

**FAMILIES' VIEWS ON PHYSICAL EDUCATION: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY****A VISÃO DAS FAMÍLIAS SOBRE A EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA: UM ESTUDO DESCRITIVO**José María López-Díaz<sup>1</sup>, José David Carnicero Pérez<sup>1</sup>, and Nerea Felgueras Custodio<sup>1</sup><sup>1</sup>King Juan Carlos University, Madrid, Spain.**RESUMO**

É evidente que a educação física é considerada uma disciplina obrigatória e como tal deve ser rotulada como uma disciplina importante, mas esta perspectiva nem sempre é partilhada pela comunidade educativa. O objectivo deste estudo era explorar a percepção das famílias com crianças matriculadas no ensino obrigatório sobre o tema da educação física. Para o efeito, foi administrado um questionário ad hoc, constituído por 15 perguntas, duas das quais de natureza sócio-demográfica e as restantes respostas eram do tipo Likert-. O estudo é um estudo não-experimental, descritivo, de corte transversal. A amostra do estudo consistiu num total de 120 respondentes (M=40,28 anos; SD=6,95). Os participantes foram seleccionados através de amostragem sem fins lucrativos. Os resultados mostraram uma falta de conhecimento sobre o tema da educação física, o que implica que existem opiniões diversas sobre o funcionamento e o objectivo proposto para este tema. No entanto, a educação física deve ser vista como um assunto essencial para o desenvolvimento integral do estudante.

**Palavras-chave:** Educação física. Desporto. Educação. Família. Escola.

**ABSTRACT**

It is clear that physical education is considered a compulsory subject and as such should be labelled as an important subject, but this perspective is not always shared by the educational community. The aim of this study was to explore the perception of families with children enrolled in compulsory education about the subject of physical education. To this end, an ad hoc questionnaire was administered, consisting of 15 questions, two of which were socio-demographic in nature and the rest of which were Likert-type responses. The study is a non-experimental, descriptive, cross-sectional study. The study sample consisted of a total of 120 respondents (M=40.28 years; SD= 6.95). Participants were selected through non-probability purposive sampling. The results showed a lack of knowledge regarding the subject of physical education which implies that there are diverse opinions about the functioning and the proposed aim of this subject. However, physical education should be seen as an essential subject for the integral development of the student.

**Keywords:** Physical education. Sport. Education, Family. School

**Introduction**

Physical education can be considered as the set of different physical exercise practices oriented towards an educational purpose<sup>1</sup>. For their part, Arévalo et al.<sup>2</sup> point out the following reasons why it is important for children to do physical education on a daily basis: it helps to achieve adequate development in all motor skills and abilities, to acquire healthy habits and the ability to make active use of free time, to obtain health and growth benefits and, furthermore, it helps children to interact and socialise. In this sense, schools can serve as environments that help to encourage the creation of healthy habits and lifestyles.

Today, society must aspire to achieve an inclusive context in all its facets<sup>3</sup>. Educational centres can serve as a fundamental pillar to work on this content, because in this case, in order to talk about inclusion, it is essential to be able to count on the participation of all educational agents, including families, teachers and students, this perspective will allow to reach different contexts and situations. For example, the continuous exchange of information between the school and the family will make it possible to work on the different educational needs of students. This, in turn, increases the possibility of establishing a continuous educational intervention avoiding a possible rupture between families and schools. In addition, it allows parents to monitor more closely the teaching-learning process of their children. However, the belief that the educational role of families should come mainly

from the home is still very present in some cases, although it is true that, increasingly, families want to be involved in the educational process in the classroom<sup>4</sup>.

The collaboration between both educational agents, family and school, should be important because in both cases, the path that should lead to the student's success takes place. Education begins first in the family and then it is the school that joins this process. Therefore, it is important that there is continuous communication between family and school. Moreover, when this happens, students perceive the involvement of families in the school as a favourable element, as it provides them with the necessary security to work in the academic and social spheres<sup>5</sup>.

