

# SOCIAL STATUS OF QUALIFIED PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS IN CYPRUS

PhD Thesis

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

Curriculum Vitae: CV

Cyprus Olympic Committee: COC

Cyprus Sport Organization: CSO

European Union: EU

International Council of Sport Sciences and Physical Education: ICSSPE

Ministry of Education and Culture: MoEC

National Union of Teachers: NUT

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development: OECD

Physical Education: PE

Socio-Economic Status: SES

Sport For All: SFA

Statistical Service of the Republic: SSR

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Although teachers all over the world share some similar characteristics such as common educational background, obligations and rights; physical education (PE) teachers are often considered as marginal. In many cases scholars have indicated that the status and rewards of PE teachers are not the same and/or equivalent with teachers from other disciplines (Stroot et al. 2006). The concept of social status is a multifaceted dimension, intertwined with a number of related concerns around esteem, prestige, respect, autonomy, authority, confidence, professionalism and professionalization (Hoyle 2001). The social standing of PE teachers has been the focus of many researches in the past few years. PE teachers are often perceived by many, including a number of teachers and students, as supervisors of a playful entertainment and that their job is not that serious since PE is all about “blowing a whistle” (Hardy 1997). In many countries PE teachers have to deal with sarcasm and lack of respect by the wider public.

However there are instances in which qualified PE teachers are regarded as capable, well-trained and committed. Those PE teachers who are not active and hard-working are those who contribute to the degrading of the professional status. On the one hand it can be argued that the status of PE at schools depends on the professionalism of PE teacher’s work (Zahner et al. 2005). On the other hand it can be expected that the opposite version might be valid as well. The status of PE teachers may depend on the low status of the subject itself. Waddington (2000) mentioned that PE teachers are conscious of the relatively low status of their subject and that is often considered to be inferior to other academic subjects. Although PE is a compulsory subject within the curriculum, which officially means that it is legitimate; many people perceive it as a non-productive educational activity (Christodoulou 2010). Nevertheless, the teachers’ social status depends on their cultural, historical, and political traditions as applied in their respective countries and it seems that in some countries this profession has lost its prestige. According to Hoyle (2001) nowadays, teachers’ prestige is comparable to semi-professions such as social work, rather than the major professions such as law or medicine.

In Cyprus; people used to believe that education could be used as a weapon for their national survival (Maratheftis 1992); since the island remained underdeveloped for many years in a state of wretchedness because of its occupation by several foreign

powers. The profession of teaching was highly respected by the general public, since formal education was available only for few, who had the time and money to pursue it (Giddens 2001). By the time education became institutionalised, the profession of teaching was developed and divided into various specializations. Each subject was taught by a different specialized teacher. The information revolution generated new kinds of information and communication and subsequently the profession of teaching (as many other occupations) started to change in its character. Students were in effect instigated to learn the basic skills faster and improve the overall quality of learning with the use of computers. Consequently, the teachers' role started to diminish and lose its initial importance and prestige. As Hardy (1997) mentioned in his research, teaching is not about teaching any more. It is more of being a part-time parent, counsellor, disciplinarian and encourager.

The societal pressure increased and subsequently there was a great instigation to respond to the new and different challenges. Therefore, this had an effect on the subject matter of physical education. PE programs were essentially squeezed out of the priorities of public school curricula. Learning other subjects began to be considered more important (Kientzler 2008). Hardman and Marshall (2000) mentioned that globally, 37 percent of the countries perceive PE as a non-essential part of the school curriculum. In Cyprus, the situation is more or less the same. PE is not provided with the appropriate status; on the contrary, when time is required for mathematics and reading or for revision purposes, PE lessons are the first to be abandoned. Cypriot PE teachers are also regarded by the wider academic staff as "having a lower status and their work in the field is not fully appreciated and apprehended". Although there is a broad consensus that sport and PE makes a significant contribution to the total growth and education of the human being, PE is drowning in heavy water; it is not considered as a "real discipline" any more (Waddington-2000, Hardman-Marshall-2000 & Brandl-Bredenbeck-2005).

The significance of early and proper PE for children should be clearly understood and should be a common concern for everybody involved in the formation of school curricula. Appropriate physical activity constitutes one of the major components of a healthy lifestyle. Regular physical exercise, active play and sports can be a realistic way to achieve numerous health benefits either directly or indirectly through its positive impact on other major risks (such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, tobacco use and stress) (WHO 2003). PE comprises of actions which assist in the

developing of physical, mental, social and spiritual health (Wolny 2010). Sport is learned in a socialization process and it is very important to be taught by a specialized professional teacher. Children are strongly influenced by their teachers; that is why teachers have to behave and act like professionals. PE may have an impact on peoples' attitudes towards physical activity, nutrition and sporting behaviour in their whole life. Therefore, undoubtedly it is of primary importance to have a professional PE teacher in every school. A PE teacher is the person who is responsible for introducing youngsters to the world of sport which consists of a full range of values (Bochenek and Burzynski 2007).

In many countries it has been noticed that PE teachers are not assigned to teach in elementary public schools. In that case, it is elementary teachers who teach PE to children, while qualified PE teachers can only work in secondary schools. This phenomenon occurs in Cyprus as well and this might lead to another problem; that is the unemployment of qualified PE teachers and to their limited job opportunities. One of their options is to accept a job which is characterized by lower requirements in comparison to their level of education and the other option is to choose a job that is unrelated to their university competences (unrelated to PE and sports). In addition it has to be emphasized that the labour market of Cyprus encountered the phenomenon of being provided with a higher level of supply in comparison with demand levels in the field of PE teaching. Therefore; the PE graduates are registered by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC)\* on a so called waiting list and they eventually get assigned to schools according to their rank on that certain governmental list. *These social problems have not been studied or researched from a sociological perspective by anyone in Cyprus* and that was the reason for selecting this subject matter for this thesis. It is a crucial problem since nowadays Europe is suffering from significant economic slowdown which has had an impact on the levels of unemployment that have significantly increased in general (Castañeda et al. 2009). The findings of this research might provide an information basis and can contribute to knowledge and science; and to the field of PE in particular. The social status of PE teachers is an important area of inquiry that provides an insight into the significance attached to education and health

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\* The Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC) is responsible for formulating and implementing the cultural policy of the government through its cultural services. It also formulates the educational policies which are approved by the Council of Ministers.

(Fwu and Wang 2002). Hence, the focus of this research is the social status of qualified PE teachers in Cyprus.

## **2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

There are a great number of publications related to PE teachers' role and status and students' education; however nobody has studied the social status of Cypriots PE degree holders. Throughout the review of related literature which is enormous the author has chosen some important literature and categorized it into two groups. The first one involves international articles and books and they are grouped into four brief subchapters. The first subchapter includes literature related to values and norms having special significance in education in general and in PE in particular. The second subchapter is about effective teaching (in general and in PE classes) and PE teachers. The next subchapter consists of references to articles and books related to physical education, health education and health "crisis" on an international level. The last one focuses on the job satisfaction from a general perspective and of PE teachers' and social capital.

In the second part of the review of related literature a conscious attempt was made to discuss the status of qualified PE teachers in Cyprus. However it has to be stressed that there were not adequate resources on this topic. In the absence of such resources, the thesis presents articles of Cypriot authors and alternatively books which provided for PE in a general perspective.

### ***2.1 International Literature***

#### **2.1.1 Cultural and Teaching Values and Norms**

A society's culture comprises both intangible aspects (beliefs, ideas, values which form the content of culture) and tangible aspects (objects, symbols, technology which represent that content). Giddens (2001) argues that the fundamental bases to all cultures are the ideas which define what is considered important, worthwhile and desirable. Values give meaning and provide guidance to humans as they interact with the social world. For example, in some countries, one important value is to be faithful to a single sexual partner. Some cultures value individualism highly where others might place greater emphasis on shared needs. Some groups might value traditional religious beliefs where others might prefer progress and science. Norms are the rules of behaviour

which reflect or embody a culture's values. For instance, for a high level of education, cultural norms would encourage students to study hard, parents to make sacrifices for the education of their children and adults to participate in learning activities throughout their lives.

On the one hand, any human being is an independent person with spiritual circumstances of his/her personal life and on the other hand he/she is a socialized person with a whole system of feelings, ideas that characterize his/her group or environment. Eleutheriades (1985) mentioned that education is a society's work. Young people should learn the basic values of their society in order to be creative, original and responsible. In the contemporary world where we live we are forced to face innovation and uncertainty. Schools will help the students to prepare for the unknown. Education functions as the most fundamental social organization and institution which influence a human's behaviour in a beneficial way.

However, according to Blau and Duncan (1962) the social status of parent affects the educational level achieved by their children, which in turn affects occupational level and social status. Status attainment is achieved by a combination of parent's status, one's own efforts and abilities, and luck. It has to be mentioned that the initial thesis of Blau and Duncan, stated that the lower the level from which a person starts, the greater is the probability that they will be upwardly mobile. After continued research, this statement proved to require modification. In 1962 the United States Bureau of the Census\* began a new research based on their questions and the results showed that it was better to start at the top of the stratification system rather than at the bottom in order to achieve a higher social status. Parents who held high-status occupations were usually able to give their children more years of quality education than those who did not hold high-status jobs.

### **2.1.2 Effective teaching and Physical Education Teachers**

Drawing on the experiences of 25 countries around the world, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has made an international study (2005) which analyzes the key developments affecting teachers and their work. The

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\* The Bureau of the Census is the government agency that is responsible for the United States Census. It gathers national demographic and economic data. In other words; it serves as a leading source of data about America's people and economy.

teacher profiles need to reflect the student learning objectives that schools are trying to achieve and profession-wide understanding of what counts as accomplished teaching. Improving the efficiency and equity of schooling depends, in large measure, on ensuring that competent people want to work as teachers, that their teaching is of high quality, and that all students have access to high quality teaching. One problem that many countries are currently experiencing is a quantitative shortage of teachers especially in mathematics, science and languages. Another concern is the composition of the teacher workforce. In many schools active teachers are over 50 years. It has to be stressed that teacher policy needs to ensure that the best available teachers are selected for employment and that they work in an environment which facilitates success. Countries experiencing teacher over-supply are in a more advantageous position. They have the opportunity to be much more selective about those who are employed. Initiatives underway include a broadening of teacher selection criteria and well-structured induction and probationary processes to ensure that the best candidates get the available jobs. Finally; the entry of considerable numbers of new teachers with up-to-date skills and fresh ideas has the potential to substantially renew the schools.

According to Armour and Yelling (2004), governments all over the world are recognizing that quality teaching makes a difference to pupil learning, that teachers can improve their practice through professional learning and therefore, that high quality professional learning for teachers is a central factor in determining the quality of teaching. The purpose of the article is to represent and/or highlight the importance of professional learning and to focus on experienced PE teachers' career-long continuing professional development; the research took place in England. The findings of this study suggest that there may be a gap between teachers' ambitions in PE and the professional development available to achieve their goals. PE teachers reported three main goals: 1) health, fitness and lifelong activity 2) competence, knowledge and understanding in/of sports and 3) elements of personal, social and emotional education. According to the results of this study they appeared to be undertaking professional development in only one of them. Particularly, professional development was undertaken with respect to knowledge and understanding in/of sports. Therefore the authors of the article argued that professional development should be restructured and refocused.

Explanation is the foundation on which success or failure of a whole section of teaching can rest. Therefore, providing a good explanation saves up time and enhances motivation whereas providing a bad explanation produces chaos. An explanation, according to Wragg and Brown (2001) can help someone to understand the following: concepts, cause and effect, procedures, purposes, objectives, relationships, processes and consequences. It is better for teachers if they are in a position to give clearly structured explanations so as to avoid any further confusion and use the appropriate teaching aids too. Another issue which is put forward by Wragg and Brown is that questioning may improve their teaching skills. It is suggested that questioning may help a teacher in finding out what pupils already know, to shape their line of argument by using pupils' own ideas and to check how well pupils understand what is being explained to them. The other argument put forward in the book is that teachers must also encourage children to teach one another. In this way the child practises clear communication and takes into account the audience in question. Explaining to someone else can often assist in the clarification of someone's own ideas, or reveal what element someone might not be able to fully understand. Lastly, the authors of the study mention that teachers must have a good grasp of the lessons' content so that they are enabled to determine the appropriate strategies. All of the above argumentation can also be applied by PE teachers and especially if they request from the students to illustrate their understanding of the exercise which was taught to them. Anyone (including PE teachers) who appears to know little and who is not in a position to provide adequate, well structured explanations may eventually lose respect.

The most common concern of pre-service Physical Education teachers is classroom management. Most of the teachers encounter several problems regarding the imposition of classroom discipline or controlling their students' behaviour especially with respect to PE classes which are carried out in an open arena. McCormack (1997) provides in her article references to several activities that can lead and/or assist to the performance of a high quality of teaching. She suggests that the following could assist in the rendering of a high quality of teaching; good arrangement of the physical environment, maintaining certain rules and procedures and monitoring pupils' behaviour. Physical education studies usually involve more pedagogical and educational subjects but it is important to realize that the practical components and field experiences are more significant. The transition from physical education studies to the real classroom can

sometimes be dramatic because of the lack of management. Poor organization has a negative impact on how and what students learn. In addition it may create a negative impact on students' behaviour. On the other hand, teachers with effective discipline practices tend to be more efficient planners and they manage to communicate in a more sufficient and productive way with their pupils. It is also essential to plan and develop a challenging curriculum in order to motivate students and encourage their participation in physical activities.

Field experiences in PE are considered as an integral part of the teacher training program. In a physical education setting, teacher educators have to deal with potentially more difficult and complex learning environments in schools. Student teaching is the most important aspect of teacher training and requires the appropriate patience and will to teach PE and sports. The organization of the teaching practicum within the framework of the teacher education program involves an effort to keep the right balance between the theoretical and practical courses. The problematic relationship between theory and practice in teacher education is illustrated by three major causes of the transfer problem: first, the role of prior knowledge or preconceptions and their resistance to change; secondly the feed-forward problem, indicating that teachers must have personal concerns or must have encountered concrete problems; and finally the nature of relevant knowledge. According to Behets et al. (2006) there are two major types of teacher knowledge. The first is formal knowledge which is the result of University's theoretical and practical subjects, and the other is practical knowledge that is generated by the teachers themselves; as a result of their teaching experiences and their reflections. Knowledge is acquired through repeated efforts to solve a problem.

### **2.1.3 Physical Education, Health Education and Health “crisis”**

There are many studies and investigations that have been analyzing the various benefits of PE lessons; regarding the social, physiological and psychological development of children but as Hunter (2006) mentioned in her research those are often not addressed in practice and are under-researched. The background of the teacher who teaches the subject of PE in elementary schools often plays a major role in what is or is not included in the programme. PE is often regarded as, or confused with “play” and

“extracurricular sport”. Many scholars have indicated that several countries reported inadequate training concerning PE for primary school teachers, as well as there has been an undervalue of motor development and motor learning during the primary school phase. It was surprising that up to 85% of primary schools in South Africa do not teach the subject of PE. Hunter addresses in detail the four major outcomes of PE which are the following: 1) motor skills, 2) health and fitness, 3) social processes and 4) cognitive change. Additionally, she argues that the individual who is entrusted with the responsibility of teaching PE at elementary schools influences the content and the pedagogical possibilities of the programme. In some counties there is a teacher at the elementary level who has an all rounded experience whereas at the secondary level the teachers are specialized in a particular field. In the Philippines and British Columbia, athletes and/or untrained non-specialist teachers regularly teach PE in schools. In 1999, the International Council of Sport Sciences and Physical Education (ICSSPE) observed the phenomenon that in many cases PE teachers in primary or elementary schools are not adequately trained for the particular subject and a number of them conduct the subject matter as a supervised play. PE is taught by the classroom teacher who usually has had little related training or no training at all regarding PE. Finally it is worth mentioning that a teacher plays an immense importance in affecting the learning experiences of young people in the elementary PE program in a positive manner as they make and utilize many of the decisions related to curriculum, teaching and assessment.

According to Wolny (2010) a new solution was approved by the Ministry of Education in Poland that assumed that PE teachers would be responsible to teach the subject of health education. She first began to explain the meaning of education in general. Teachers should be able to recognize and respect the pupils, listen to their needs, strengthen their will, and indicate the truthful way which will lead them to goodness. School is a place where children find directions; humanistic values giving a sense to their lives. The school does not only provide an education, but also orientates pupils towards knowledge, it also assists in developing their ability to learn as a way to satisfy their natural curiosity regarding the world and discover their interests and prepare them for further education. In the new solution, PE was recognized as the most suitable subject to carry out health education. Students must learn how to be able to take care of their and others’ health, as well as to develop their ability to create a healthy friendly environment. The subject matter of Health education involves the

following: 1) physical activity, work, rest, nutrition 2) physical development 3) body care, security and diseases 4) health and health care and 5) mental and social health, and useful abilities for everyday life. PE teachers are those who have to teach the aforesaid activities. A PE teacher is the key person in school health education and must serve as a healthy role model. The right attitude of the teacher is the underlying factor that could lead successfully in the formation of a healthy attitude on the part of students. PE teachers do not only have to be experts in the knowledge they impart, but they must also be in a position to help students discover in a wise manner the sense of life, the great adventure and a unique opportunity to become real. The author finally concludes that a creative PE teacher is the guarantee for the effectiveness of health education.

