

SOCIALIZATION AND INCLUSION OF STUDENTS IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES THROUGH THE CHESS GAME

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Abstract

For children, the game of chess is quite important, as it helps them to become responsible human beings, with a fairly high degree of discipline and much wiser. By associating chess with the physical activity in physical education classes, we offer children all the leverage for healthy development. The purpose of the present paper is to highlight the fact that practicing chess at any school age contributes to the fulfillment of the functions of physical education and becomes a means of socialization. The game of chess used in physical education classes and during school breaks was aimed at socializing students. The students included in the present research were tested by applying the items of the questionnaire. The school planning elaboration of the chess course is designed according to the age of the students and taking into account their ability to concentrate. The organization of the class of students is in pairs and groups, having the game of chess as a means of work.

Introduction

All over the world chess is considered an art, a science and a sport. It is over 1500 years old, so it has become the most popular mind game in the world. Whenever you lose you learn more than when you win.

For children, the game of chess is quite important, as it helps them to become responsible human beings, with a fairly high degree of discipline and much wiser. By associating chess with the physical activity in physical education classes, we offer children all the leverage for healthy development [1].

Practicing the game of chess since kindergarten, primary school and continuing in high school develops children's self-confidence, improves their thinking, so that the game of chess is also known as "the game of the mind" [2].

According to school curricula, chess can be studied as an alternative subject or as an optional one. If we were to ask ourselves the question "Why should children play chess?" we would have enough motivating answers, but one main reason is socializing and fun. The game of chess has many benefits if it is promoted and approved in schools [3].

The game of chess prepares children for life, helps them to put their minds in order, disciplines them in making decisions and analyzes any situation before any move or acting [4].

In the last two years, due to the period we are going through from a medical point of view, i.e. the Covid-19 pandemic, the game of chess took the main place in the physical education classes in the cold period, involving all children, even those exempted from physical effort during the sports classes. By bringing them into the physical education classes, it was created a state of well-being, an increasing attention and a means of getting closer to individuals. We would like to point out that when observing the children playing chess, we drew the conclusion that their respect for their peers increased a lot, and even their school performance improved. The attitude towards a colleague who was considered "weak" in physical education tests changed and the "weak" one became "strong".

A. Dragnea et al. [5] in “Theory of physical education and sports” (p. 148-152) recommend the characteristics of physical education and sports as factors of socialization and desire for social integration: carrying out exercises in pairs or groups contributes to the students interaction, and achieves socialization; the psychosocial environment is created both through the forms of organization and the contents of the school curriculum; the children interact with each other by fulfilling some tasks or roles simultaneously, and also by cooperating with the team members and adversity of another team.

Socializing during the physical education and sport classes might be closely related to the growth of the personality that produces some changes: emotion control, respect for others, honesty, fair play, cooperation, competition, self-confidence and increased self-image. The most important aspect of socialization is the development of the personality, once self-identity is acquired, and in this respect physical education has this merit.

Physical education, through its originality and competitive way, by working in pairs, groups or team, could change the way we look at ourselves in relation to people around us.

Gloria Rață and Gh. Rață [6], in their published work “Physical education and teaching methodology” (p. 90), mention that: “Physical education, more than other educational disciplines, offers the possibility to live high levels, the emotion of being the best and the most well-known, the joy of competing and overcoming unattainable obstacles, and the possibility to know and discover one's own person”.

The World Health Organization encourages the importance of regular physical activity of all kinds, such as walking, running, swimming, sports games, winter sports, exercise games, chess, etc. Scientific research has shown over time that exercise is the main means by which the long-term support of the individual's physical and mental health contributes to a healthy lifestyle.

With the introduction of the new framework plan, starting with the 2014-2015 school year, chess becomes an optional school subject; it is mediated and included in the school curriculum; physical education teachers are trained for this discipline and could successfully propose this optional subject among primary-school and gymnasium students. “Chess education” is the title of this optional which also has a school curriculum developed and approved by the Ministry of National Education, having the first and second year of study in the national offer for curriculum at the decision of the school [7].

In order to increase efficiency and have a beneficial effect on children, from a pedagogical and psychological point of view, we introduced the practice of team play, so that children become more cooperative, provide support to other team mates and share responsibility for decisions; failure would be easier to bear, and last but not least, by applying the team method, chess meets the best underlying requirement of psychology, which says that school education is designed to socialize students, and thus prepare them for the adaptation to the social system [8].

The game of chess has also a beneficial role in the case of students with learning difficulties. Motivational aspects could be transferred to other disciplines, for example, mathematics by learning coordinates can start from the chessboard; geography can also borrow learning coordinates with chess; in ICT children can use the computer for a game of chess, and in literature there are various written stories about chess that can be easily transposed to these courses [9].

Success in chess could be considered in percentages as half being work, and the other half being ensured by the intelligence of the individual.

Children who love chess could recreate themselves by playing a game; nerve cells regenerate during a chess game, deep thinking can contribute to the formation of antibodies and the victories in the game of chess develop a positive thinking, while defeats could strengthen the mental balance.