For their part, various studies indicate that schools that have a successful educational project are those that have family participation within it<sup>6</sup>. Furthermore, this participation not only helps to improve the well-being of schools, but also helps to achieve better learning outcomes for students<sup>7</sup>.

When reference is made to the positive relationship that should exist between the family and the school, it is directed towards the need for mutual knowledge and the possibility of sharing certain common educational criteria that help the student's development process. However, it is not always possible to establish a profitable and stable relationship between both educational agents. This may be due to different reasons. Families may feel inferior due to the possible academic level they may show, thus influencing the possibility of participating in the planning and development of tasks and proposals of the centre. Lack of time is another factor that can affect the participation of families in the centres. The incorporation into the world of work or the increase in single-parent families prevents a more detailed attention to the student's academic performance<sup>8</sup>.

Motivation is another component to be considered within the student's academic performance. In the subject of physical education, motivation becomes an essential aspect to understand the various reasons that lead students to make an effort to learn and to achieve success<sup>9</sup>.

Moreno and Hellín<sup>10</sup> concluded that students were more interested in taking Physical Education because of its usefulness and health effects. Since its inclusion in the education curriculum, the subject of Physical Education has been associated with the concept of health, which should be considered a priority concept<sup>11</sup>. This relationship has been increasing in recent times as a consequence of the lifestyle in today's societies. In this sense, action measures aimed at health promotion and focused on education are proposed<sup>12</sup>.

As the school is a strategic place that helps to promote healthy activities and spread participation in physical activities<sup>13</sup>, this can help students to acquire a series of habits and customs that will keep them participating in physical activities into adulthood.

Teachers and professionals dedicated to teaching Physical Education must be able to design and develop tasks that encourage motivation in students in order to improve this problem. It is at an early age when it is still possible to shape and modify behaviours that help to generate healthy habits and improve eating habits.

For Santos<sup>11</sup>, it is necessary for teachers to be aware of and assume the responsibility of educating for health, training responsible and independent people to take care of their health. The aim should be to propose tasks that ensure balanced growth and development, promoting an active life that guarantees participation in physical and sporting activities outside the school.

Physical education should manifest this desire to promote quality education, support health-related programmes or increase physical exercise<sup>14</sup>. At this point, in order to understand the relationship that can exist between school and family, it is necessary to know what students and their families think about the meaning and usefulness of the subject of physical education. The project entitled "physical education for the whole family" tries to

bring physical education closer to the current context, refuting the association with the gymnastics of yesteryear. This proposal aims to bring families closer to the school so that they get to know and respect the subject of physical education and become involved in it<sup>15</sup>.

But how do families feel about physical education? If they really believe that physical activity is of benefit to their children, they should be highly involved in promoting this type of activity. Studies such as Adarve et al.<sup>16</sup> and Burgueño et al.<sup>17</sup> show precisely the importance of family involvement in physical activity. The attitude that parents may show towards sports practice can influence their children's participation in physical-sport activities<sup>18,19</sup>. On the other hand, Cueto-Martín et al.<sup>20</sup> also states the need for shared physical activity between parents and children in order to give it greater importance. This position can help to understand the importance that physical education can have. The aim of this research is to find out the opinion and the level of perception that families have of the subject of physical education in three public schools in a city in the south of the Community of Madrid.

## Methods

### *Design and Participants*

The target population for the questionnaire were families with children enrolled in compulsory education, i.e. primary and secondary education, in three public schools in a city in the south of the Community of Madrid (Spain), who showed interest in participating and who had WhatsApp and an Internet connection.

The study is a non-experimental, descriptive and cross-sectional study. The study sample consisted of a total of 120 people (M=40.28 years; SD= 6.95). The participants were selected through non-probabilistic purposive sampling. The questionnaire was answered by 50% of fathers and 50% of mothers. Participation was voluntary and the method used ensured anonymity and confidentiality of the data obtained at all times.