Thomas L. McKenzie (2007) mentions that sedentary living is an immense health concern worldwide. In his opinion, schools can be viewed as an investment in public health and as the institution entrusted with the primary responsibility of promoting physical activity. PE is an important component of coordinated and comprehensive school health programs. The two major curricular goals of PE are the following: 1) the adoption and 2) the maintenance of physically active lifestyles. Of course there are some other objectives related to PE but because of lack of time allocation and limited and/or inadequate facilities, these cannot be realized. Health related PE focuses on the development of lifelong physical activity which is a continuing process and not a specific outcome such as physical fitness. In addition, health related PE is directed towards public health objectives, a concept that is much broader than PE itself. Health related PE shifts away from fitness training to behavioural training and students learn general behavioural skills. For that reason, the role of PE teachers needs to expand. They need to consider redesigning their curricula and instructional behaviours to promote out-of-class physical activity, modifying the school environment so that pupils can be provided with opportunities to be active during their lifetime. They have to motivate students to maintain physical activity and their recommendations should be the following: 1) Modification of content preparation 2) increase of diversity of field experiences and 3) development of physical educators' promotion, advocacy and political skills.

It is common knowledge that in order to maintain a healthy state, physical exercise is one of the major key factors. Roberts et al. (2004) argue that there has been a growing concern in recent years about the emergence of a supposed “health crisis” in the form of an “obesity epidemic” among young people. It is argued that one of the main causes of the obesity epidemic is the declining levels of pupils’ involvement in sport and physical activity. This paper provides some critical comments on the taken-for-granted relationship between these two emerging “crises” and indicates that in contrast to popular opinion, young people are, in fact, doing more physical activity in comparison to any other time in the past, but that this process has co-occurred, and continues to co-occur, with increasing levels of obesity and overweight. In order to begin to explain these co-occurring processes, it is argued that we need to examine young people’s lives in their total context, while noting, in particular, the continuing significance of broader social processes and the networks of relationships which they are involved in.

#### **2.1.4 Job Satisfaction and Social Capital**

Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition. According to Bourdieu (1986) the volume of social capital possessed by a given agent thus depends on the size of the network of connections they can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in their own right by each of those to whom they are connected. The network of relationships is the product of investment strategies, individual or collective, consciously or unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term, i.e. at transforming contingent relations, such as those of neighbourhood or workplace into relationships that are at once necessary and voluntary, implying durable obligations subjectively felt (respect, friendship) or institutionally guaranteed (rights).

Job satisfaction according to Bradley and Brian (2003) has been linked to the motivation to join and stay in the organization and to the motivation to work hard and well within the organization. There are many differences between studies about job

satisfaction because some sociologists believe that public employees are generally satisfied but some others have the opposite opinion. The organization has to create a friendly environment in order to keep its employees satisfied. The work environment consists of job characteristics such as meaningfulness of employees' work and work context which has been interpreted to mean the goals of the organization. In their article Bradley and Brian mentioned that job satisfaction can be explained by three job characteristics (routine practice, job goal specificity and human resource development). Organizations may help their employees be more satisfied by using customer service or supervisor training programs to increase the quality and quantity of their feedback. Lastly, it seems that as the degree of routine practice increases in the job, job satisfaction decreases.

More highly educated people are able to find more rewarding jobs and derive more satisfaction from their work (Davis and Moore 1945). Of course, expectations about job rewards tend to increase with education and this may have a negative impact with respect to job satisfaction. Ganzach (2003) wanted to examine the effects of education and intelligence to job satisfaction. Education is more important than intelligence in formal pay systems. Many organizations use education as the basis that assists them in determining the level of salaries and do not consider or appreciate the results of intelligence tests. According to the author, education has a direct negative effect on pay satisfaction and a minor effect on intrinsic satisfaction. Intrinsic satisfaction is achieved through success in task performance. Intelligence has a direct negative effect on intrinsic satisfaction and a negligible effect on pay satisfaction.

Scholars support that individuals with high levels of public service motivation will be more satisfied with their job and will be more committed in public organizations when compared with individuals with a lower level of public service motivation. Public service motivation is characterized by altruistic intentions that motivate individuals to serve the public interest. Bright (2008) argued that job satisfaction and turnover intentions are reflections of the outlook that employees have about their employment. Employees display higher levels of job satisfaction and lower turnover intentions, when the characteristics of their working environment satisfy their needs. Of course the longer an employee works at any public organization, the more their job satisfaction decreases. Furthermore, employees become more satisfied and less likely to quit their

jobs when the congruence between individuals and organization increases. Finally, his study confirmed that public service motivation offers benefits to public organizations when it increases person-organization fit.

According to Ehsani (2010) management and leadership style are facilitating factors which motivate the employees and hence directly and/or indirectly affect job satisfaction. This led him to study the transformational and transactional styles of management and leadership amongst the PE teachers of Esfahan. He first describes the theoretical background of organization and management. Improvement of organizations depends on the management style, and job satisfaction. Employees' satisfaction will increase productivity and lead to their augmented participation in the trend of performing their assignments. In order to evaluate the attitude of teachers and determine their job satisfaction and style of leadership, information was gathered by standardized questionnaires from 181 PE teachers. The results indicated that PE teachers who gave higher scores to the style of management and leadership of their district have been enjoying a higher job satisfaction. No relationship was found between gender, marital status, educational degree and job satisfaction as opposed to age and record of service.

## ***2.2 Literature related to the Cypriot situation***

The Educational System of Cyprus constitutes an important subsystem of the society which promotes ideological, societal and economical projects. There is a strong interaction between the society and the education of Cyprus. The different chapters of the book "The Educational System of Cyprus" were written from 1984 to 1992. According to Marathefti (1992) school is a powerful system that belongs to social systems and its aim is the provision of education. The development of society has an impact to the development of the Educational System and of course the various values and purposes of it, which then influences the whole society. The author in this book categorizes the Educational System of Cyprus into three main historical periods: a) Turkish Occupation (1571-1878) b) British Occupation (1878-1960) and c) Independence period (1960-today). During the years of the Turkish Occupation, only few people were educated by the priests. Later on, during the British Occupation the

education system was developed. Many schools were established but the teaching of the subject of Greek History was forbidden. Until 1860 in Cyprus, there were only thirty-seven schools, out of which only three were secondary schools with 1278 students. Today, education in Cyprus is provided through pre-primary and primary schooling, secondary general and secondary technical/vocational schools, special schools, third level institutions and non-formal institutions. The Republic of Cyprus has three-hundred and three elementary schools, three-hundred and forty-seven secondary general schools and one-hundred and fourteen high schools. The teaching staffs in those schools consist of highly educated and talented professional teachers in their respective areas of teaching. The Cypriot Educational System constitutes an important subsystem of the society which has an interaction with the other societal systems like the Church, political parties, parents' federations, civil and rural organizations and different corporations. All of the aforementioned systems comprised as one; form the general pedagogy of the broad society. During the Independence period, the Greek Assembly Community of Cyprus had the administration of the Greek-Cypriot education and followed the same style and content of the Greek Education.

An individual who is exercising may realize that spiritual power is higher than the body's power. Our soul provides rhythm and harmony to our actions. Exercise may provide us with certainty and this certainty may be imposed to our body. Physical Education used to be considered as art, but today it is based on science and in fact it relies on it. The lack of ability and dexterity in sports may influence a child's social development because the most basic factor of configuration of personality is our contact with the environment which surrounds us. The lack of social development impedes the smooth sentimental development of a child since a clumsy and weak child feels undesirable by others. In opposition with the skilful child that feels sure and sovereign. Chadjiandreou (1969) believes that a child who is guided properly for the game and for sporting activities will always be proud and won't be jealous. He/she will always be willing to help others and give advice to everyone. The child will not be disappointed if he/she loses a game, even if it seems unfair. The child feels equal with others and does not criticize others maliciously.

To gain all of the aforesaid benefits of physical activity, the PE class has to be taught properly and professionally by specialized teachers. However, PE class is facing

the problem that although it used to be a very important subject at schools, later on it became rather pointless for the majority of wider public. Even so, the teaching of physical education at schools has a variety of purposes and it seems that the whole procedure has an impact on the students' character and ideals to be formulated at a later stage in their lives. PE classes promote health, equal opportunities between the students, fair play, and collaboration with others, and a way of relaxation in order to avoid aggression. Capardes (1999) argues that PE teachers are responsible to teach fair play because it is very important for the children to learn to respect others, to follow the rules of a game or a community, to play or live in a friendly environment with respect and to develop the feeling of being proud and being socialized. It was pointed out, that the correct and proper teaching of physical education classes may contribute to the formation of a capable individual who will be having a constructive role in a healthy society. Lastly, the PE teacher has to be characterized by patience and morality.

The MoEC of Cyprus suggested that PE lessons should not be taught by qualified PE teachers. It is elementary teachers who are responsible for PE classes in primary schools. A research which was conducted by Tsangaridou (2002) described the enacted pedagogical content knowledge of an elementary classroom teacher during student learning. This study reported on an in-depth investigation carried out based on a case study... She also relied on documentary analysis and observations. Anna, her participant was studying to become an elementary teacher. In her fourth year of study she undertook her teaching practice and she taught 82 lessons in all subject areas which were included in the national elementary curriculum. Only six of them were about physical education and their duration was 40 minutes two times a week. She used different documents such as unit plan, lesson plan and handouts. Also she was interviewed twice. The first interview was undertaken prior to her teaching practice and the other interview during her actual practice. Findings of this study suggested that the pre-service teachers' pedagogical content knowledge affected teachers' actions and practices. Also the author suggested that a teacher has to find special ways to transmit the knowledge to his/her students. Lastly the author emphasized that it is very important for pre-service classroom teachers to learn what, why and how to teach Physical Education.

Health education in schools is a relatively new subject. According to Fontana and Apostolidou (2002) health education curriculum in Cypriot schools stipulated that in secondary schools all teachers with specialities related to the subject should be directly involved, and in primary and pre-primary schools responsibility should be shared by most staff members. In order to be effective, it is desirable that teachers set examples of good and healthy lifestyles. A paper which was written by the aforesaid authors, aimed to gather data on lifestyles among Cyprus teachers, and to investigate the effect of these lifestyles on their perceptions and attitudes towards health education. They also examined these lifestyles in relation to their role as health educators. The study applied a questionnaire which was developed with the help of experts and was designed particularly so as to sample teachers' lifestyles. It contained 38 statements relating to four different variables of healthy lifestyle (smoking, sleeping habits, alcohol consumption and exercise), together with questions which addressed the issue of the attitudes applied towards health matters. The conclusion of this study is that teachers with 'good' lifestyles proved more positive towards health education and more prepared to teach their respective subject.

Lack of physical exercise (probably because of inappropriate teaching of PE in early years of childhood) and diminished knowledge of a healthy lifestyle may lead to serious health problems. Nowadays, it is well accepted that obesity is increasing progressively and such an increase constitutes a worldwide concern. Particularly childhood obesity has reached epidemic proportions and is perceived as a serious public health issue. Obese children are at increased risk for hypertension, dyslipidemia, type II diabetes, metabolic syndrome, cardiovascular disease and asthma. The data subjects were students attending the 6th grade of public elementary schools from 1997 to 2003 and they all participated in the "Child Health Program" in Cyprus. Approximately 94% of students attend public schools up to the age of twelve. The evaluation of this research consists of the following factors: physical examination, serum lipid determination, diet assessment, physical examination and physical activity assessment. Over a 5-year period, and in particular between the academic years of 1997-1998 and 2002-2003, the overall prevalence of obesity in 11-year-old children increased from 6.7% to 7.9%, whereas, a marginal insignificant increase in the prevalence of overweight children (from 20.8% to 21.6%) was observed. Savva et al. (2008) argued that the increased percentage encountered with respect to the overweight problem and

obesity is the consequential results of various environmental factors. Sedentary lifestyles and unhealthy diets are considered as the main environmental contributors to obesity.

The profession of teaching for many years in Cyprus has been considered as a highly respected occupation that was preferred in comparison to any other career due to its status in the society. However, gradually over the years there has been a decrease in its importance since other more high profile careers have developed progressively. The following careers are considered as very high profile: Chartered Accountants, Risk Managers, and Certified Accountants since they are the type of professionals that can assist a company and/or an organization in doing better and surviving over the period of crisis. These professions are considered by the Cypriot society as the epitome of success and guarantee a high return to those who are successful.

In contrast, the profession of teaching, including teaching PE will not provide any real opportunities. As it will be developed in this thesis, PE teachers in Cyprus encounter minimal job opportunities. This is also encountered in all areas of teaching since it takes numerous years for the appointment of any given individual as a professor/teacher. As it will be analyzed herein below MoEC applies a particular employment policy for all the teaching professors.

The Cypriot literature provides a helpful insight with respect to certain aspects of PE and health but there has been no analysis of the social status of qualified PE teachers in Cyprus by applying the sociological perspective. This is the first attempt that has been made in discussing and analyzing the certain topic.

### **3. OBJECTIVES**

This thesis aims to provide an insight regarding the following objectives: to discover the social status of qualified PE teachers in Cyprus; to find out what kind of sport-related jobs they are employed in and which other sectors they work in; to analyze the status of PE in Cypriot schools; to discuss if the PE degree holders' status can be characterized by consistency; to find out if they are satisfied with their job and position in the Cypriot labour market; to discover their opinions on social capital influencing their job opportunities and their opinions about the official governmental employment policy; and to investigate their attitudes towards PE and health awareness.

In order to reach the objectives of the current thesis, an empirical research was carried out by the author. The aim of the investigation was to be provided with answers with respect to the following research questions:

- What is the status of PE in Cypriot schools?
- What are the actual occupations of qualified PE teachers and are their status crystallized or not?
- To which degree are qualified PE teachers satisfied with their job and situation in the labor market?
- What are their opinions regarding the governmental employment policy and social capital in relation to their employment?
- What are their attitudes towards sporting activities and healthy lifestyle?

### **3.1 Hypotheses**

It was assumed that:

**H<sub>1</sub>** The subject of PE is not considered as a “real discipline” at Cypriot schools.

**H<sub>2</sub>** The majority of qualified PE teachers who are not employed in public schools have jobs that are unrelated to sports and that only few have the opportunity to work as PE teachers in private schools and/or in sport related jobs.

**H<sub>3</sub>** Mainly qualified PE teachers who are employed at public schools and/or in the governmental sector are satisfied with their job and position in the labour market and their status is crystallized.

**H<sub>4</sub>** Social capital is mostly involved in qualified PE teachers’ employment in the Cyprus Sport Organization (CSO)\* and the majority of the subjects believe that the governmental employment policy is also unfair in a certain respect.

**H<sub>5</sub>** The qualified PE teachers’ attitudes towards PE and healthy lifestyle depend on their actual job.

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\* The Cyprus Sport Organisation is a semi-governmental organisation enacted by the 1969 – 1996 laws upon the CSO acting as the Supreme Authority in the Republic of Cyprus. Its main objectives are: the development of sports outside schools, the co-ordination of sport life in Cyprus, the cultivation of the Olympic ideal and the promotion of the Republic on the international sport scene.

## 4. METHODS

The basic method of this research was the survey method which was complemented by in-depth interviews and the analysis of documents. The survey was designed for the entire population of qualified Cypriot PE teachers (N=1880) regardless of their actual job. All subjects were aged 20 - 65 years, graduated before 2007 and were licensed as teachers by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The reason for choosing this age group is that the youngest individuals that may have a PE degree are 20 years old and those who are over 65 years are retired in Cyprus and therefore they can be considered to have left the labour market.

At the start of this research (April 2008); the author received two governmental lists by the MoEC. The first list consisted of all the Cypriot qualified PE teachers who are employed in the Cypriot secondary schools and the second list (the so called “waiting list”) consisted of those qualified PE teachers who did not have the opportunity to teach in public schools yet. The subjects were classified into three categories according to those two special lists: 1) T- public school teachers, 2) S – those engaged in sport-related jobs (but not teaching in public schools) and 3) O – those engaged in other jobs, making no direct use of their educational background. The first group consisted of the total population of the first governmental list, that is of those who are employed in public schools ( $n_1=392$ , the rate of responses is 68.6%). The sub-samples of the latter two categories were selected randomly from the official waiting list, every fourth person was chosen ( $n_2=193$  and  $n_3=69$ , respectively) (Table 1).

