

## PROFILE OF THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT TEACHER FROM PRE-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN CLUJ-NAPOCA

HĂISAN ANGEL-ALEX<sup>1</sup>

**ABSTRACT.** Being a teacher – „fundamental profession in a society, noble by it's nature, through which the persons that choose to practice it dedicate their lives to educate the new generations. They are persons that daily interact with children and guide them along their school life using their knowledge gained during professional and personal life”. The present study is part of an ampler research, that was designed to determine the quality of life of the physical education and sport teachers from pre-university education in Cluj-Napoca. We have considered to be imperative the outlining of the profile of our subjects in order to finish our initial study. For obtaining the profile of the physical education and sport teachers from pre-university education in Cluj-Napoca, we have divided the data obtained after the distribution of the questionnaires in five categories: 1. identity data; 2. educational background; 3. family, health and financial data; 4. human relations and society; 5. profession. We tend to believe that this profile has managed, on one hand, to familiarize the ones that are interested in our research with our subjects and on the other hand to present the advantages and disadvantages, in a general way, of this profession.

**Key-Words:** profile, physical education and sport teachers, pre-university education, Cluj-Napoca

**REZUMAT.** *Profilul profesorului de educație fizică și sport din învățământul preuniversitar din Cluj-Napoca.* A fi profesor – „profesie de bază într-o societate, nobilă prin natura sa, prin care persoanele care aleg să o practice își dedică viața educării noilor generații. Sunt persoane care interacționează zilnic cu copiii și care îi îndrumă pe parcursul vieții școlare apelând la cunoștințele dobândite în anii de studii dar și a celor de experiență atât la catedră cât și în viața personală”. Studiul de față face parte dintr-o cercetare mai amplă, pe care am demarat-o în vederea determinării nivelului calității vieții profesorilor de educație fizică și sport din învățământul preuniversitar din Cluj-Napoca. Am considerat imperativă conturarea unui profil al subiecților noștri în vederea finalizării demersului nostru inițial. În vederea obținerii profilului profesorului de educație fizică și sport

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<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania,  
haisanangel@hotmail.com

din învățământul preuniversitar din Cluj-Napoca am împărțit datele obținute prin aplicarea chestionarului în cinci categorii: 1. date identitare; 2. educația respondenților; 3. familia, sănătatea și bunăstarea financiară a respondenților; 4. relațiile interumane și societatea; 5. profesia respondenților. Credem că acest profil a reușit să realizeze o familiarizare cu subiecții, pentru cei care au fost interesați de cercetarea pe care am desfășurat-o, pe de o parte și pe de altă parte de a face cunoscute atât avantajele cât și dezavantajele, într-un mod general, ale acestei meserii.

**Cuvinte cheie:** profil, profesori de educație fizică și sport, învățământ preuniversitar, Cluj-Napoca.

## **Introduction**

Being a teacher – „fundamental profession in a society, noble by it's nature, through which the persons that choose to practice it dedicate their lives to educate the new generations. They are persons that daily interact with children and guide them along their school life using their knowledge gained during professional and personal life”. This was the answer given to me by one of my former teachers when I asked him how would he describe a teacher's job and it's attributions. The generations are changing and the concepts, unfortunately, along with them and instead of perfecting the educational system by giving a bigger attention to details and to what it is supposed to deliver the teaching process, it's finality, we consider that the ones involved are getting more and more superficial, due to the multitude of activities, real or fictive, in which they are involved in order to obtain a better evaluation and the eventual benefits that could come with it.

In order to achieve better results in education we consider that first of all we have to know with who we are working with, we have to get to know them, what are their expectations, goals, needs, complaints and how are their particular lives. That's why the present study is important and we consider it a small step towards achieving this goal.

## **Objectives**

The present study is part of an ampler research, that was designed to determine the quality of life of the physical education and sport teachers from pre-university education in Cluj-Napoca. The results of the study show that our subjects have an above the average quality of life compared to the general population of Romania (Haisan, 2012, in press). We have considered to be imperative the outlining of the profile of our subjects in order to finish our initial study. We tend to believe that this profile has managed, on one hand, to

familiarize the ones that are interested in our research with our subjects and on the other hand to present the advantages and disadvantages, in a general way, of this profession.

### **Methods and materials**

The present study is based on the data obtained for our initial study that was designed to determine the quality of life of our subjects. In order to collect the necessary data, we have distributed questionnaires to all physical education teachers from pre-university education from Cluj-Napoca in the period 16.11.2011 - 06.12.2011. From a total number of 149 questionnaires we have obtained a final number of 105 which means a 70,46% response rate. We further divided the obtained data, in order to outline the physical education and sport teacher profile, into five categories: 1. identity data; 2. educational background; 3. family, health and financial data; 4. human relations and society; 5. profession.

