in the development of your personality is determined by the discipline you preferred?", Figure 4 shows that 29% of respondents believe that the choice of optional discipline does not have a great effect on the development and perfection of personality, 10% appreciate that it influences to a small extent, 30% are convinced that the discipline they opted for is the strong element, 25% are convinced that the chosen discipline is the basis of progress while 6% are undecided.

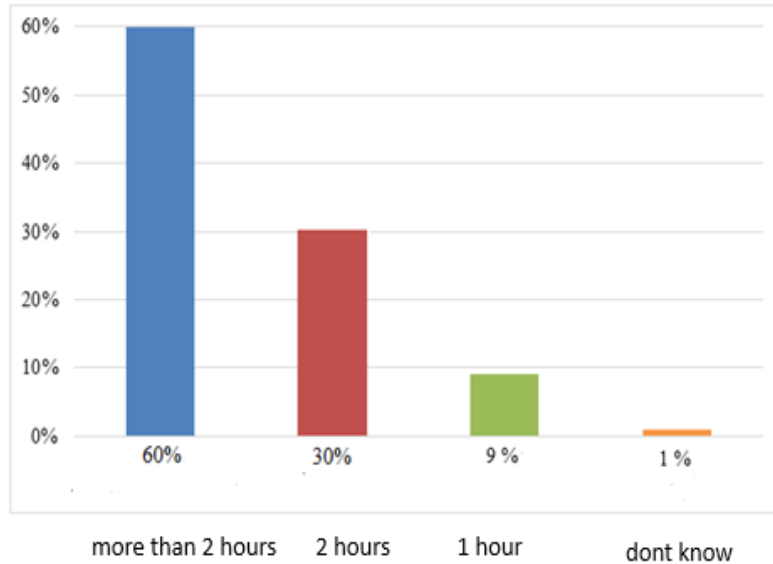


Fig. 3. Duration of time allocated to EFM in free time

This somewhat constant spread of opinions with the exception of points two and four demonstrates that students are not aware of the importance of practicing a sport for the development and formation of personality traits.

This is explicable because young people are not yet old enough to say exactly how their evolution of personality traits has been influenced and, moreover, one cannot speak of full maturity at this stage.

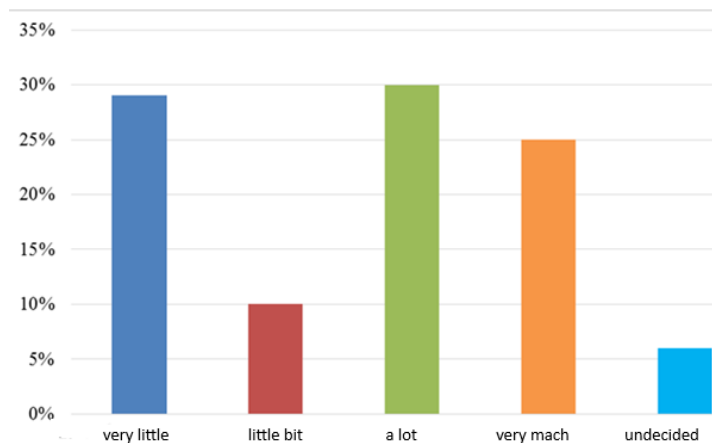


Fig. 4. The importance of the chosen discipline

Question no. 6 “What motor skills do you consider to be a priority and an absolute necessity throughout your career as a future officer” is characterized by the

results shown in Figure 5 which shows that 36% of respondents consider strength to be an essential motor quality, 25% stated that endurance, 23% considered

speed, 12% considered coordination important, 3% chose flexibility and mobility, 1% undecided. The presented results highlight the following: the force occupies the first position also due to a good media coverage in the virtual and written environment (demonstrated video at various competitions, training programs, etc.), the resistance is in the second place, which means that future professional fighters appreciate the value, you cannot be a valuable fighter without this motor quality, speed complements

the previous ones, being just as important. Flexibility and mobility are preferred in a smaller percentage due to their complexity. At the same time strength and endurance are qualities that develop easily compared to other qualities (speed and urge) and they were assessed by the entrance test. Last but not least, strength and endurance are the motor qualities on which the Military Physical Education curriculum is oriented. The students, being in the third year of study, were able to realize this aspect.