**Table 1:** Research population according to qualified PE teachers’ actual occupation

		Total Population		Research Population		
		N	%	N	%	
Occupation	PE teachers (T)	392	100	269	68,6	
	Not PE teachers	Sport Related Job (S)	1116	75	193	73,6
		Other Job (O)	372	25	69	26,3
	Total		1880		531	

The main characteristics of the research population (N=531; 28.2% of the total population) reflect approximately those of the total population (according to actual job, age, gender and the year of their graduation) (Table 2).

**Table 2:** Research population according to qualified PE teachers' age, gender and year of graduation

			Total Population		Research Population	
			N	%	N	%
<b>Age</b>	<b>PE teachers</b>	20-25 yrs	-	-	-	-
		26-35 yrs	10	2,5	8	3
		36-45 yrs	155	39,5	104	38,7
		46-65 yrs	227	58	157	58,3
		<b>Total</b>	392	100	269	100
	<b>Not PE teachers</b>	20-25 yrs	105	7,1	23	8,7
		26-35 yrs	1048	70,4	188	71,7
		36-45 yrs	256	17,2	41	15,6
		46-65 yrs	79	5,3	10	4
		<b>Total</b>	1488	100	262	100
<b>Year of Graduation</b>	<b>PE teachers</b>	1965-1979	95	24,2	61	22,7
		1980-1989	234	59,7	170	63,2
		1990-1999	58	14,8	35	13
		2000-2007	5	1,3	3	1,1
		<b>Total</b>	392	100	269	100
	<b>Not PE teachers</b>	1965-1979	15	1	4	1,6
		1980-1989	95	6,4	11	4
		1990-1999	427	28,7	76	28,4
		2000-2007	951	63,9	171	66
		<b>Total</b>	1488	100	262	100
<b>Gender</b>	<b>PE teachers</b>	Men	238	60,7	162	60,2
		Women	154	39,2	107	39,8
		<b>Total</b>	392	100	269	100
	<b>Not PE teachers</b>	Men	927	62,2	164	62,6
		Women	561	37,7	98	37,4
		<b>Total</b>	1488	100	262	100

The data were collected by the same structured standardized interviews in all three groups. The active PE teachers were subjected to a self-administrative interview; they answered the questionnaire in the presence of the author in their schools during the

2008-2009 academic year. Those having other jobs and waiting for being employed as PE teachers responded by mail also during the same academic year. The questionnaire contained closed, alternative, and open-ended questions. The final version of it was prepared according to experience from a pilot study.

In-depth interviews were conducted with officials responsible for applying the governmental employment policy (n=4), experts in Cypriot curricula (n=3), and with qualified PE teachers from all three groups, that is with public school teachers (n=20), licensed PE teachers engaged in sport related jobs (n=25) and with licensed PE teachers engaged in other jobs (n=10). The in-depth interviews were conducted in 2008 and 2009 in most cases at the workplace of the respondents. The guidelines of the in-depth interviews included questions about the following issues: the educational system, physical education, governmental employment policy, occupational prestige, social capital, labour market and their habits concerning their lifestyle.

During the research the following major documents were analyzed: the list of active PE teachers registered by the MoEC, the so called waiting list of the PE teachers, PE curricula at public schools which have been issued over the last 15 years, Sport for All programs and projects for school children issued by the Cyprus Sport Organization and the Ministry of Education and Culture.

The data were typed into the well-structured database and were processed by the SPSS (16.0) software program. Considering the level of measurement (and the hypothesis), during the analysis the following methods were applied: chi-square function (the level of  $p \leq 0.05$  being considered significant), T-tests and ANOVA analysis, and Cluster analysis.

Before the multivariate analysis descriptive statistics were performed. The latter consisted of both measurements of central tendency and dispersion. There was also measurement of association, which indicated how two or more variables are related to each other. The proportions and percentage of the relevant variables were checked as well.

In some cases means, standard deviation (sd.) and other statistics could not be calculated by the nominal level scales; therefore the chi-square method was used. During the analysis a table was established, which combined the distributions of two variables. The chi-square analysis is the most generally used non-parametric cross-table analysis. The results of the analysis indicate whether there is significant relationship between the two variables or not.

In the research questionnaire some variables were categorized as internal and a scale level of measurement. In these cases mathematical manipulations are allowed, and multivariate analysis can be utilized as well.

In most of the cases, the mean differences between two variables were considered: a t-test assessed whether the means of two groups were statistically different from each other. This analysis is appropriate whenever a comparison of the means of two different groups needs to be performed. During the analysis of the output table (of the t-test) the main focus is the t-value and the level of p (the significant level 'p'). In the current research it is 0.05; which is generally accepted in social sciences.

When there are more than two groups the differences (the selected variable) between the three or four groups should be checked. If t-test is used, the priori error might be high; therefore Analysis of Variance (ANOVA analysis) should be utilized. ANOVA analysis is applied when the curve of the dependent variable is normal. If the results of the ANOVA (F value and the p level should be checked) are significant (and all conditions realized), it can be stated that the three (or more) groups are different. The post-hoc test (Tukey HSD was used) shows the differences between the groups too.

Additional application of the association among variables is the reduction of the number of variables based on the relations among them. Cluster analysis was used as well, which is the assignment of a set of observations into subsets (called clusters) so that observations in the same cluster are similar in some sense Cluster analysis was utilized into two different ways. Cluster analysis with variables and with cases. Cluster with cases means how many groups the sample can be divided into and what the characteristics of the different groups are. Cluster analysis with cases was used in the case were the variables were the same; for example 1) job satisfaction 2) satisfaction towards salary 3) comparison of their salary with the average 4) satisfaction with the position in the labour market. Ward's method was accepted with squared Euclidean Distance from the Hierarchical Cluster Methods. All cases after the cluster analysis have got a new cluster number which was saved.

## **5. RESULTS**

### ***5.1 The status of PE in Cypriot schools***

In order to understand the PE teachers' status it is necessary to be familiar with the position of PE at Cypriot schools. A brief historical overview serves as a means to establish clearly the whole world of PE in schools generally and particularly in the Cypriot society. During the nineteenth century, the subject of physical education (PE) was introduced into school programs in many countries around the world. In the beginning, teachers were influenced by military physical training. People used to believe that physical fitness and athleticism could facilitate the achievement of moral, religious, and mental growth (Wanxiang and Zenong 2006). Physical educators wanted their students to be physically powerful; therefore their teaching methods were strict and demanding. Over the years, PE instruction has evolved according to different philosophies, particularly those of the dominant culture in the individual countries. Since 1950, there has been a gradual erosion of the frequency and quality of PE programs and this has been encountered in many states. PE programs disappeared from schools due to a variety of complex reasons. In some countries, physical activity and sports became an integral part of everyday life, and for that reason PE classes were neglected at schools. As sporting activity spread everywhere, the main interest of such school programs was to improve the skills and techniques in different sports. The structure of PE classes became completely different than before. In other countries, PE disappeared from the curricula because of societal pressure to respond to different challenges. Learning other subjects began to be considered more important, and PE programs were essentially squeezed out of the priorities of public school curricula (Kientzler 2008). As a consequence the subject lost its original prestige and status.

Globally speaking, nowadays PE often finds itself in a defensive position. It is frequently marginalized, suffering from "decreasing curriculum time allocation; low status esteem; budgetary controls with inadequate financial, and personnel resources" (Hardman 2003). The reports on the status of PE presented in 1999 in Berlin revealed negative tendencies; such tendencies are also valid for Poland (Staniszewski 2007).

The aforementioned phenomena were the main interests of cross-cultural research, the findings of which were published in 2005 in a book entitled *International Comparison of Physical Education*, edited by Uwe Pühse and Markus Gerber. In that survey, the status of PE was compared worldwide. Unfortunately, Cypriot authors were not invited to contribute to this research. Probably it was supposed that the Cypriot standing regarding PE will be similar to that of Greece's. The author of this thesis tries to discover the PE world in Cyprus by using similar guidelines as were used by the authors of that special book.

According to Chadjistephanou (1997), there has been neither a bibliography nor any publications that refer to the possible inclusion (1878) of PE as a subject at the curricula at schools in Cyprus. Inevitably the Cypriot educational system was not stable in those periods because Cyprus had been occupied by various conquerors for many years. Each of them attempted to use education with the intention of promoting their political goals. They also wanted to abolish or at least diminish every Greek traditional element that existed in the Cypriot educational system. Nevertheless, there is supporting evidence that in 1892 PE was first introduced as a subject in schools. After 1960, when the island became independent, the Cypriot educational authority sought to have their programmes approved again by the Ministry of National Education and Religion of Greece. They followed the same educational system: six classes at elementary school and six classes at the secondary general education (three classes of the gymnasiums, which were compulsory, and another three classes of the so-called lyceums). Lyceums consisted of three branches: Classiko, Practiko and Emporiko.

Cypriot secondary schools adopted the Greek teaching aims and curricula. In 1976 the MoEC department responsible for secondary general education created new timetables and curricula in English. Its concept was based on the previous Greek curricula. At the gymnasiums, PE classes were held 3 times per week and for the lyceums two times per week, with the exception of the Classiko branch (3 times). The lesson was taught separately for boys and girls and in primary schools the students attended PE classes twice a week. The curriculum for primary schools was revised by the MoEC in 1994. All forms of educational planning, policies, guidelines and laws remain the sole responsibility of the MoEC. All public schools have to use the syllabi, curricula and textbooks prescribed, regulated and supervised by the MoEC (Karagiorgi and Nicolaidou 2010). The purpose of the aforementioned curriculum

was to improve teaching methods and to develop more uniform teaching material and subjects. It is surprising that since 1994 the curriculum has not been integrally changed. There were two more revised editions, in 1996 and in 2002, and three additional republications, in 2005, 2006 and in 2007.

Time allocation for PE classes has not been amended in any significant way since 1994. In primary schools children attend PE classes two times per week. In the lower secondary schools three times per week and two times for the first grade of lyceums. The second and third grades of lyceums exercise only once per week. The most critical remark crucial to be mentioned here is that no PE curriculum has existed for the gymnasiums (lower secondary). The issue of the absence of such curriculum was addressed to the officials responsible who have provided a surprising answer. PE teachers do not follow an official written curriculum to teach at gymnasiums, they just follow instructions and advice given by the inspectors of the PE. It can also be seen in the website of the MoEC that the only available curriculum for the secondary schools is the one posted for lyceums ([www.moec.gov.cy](http://www.moec.gov.cy)).

In the primary schools (six to twelve years), the aim of PE is to promote healthy growth in students, including physical, spiritual and emotional development. Another purpose is to contribute to the improvement of their health and their smooth integration into society. The curriculum for elementary schools is divided into two circles in all three grades. The first three grades stress the development of basic skills. Certainly, in this period teachers do not expect the children to play sport and exercise with excellent technique. The basic exercises taught include moving around in different ways, learning how to handle and control apparatus safely, learning various body positions and movements like stretching and balance, games, and relays. In the second cycle, teachers continue to teach basic kinetic elements, with the intention of teaching the more specialized skills related to sports. Students are introduced to gymnastics, track and field, ball games, and dance. As a final point, it is important to note that in the current curriculum there is no chapter or paragraph that explains the evaluation process of PE. There is no curriculum for the lower secondary schools – as already mentioned herein above. The aims of PE in lyceums are the following:

- a) to develop positive attitudes and to obliterate violence and hooliganism from sporting events,
- b) to ensure equal opportunities for students concerning their participation in PE classes,

c) to encourage students to engage in physical activities throughout their lives.

The purpose of PE classes for the first grade of lyceum is to develop the students' physical abilities and skills, and to prepare them for the second and third grades. Students first of all have to improve their strength, endurance, speed and flexibility. They have to learn the different techniques and rules for each sporting event in track and field, and in some ball games. PE teachers have also to teach them two traditional Cypriot dances and many kinds of exercise in order to improve their sense of rhythm and tempo. Finally they have to learn some theoretical knowledge that involves lectures related to nutrition, healthy lifestyle and stress control. The evaluation process is not described in the curriculum in detail. It is only explained that it takes place frequently by applying measurements and tests. No further indication is provided as to what constitutes a frequent basis of evaluation and/or what the measurements and tests should consist of.

The purpose of PE in the second and third grades is similar:

1. To continue learning different techniques and skills of all sports,
2. To increase or maintain the students' interest for physical activities,
3. To build basic foundations in sports, mainly fair play,
4. To emphasize the recreational aspect of PE.

The evaluation of students in PE depends on seven factors:

1. Their readiness before and after PE class (constitutes 5% of the total mark)
2. The required uniform of PE (5%)
3. Their attendance or absence from PE lessons (10%)
4. Their attitude and behaviour towards the PE teacher, other students and the subject itself (5%)
5. Their physical abilities and skills (50%)
6. Their knowledge in oral and written form (20%)
7. Oral and/or practical presentation (5%)

The evaluation process for the third year students is not provided in writing in their curriculum, either. Moreover it must be emphasized that in the second and third grade of the lyceum, students are allowed to choose some extra subjects so as to be afforded with an extra level of specialization that will assist them with their future career. PE is

one of those subjects that can be selected and in the curricula there are additional schedules for it with extra time allocation if PE is selected.

In 2003 the educational authorities of Cyprus observed and realized that there were many severe problems and weaknesses in the education of students. Seven academics were appointed with the purpose of reshaping the highly centralized educational system. The most significant proposals that were put forward and concerned the transformation of the educational system were the following:

1. Institutional framework of governance, power and monitoring,
2. New structure of educational system and school institutions,
3. Content of education: curricula, school knowledge, and pedagogic educational process,
4. Public and private higher education,
5. Education and training of teachers,
6. Evaluation of educational work and teachers (Committee on Educational Reform 2004).

In 2008, following the acceptance of some of the above propositions, another committee was appointed that was responsible for the formation of curricula. In turn, additional experts were appointed in 2009, who were specialists for each subject included in the curricula. Finally they succeeded in creating a new curriculum in 2010 that involves all levels of public education: pre-primary, primary and secondary education. Their project comprises the content of the different subjects, teaching methods, and system of evaluation, the educational environment and the relationships that are developed between the educational system, parents, students and teachers.

Currently (academic year 2010-2011), teachers and inspectors of each subject included in the curricula have initiated their training in order to be able to use the required teaching materials and methods provided in the new curricula. In the academic year 2011-2012, according to their plans, the renewed curriculum will be introduced in primary schools and gymnasiums; in the year 2012-2013 it will be introduced in the first grade of lyceums; in the year 2013-2014 in the second grade; and in the year 2014-2015 in the third grade of lyceums. There are many changes which have been introduced to the entire educational system including certain curricula and this is the reason why a longer period of time is required in order to successfully implement it. Generally speaking, Cyprus faces numerous challenges, particularly since it became a member of the European Union in May 2004, which led

to unprecedented efforts to improve the educational system (Karagiorgi and Nicolaidou 2010). It is expected that a new mentality will evolve and will eventually be followed by students, teachers and parents alike, with the intention of realizing the aims of the new system. It can be considered as a positive that there is no intention to reduce the time allocation for PE classes. An improvement is that PE is not to be regarded as an academic subject that is inferior to others; on the contrary, the uniform approach applied is that all academic subjects are equal. At primary schools the time allocation for PE will be the same as before. At lower secondary schools (gymnasiums) there will be three PE classes per week for the first and second grades, and two for the third grade. In lyceums two PE classes are planned per week for all grades.

As it was mentioned herein above, nowadays PE class in Cypriot schools is inferior in practice to other academic subjects. As Yiallourides (1998) mentioned in his PhD dissertation, PE lessons are cancelled when time is required for reading and mathematics or for the revision and test taking in other academic subjects. Although PE is a compulsory subject within the curriculum, which officially means that it is legitimate; many Cypriots perceive it as a non-productive educational activity. They believe that PE class at schools is a waste of time and that PE is only about blowing a whistle (Hardy 1997). Apparently there are few PE teachers who teach that way. In many instances children were complaining that the only thing that they had been doing in PE classes was kicking the ball and nothing else. A great number of qualified PE teachers have the feeling that their special role is not highly valued by society (Christodoulou 2009). However, we have to emphasize that this criticism cannot be generalized for every PE lesson or for every PE teacher. There are many PE teachers who love their job, act in a professional way and try to do their best in order to transmit their sport related knowledge and healthy active lifestyles to the students.

Furthermore, an important critical concern regarding PE teachers in Cyprus is their oversupply in comparison with the low level of demand of the public sector in the society. Almost every newly graduated PE teacher is compelled to undertake other jobs not related to teaching. All of them are registered on an official waiting list arranged by the year of their graduation and have to wait for some years until they are offered employment at public secondary schools (Christodoulou 2010). There is a huge number of qualified PE degree holders who cannot teach at schools. The MoEC prohibited the appointment of PE teachers in elementary schools. Traditional

elementary teachers are obliged to undertake an extra course in PE in order to teach the subject themselves. In other words, qualified PE teachers cannot use their university competence and education to teach PE. Some of them are forced to work in jobs not related to sports, and others are working as coaches and/or instructors. But what will happen after fifteen to twenty years when they will be invited to work at schools? Will they be ready to teach all the sporting activities and exercises with the required patience and love?