Onward we assigned to each one of the five categories the indicators from the questionnaire that were referring to them and continued by analyzing and discussing the data with the purpose of identifying the general features of our socio-professional category.

### **Results**

#### ***1. Identity data***

Regarding their gender, the study group was made up by 68% males and 32% females. The average age is situated in the proximity of 41,94 value, with 27,27% of the females being situated in the 55-59 years interval, close to the retiring age. The percent of the male subjects that are older than 55 is higher, with 28,17% and they are distributed on intervals from 55 to 71 years.

Teaching physical education and sport in schools still represents an option for graduates, although the financial retribution is low, 16% of our subjects having the age between 25-29.

Regarding their marital status, 68% have declared they are married and have representatives in all age groups beside the 20-24 years one. Most of them are concentrated in the following categories: 30-34, 35-39 and 55-59, 60-64 years old. Most of the unmarried persons can be found in the 25-29 years interval and they represent 2/3 of this interval. Taking into consideration this facts, we could ascertain an increasing age at which people get married, that could be due to the increasing life expectancy and the rapid development of the society and globalization. This could have a direct influence on the traditional meaning of a family. Although, if we analyze the 30-34 years interval we can see that the situation changes in comparison with the 25-29 interval, the number of the married persons increasing and the one of the unmarried persons decreasing. We can conclude that physical education and sport teachers are thinking to found a family around the age of 30.

We have observed a relatively high percentage of divorced subjects, that are almost evenly distributed on the age intervals from 30 to 59 years. From what some of them have declared, the cause of the divorce would be the very domain in which they activate.

Regarding their ethnicity, 71 persons declared they are Romanians, 12 Hungarians, and 21 preferred not to declare it.

We continue by analyzing the religion of our subjects. Most of them are Orthodox, 80%, followed by Roman-Catholic and Reformed Church each with 6%. The high percentage registered by the Orthodox religion is normal, taken into consideration that the National Statistics Institute in their report from 2008 show that 86,8% of Romania's population is Orthodox (INS, 2008). In the same report we can see that the next religions are Roman-Catholic with 4,7 % and Reformed Church with 3,2%, values that support our results.

85% of the subjects have been born in an urban area and most of them are born in Cluj county, followed by Mureș, Alba and Sălaj.

## ***2. Educational background***

Most of the subjects have finished their bachelor degree studies in Cluj-Napoca. On the second place we can find Bucharest with 17 persons. We have analyzed the age of the ones that have finished in Bucharest and we found out that all of them are over 44 years old and furthermore nine of them are born in Cluj county. So, although in Cluj-Napoca a Faculty of Physical Education and Sport existed since 1960 and had an interruption of it's courses only between 1983-1990 (FEFS, 2012), there were persons that preferred to follow the courses of the Academy of Physical Education and Sport in Bucharest.

Taking into consideration the high number of the persons that followed bachelor degree studies in Cluj-Napoca, we have decided to find out which were the institutions preferred by them. So, most of them have opted for the courses of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport from „Babes-Bolyai” University, but there were also ones that opted for the courses Faculty of Physical Education and Sport from the particular „Avram Iancu” University, which was established in 1992. There were also subjects that declared that they have bachelor degrees, besides the one in physical education and sport, in other fields. Another category which we have identified has double specialization, physical education and sport/kinetotherapy. Very few of them have master degrees.

„Babes-Bolyai” University stays in the top preferences also regarding the master degree studies, being followed by the Technical University, University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine and „Bogdan Voda” University. 9 persons are following in present the courses of a school, 65 declared that they don't and 31 haven't declared. Analyzing the persons that have declared that they follow courses in present, we have 1 person for bachelor degree, 3 for master degree, 1 for Ph.D and another four that follow various specialization courses.

We will continue with the specializations held by our subjects. Due to the fact that the question for this indicator was an opened type one and it didn't specifically requested to state their type of sport in which they held a specialization, many of the subjects declared the domain in which they held the specialization, namely „physical education and sports”. Although, from the ones that have declared the type of sport in which they have a specialization we have obtained some data. The sports in which they have a specialization are, in a decreasing order: athletics, football, basketball, handball, volleyball, skiing and swimming.