### *Instruments*

The instrument used for this study was an ad hoc questionnaire. The questionnaire was created using the Google Form application. This allowed a link to be generated so that those who had an Internet connection could respond. This questionnaire was administered via the WhatsApp application to families and different groups of parents with children who met the above-mentioned profile. The questionnaire had to be answered by one of the responsible members of the participating family nucleus.

The questionnaire that was administered consisted of 15 questions. The first two questions were of a socio-demographic nature: questions related to the age and sex of the family member responding. The remaining 13 questions were oriented towards the level of knowledge and importance shown by the families towards physical education; the relationship between the family and the physical education teachers; the opinion held with respect to the organisation of the subject and the result of motivation with respect to physical education. The type of response was a Likert-type scale with the possibility of answering only one option. This tool has a Cronbach's alpha of .855. This questionnaire allowed us to collect information about the opinion and perception of families regarding the subject of physical education.

### *Statistical analysis*

The statistical package SPSS version 25 for Windows was used for the analysis of the results. In order to carry out the research, the normality of the variables was analysed using the K-S test (Kolmogorov-Smirnov). As a normal distribution was not observed, a bivariate analysis was carried out with the aim of collecting descriptive data using the cross-table

system and analysing the results between the different variables.

## Results

The results of the questionnaire are described below. It should be noted that most of the participants are 42 years old (11.7%) and 47 years old (10%) respectively. However, in order to make a more precise analysis, the age block has been divided into intervals. In this case, the majority of the participants (25.8%) are in the age range between 41 and 45 years. This is followed by the age bracket between 46 and 50 years with 20.8%. The lowest percentage is 5%, representing the block of families above 51 years of age. In addition, half of the participants are men and half are women, which will allow us to analyse and compare the perspective that fathers and mothers have on the subject of physical education.

Regarding the level of importance given by families to the subject of physical education (table 1), 39.17% consider it to be as important as the rest of the subjects. This figure contrasts with the 45% who consider physical education to be of little or no importance. Moreover, the percentage of fathers (8.33%) who consider physical education to be the most important subject is slightly higher than that of mothers (7.5%).

**Table 1.** Level of importance of Physical Education in relation to other subjects

	Sex	Age of parent						Total
		-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	+51	
<i>Not important</i>	F	0	1.67	1.67	2.5	1.67	0	7.51
<i>A little important</i>		0	4.17	1.67	3.33	5	0	14.17
<i>Equally important</i>		2.5	5	3.33	5	4.17	0	20
<i>More important</i>		0.83	0	2.5	1.67	2.5	0.83	8.33
<i>Not important</i>	M	0	1.67	0.83	3.33	1.67	0	7.5
<i>A little important</i>		3.33	2.5	4.17	3.33	0.83	1.67	15.83
<i>Equally important</i>		1.67	2.5	4.17	5.83	4.17	0.83	19.17
<i>More important</i>		1.67	0.83	1.67	0.83	0.83	1.67	7.5

**Notes:** Result in percentages (%); F= Father; M= Mother

**Source:** authors

As for the level of knowledge of the content taught in the subject of physical education (table 2), only 9.15% of the participants admit to knowing all of the content. 44.99% admitted to knowing a few things about the content of the subject, this being the highest figure, and 15% admitted to knowing nothing at all. Moreover, the percentage of fathers who know all or part of the content of the subject is higher than that of mothers, 23.34% compared to 16.65%.

**Table 2.** Level of knowledge of content taught in physical education

	Sex	Age of parent						Total
		-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	+51	
<i>I know nothing</i>	F	-	1.67	-	1.67	3.33	0.83	7.5
<i>I know few things</i>		1.67	3.33	4.17	4.17	5.83	-	19.17
<i>I know some things</i>		1.67	5	3.33	4.17	4.17	-	18.34
<i>I know everything</i>		-	0.83	1.67	2.5	-	-	5
<i>I know nothing</i>	M	-	1.67	0.83	3.33	1.67	-	7.5
<i>I know few things</i>		5.83	5	7.5	5.83	0.83	0.83	25.82
<i>I know some things</i>		0.83	-	1.67	3.33	4.17	2.5	12.5
<i>I know everything</i>		-	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83	4.15