On the other hand, it is believed that children aged six to twelve are not properly taught the subject of PE (since the subject is taught by elementary teachers). PE teachers are obviously more familiar with the whole world of sports and also with the teaching methods of PE. The duration of their studies is three to four years and during these years they get extensive experience in education of children in different ages. How is it possible for traditional elementary teachers to teach PE on the same level, if their education in PE lasted only for a few months? Do they really know what and how to teach to children in PE classes in the same way as qualified PE teachers do? Besides that, research conducted in 2002 indicates that the prevalence of obesity among Cypriot children aged 10 to 11 is around 10%. This percentage shows that the occurrence of obesity in Cyprus is as high and in certain instances it is even greater than in other developed countries (Savva et al. 2002). It is well known that obesity is associated with the lack of physical exercise (which facilitates energy expenditure) and energy intake (Jabłońska et al. 2008). If children are not physically active and do not take care of their nutrition, the consequences can be tragic. Obesity and overweight may lead to illnesses and numerous health hazards (Jarosz and Rychlik 2008). Another research which was conducted in Germany indicated that more than 30 percent of all children are reported to be obese and that for many of them even a forward roll is considered as a too difficult task (Pfister and Reeg 2006). Many students are not able to do the simplest of exercise, their conditional abilities are on a low level and many of them are obese.

## ***5.2 Actual occupations of qualified PE teachers***

Cypriot qualified PE teachers have to deal not only with the low level of respect, but with the limited prospect of job opportunities available to them. As it was mentioned herein above, there is more supply than demand in their sector and unavoidably PE

degree holders have to wait for a considerable amount of time in order to get employed by secondary public schools. Since 2007, 1488 qualified PE teachers have not been working in public schools. There are few of them who have graduated as early as 1989 from universities and even today they still do not have the opportunity to teach at public schools. 269 of the participants of the current research are active PE teachers (T) in public secondary schools. There are 193 qualified PE teachers who are working in sport-related jobs (S) and 69 who have followed a different career not related to PE (O). Almost one fifth of the “S” subjects are working for the Cyprus Sport Organization, which means that some of them are employed in the Sport for All (SFA) program and the rest of them contribute to the decision-making and/or organization of the various tasks and activities of the CSO. Sixty-five individuals (S - Group) are working as instructors and personal trainers in sport-health clubs. Three of them are the owners of the gym they work in; and two other participants are responsible for the management of the club. Thirty-five qualified PE teachers are engaged in coaching in various sports. The most common sports which they are involved in are swimming, soccer, basketball, volleyball and tennis. Seventeen subjects “S” are working as PE teachers in private schools. The official waiting list relates only to employment for public schools while private schools are not considered for the purposes of this list. Moreover, there are eight PE degree holders who are teaching PE at universities and colleges; apparently because of their further studies (meaning master’s degree and/or PhD). The rarest sport-related occupations that the subjects appear to have been involved in are the following: governmental training of PE, PE in army and in physiotherapy centre, management of soccer teams, and employment at the Cyprus Olympic Committee (COC) and PE in elementary schools. It must be emphasized that those participants who are working as PE teachers in elementary schools have also graduated as teachers (a further university degree was acquired).

It can be expected that qualified PE teachers who belong to the third Group “O” are working in different kind of jobs (unrelated to PE) by choice. On the other hand, there is a possibility that they were unable to find a sport-related job that would satisfy them; so they were somehow compelled to search for another kind of occupation. Sometimes the work conditions might be relatively unpleasant, the tasks can be dull and the wage is not enough (Giddens 2001). The results revealed that the majority of this Group “O” are employed in the governmental sector (police and

ministries). In the Cypriot society occupations which belong to the public sector offer a greater number of benefits in comparison to the private sector. The most important benefit is the permanency of the employment whereas in the private sector there is always a certain degree of uncertainty by reason of the fact that the employer might terminate the employment contract owing to financial reasons, such as decreasing costs or increasing profit. Besides, there is a great diversity in terms of the range of jobs that are preferred by the participants of the third group. Almost one third of the subjects are working in the private sector, meaning salesmen, owners of private businesses and bank employees. Bank employment is also regarded as a beneficial job with high income and relatively low working hours. Finally there are few qualified PE teachers who are involved in accounting, pharmacy, physiotherapy and the army.

Broadly speaking European labour markets have encountered a rise in the unemployment level and a dramatic increase in the supply of educated workers (Decreuse 2000). The optimistic news that resulted by way of this research is that only two participants mentioned that they are temporarily unemployed. In addition (as it will be analyzed in the following sub-chapter), almost half of the subjects accomplished some further studies in order to obtain a better job and earn additional money.

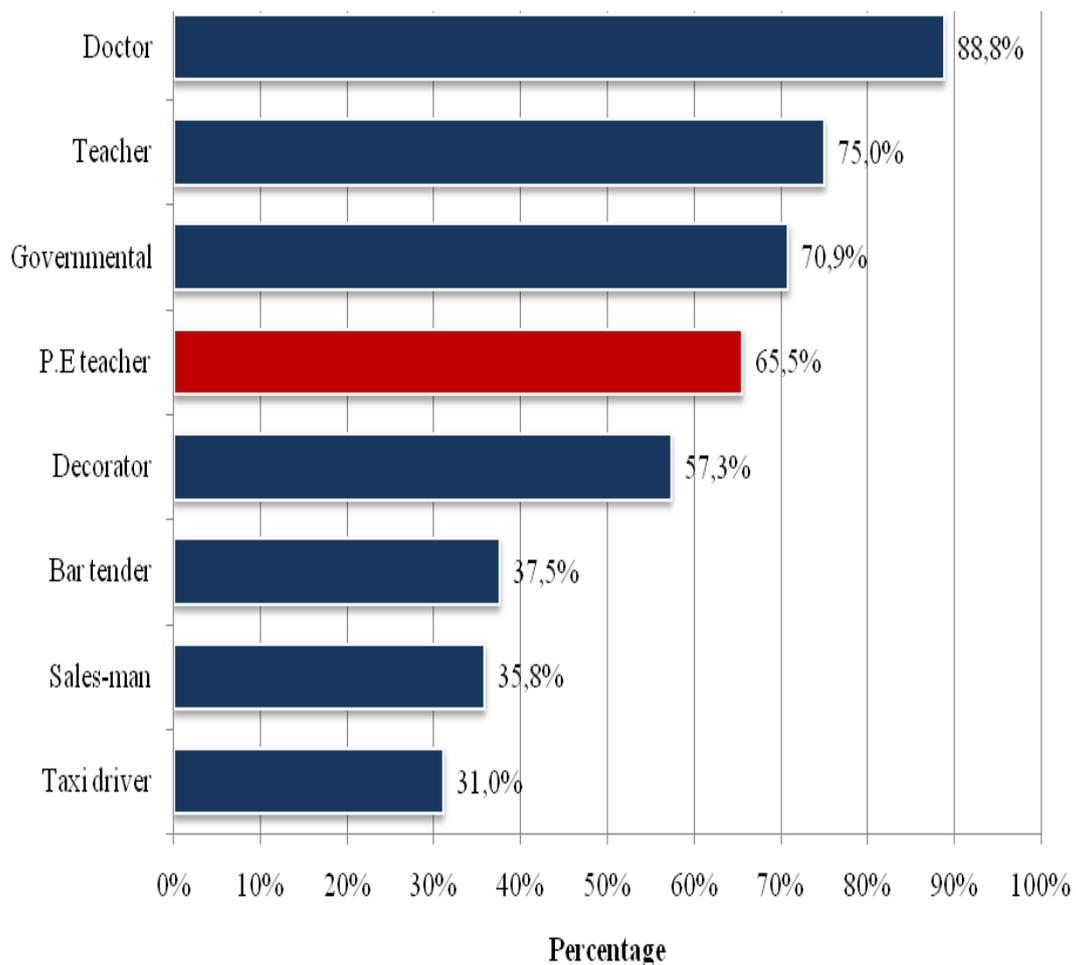
### ***5.3 Qualified PE teachers' satisfaction with their job and position and status crystallization***

PE teachers belong to the social group of teachers, which is a white collar occupation. Although they should have the same occupational prestige with teachers, their profession is usually considered as a less honorable occupation. The low status and esteem of physical education are by no means a recent phenomenon (Hardman and Marshall 2000). In Cyprus the profession of a PE teacher is regarded as an undemanding and effortless job with high income. Probably this opinion refers mainly to those who are employed at public schools in the governmental sector.

In the following passages, the social status of all Cypriot qualified PE teachers is analyzed and presented, irrespective of where they work, i.e. either at public schools, or in different areas (while waiting for their employment at schools). The concept of status appeared in sociology in the 1940s. According to Matějů and Martin (1998) E. Benoit Smullyan, referred for the first time to the concepts of class, status

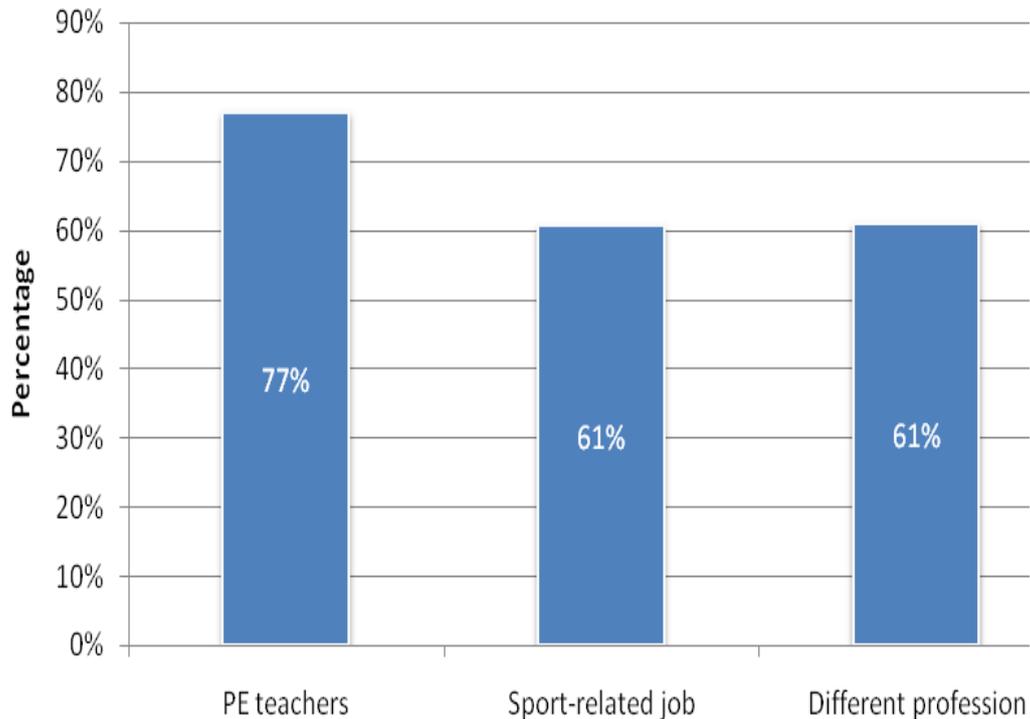
and party that were introduced by Weber. According to Weber, the concept of status is within the "social" order in the sense that status groups are stratified according to the principles of their consumption of goods as represented by a certain honour or prestige in following special styles of life. Weber subsumes occupation under the heading of status since social honour is claimed by virtue of the special style of life which may be determined by an occupation (Rush 1965). In this research social status is defined in the narrow sense of socio-economic status (SES) derived from occupation or occupational prestige, education as an individual investment in social standing and earnings as payoffs of the educational investment. Status crystallization is subsequently the degree to which these three dimensions or aspects of SES are correlated (Wolf 2008).

Considering the first indicator which is occupational prestige it is important to note that all of the participants are qualified PE teachers but they were divided into three groups according to their occupation. The largest group is the first group that involves PE teachers who are employed at schools (52% of the participants), PE degree holders who are employed in sport related jobs belong to the second group (36%) and the smallest third group involves PE degree holders who are employed in non-sport related jobs (12%). The participants were asked to evaluate according to the public opinion of Cyprus, the prestige of PE teachers' profession in comparison to other occupations too (Figure 1). In their opinion, Cypriots attribute a greater level of respect towards the following categories of professionals: medical doctors (88.8%), teachers (75%), governmental employees (70.9%) and then for PE teachers (65.5%). Decorators, bar-tenders, salesmen and taxi drivers perceive a lower honour than PE teachers. According to previous studies the only consensus of occupational prestige was related to the profession of medical doctors which received the highest admiration among other occupations. The order rank among the other kind of jobs differs between several countries in accordance with their social values. For example in Poland, teachers in 1975 had higher prestige than in the USA and locomotive drivers had more prestige in Czechoslovakia than in the USA. Prestige of any particular social role is based on a different combination of factors which produce its relative moral worthiness and consequently entitle it to the show of deference behavior (Roger 1975).



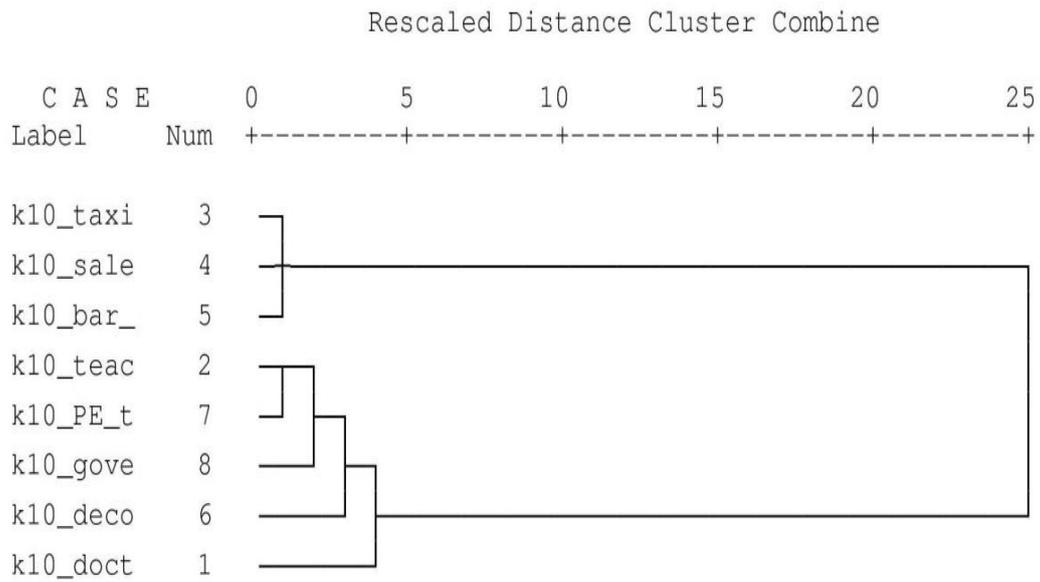
**Figure 1:** Means showing how the qualified PE teachers believe that the wider public evaluates the occupational prestige of certain professions in Cyprus

It must be mentioned that when these results were analysed according to the three different groups with the ANOVA method ( $F = 18.435$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), the differences were significant. The participants of the second “S” and third Group “O” claimed that the public respects their occupation at a lower percentage (61%) in comparison to the first Group “T” that take the opinion that the public respects them to a greater extent by reason of their employment at public schools (Figure 2).