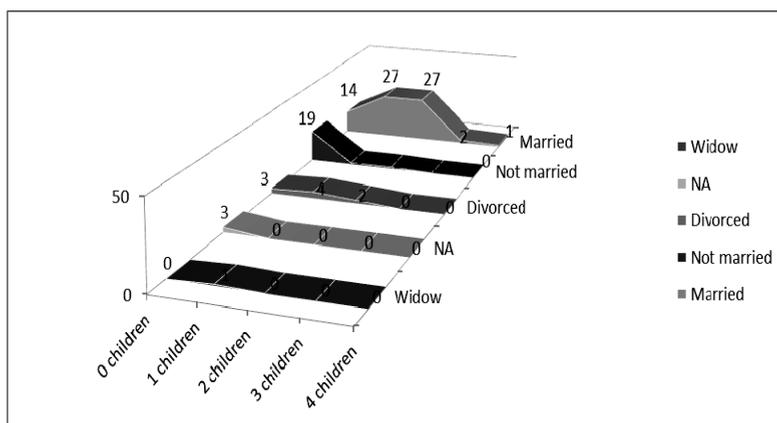
Regarding the management functions held in the institutions in which they activate, only two persons have declared that they are Assistant Director and one educational counselor. The rest of them didn't declared.

### 3. Family, health and financial data

35% of our subjects have declared that they have a „very happy” marriage and 36% a „happy” marriage. The Warwick University studied in 2005 the way the marriage affects physical and psichical health. They've concluded that a happy marriage generates a well being and prosperity state equivalent to an income of approximately 100.000 dollars annually. (Wilson & Oswald, 2005).

Regarding the number of children, predominant are the ones that don't have any, followed by the ones with one and two. Two persons from our whole study have 3 children and only one 4. The researchers from the Quality of Life Institute affirm that the „valuation of one children became a standard in society”, the model of families with one children becoming characteristic for all countries from the ex-communist block (Popescu, 2010).

We present in the graphic bellow the situation on the number of children in relation with the marital status of the subjects.



**Graphic 1.** - Number of children and marital status

Most of them declared that they own a car or an apartment, 5 declared they have stocks, 21 land and 10 persons preferred not to respond. Taking into consideration that in the countries from the ex-communist block the propriety of apartments is high, the percent obtained by us for the ones that declared they own an apartment, 70,47%, is situated near the results obtained by studies in this field. So, we can confirm the high level of propriety, which is probably due to the privatization of the social apartments in the 90's (Precupetu, 2006).

Three quarters of our subjects declared that they own a car. The car became a necessity because the distances that need to be covered in order to obtain financial resources, supplies, human interaction, etc., have increased. The percentage of the ones that have a car and an apartment is 48,57%.

Regarding how their incomes cover daily necessities, most of our subjects fall into the two middle categories „basic needs, but with great effort” and „only basic necessities”, summing almost 2 thirds of our study group.

Only 28% declared that they have a second job and 27% have chosen not to express their opinion. The functions held at the second job are for most of them related to sports, like coaches, instructors, therapists, but there are some that do have other jobs like building manager, cab drivers, cosmetics distributors, movers or financial consultants.

In the top preferences of spending their free time, we have, with values greater than 10% activities like „walking in nature”, „reading”, „spending time with the family” and „movies, TV”.

Regarding the number of holidays spent in the last 5 years into a resort from Romania or abroad, the highest percentage is recorded by the ones that managed to spend it every year with 25%. These are followed by the 20% that didn't had the chance to spend any holiday and the 45% that managed to spend one, two or three holidays in the last five years. We also had cases with 10 or even 15 holidays spent in the last five years, but this are isolated ones. In another study we have discovered a close connection between how subjects evaluate how incomes cover their basic necessities and the number of holidays spent (Haisan & Bresfelean, 2012, submitted for review).

28 of our respondents haven't declared if they have or not health problems, 57 declared that they don't have any health problems and 20 of them suffer from various affections.

The will to emigrate among our subjects records high values as 38% of them would like to emigrate. In which regards the country of destination, on first place we have the United States Of America with 27%, on the second place we have an imprecise destination „anywhere”, which we have considered as a desperate cry for help in the face of the more and more concerning problems of the society in which we live in. On the next places we can find Canada with 16% and United Kingdom with 7%, as we can see all top destinations are

english speaking countries. We have identified in another study which are the factors that influence the decision to emigrate. These are of social and financial nature (Haisan & Bresfelean, 2012, submitted for review).

The last indicator from this group refers to achievements in life. 44 persons declared that they are „so and so satisfied” with what they’ve accomplished in their lives so far. These are followed by the ones that have declared themselves „satisfied” with 41 persons and by the „very satisfied” ones with 16 persons. This indicator gives the one that is interviewed the possibility to evaluate his accomplishments in life so far and we must bear in mind that there is a tendency to exaggerate in order to increase self esteem. We intend to believe, although there is this tendency, that our subjects managed to give themselves a fair evaluation due to the fact that most of them are concentrated in the middle categories.