Starting from the purpose of physical education, the contribution to maintaining health, regardless of the type of lesson – learning, consolidation or improvement, we got involved and introduced chess as a means of socialization during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The present research emphasizes the effectiveness of practicing chess as a recreational, socializing, and selection goal for talented children.

Material-method

The purpose of the present paper is to highlight the fact that practicing chess at any school age contributes to the fulfillment of the functions of physical education and becomes a means of socialization. As we all know, every child feels the need to be part of a group and the desire to assert himself and collaborate with other children. From the gymnasium school curriculum, we know that chess is an alternative discipline and could be put into practice by any teacher.

The research objectives were:

1. To demonstrate that gymnasium students could practice chess as a way of socializing and recreating.
2. To clearly show there are influences in the psycho-social evolution of students who practice chess in an organized way and in their free time.

We carried out the present research on the 5th grade B from “Jean Bart” Gymnasium School of Suceava, during the period of four months, September 2021 to January 2022.

In the first part of the article, the students were initially tested on the level of knowledge of the game of chess, and at the end we applied the final test using questionnaires.

Methods used in our research: study method, observation method, questionnaire method. Through our individual study we gathered scientific information about chess from books, textbooks, treatises and scientific papers of Romanian and foreign authors, thus compiling the bibliography of the article under discussion. Observation is the most common and handy method, as it is fast, easy to apply and able to immediately analyze the evolution of individuals. Through observation as a method, we supervised and noted the behavioral manifestations of the students, especially at different times of the game. We paid attention to the children's temperament, their desire to overcome themselves during the game, and we finally make an observation sheet.

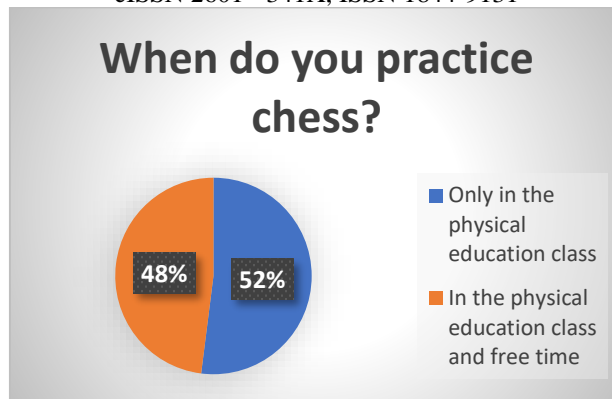
According to P. PICHET (1971, p. 93), questionnaires “are tests composed of a greater or lesser number of questions presented in writing to the subjects and refer to their preferential opinions, feelings, interests and behaviors in precise circumstances”.

S. Chelcea (2002, p.60) defines this method as “a technique and corresponding to an investigative tool consisting of a set of written questions and possibly graphic images, logically and psychologically ordered, which, by the administration by the survey operators or by self-administration, determines the respondents' answers to be recorded in writing ”.

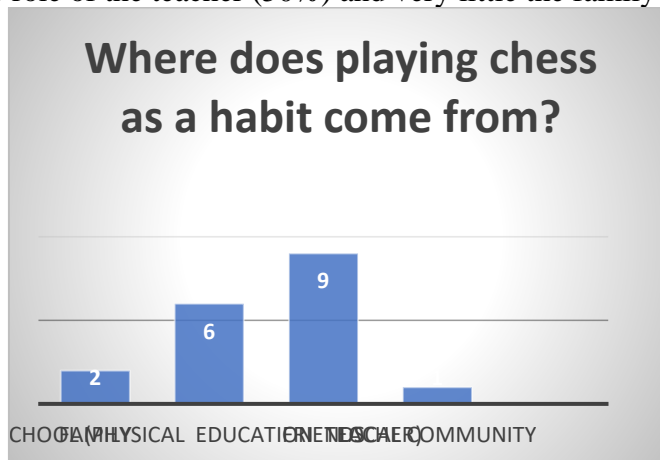
Results

In the present research we applied a questionnaire including 8 items by which it was sought to find out whether by practicing the game of chess, in a free or organized way, students are aware of its benefits and influence on their psyche. The questionnaire was applied to a number of 18 students.

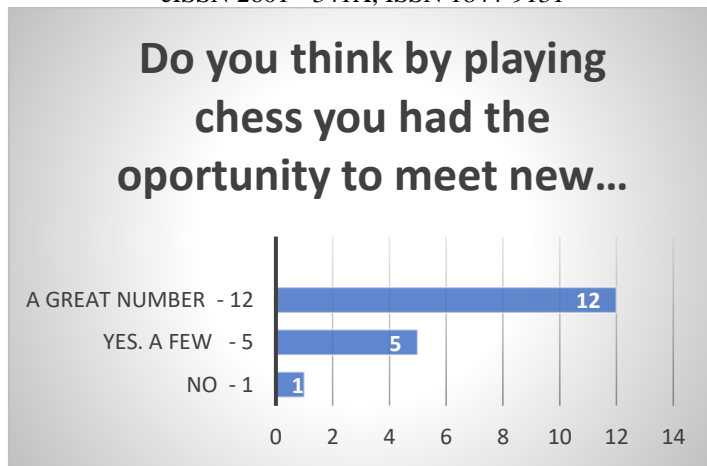
It is easy to observe that there is a high percentage of practicing chess in their free time, not only in physical education classes.