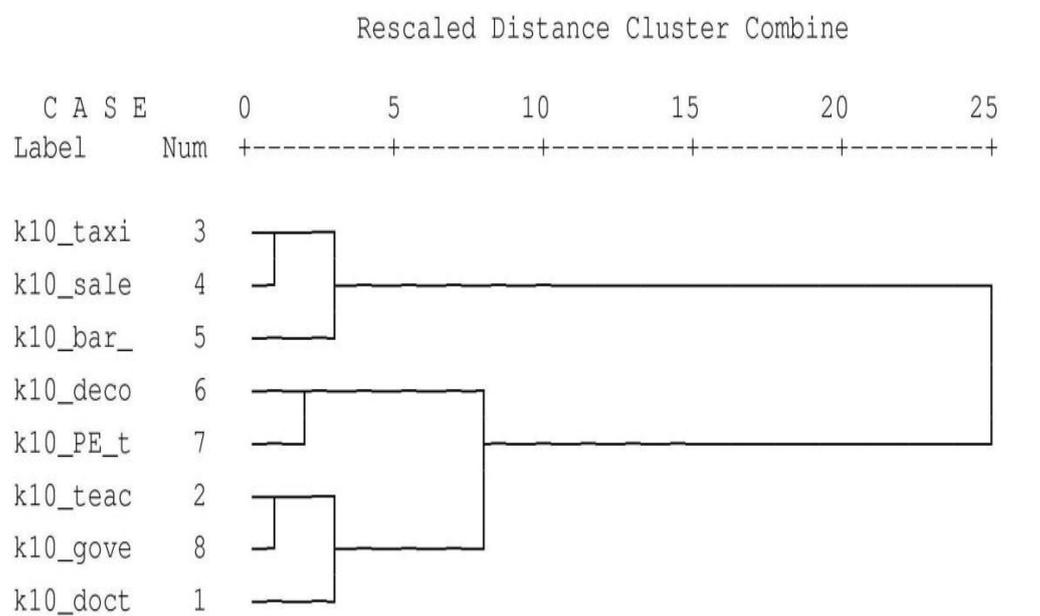


**Figure 2:** Means showing how the three groups believe that the wider public evaluates the occupational prestige of PE teachers

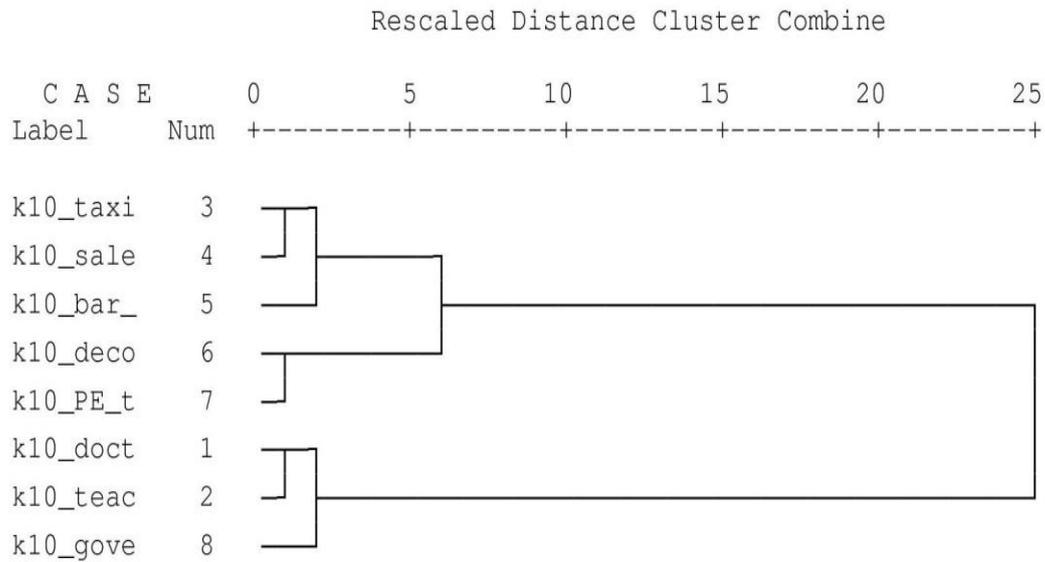
A Cluster analysis was also utilized to find out the opinions of each group regarding the prestige of several professions. As it is shown in Figure 3, the first Group categorized the various professions into two sets. The first set consists of taxi-drivers, sales-men and bar tenders. The second consists of teachers, PE teachers, governmental employees and decorators whose occupational prestige is similar. The second group (Figure 4) divided the given jobs in a different way especially in the second set. Their results were divided into three sets. The first one was more or less the same as the results of the first Group. The second set includes the PE teachers together with the decorators and the last set consists of teachers, governmental employees and doctors with the highest esteem. Finally the participants of the third Group (Figure 5) believe that the prestige of PE teachers is similar to the prestige that is enjoyed by decorators, taxi drivers, salesmen and bar-tenders which is on the low end in comparison to the prestige enjoyed by the profession of doctors, teachers and governmental employees. Apparently, there were considerable differences between the participants with different careers regarding the prestige of PE teachers.



**Figure 3:** Distribution of responses in the first group in view of the occupational prestige of the above professions subject to the wider public view



**Figure 4:** Distribution of responses in the second group in view of the occupational prestige of the above professions subject to the wider public view

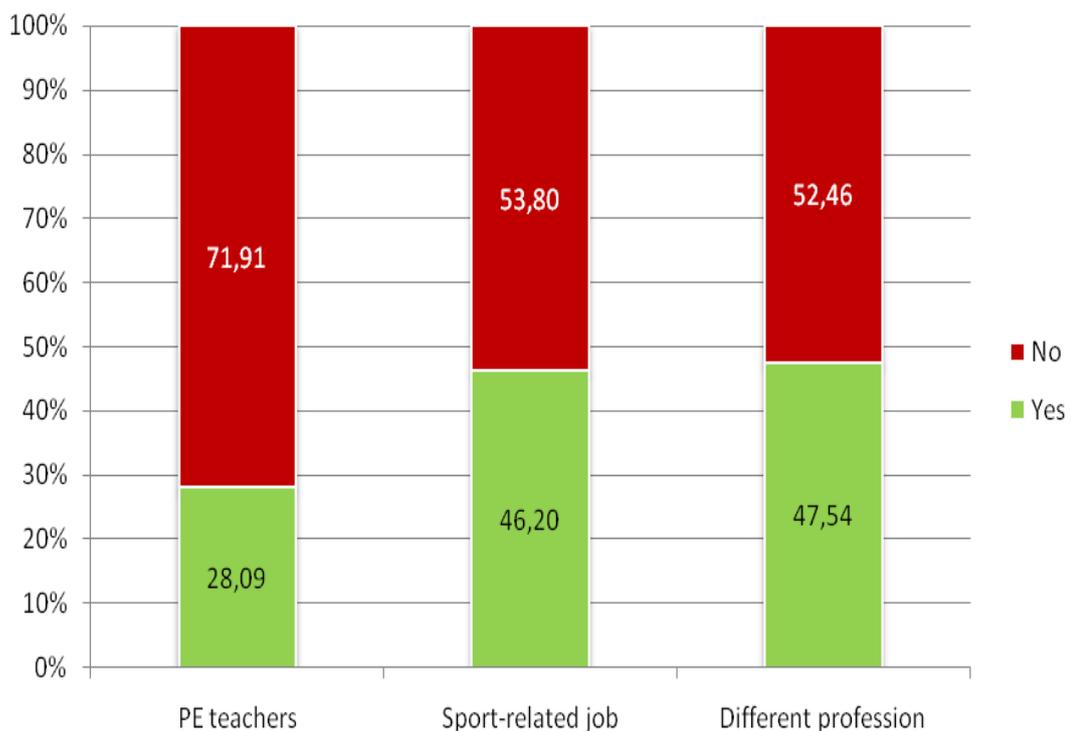


**Figure 5:** Distribution of responses in the third group in view of the occupational prestige of the above professions subject to the wider public view

It would also be interesting to indicate the differences in details between the three groups about the occupational prestige. Doctors received the highest honour from the second group and the lowest from the first. Teachers received the highest esteem from the third group and the lowest from the first. Governmental employees also received the highest esteem from the third group and the lowest from the first. Bar-tenders were evaluated higher by the second group and the lowest evaluation was provided by the active PE teachers (1<sup>st</sup> Group). It seems that active PE teachers have negative feelings and opinions towards four different professions. Probably they do not believe that those occupations should be so highly respected. It is not surprising that they gave the greatest respect for their own profession (PE teacher) and the remaining two groups evaluated them similarly. All the three groups share the same opinion about the decorators' prestige. Taxi-drivers and sales-men were evaluated higher by the active PE teachers (1<sup>st</sup> Group) in comparison to the evaluation provided to the aforesaid professions by the members of the second group. As it was mentioned before, taxi-drivers have the lowest occupational prestige among these eight occupations.

Another concept which has a vital role in the socio-economic status of an individual is education. It is clear that all of the participants graduated from universities of sport sciences, which means that they all have the same degree.

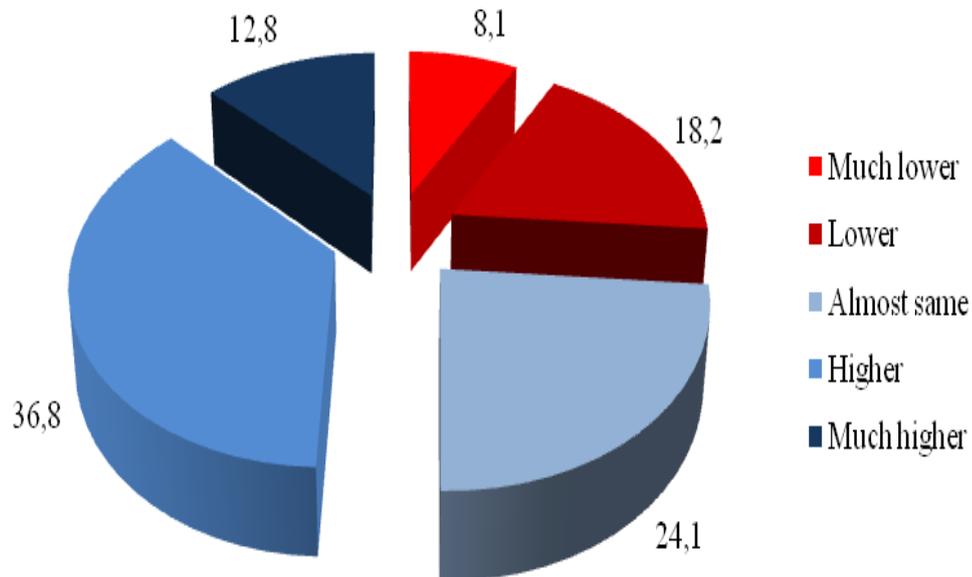
Obviously some of them wanted to be more educated so they did undertake further studies that were the following; another alternative degree, a master's, a PhD or just an extra course. The results indicated that nowadays the participants belonging to the second and third group are more educated than the active PE teachers (1<sup>st</sup> Group). A chi-square test ( $\chi^2$  value = 18.682; df = 2;  $p < 0.001$ ) showed that the differences were significant (Figure 6).



**Figure 6:** Distribution of the responses of the three groups in view of the further studies to be possibly taken

The majority of the whole sample of this research (18.3%) showed their preference in undertaking a master's degree in order to learn more and become even more specialized with respect to a specific field of study. 8.8% of the sample was interested in engaging in an additional science so they chose to get another university degree, 11.8% of the subjects participated in various courses and the minority of the sample which comprised of 3.6% continued their studies so that they would acquire the highest academic degree i.e. a PhD.

The third dimension of social status is the income or salary of the subjects. Because of the three different groups of occupations, the results were analysed according to the average monthly salary in Cyprus\* which was €1697. Almost half of the sample has “higher” or “much higher” income than the average and 24.1% receive almost the same amount as the average (Figure 7).



**Figure 7:** Means showing how the subjects evaluated their salary in comparison to the average salary which is paid in Cyprus (scale: 1- much lower and 5- much higher)

ANOVA analysis indicated the results in relation to dependent variables which are the following 1) job satisfaction 2) satisfaction towards salary 3) comparison of their salary with the average salary 4) satisfaction of their position in the labour market. The independent variable was the group where the respondents belong. Table 3 shows that in all dependent variables the active PE teachers (1<sup>st</sup> Group) have a higher average mean than the other two Groups. Regarding job satisfaction, the second group has one mark difference from the third group. As for the remaining dependent variables the results between the second and third groups are alike.

\* The Statistical Service of the Republic of Cyprus in 2008 declared that the average salary per month is €1697

**Table 3:** Means showing the level of satisfaction regarding qualified PE teachers' job, salary and position in the labour market

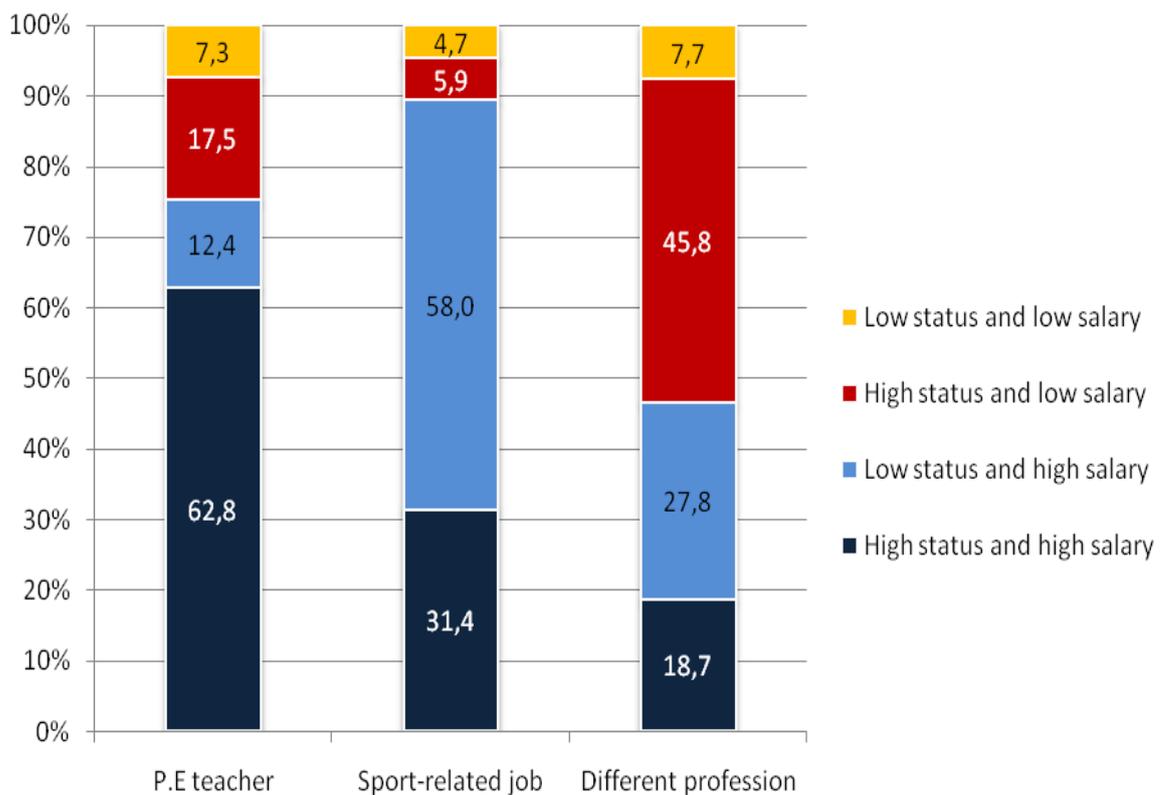
	Mean		F	df	P
Job satisfaction	PE teacher (T) Sport-related job (S) Other job (O)	4.51 4.01 3.00	53.337	2	0.001
Satisfaction with salary	PE teacher (T) Sport-related job (S) Other job (O)	4.21 3.34 3.21	75.535	2	0.001
Comparison of their salary with the average	PE teacher (T) Sport-related job (S) Other job (O)	3.99 2.49 2.61	179.171	2	0.001
Satisfaction with their position in the labour market	PE teacher (T) Sport-related job (S) Other job (O)	4.23 3.33 3.27	45.460	2	0.001

After the Cluster analysis the following cases were analysed:

- In the first cluster are those qualified PE teachers who are satisfied with their salary and with their position in the labour market
- In the second cluster are those qualified PE teachers who are satisfied with their salary but less satisfied with their position in the labour market
- In the third cluster are those qualified PE teachers who are satisfied with their position in the labour market but less satisfied with their salary
- In the fourth cluster are those qualified PE teachers who are neither satisfied with their labor market position nor with their salary

Chi-square test examined the cluster number and Group variables ( $\chi^2$  value = 98.968; df = 6;  $p < 0.01$ ). As it is shown in Figure 8, there are more active PE teachers "T" with a high status and a high salary (62.8%) than in any other group. It was also demonstrated

in a research which was conducted by Attalides (2009) that the income of the educators who teach in elementary and secondary schools of Cyprus is high, almost two times more than the average salary. Another 17.5% of active PE teachers “T” have a high status even though they receive a lower salary and almost half of the PE degree holders who have different careers (45.8%), seem to have high status but once again they do receive a low income. It is also interesting that more than half of the participants of the second group (58%) have a low status but high income. In all three groups less than 8% of the participants have a low status and a low salary.