#### ***4. Human relations and society***

We begin by analyzing the way our subjects evaluate the relation between family and professional life. Most of them, 85 persons, consider that this relation is an harmonious one, 5 declared that isn’t and 15 didn’t express their opinion. Among the ones that declared that it isn’t harmonious we can find the ones that declared that their profession was the principal cause for their divorce.

We would like to underline the difference between the teachers from Sports Program High School and other high schools. The ones from Sports Program High School, due to their busy schedule, must make sacrifices regarding their family life and not only, that could lead in time to problems like solitude or even worst, alcohol dependence.

We continue by analyzing how our subjects perceive their relations with relatives, colleagues and friends. 8 persons preferred not to respond and from the 97 ones that did, only one evaluated them as being bad.

The right to vote was exercised by 86 persons and in which regards the interest for politics we have 84 persons that aren’t interested, 14 that are interested and 7 that didn’t confirmed.

The last indicator for this category is represented by the evaluation of the Romania’s society trajectory. 79% of our subjects considered it to be „bad”, 5% „good”, 5% „neither good, nor bad” and 11% didn’t express their opinion. Our results coincide with the ones obtained by the Quality of Life Institute, in which they outline a new deterioration of the Romanian’s life quality. A majority of 74% appreciate negatively the living conditions from 2010 in comparison with 2009, by considering them „worse” or „much worse” (Margeian et al., 2010).

### **5. Profession**

Regarding the number of years of activity, the average situates around the value of 17,32 and the maximum number of years of service for a physical education and sport teacher in our study is 44 years meanwhile the lowest is one year. 87% of our respondents declared that they don't regret the profession that they've chosen, 4% didn't express their opinion and 9% are regretting.

Physical education and sport teachers evaluate the educational system, in general, as being one of a low quality and are influenced in taking this decision by financial reasons, gender and marital status (Haisan & Bresfelean, 2012).

The financial retribution of the profession is considered to be „unsatisfactory” by 83%, while 12% haven't confirmed. None of the subjects considers that the financial retribution is „very good” 1% consider that is „good” and 4% „satisfactory”. The satisfactions offered by the job are for most of them of spiritual and professional nature, only one person declaring that they are financial.

38% of the respondents consider that their profession is „under evaluated” in the national educational system, 23% that it is „appreciated”, 9% „neither appreciated, nor under evaluated”, 24% didn't express their opinion and 6% declared that they don't know.

The interest for physical education and sport in Romania is low, given that studies, like the one developed by the Endocrinology Institute C.I. Parhon, show that approximately 60% of Romanians have weight problems and 30% are obese (INE C.I. Parhon, 2009). In school, where theoretically are laid the foundations of a physical culture, the domain of physical education and sport is considered to be one of a low importance, being put together with music and arts at „etc.” as teachers themselves affirm.

### **Conclusions**

We can affirm that following our approach to outline the profile of our socio-professional category, we have obtained the necessary data to finalize our study.

In the following lines we present the profile of the physical education and sport teachers from pre-university schools in Cluj-Napoca.

They are mostly men, with an age averaging 41,94. The majority are married and are Orthodox born in Cluj-Napoca.

They have finished their bachelor's degree studies at the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport from „Babes-Bolyai” University. The master degrees are obtained at the same institution as the bachelor ones. A small number of our subjects follows courses in present. Regarding the sports in which they held specializations we haven't obtained relevant data due to the unclarity of the question. 2 persons out of 105 have managing functions in the institutions in which they activate.

Most of them have a „happy” and „very happy” marriage. Families with one and two children register the same values and the number of the ones that are divorced raises some questions being situated around 10%. The majority of them have an apartment and a car in propriety, the percentage of the ones that have both being situated around 50%. Regarding the incomes most of them are situated in the middle categories „basic needs, but with great effort” and „only basic necessities”. A little over a quarter have declared that they have a second job. Physical education and sport teachers spend their free time taking walks in nature, reading or with their families. A quarter of them managed to spend their holiday every year for the past five years into a resort from Romania or abroad, while 20% of them spend none. More than half declared that they don't have health problems and they practice with regularity a physical activity. 38% would like to emigrate, preferring english speaking countries but also an imprecise location „anywhere”, which we saw like a cry for help in face of the stringent problems of our present society. Life accomplishments are situated at a middle towards superior level for most of our respondents.

The relation between family and profession is considered to be harmonious, with differences between the teachers from Sports Program High School and other high schools. The relations with colleagues, relatives and friends are very good. Our subjects are persons that have voted, don't have an interest in politics and evaluate the trajectory of the Romanian society as being a „bad” one.

Average number of years of activity is situated around 17,32. Only a small number of subjects regret their profession and a large number evaluate the national education system as having a low quality. Most of them consider the financial retribution „unsatisfactory” and have only „spiritual” and „professional” satisfactions. They consider that their profession is underrated in the in the educational system.

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