Notes: Result in percentages (%); F= Father; M= Mother

Source: authors

33.3% responded that grades in physical education were important. In contrast, the lowest figure was that grades were the most important (12.5%). It is striking that 30.02% believe that grades are not important. In addition, 7.5% of fathers considered grades in physical education to be very important, compared to 5% of mothers. Regarding the time devoted to each of the physical education sessions (table 3), more than half of the respondents (62.5%) indicated that one hour is enough. In no case, no one answered that physical education was not necessary or that 30 minutes was enough. On the other hand, there are more fathers than mothers who consider that sessions should last longer than one hour, 10% compared to 7.49%.

**Table 3.** Time needed to dedicate to a physical education session

	Sex	Age of parent						Total
		-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	+51	
<i>It would not be necessary to do physical education</i>	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>30 minutes</i>		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>45 minutes</i>		-	3.33	2.5	2.5	2.5	0.83	11.66
<i>1 hour</i>		2.5	5	5	6.67	9.17	-	28.34
<i>More than 1 hour</i>		0.83	2.5	1.67	3.33	1.67	-	10
<i>It would not be necessary to do physical education</i>	M	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>30 minutes</i>		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>45 minutes</i>		1.67	-	2.5	2.5	0.83	0.83	8.33
<i>1 hour</i>		5	6.67	5.83	8.33	5.83	2.5	34.16
<i>More than 1 hour</i>		-	0.83	2.5	2.5	0.83	0.83	7.49

Notes: Result in percentages (%); F= Father; M= Mother

Source: authors

Regarding the number of days per week that physical education should be available (table 4), all participants considered it necessary to have physical education. In this case, 37.49% of the participants indicated that three days were sufficient, which was the highest response. The lowest percentages were those who indicated one day and five days for physical education, 15.84% and 17.5% respectively. Moreover, with three days being the most repeated answer, mothers were the most frequent respondents, 19.99% compared to

17.5% of fathers.

**Table 4.** Number of days needed for physical education in a week

	Sex	Age of parent					Total	
		-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50		+51
<i>It would not be necessary to do physical education</i>		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>1 day</i>	F	-	1.67	-	1.67	2.5	-	5.84
<i>2 days</i>		1.67	3.33	5	4.17	4.17	-	18.34
<i>3 days</i>		0.83	5	2.5	4.17	5	-	17.5
<i>4 days</i>		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>5 days</i>		0.83	0.83	1.67	2.5	1.67	0.83	8.33
<i>It would not be necessary to do physical education</i>		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>1 day</i>	M	-	2.5	0.83	4.17	1.67	0.83	10
<i>2 days</i>		1.67	1.67	3.33	2.5	0.83	0.83	10.83
<i>3 days</i>		3.33	2.5	5	5.83	2.5	0.83	19.99
<i>4 days</i>		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>5 days</i>		1.67	0.83	1.67	0.83	2.5	1.67	9.17

**Notes:** Result in percentages (%); F= Father; M= Mother

**Source:** authors

On the other hand, almost all respondents (48.33% agreed and 42.49% strongly agreed) were in favour of the school offering physical and sports activities outside school hours in order to increase the number of hours complementary to the subject of physical education. However, 9.18% disagreed with this proposal. In this position, fathers and mothers responded very similarly.

Moreover, 36.66% said that the figure of the physical education teacher becomes a very important element in the teaching of the subject and 28.34% considered it to be the most important. However, there are no family members who consider that the role of the teacher is not important at all. Once again, fathers (15.83%) say that the teacher is the most important element for the functioning of the subject, compared to 12.51% of mothers. The total number of participants agreed (45%) or strongly agreed (55%) that families and physical education teachers should be coordinated for the students' learning. At the same time, they consider that both agents should use physical education and sport to raise awareness and educate in values and get involved in the process of generating healthy habits and lifestyles.