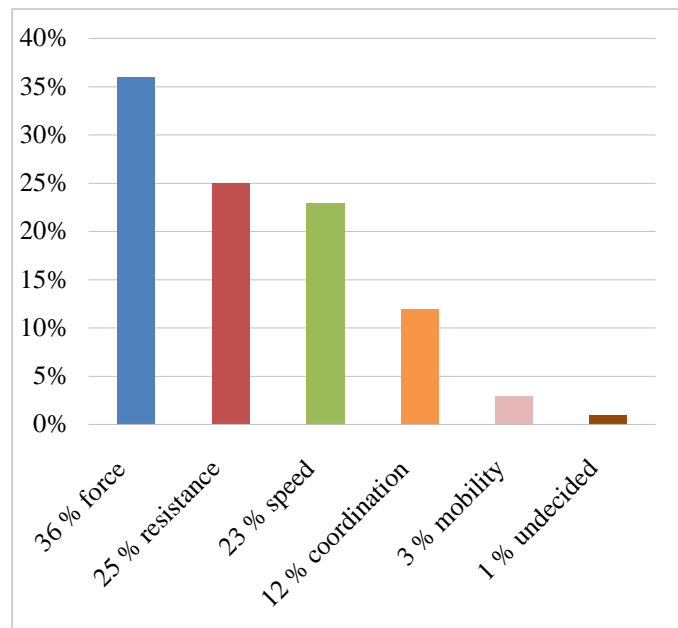


Fig. 5 .*The place and importance of motor qualities in students' preferences*

Regarding the independent practice of physical exercise, the answers show that: 50% of the subjects put in the foreground the individual physical training that they consider of major importance, 30% would like to practice regularly, 19% from time to time and 1% are undecided. According to those mentioned above, it results that students, in a percentage of 80%, want to practice physical exercises learned in

military physical education courses, systematically and consciously, not least of certain coordinated disciplines by specialized teachers.

For item no. 8 "In order to increase the attractiveness of the lesson, how do you think it should be intervened to optimize the lesson in your favourite sport", Figure 6 shows the students' perception about optimizing the military physical education

lesson as follows: 49% consider it necessary to increase the number of hours with applicative destination, adapted to the specific activity, 29% prefer team games, 20% expressed their desire to diversify the topics in the military physical education and sports course, while 2% do not know. We must point out that approximately 50% of students want an increase in the number of hours devoted to military physical education, although this specialty has the schedule with the most hours allocated. However, students point out that the activity should be predominantly applied. We consider that the skills specific to martial arts have a strong applicative character both through the formation of self-defence techniques and through the development of psychomotor skills. In our opinion, the most applicable disciplines in the current curriculum are swimming and skiing. The means of martial arts have a formative character first of all and then applicative. Therefore, we consider that the students came up with constructive ideas, suggesting that they want teachers to be

more open to new things, to adapt themes from different sports to the multilateral training of future officers.

Regarding the level of effort, the students answered as follows: 58% opted for normality in the sense that they assume the option they made, 19% hard, 12% very hard, 6% light, 4% very light, and 1% do not know. From our point of view, the way students appreciate the conduct of military physical education courses is fair, and this demonstrates that the optional programs fall within the specific training standards [6], and will be adapted according to the situation (age, somato-physiological particularities, etc.). The 58% percentage of students who state that they expect the effort should be a usual one points out the fact that they are aware of the importance of practicing physical activities for their future job. In the same time we can appreciate the level of responsibility concerning the decision of practicing an optional discipline from the perspective of the high level of applicability and of the importance of the assimilated skills for the future profession.

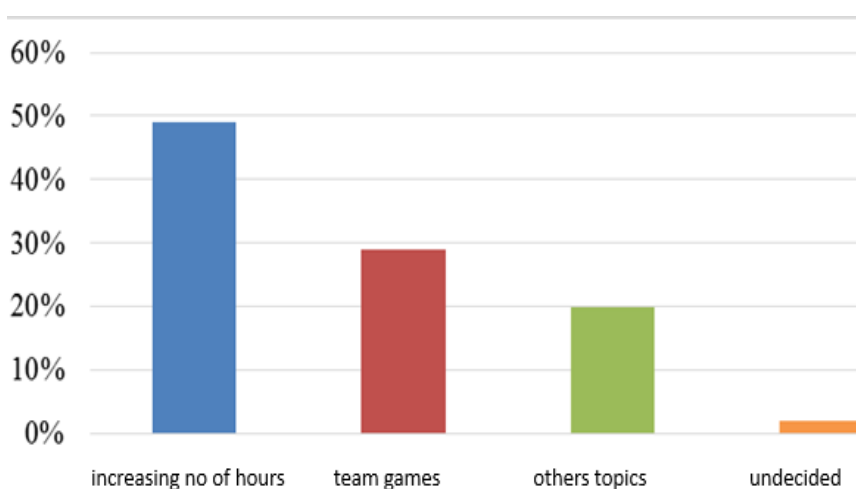


Fig. 6. Optimizing the lesson of military physical education and sports, correlated with students' preferences

4. Conclusions

The sociological survey conducted with students from the "Henri Coanda" Air Force Academy in the third year, highlighted their preference for certain sports (basketball followed by self-defense) and the fact that the time allotted to achieve the objects is too short. Students have a high interest in conscious participation in lessons; they consider that the most important specific motor quality is strength. It was also highlighted that the participants in the study are aware of the formative value of military physical education in the future profession, as well as the importance of practicing and mastering self-defense skills in completing leadership.

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