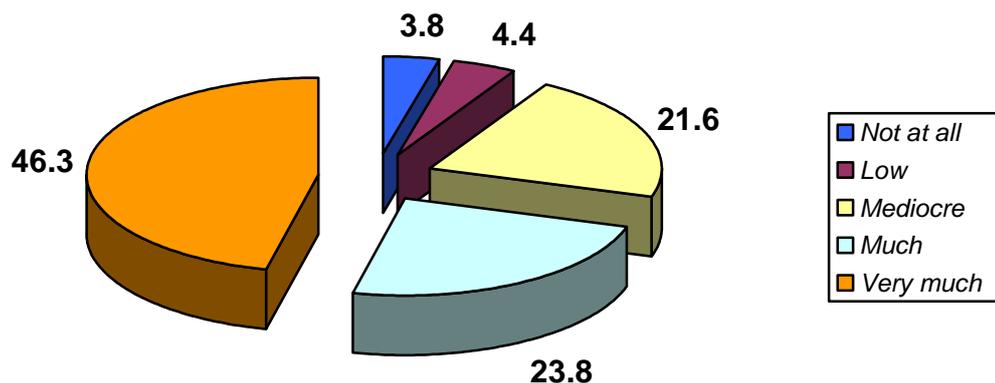


**Figure 8:** Means showing the status and salaries of the three groups

The social status of different occupations might be similar in a society however; people having the same occupation are satisfied with their job to a different degree. The level of their satisfaction might have an impact on their quality of life in general and on the quality of their work in particular. Danielsson and Bodin (2008) provided that Locke in 1976; argued that job satisfaction has been defined as a “pleasurable or positive emotional state, resulting from the appraisal of one’s job

experiences”. In striving to achieve a more motivated and better performing workforce, job satisfaction plays a key role. Job satisfaction may also be regarded as a function, the extent to which one’s needs are satisfied in a job (Koustelios and Tsigilis 2005). In addition, according to Crossman and Harris (2006) the factors which are affecting the level of job satisfaction can be broadly categorized as environmental (the job itself or the working environment), psychological (personality, behaviour attitude) or demographic (age, gender).

Considering the level of job satisfaction on the part of qualified PE teachers the results of this research indicate that almost half of the respondents were very satisfied with their job and 2/3 of the sample claimed that they are either “much” or “very much” satisfied with their occupation (Figure 9).



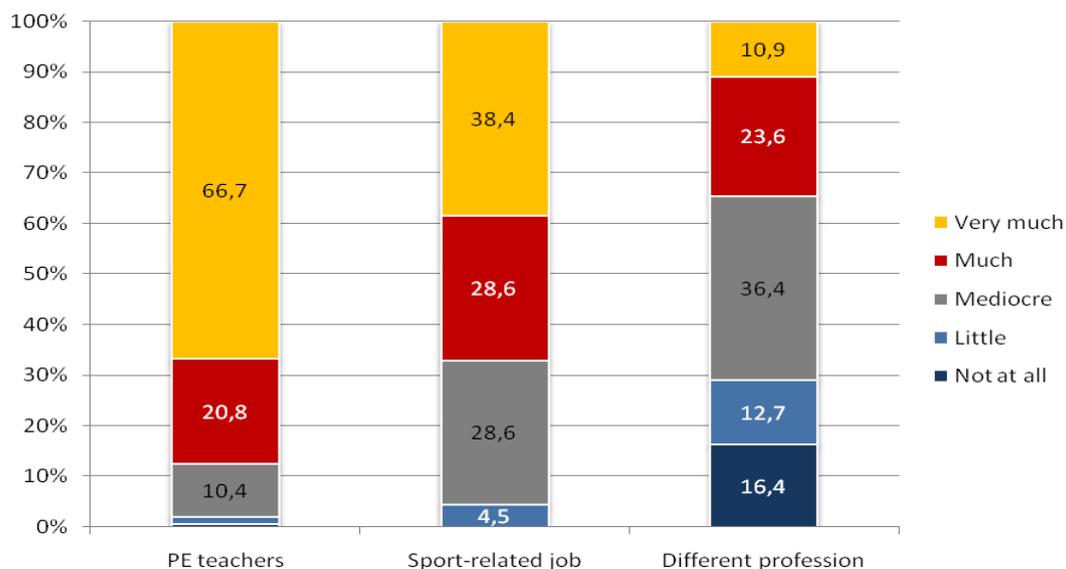
**Figure 9:** Means indicating the level job satisfaction of the sample (scale: 1- not at all satisfied scale, 5- very much satisfied)

The findings of a similar study by Koustelios and Tsigilis (2005) suggested that Greek PE teachers experience low levels of burnout and they are satisfied to a great extent with the job itself.

A crucial aspect regarding job satisfaction is the actual salary to be paid by the employer to the employee. Ganzach (2003) provided that Levine in 1993 argued that payment is positively related not only to pay satisfaction but to favourable work attitudes in general. The Statistical Service of the Republic (SSR) declared that the

average salary (in 2008) of Cypriot citizens was €1697 per month. With respect to qualified PE teachers, almost half of the sample had either an income which was “higher” or “much higher” than the income provided by the SSR and a percentage amounting to 24.1% receive almost the same amount with the average. Hence, some qualified PE teachers declared to have more than one job in order to earn more money. When they were asked to evaluate their satisfaction in view of their salary between their full-time and part-time job the results were in accordance with the salary figures. Most of them are much more satisfied with the income of their full-time job.

A Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$  value = 94.487; df = 8;  $p < 0.01$ ) was also performed on the data related to job satisfaction according to the results of the three groups (Figure 10). The majority of the subjects (66.7%) having indicated that they are “very much” satisfied with their job are employed in public schools and their profession is that of an active PE teacher. A percentage of 38.4% who are employed in other sport related jobs have also provided that they are “very much” satisfied. In total contrast to the first and second group, the third group has a lower corresponding percentage. In this respect, the third group is the only group which has a relatively high ratio amounting to 16.4% of the participants who have stipulated that they are “not at all” satisfied with their occupation.



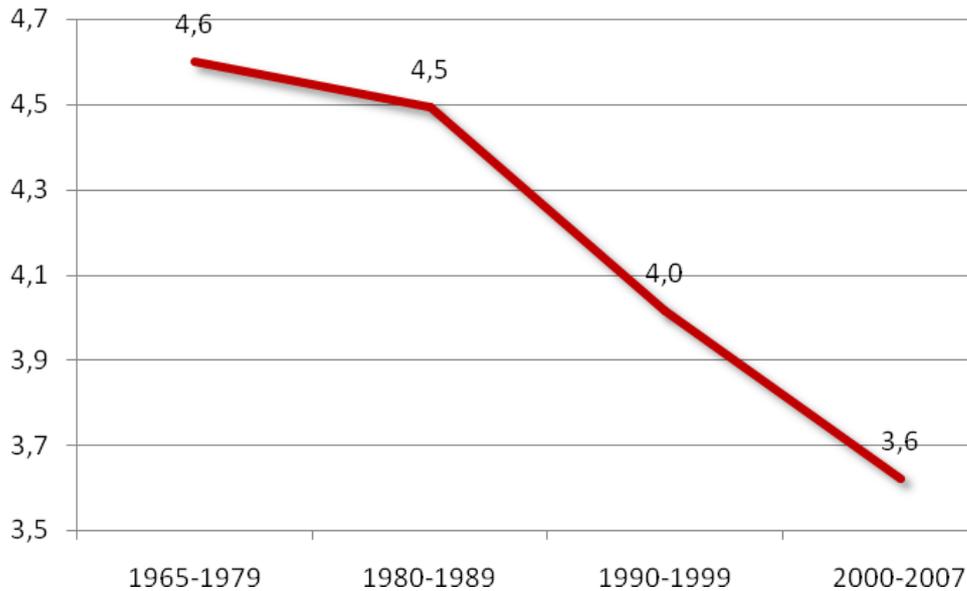
**Figure 10:** Distribution of the responses in the three groups in view of their level of job satisfaction (scale: 1-not at all satisfied, 5-very much satisfied)

Moreover, considering the demographic factors; ANOVA analysis ( $F=16.231$ ;  $df=3$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) was performed to compare the job satisfaction in relation to their age. Table 4 illustrates that the older participants are more satisfied than the younger ones. The first age group has a slightly higher percentage than that of the second group. The same results were indicated by Crossman and Harris in 2006. Satisfaction is high at the beginning of a teacher's career and consequently over the years the satisfaction level decreases, but start to increase again towards the end of their career.

**Table 4:** Means indicating the level of job satisfaction in relation to their age (scale: 1-not at all satisfied, 5-very much satisfied)

	Mean		F	Df	p
Job Satisfaction	20-25 years old	3.89	53.327	3	0.001
	26-35 years old	3,63			
	36-45 years old	4.14			
	46-65 years old	4.62			

The qualified PE teachers' year of graduation also has an influence on the level of job satisfaction. In the next figure (11) the older participants are those who have graduated from university during the years 1965-1979 and the younger participants are those who have graduated during the years 2000-2007. Crossman and Harris (2006) and Griva and Joeke (2003) have discovered in their respective researches that older teachers are more satisfied with their job. On the other hand, the National Union of Teachers (NUT) (2001) indicated that there was higher dissatisfaction among individuals aged 25 to 29.



**Figure 11:** Means providing the level of job satisfaction in view of the year of graduation of the qualified PE teachers

The gender characteristics were analyzed by t-test ( $\text{Mean}_{\text{man}}=4.05$ ,  $\text{Mean}_{\text{woman}}=4.04$ ;  $t=0.017$ , NS), and the differences between males and females towards job satisfaction were not significant. The results of the research conducted by Crossman and Harris (2006) show similar patterns; male teachers are slightly more satisfied than females although their ANOVA analysis resulted that the differences with respect to gender were not that significant.

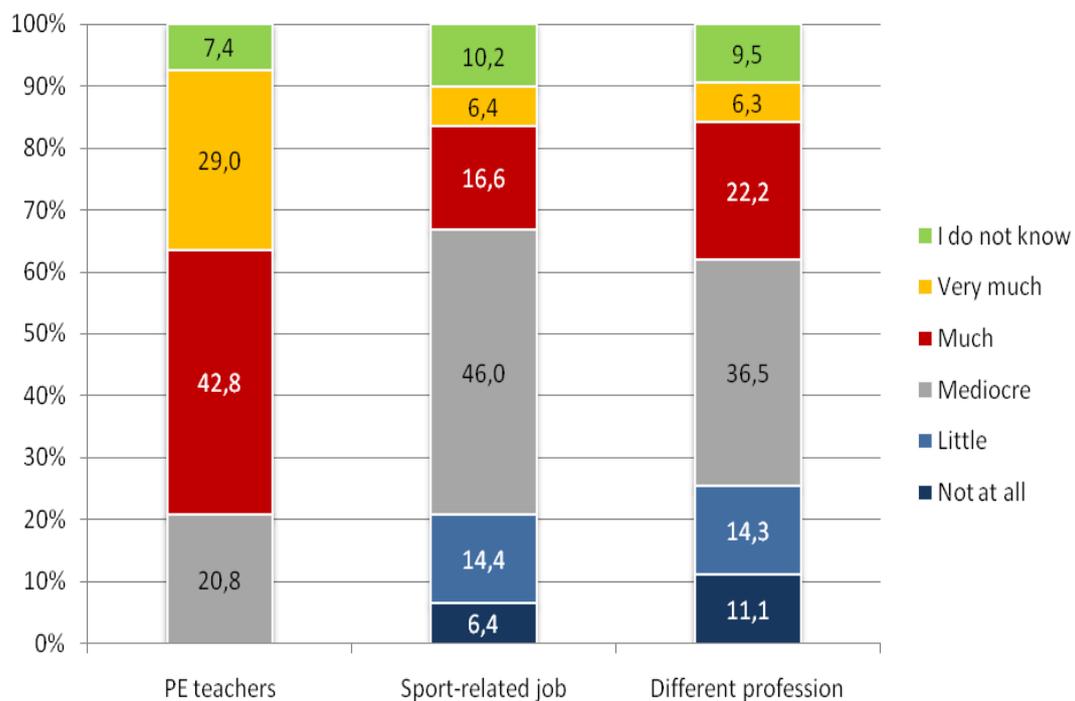
In addition the participants were asked if they would prefer to have done other studies instead of PE. Only fifty-nine individuals would prefer to have studied something else. Crossman and Harris (2006) revealed that Carvel's study in the year 2000 indicated that a high percentage of his subjects who were teachers would have resigned from their job if they were offered an alternative employment.

Since the automated machines have replaced many repetitive and undemanding work processes (O' Donnell 1994), in post-industrial societies the majority of employees work in the service sector. Obviously there are several reasons that people tend to choose a job in the tertiary sector; arguably these may be the following: a greater achieved status, a unique identity and higher income.

The labour market of Cyprus can be considered as a relatively flexible one and well functioning. The individuals who were involved in occupations related to education in 1995 amounted only to 13.300, whereas in 2008 their number increased to 20.300. Nowadays the problem with these kinds of occupations is that there is excessive supply. In 2008 for example there were 1683 elementary teachers, 660 teachers of psychology, 1472 teachers of mathematics, 594 music teachers and 1488 PE teachers who were still waiting for their employment at public schools. In other words, because of the existing governmental employment policy applied by the MoEC of Cyprus, those people are forced to work in alternative employment regardless of their university degree in order to make a living. Nonetheless, some of them will be able to get employed at schools at an earlier stage in comparison to others. Unfortunately PE teachers belong to a group of teachers whose employment will be very sluggish owing to the fact that the time allocated for PE is minimal in comparison to the other subjects taught at schools. For instance, a Mathematics teacher who is afforded with a significant time allocation will be offered employment at an earlier stage since each school will require at least four teachers in order to cover the required amount of lessons.

Qualified Cypriot PE teachers were asked to evaluate their satisfaction (on a scale of five) with respect to their position in the labor market. Although based on their qualification PE teachers belong to the “group of teachers” due to the different structure and aim of their lesson, the Cypriot citizens distinguish them and do not consider them as educated as the rest of the teachers. The analysis of the results indicated that PE teachers who are employed at schools are much more satisfied with their position than the subjects of the remaining two Groups (Figure 12). There were not any negative answers in the first Group (except 7.4% who were not aware of what to answer). Almost half of the respondents who work in sport-related occupations have provided an answer which indicated that they were satisfied in a medium level, a percentage of 6.4% of them were dissatisfied and one tenth of the group did not provide an answer since they did not know what to answer. It is important to note that an identical percentage of participants of the second and third Group have stipulated that the level of satisfaction with their position is “low”(14.3% - 14.4%) and once again an identical percentage of the second and third Group have stipulated that they are “very much” satisfied with their position (6.3% - 6.4%). However, there is a difference of 4.7% between the second and third Group regarding the indication “not

at all” satisfied. More than 1/3 of the third Group has indicated with their responses that they are overall satisfied with their position at a medium level and a 9.5% did not know what to answer. Despite the above, it must be noted that the position of the individuals who belong to the third group “O” is probably completely different from the first 2 Groups “T” and “S” because of the fact that they exercise a different kind of job which is not related to sport. Besides when the subjects of the third Group “O” were asked to evaluate their satisfaction towards their job generally and towards their income; they did provide the highest ratio of negative answers in comparison to the other two Groups “T” and “S”.



**Figure 12:** Means showing the level of qualified PE teachers’ satisfaction with their position in the labour market (scale: 1-not at all satisfied, 5-very much satisfied or have provided an indication of “do not know”)

### ***5.4 Opinions about the governmental employment policy and the role of social capital***

Individuals in many societies can apply for a job right away and get employed immediately as soon as they graduate from their studies. In most cases the applicants

have to send their Curriculum Vitae (CV) and then be prepared for an interview either in person or via a conference call. In certain types of jobs the candidates may also have to pass an examination in order to continue with the whole procedure.

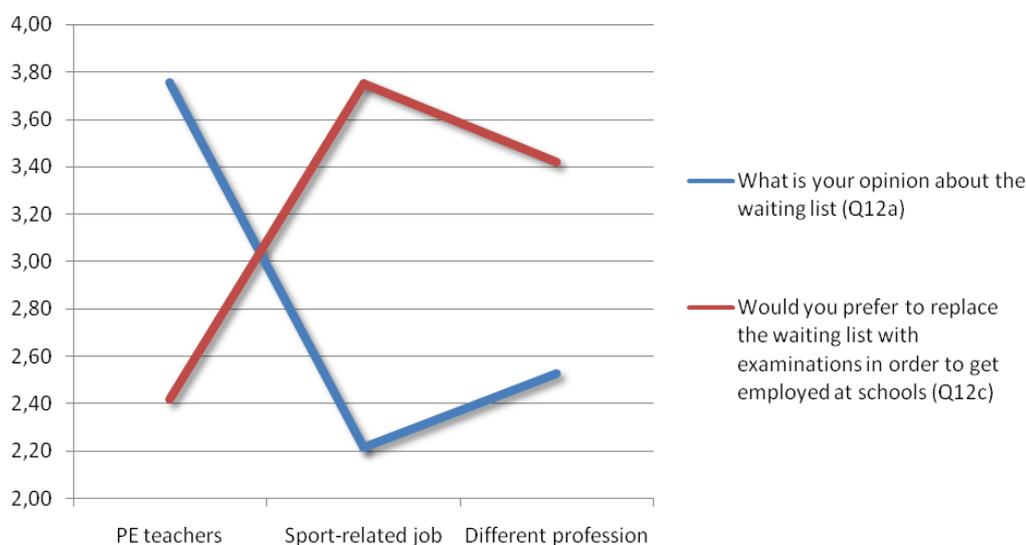
In Cyprus, the private sector can be described as follows in terms of the employment policy applied. The applicants usually have to send their CV and if the employer believes that the certain job is suitable for them then they are able to start working without delay. There are some large organizations which belong to the private sector but they request an examination first. This procedure is identical with the procedure applied in the public sector; if the candidates pass the examination, they also have to be evaluated in the course of an interview on the basis of which they are assessed. However, a different policy is applied with respect to teachers. Therefore the procedure followed is rather different. The teachers submit their university degree to a particular department of the MoEC. Each individual following the submission of his/her degree receives a unique number which is subject to a priority order. Each year a certain number of individuals subject to their number will be requested to initiate the provision of their services at public schools. Nowadays there is a higher level of supply than demand in the profession of teachers generally. It has to be noted that Cyprus is a member of the European Union; therefore, other Europeans are also free to exercise their freedom to work in Cyprus. Over the past 2 years, a significant number of teachers from Greece have decided to seek employment through the MoEC of Cyprus. This was due to the fact that Greece faces a huge economic crisis and the salaries there are much lower in comparison to Cypriot standards. Subsequently, many Greek teachers have submitted their degrees and the list kept by the MoEC is now longer than ever.