As to whether physical education helps to generate healthy habits and lifestyles, the total number of responses was very similar between the two, with 50.84% agreeing and 49.15% strongly agreeing. None of the respondents considered that physical education does not help to generate healthy habits and lifestyles. Moreover, the percentage of responses among fathers and mothers is practically the same.

On the other hand, just over half of those surveyed (50.83%) did not consider that the time spent in physical education sessions was sufficient to generate healthy habits and lifestyles. If we add to this figure those who strongly disagreed (13.33%), the result indicates that well over half (64.16%) considered that the time spent in physical education sessions is insufficient to generate healthy habits and lifestyles. In this case, more mothers were in this position (32.5%) compared to 31.66% of fathers.

As for motivation, 34.17% considered it to be very important when assessing students' academic performance (table 5). This is followed by 26.67% who believe that motivation is not at all important. When considering motivation as the most important element, fathers (11.66%) gave it more importance than mothers (9.99%). However, the distribution of responses in terms of taking all the importance away from it was very similar (13.33% versus 13.34%).

**Table 5.** Student motivation is an element to be taken into account when assessing academic performance

	Sex	Age of parent						Total
		-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	+51	
<i>Not important</i>	F	0.83	2.5	2.5	4.17	3.33	-	13.33
<i>A little important</i>		-	0.83	-	-	0.83	0.83	2.49
<i>Equally important</i>		-	2.5	0.83	1.67	1.67	-	6.67
<i>More important</i>		1.67	2.5	3.33	4.17	4.17	-	15.84
<i>It is the most important</i>		0.83	2.5	2.5	2.5	3.33	-	11.66
<i>Not important</i>	M	1.67	3.33	2.5	4.17	1.67	-	13.34
<i>A little important</i>		-	-	-	-	0.83	0.83	1.66
<i>Equally important</i>		1.67	-	2.5	2.5	-	-	6.67
<i>More important</i>		2.5	3.33	5.83	4.17	1.67	0.83	18.33
<i>It is the most important</i>		0.83	0.83	-	2.5	3.33	2.5	9.99

**Notes:** Result in percentages (%); F= Father; M= Mother; Source: Own elaboration

**Source:** authors

Continuing with the dimension of motivation (Table 6), more than half of the participants (55.84%) indicated that they disagreed that students are motivated to take physical education. Furthermore, the percentage of males and females who responded, totally disagreeing that most of the students are motivated to take physical education, is equal (1.66%), while the position of agreeing is very similar (4.16% of fathers versus 3.33% of mothers).

**Table 6.** Most students are motivated to take the subject of physical education

	Sex	Age of parent						Total
		-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	+51	
<i>Strongly disagree</i>	F	-	0.83	-	0.83	-	-	1.66
<i>Disagree</i>		0.83	6.67	5	7.5	5.83	-	25.83
<i>Agree</i>		2.5	3.33	3.33	3.33	5	0.83	18.32
<i>Strongly Agree</i>		-	-	0.83	0.83	2.5	-	4.16
<i>Strongly disagree</i>	M	-	-	0.83	0.83	-	-	1.66
<i>Disagree</i>		5	4.17	6.67	7.5	4.17	2.5	30.01
<i>Agree</i>		1.67	2.5	3.33	5	2.5	-	15
<i>Strongly Agree</i>		-	0.83	-	-	0.83	1.67	3.33