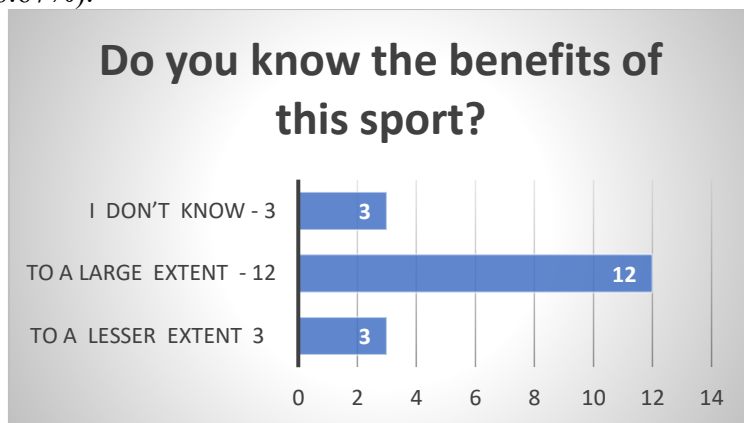
The significant percentage in the habit of playing chess is the circle of friends (33%), then the role of the teacher (50%) and very little the family (11%).



Most students ticked the last answer (66.67%) which proves that the area of friends through chess has increased a lot.



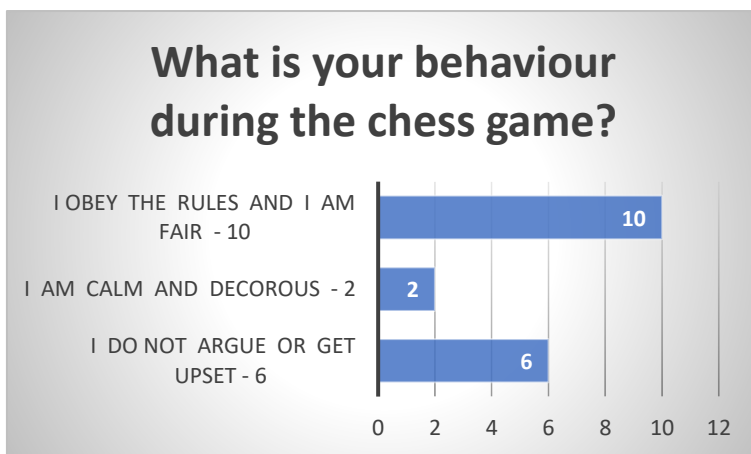
The answer of the students is very relevant; most of them responded “a great number” (66.67%).



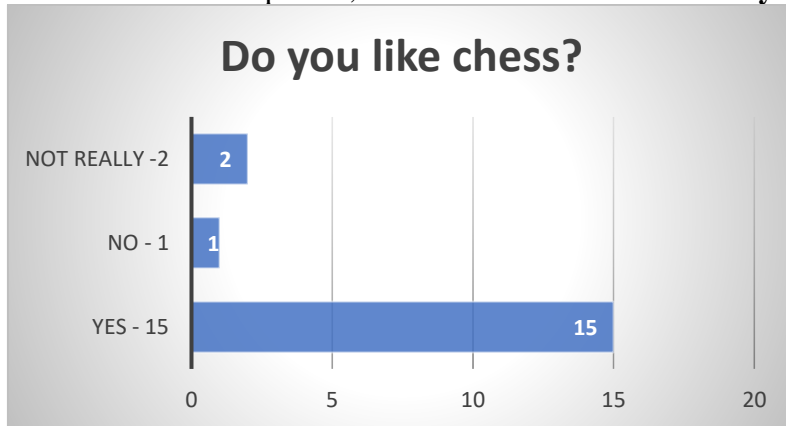
From the diagram above we see that almost 70% of students respond that chess is a form of socializing in their physical education classes.



The majority answer of the students was: they obey the rules, they are fair and calm.



The answers were as expected; most of the students answered **yes** (83%).



Conclusions

The game of chess used in physical education classes and during school breaks was aimed at socializing students. The students included in the present research were tested by applying the items of the questionnaire.

In terms of designing the game of chess, it is highly important to know well enough the cognitive and mental state of the students.

The school planning elaboration of the chess course is designed according to the age of the students and taking into account their ability to concentrate. The organization of the class of students is in pairs and groups, having the game of chess as a means of work.

After completing our research, we are able to offer you some ideas for the proper development of the game of chess:

- involving and co-opting students from all levels of education to practice chess;
- pay special attention to the use of chess in physical education classes in order to educate and eliminate agitation and nervousness in students;
- use the assessment system in the initial/predictive and final testing in accordance with school planning, if chess is an optional school subject;
- students know to appreciate themselves and respect their opponent;
- the game of chess should be practiced regularly, so that a Chess Club could be established in school.

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