

PHYSICAL ACTIIVTIES IN ALTERNATIVE ENVIORNEMENT IMPLEMENTED AT PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES – CASE OF MACEDONIAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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Introduction

The quality of physical and health education process is determined by many factors. Despite the quality of teacher work and curriculum design, availability of adequate material facilities and resources is one of the key elements of quality delivery of PE. The lack of material resources for realization of quality PE teaching process is one of the main problems not only in our, but also in other European countries (Eurydice, 2013). Finding different solutions for implementation of physical activities in alternative environments could be some of possible solutions to overcome the existing problems with material bases.

Methods: The purpose of the study was to determine the current situation with material facilities for sport and physical education in our primary schools, available sport bases in local community and conditions for outdoor activities in order to achieve quality PE in elementary stage of primary education. The quantitative analyses, analyses of documentation and analyses of specialized literature sources are used. The current condition with material facilities for PE classes in primary schools were determined using specially designed questionnaire, applied on 134 primary school classroom teachers from 15 primary schools in five different cities in Republic of Macedonia. The questionnaire was comprised from five questions related with availability to use indoor and outdoor facilities, possibilities for free access to public playgrounds etc. The document analyses used following criteria: structure of thematic unions; spatial requirement described in guidelines; possibilities to implement outdoor activities or to use other school facilities – school yards, corridors, classroom. The analyses on specialized literature focused on studies related to possibilities of Macedonian nature resources for outdoor activities and sports, were done.

Results

The results from survey give information about current state with available facilities for PE in schools. According the results, 18% of teachers declare that their school doesn't have sport hall. These schools are mainly located in rural areas. Furthermore, asked about the access and conditions of use of school sport halls, 61% of teachers stated that they can use it but sharing the space with pupils from other grades from classroom stage. Additional 19% of teachers stated that they share the terms with higher grades (6th – to 9th) and 20% of teachers declare that even their school has sport facilities, they cannot use it. Regarded the access to outdoor facilities for sport, 90% of teachers declared that they use such facilities that belong to their schools. Other 10% of teachers use facilities that are common property of the school and other institutions or public property. The availability of parks, public playgrounds or hiking paths near schools for purposes of PHE classes are available for 52% of interviewed teachers, partly available for 22% of teachers and not available for 26% of them. Further analyses showed that access to such facilities is determined by the location of the schools. Namely, the teachers that stated that have limited access or no access to such facilities represents schools that are located in city center in areas that are completely urbanized and with no green spaces or parks.

The analyses of current PHE curriculum showed that current PHE curriculum is comprised from compulsory and optional thematic unions. Thematic unions named as: movement for proper motor development and physical preparation, movements for body shaping, basics of athletics, basics of gymnastics, movement games, fundamentals of dances and bases of sport games – basketball, handball, volleyball and football are established as compulsory for the elementary classroom stage of primary education (1st – 5th grade). Analyzed from the aspect of requirements for their realization, in general they should be realized in indoor sport halls. Some contents from basics of athletics, movement games and bases of sport games are recommended to be realized outdoor, in school yard. On the other hand, optional thematic unions are mainly realized outdoor. They are realized in cooperation with parents and local community and their realization is related with possibilities of local environment, natural

resources and material facilities in cooperation with local community. The optional thematic unions are same for all five grades in primary education. They are following: activities in water, activities on snow, driving bicycles, rollers; activities in nature - hiking; mini tennis; badminton; school sport competitions.

The analyses of referent literature suggested on great possibility for outdoor activities and sports. Namely, Macedonia is determined to be mostly mountain country with many hills located very near to cities. This natural landscape offer great possibilities for outdoor activities such as hiking, running, cycling, swimming, skiing and other activities (Dimitrov et al, 2018).

Discussion and conclusion

Based on previous analyses, it could be concluded that current PHE curriculum is mainly oriented on activities that use indoor facilities. On the other hand, the structure of nature in Macedonia gives many possibilities for outdoor sports. Considering these facts and the lack of material facilities for sport in schools, the focus on PHE activities should be transferred from indoor to outdoor. The possibilities of local community and nature (near parks, open playgrounds, thematic parks for driving bicycles, rollers, open – air fitness playgrounds, open – air tennis and badminton courts) could be successfully used for the purposes of PHE. Additionally, the benefit from such use will not be just implementation of different contents of dynamical PE activities in nature and open air but will be also beneficial from the aspect of holistic and integrative learning (Popeska & Jovanova, 2016).

References

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