**Notes:** Result in percentages (%); F= Father; M= Mother; Source: Own elaboration

**Source:** authors

## Discussion

According to data collected by the World Health Organization<sup>21</sup>, just over 80% of adolescents did not complete the recommended amount of physical exercise and sport in 2016. Physical education can serve as a complement to help promote continued physical exercise, ensure the minimum amount of time established by the WHO and provide healthy lifestyle habits<sup>21</sup>. However, according to the survey data, just under half of the participants believe that physical education is unimportant or unimportant. This may seem counterproductive as, despite knowledge of the benefits that physical education can bring, studies show that physical exercise and sport are declining as students get older<sup>22</sup>. According to Gambau<sup>23</sup>, educational administrations and the policies applied are far from minimising the problems affecting the quality of life and health of young people and adolescents. The level of marginality to which the subject is subjected with respect to other subjects, the little consideration it has in the educational status and the little time allocated to it within the school timetable<sup>24</sup> means that families may not consider physical education to be one of the most important subjects<sup>23</sup>. This position contrasts with that of Megías<sup>25</sup>, who states that students should be the first to express the importance of taking a subject such as physical education. The students' conception of the meaning and usefulness of physical education will also allow families to have a more objective opinion about the functioning and importance of the subject<sup>25</sup> and the other way round<sup>18,19</sup>. In this sense, Contreras et al.<sup>26</sup> reported in their study that students consider the subject of physical education to be important, although this level of importance is not as evident as other subjects. This may be in line with the importance that families may attach to physical education grades.

On the other hand, in order for families to know the content and functioning of a subject, it is necessary for them to participate in the educational community and show interest in finding out about it. This stance will determine the level of involvement they may have in the subject. The results of the survey showed that more than half of the parents had a general lack of knowledge of the content of physical education. For many years, the content worked on in physical education has been oriented towards physical preparation work aimed at sports and competitive performance<sup>27</sup>. Currently, the approach to the subject is not based on this premise, which is why the percentage of parents who have stated that they know the content of physical education is very low. The previous approach to physical education was rejected by several experts who understood that the subject was part of the education system and that the objective should focus on the integral formation of the student, eliminating specifically physical training of the body and competitive performance<sup>27</sup>. Furthermore, the fact that the subject of physical education includes content dedicated to sport does not necessarily mean that it should make use of methodologies that are specific to sporting competition. And this is something that can be confusing for fathers, which is why the percentage of responses regarding the level of importance they attribute to physical education is higher than that of mothers. In this case, physical education should seek more pedagogical goals, approaching the different sporting practices from a sport initiation perspective and with an educational component.

Moreover, as mentioned above, one of the objectives of physical education is to ensure a certain minimum number of hours in order to achieve the recommendations of the WHO<sup>21</sup>. Several studies have shown that one hour a day of physical exercise and sport will decrease the rate of obesity and increase people's quality of life.

In this regard, most participants also recognise that one hour per session is sufficient, but do not agree with the WHO on the number of days per week. Most parents say that two or three days is sufficient, while the WHO states that one hour of physical exercise per day is sufficient<sup>21</sup>. Arévalo et al.<sup>2</sup> list several reasons why children should engage in physical



education on a daily basis, for example, to achieve an adequate development of motor skills, obtain health benefits, generate healthy lifestyle habits or even help children to interact and socialise, among others. This is where the dilemma of how much time and performance is spent on the task can come in. It has been shown that the time spent in physical education classes is insufficient<sup>28</sup> and that it is necessary to carry out physical activity and sport outside school hours.

According to Gambau<sup>23</sup>, physical education in Spain may seem to be stuck in a rut and, furthermore, this perspective does not seem to be worrying, as the policies adopted in the field of physical education are not accompanied by the recommendations set out by international organisations. In order to make up for these shortcomings, the aim is to encourage competitive and institutionalised sporting practices, trying to cover the objectives worked on in quality physical education. In this sense, it is worth reflecting that sporting practice can also be accompanied by an educational character with great pedagogical potential<sup>29</sup>.

When school hours end, there is still the possibility of continuing to practice physical exercise and sport, although not all centres offer this type of tasks due, among other things, to the possible low demand either because they do not want to participate or because their interests are oriented towards other types of occupations. In this sense, almost all the participants agreed on the need to offer physical and sporting activities in addition to school time. If sport is carried out in an educational centre as a complementary activity, this practice should be oriented towards a more educational perspective, providing a pedagogical space<sup>30</sup>.