Therefore, the result of the above mentioned tendencies is that many Cypriot teachers will be employed at a much later stage since Greek nationals have taken priority due to their year of graduation. This will definitely create a chaotic situation and the problem is likely to become more serious in the future. The same is applicable for PE since Greek graduates have submitted their degrees in this field as well. The number of PE degree holders who have submitted their degree and are waiting for employment at the various public schools amounts to 1488. The subjects of this research were asked to express their opinion about different issues which were related to the aforesaid governmental employment policy; especially concerning the “waiting list”. A percentage of 15% of the participants have the opinion that the “waiting list”

is a “very fair” system and a percentage of 27.5% of the participants believe that the certain employment policy (meaning the waiting list) is “fair”. Another significant percentage of 23% of the participants have neither a positive nor a negative opinion regarding the given list. On the contrary, 18.9% and 15.6% respectively characterized the employment list as a “very unfair” or an “unfair” system.

ANOVA analysis was performed with one independent variable, the group, so as to compare the results of the three different groups. It seems that active PE teachers (1<sup>st</sup> Group) are those individuals who expressed a positive opinion towards the “waiting list”. The majority of the participants of the second Group judged the waiting list in both ways i.e. they regarded the given system as either “very unfair” or alternatively as “fair” and the third Group was between “fair” and “neither positive nor negative”.

In Greece a different employment policy is applied for teachers. They have to undertake examinations in order to get employed at schools. In Cyprus, the officials had several discussions about the particular issue but they have not issued a decision regarding this issue as yet. The participants provided their opinion about the replacement of the “waiting list” with examinations. 25% of the subjects have neither a positive nor a negative opinion regarding the aforesaid question posed, a ratio of 24.8% of the subjects have provided an indication that they are “not at all” supportive about the replacement of the waiting list by a system of exams, a 23% of the subjects have provided that they would “very much” wish that the MoEC replaces the employment policy, a 16.8% of subjects express their wish to undertake exams via the indication “much” and lastly a 10.4% of subjects indicated that they had a “lower” level of wish for the replacement of the waiting list by examinations. ANOVA analysis ( $F_{Q12c} = 55.662$ ;  $df = 2$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) indicated that active PE teachers “T” do not wish for the employment policy to be changed whereas the other two Groups “S” and “O” take the opinion that the replacement is desirable (Figure 13).



**Figure 13:** Means indicating the subjects' opinions; towards the employment policy applied by MoEC

86.6% of the participants knew prior to the initiation of their studies about the employment policy and the existence of the “waiting list”. A significant number from the participants who were not aware of the policy were the active PE teachers “T”. Obviously at the beginning of their studies there was not any list for PE teachers.

On a different perspective, social capital means different things to different people and usually those who use the term interpret it as an ingredient of resource allocation mechanism (Partha and Ismail 2000). According to sociologists and political scientists there are many reasons that justify the existence of favours based on personal contacts (which are otherwise referred as social capital). As it was pointed out by Attalides (2009) the cause of the existence of social capital can be allocated in the depth of the history of the socio-political culture of each society and its consequences are of extreme severity. Social capital arises through a “cliental system” where the relation of politicians when interchanging with the citizens is in their capacity as “clients” they exchange benefits with. It seems that Cypriot politicians do not disagree any longer as to whether social capital is in effect or not; but they disagree as to who is or was undertaking social capital and who is responsible for the resulting situation (Attalides 2009). Cyprus is a small island where people may know each other or may have common relatives or acquaintances so they take advantage of this situation in their professional advancement. When Cypriots wish to get employed in a specific job; then they will give a call to a familiar person and will certainly ask

for their assistance in exchange of a future favor even though the particular individual might not be ideal for the given position (Christodoulou 2009).

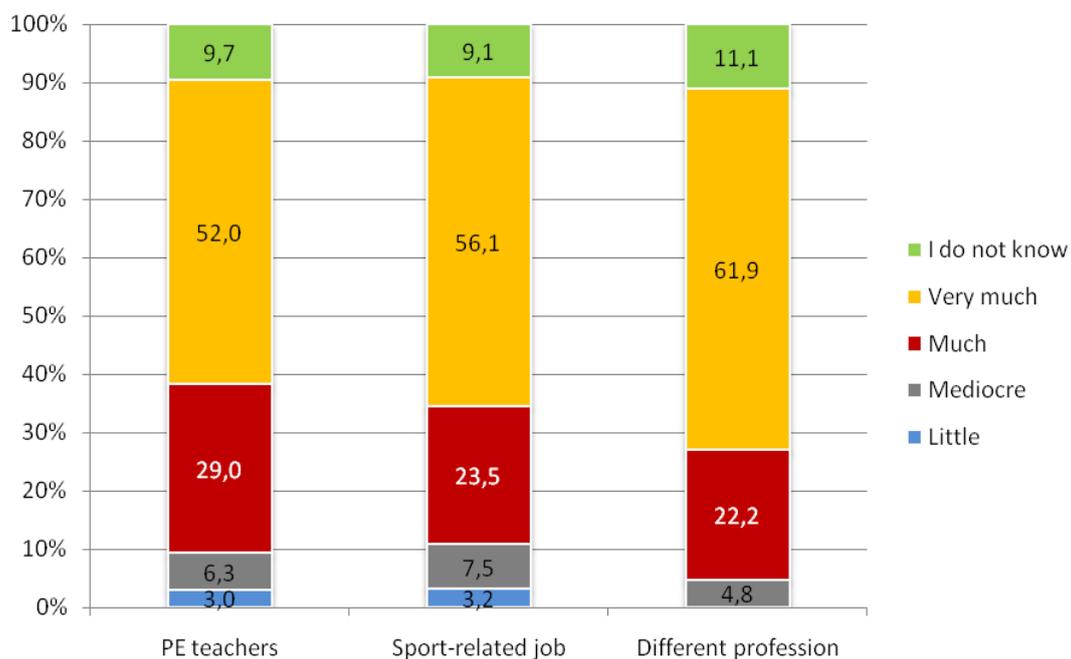
It can be said that there is corruption in the Cypriot public sector based on the influence of social capital. This is evident by the fact that an individual that ought not have been employed or promoted is preferred in comparison to an individual who is perhaps more hard-working and fulfils the necessary qualifications for the given position. As in other European countries, the public opinion in Cyprus is also similar claiming that the public sector is not efficient due to the fact that it consists of employees being there by reason of a connection with a particular politician or a political party and hence the public sector is not progressing in the same pace as the private sector. It is important to mention that the most traditional complaint is that unemployed individuals are wronged because of this “favoritism”. Some people believe that favoritism, the “cliental” relationship which has been analyzed above, and the existence of social capital are absolutely acceptable phenomena in the Cypriot society (Attalides 2009).

It is of essence to discuss the interconnections of social capital, in terms of the waiting list which is kept by the MoEC. The aforementioned list is available for inspection by the wider public. There is a significant segment of the public that take the opinion that the social capital cannot influence the waiting list itself and that everything performed in connection with the list are on the basis of a strict hierarchical order (i.e. year of graduation). There is also a contrary opinion on the above which represents a different segment of the Cypriot society who believe that if social capital is mobilized then the list can be amended. The results of this thesis showed that more than half of the qualified PE teachers believe that social capital has either “no influence at all” or “a low influence” with respect to the order kept in the “waiting list”. Approximately one fifth of them have a neutral opinion. Nevertheless, a smaller segment of the participants representing respectively 12.6% and 11.4% argued via the indication “much” or “very much” that the order of the list is influenced by social capital.

An alternative employment for qualified PE teachers’ is the Cyprus Sport Organization. The majority of the public believe that only a minority having the greatest social capital can ascertain such employment (Christodoulou 2009). This is due to the fact that the employment policy applied by CSO requires simply an interview and therefore the results of the interview are exclusively within the control

of CSO's employees. It is very interesting to note that the findings of this research indicated that more than half of the participants indicated via the indication "very much" (55%) or "much" (26.4%) that social capital influences their employment at the CSO. Only an insignificant percentage of 0.2% believes that social capital does "not influence at all" their employment at the organization.

A Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$  value = 94.487; df = 8;  $p < 0.01$ ) was performed and it revealed that there are great differences between the three different groups. In the third Group "O" there are more qualified PE teachers than in the other two Groups "T" and "S" who have specified via the indication "very much" that social capital affects their employment at the CSO. As it is shown in the Figure below (14), almost 1/3 of the first Group "T" argue by inserting the indication "much" that social capital influences their employment at the organization. In the third Group "O" no individuals have replied by inserting the indication "no influence at all" or "low influence". It is evident that the individuals of this group believe that social capital is an important asset that influences their employment at the Cyprus Sport Organization.



**Figure 14:** Means providing the subjects' opinions on the level of influence of social capital with regards to the employment of qualified PE teachers in the CSO (scale:1-no influence at all, 5-very much influence and they have provided an indication "do not know")

ANOVA method ( $F= 5.486$ ;  $df = 2$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), was also used for the analysis of the results related to social capital and the “waiting list”. The differences between the three groups were significant. The participants were asked again to respond by marking on a scale of five via the following indications: 1 - no influence at all, 2 - low influence, 3 - mediocre, 4 - much influence and 5 - very much influence. The resulting average of the answers of the third group is 3.10. Active PE teachers “T” believe that social capital exerts a low level of influence in view of their employment at schools; whereas the average answer of the second group had only a difference amounting to 0.13% in view with the responses provided by the first group.

### ***5.5 Health awareness and sporting behaviour***

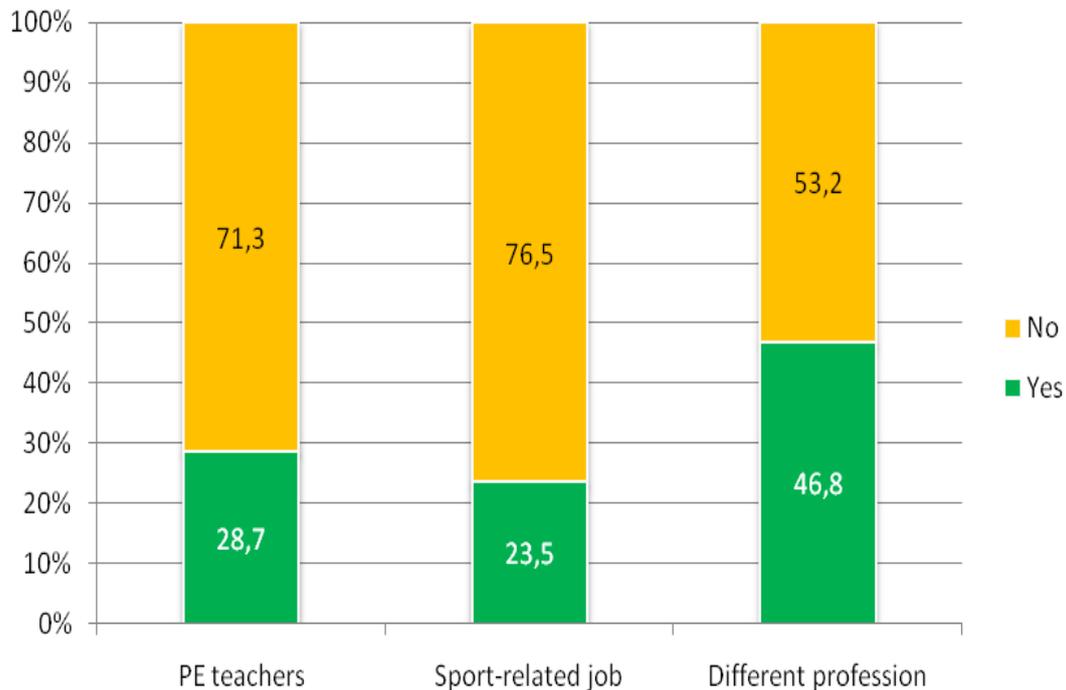
Although this sub-topic is not in close connection with the social status of qualified PE teachers; it is an important issue to be acquainted with their attitude towards health awareness. Many of them who are assigned to the waiting list might teach in public schools in the near future. It is vital to know to which degree they perceive a positive attitude towards sporting behaviour and health consciousness. This information might be of interest to decision makers and may contribute to the change of the special employment policy which exists in the teaching sector.

Many scientists have proved that physical activity and proper nutrition may prevent severe diseases. Qualified PE teachers should know better than anybody else what risks and diseases can appear owing to the lack of exercise. Hence, they should treat their bodies and subsequently their health properly and motivate others to do the same. Their role as PE teachers is not limited to school teaching but additionally it includes the aspect of promoting a healthy lifestyle. According to the European Sport Charter (2001), PE professionals and amateurs have to behave in a way which sets a good example and presents a positive model for children and young people. Several studies show that exercise may prevent or control hypertension, osteoporosis, type II diabetes and obesity. The prevalence of overweight and obesity is increasing worldwide and there is no doubt that this is caused by an excessive energy intake, decreased physical activity and a sedentary lifestyle. Of course, a possible genetic predisposition and low socioeconomic status may also play a significant role (Graf et al. 2006).

A healthy and physically active lifestyle can also reduce the risk of coronary heart disease and sudden death (Chew et al. 1985). In other words, systematic and regular physical activity is an indispensable element of a healthy lifestyle, which in a definite and positive way affects one's state of health and quality of life (Nowak and Ignasiak 2008). It can be expected that PE at schools assists greatly to physical and mental well-being, training of healthy lifestyle, fighting against addictions, developing the right hygiene and has a very important role in recreation and rehabilitation (Kristonne et al. 2007). Therefore, it is a crucial issue for the qualified PE teachers to be health-aware in their everyday life and subsequently, be able to advise individuals to follow a healthy lifestyle. The most significant dimensions which are analyzed in this sub-chapter are the following: 1) sporting activity 2) smoking habits 3) if it is important for them to work as PE teachers 4) motivating other people to exercise 5) sport consumption and 6) nutrition.

The results of this research revealed that most of the qualified PE teachers in Cyprus pay attention to their nutrition, do not smoke and they undertake physical activity in order to maintain healthy. The author wanted to discover their health awareness regardless of their current occupation. It is expected that as the time passes by some of the qualified PE teachers would no longer perceive their sporting behaviour and health awareness in the same way as they perceived it immediately after they graduated.

Cigarette smoking is regarded as the most influential of the controllable risk factors. The more cigarettes a person smokes and the longer they smoke, the higher the risk of encountering heart disease will be (Chew et al. 1985). Nevertheless, the results indicate that 71.3% of the sample of this research does not smoke. It is very important that a teacher should be admired by its students for his/her decisions i.e. no smoking, no alcoholic drinking no use of drugs and so forth. It is remarkable that according to the results 71.3% of the first Group "T", 76.5% of the second Group "S" and 53.2% of the third Group "O" are non-smokers. Obviously those with an alternative non-sport related career are more engaged in the habit of smoking than those who are involved in sport-related jobs. Another research which was conducted by the SSR of Cyprus showed that a significant percentage amounting to 23.9% of the entire population aged over 15 were smoking on a daily basis.