Following this policy, school sport can arouse great interest due to the great educational potential it represents<sup>31</sup>. This is where it must be made clear that simple participation is not enough and that teachers must be aware of the values they transmit and of educating for health care Santos<sup>11</sup>, which is why the vast majority of participants consider that the figure of the teacher is no longer important or the most important.

Both physical education and sports have a specific weight in the education of students. This is recognised in the Organic Law amending the Organic Law on Education<sup>32</sup>, which insists on the importance of physical activity at school. This position is due to the fact that physical education goes beyond providing theoretical-practical content, since physical education classes should be oriented towards a transdisciplinary approach, that is, the objectives should be directed towards a holistic vision of the human being<sup>33</sup>. From this dimension, biological, psychological and social aspects must be considered throughout the whole process of human development. Physical education will help students to acquire awareness of their own body, which will allow them to develop motor and coordination skills, improve their physical condition, promote healthy habits, development of social skills, etc.<sup>33</sup>, as well as promoting other types of values that go beyond participation in the task itself, such as trust, respect, solidarity and cooperation, among others<sup>34</sup>. All this is transformed into academic and personal growth. However, despite underlining the importance of physical education, Peña et al.<sup>35</sup> remind us of the need not to neglect the other academic areas, as they are all important in the integral formation of the student.

On the other hand, the total number of participants has stated that they agree or totally agree that families and physical education teachers should be coordinated and become an active part of the commitment to physical exercise and sport, knowing that the time invested in physical education classes is insufficient<sup>28</sup>. According to Baños<sup>36</sup>, in order to avoid future abandonment, it is necessary to create habits that encourage continued participation in this type of activity. To achieve this, it is necessary to awaken the interest and motivation of students in each of the physical education sessions. In this case, if there is greater enjoyment and satisfaction in participating, the rates of intentionality to engage in physical activity and

sport outside school hours will increase<sup>36</sup>. This stance could help to ensure that the levels recommended by the WHO are reached.

Regarding the motivation component, more than half of the respondents indicated that it is an element to be taken into account when assessing student performance. In this sense, physical education should be related to the field of play, as the aim is to seek attraction and motivation in the student<sup>37</sup>. Perhaps, in this sense, the figure of the teacher acquires greater importance as the work proposals and methodologies applied will influence the motivation of students. The parents' lack of knowledge about the content and functioning of the subject of physical education may be the reason why a large proportion of parents responded that they disagreed or strongly agreed that most students are motivated to take the subject of physical education. However, studies have shown that by encouraging active participation and promoting autonomy, students will perform better and achieve better results<sup>38</sup>. In addition, they will be more motivated, will value the subject of physical education more highly and will also engage in physical activities outside school hours<sup>39</sup>.

## Conclusion

Physical education should be seen as an essential subject for the integral development of the child. It should not be forgotten that different elements related to life skills, values, attitudes and knowledge can be worked on in this subject. In addition to working on these elements, physical education can help to acquire a commitment to physical exercise and sport in order to achieve an active and healthy lifestyle.

However, this intervention cannot be left in the hands of just anyone, hence the importance of the physical education teacher to work on all those aspects mentioned above. The figure of the teacher must be key in the training of students, as he/she is considered to be one of the people who have the greatest influence on their development. In the case of physical education, in order to prevent students from abandoning the practice of physical exercise and sport, it is important that the teacher has adequate didactic training in the subject. This level of knowledge will help him/her to design different attractive and motivating tasks for students, thus favouring continuity in the practice of physical exercise and sport.

Moreover, families should be another educational agent that helps and complements schools in the education of students. It should not be forgotten that family participation is important for the education of students. It is therefore advisable and necessary for parents to be involved in order to learn how subjects work, in this case, physical education, so that the contribution they can make is based on a knowledge perspective. To this end, the educational centre must open its doors.

The purpose of any school should be to help students grow as individuals. The subjects taught should go in the same direction. It is wrong to think of physical education as being associated with competitive sport or with the student's performance in physical preparation. This subject should be oriented towards the acquisition of different skills and competences, as well as being directed towards personal and social development.

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