**Figure 15:** Distribution of the three group responses' in view of the exercise of smoking habit or not by qualified PE teachers

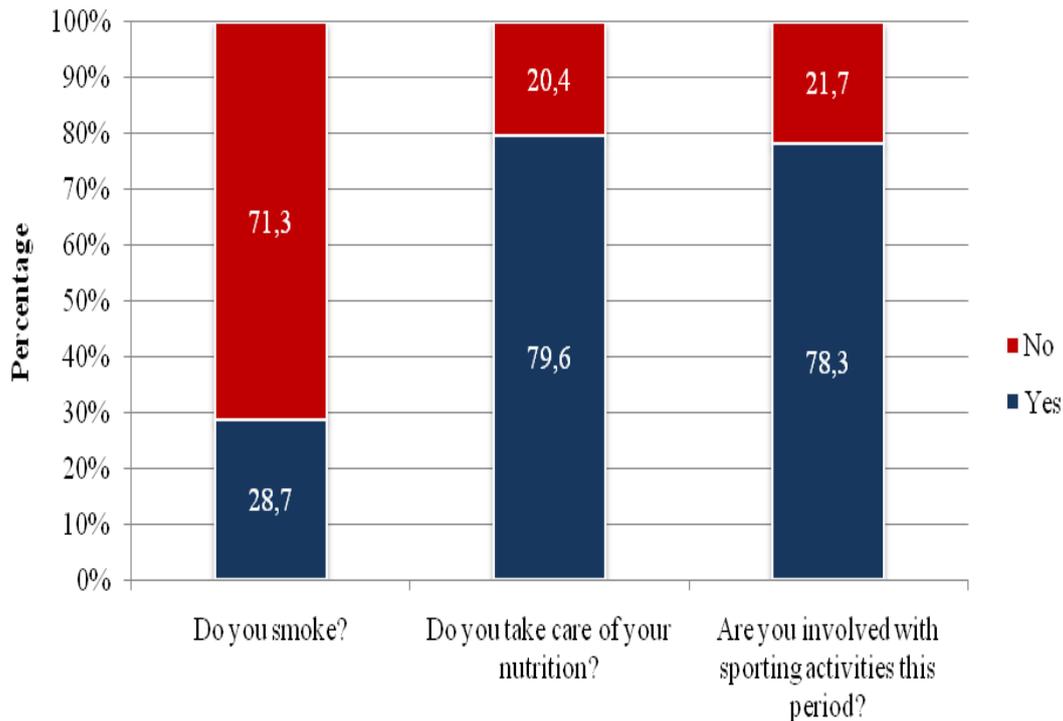
The subjects were also asked about their attitudes towards nutrition. About 80% of all the subjects declared that they were conscious of their diet and maintained a healthy nutrition. No significant gender- or age-related differences were found in that respect. It is positive to note that only few of the subjects provided that they are not concerned about their food consumption. Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$  value = 2.042; df = 2; NS), showed that 82.2% of the first Group “T”, 79% of the second Group “S” and 74.6% of the third Group “O” take care of their nutrition. However, according to the SSR of Cyprus, on the basis of a health survey (n = 5617) which was conducted in the year 2003 the majority of the Cypriot population (78.1%) did not follow a special diet or dietary regime.

A similar percentage to the above indicated that qualified PE teachers undertake physical exercise. In fact 78.3% of the research sample provided this indication. All the subjects were asked about their involvement and/or frequency in undertaking physical activities, the answers being rated in a five-point scale. Another Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$  value = 9.826; df = 2;  $p < 0.05$ ), indicated that there were differences between the three groups. The lowest activity was declared by subjects

from the third Group “O” (73%) and the highest by the second Group “S” (86.1%), the first Group “T” being positioned in between (74.7%). Accordingly, the percentage of those declaring that they were not undertaking any sport activity whatsoever, was higher in the third Group “O” (31%) and differed significantly from the percentages that resulted in the first two groups (13.5% and 10.3% respectively).

The sporting behaviour of the citizens of Europe was also examined by the European Commission in 2006 and their study revealed that only a limited number of Europeans practiced sport or participated in other intense leisure activities. In more than half of the European countries, more than 40% of the respondents from all the countries (the Cypriot respondents indicated a percentage of 41%) do not undertake the appropriate amount of physical activity. In view of this survey, Cyprus is considered as an inactive society.

Nevertheless, according to the results of this research, younger subjects in the age groups 20-25 and 26-35 declared that they were more active physically than the middle and older aged subjects of the sample between 36-45 and 46-65. The results of this research with respect to gender indicated that the percentage of men and women that exercise were practically identical (78.3%). The results of this research are contrasting to the results provided in the report of the European Commission (2006) and in the study of Suchomel et al. (2008) which was performed in the Czech Republic. The aforesaid report and study indicated that men were more physically active than women. This might be owing to the particular field of education they enrolled in and the professions they have been working in.

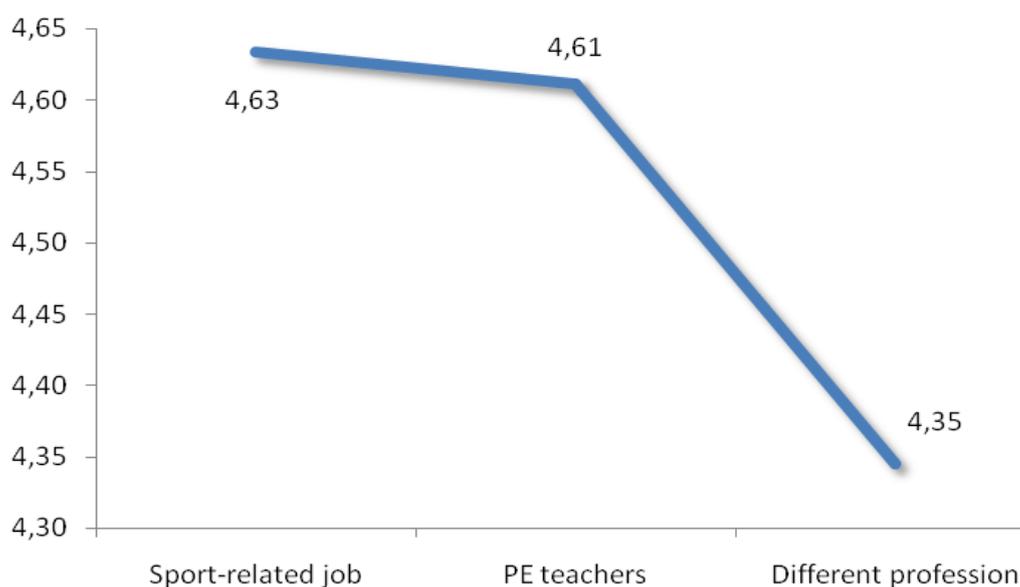


**Figure 16:** Percentages indicating the responses of the sample in terms of the questions post regarding the pattern of their health lifestyle

The most frequent sporting activities that the qualified PE teachers are involved in are the following: jogging or walking (30.70%), attending the gym (29.20%), swimming (23%) and playing different ball games (20.30%). There is substantial evidence underlining that regular aerobic exercise such as walking, jogging, dancing or swimming is beneficial to physical and psychological health. Regular exercise appears to be particularly effective in prevention of coronary disease and osteoporosis and is of some value in the effort to manage obesity and diabetes (Waddington 2000). Drummond et al. (2002) in their research indicated that 60% of health educators (N=20) participated in exercise activities and 25% of them did not smoke. Fontana and Apostolidou (2002) investigated the lifestyle of Cypriot elementary teachers. The most frequent sporting activities that were carried out by the elementary teachers were swimming 60% of the sample and jogging 50%. The subjects of their study were also asked if they smoked and a percentage amounting to 88% of their sample was not a smoker.

It is important to mention that PE degree holders are responsible for teaching different skills and values, advising what is proper and healthy or not and motivate individuals to act according to their advice. Another issue which was addressed in this thesis was the motivation of other individuals such as schoolchildren, club members, etc. for physical activity. The way that people are motivated and managed is crucial to the success of schools (Armour and Yelling 2004). 96.6% qualified PE teachers are trying to persuade and convince people to get involved in physical exercise. Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$  value = 4.574; df = 2; NS), indicated that there are no significant differences between the three groups in this respect.

ANOVA analysis ( $F = 3.550$ ;  $df = 2$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) was performed in order to discover if it is important for qualified PE teachers to work at schools (as active PE teachers). As it is shown in Figure 18 subjects from the first and second Group “T” and “S” answered almost in an identical way to that question with the mean rating of those from the third Group “O” being significantly lower ( $p < 0.05$ ).



**Figure 17:** Means providing the degree of importance in acquiring a job as a PE teacher (scale:1-not at all important, 5-very much important)

The final dimension which has to be discussed is the attendance or involvement of qualified PE teachers in sport competitions and/or matches. Passive engagement in

sports was high in all three groups and amounted to  $4.31 \pm 1.29$  on a five-point scale. There were no significant differences between the three groups (Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$  value = 11.333; df = 6; NS). More than half of the subjects attend sporting matches or competitions either at a “very often” or “often” frequency.

## 6. DISCUSSION

The low status and esteem of physical education (PE) is by no means a recent phenomenon (Hardman and Marshall 2000). The reason for this phenomenon is the negative opinion towards PE teachers due to the fact that the subject itself is not regarded as a “real discipline” by the wider society. The results highlight the necessity of supporting the physical education as a subject in the Cypriot educational system. It seems that Cypriots are aware of the various benefits that can be gained by physical exercise, but they are not positively attributed towards PE classes in schools. Despite the fact that the results of “Special Eurobarometer” (2004) indicated that 97% of Cypriot citizens believe that sport can serve as a means that can be used towards health improvement in practice Cypriots do not consider the subject of PE as a “real discipline” at schools. Schools have been identified as the institutions which have been entrusted with the primary responsibility for promoting physical activity (McKenzie 2007), a fundamental factor of human development. According to Graf et al. (2008) via PE and sporting activities a health-enhancing behaviour is promoted (such as proper nutrition and avoidance of cigarette smoking) and this protects individuals against negative psychological influences that can lead to delinquency. On the other hand the lack of physical activity may lead to delays, or even a deficiency in one’s overall development (Bronikowski et al. 2000). The lack of exercise may also lead to obesity or to a person being overweight which are considered as severe health problems. In Cyprus there is evidence which supports that obesity in childhood has been increasing to a great extent.

In the European Union (EU) there have been efforts to raise the population’s awareness about the importance of sport in an educational context as well as increasing the significance of physical activity in school curricula. Physical educators in Cyprus seem to experience problems in convincing the officials allocated at the MoEC about the important role of PE (Doll-Tepper 2005) and the significance of its effective teaching. In order to make a PE class effective it has to be taught by a professionally qualified PE teacher. According to Wolny (2010) the educational and health effectiveness of the teacher’s work depends on the following 1) the way they were brought up and what role model they represent for the pupils 2) their hygienic and pedagogical knowledge, particularly about the developmental needs of young

people and 3) an interest and vocation for PE and sports. A PE teacher needs to shift from “an instructor of body exercises” (object-orientated approach, no reflection, basic tool – a whistle), through a “bio-teacher” (excessive belief in educational effectiveness of body exercises) to an “axioteacher” (ability to explain to pupils the sense of body’s value in the context of the social standards of conducts and the system of values accepted in the given culture).

Qualified PE teachers have to be able to stimulate young people to participate regularly in physical activity and provide a professional education from elementary school onwards. In Cypriot primary schools there are some traditional elementary teachers who do not love sporting activities and physical exercises but they are obliged to teach the certain subject to the students. Besides they might not have the appropriate knowledge on PE. According to Hunter (2006) many countries reported inadequate training in PE for primary school teachers, as well an undervaluing of the primary school phase for motor development and motor learning. It must be noticed that PE studies usually last three to four years and the university knowledge that PE students gain is enormous. They do not only study the theoretical aspects of general teaching, but the practical part of each aspect of the subject as well. The duration of teaching practice is usually one to two years and the experience acquired is very important for their future career as PE teachers. It is PE professionals who are the appropriate persons to teach PE in every school since their studies are approved by the MoEC.

Qualified PE teachers are familiar with the various correct and complex techniques and styles of teaching PE. Their experience and knowledge in sporting activities is much greater in comparison to the experience of any other teacher and definitely they are the ones who are more competent to explain properly and with safety any kind of sporting exercise. Because of their training and preparation during their studies; they have developed progressively their physical, mental, moral, social, aesthetic, and health education. The majority of them may also act and behave as leaders and have a unique relationship with their students. In many instances, pupils consider PE professionals as the ideal teachers since they are more relaxed than any other professor and they do feel that PE professionals can be entrusted and confided in with their problems. PE professionals look more humane since they interact with the students in a different way via sporting activities. If we were to compare it with other teachers then it can be argued that teachers of other subjects of the curricula are not in a position as good as PE teachers to interact with their students since they have to abide strictly by the terms of

the curricula and teach a very specific/particular syllabus. On the other hand, a PE professional will interact in the course of the subject since i.e. they will encourage them to increase their stamina, or to try and undertake the particular sporting activity and they will assist them in building up a character.

Moreover, in secondary schools there are some (active) PE teachers, who are relatively old and who do not teach the subject with enthusiasm any more because they practiced the profession for a number of years. Teachers' burnout can affect their job performance since the quality of their teaching can decrease which in turn influences the academic achievement of children (Koustelios and Tsigilis 2005). There are more than a thousand of PE degree holders who might love and feel anxious to teach everything they learned at universities but they are not able to get employed at schools. Observing the school reality, one notices that young people are attracted by good examples from life. A good teacher ought to be both delicate and consistent in actions. A good PE teacher ought to love the physical exercises and healthy lifestyle and be a credible undisputable model for his students (Wolny 2010) but in reality many PE teachers do not act as qualified professionals.

The phenomenon of the provision of higher supply than demand in the Cypriot labour market is not unusual. Many educated individuals have to deal with the same problem. Teachers of maths, psychology and philology need to wait for months or years until their employment in the public sector. In many occasions they do further studies in order to find a better job but the results might be the opposite. If their own educational attainment is higher than the educational "requirements" of their potential job, then they are termed as "over-educated" workers (Ryan and Sinning 2011). This is a contemporary social and economic problem in European countries. In particular over-educated PE teachers are in a more disadvantageous position since sport sciences have not developed yet in the Cypriot tertiary education. In sport and health clubs master's degrees are not needed. The outcome is to work in a job that does not conform to their educational level.

In turn, the results indicated that qualified PE teachers are not satisfied with their status and prestige. They are of the opinion that they deserve a better position. It seems that the subjects evaluated higher the occupational prestige of PE teachers and a lower level of respect was attributed to those who were working in sport-related jobs or in a completely different profession. It is rather interesting to note that all the participants share the same educational degree (same university knowledge and

education) but still did not assess the reputation of their job evenly. In turn, when they were asked to evaluate the honour of each type of work the results were surprising. The profession of teacher received the second place in the rank, one place lower than that of the doctor. It seems justified for doctors to be highly appreciated because of their duties and responsibilities towards human lives. The unexpected result was that although qualified PE teachers belong to the same category with teachers and other governmental employees (since they work in public schools), their estimation towards their job is lower in comparison to the aforesaid individuals. Teachers traditionally used to hold a position of respect in the community (Freeman 1987) but the status of PE teachers is not treated similarly. Even governmental employees received higher occupational prestige than PE teachers. On the other hand, PE degree holders differentiated their job from the job of decorators, bar-tenders, salesmen and taxi-drivers that overall were less respected by the wider public in the view of the qualified PE teachers that were responding to the questionnaire. It should be appreciated that physical educators assist individuals in improving their health and therefore they do not simply regard it as an ordinary job. It is a vocation which makes a definite contribution to society; it helps to prevent several diseases and assists in the proper development of the human body and mind.

It is also worth mentioning that when the results were analysed separately for the three groups; the resulting conclusion was that their opinions about the PE teachers' prestige in relation to the other jobs are dissimilar. Group "T" evaluated its occupational prestige with higher respect than the other two groups. Generally in Cyprus, coaches and instructors are usually not highly respected by the community members, because of the particular kind and specific type of their occupation. The second and third group evaluated the occupational prestige of doctors, teachers, governmental employees and bar tenders higher than the first group. It can be explained by the fact that the members of Groups "S" and "O" are very disappointed by their job's opportunities; so they admire those who work in a highly respected job more. In relation to the bar-tenders it can be said that it is a temporal job which offers high income, so probably a lot of the qualified PE teachers most likely got involved in the job of bartender immediately after they concluded their studies since they were unable to work immediately as PE teachers at schools. The only profession which was similarly evaluated by the three groups were the decorators.

There are other countries (apart from Cyprus) that have adopted the same negative approach towards PE teachers. Subject to the available literature which originates from a number of other countries, PE teachers are not highly respected because their professional duties are related only to the students' physical activity, and the subject itself is not as significant as the rest of the academic subjects. There is a common belief that the only thing that PE teachers have to teach is "how to kick the ball" and nothing else. They do not want to realize that qualified PE teachers are professionals and that PE is a significantly recognized profession which should be highly respected. According to scholars, each profession has six characteristics which can be listed as follows: a) intellectual activity, b) practical use, c) research resulting in new knowledge and ideas, d) self-organization e) communication capacity and f) altruism. It seems that PE includes all of them and it can be said that it is a profession. The first one is the intellectual activity (body of knowledge) which is needed to teach physical skills. The second is the practical use which means the improvement of health, skills and fitness of an individual. The third one is the research resulting in new knowledge and ideas. True professionals always try to develop their knowledge by the assistance of new scientific research, which in the case of health studies and sport sciences is growing rapidly. The fourth is related to self-organization or professional bodies which can contribute to the fifth point which is the communication capacity. Finally, the criterion of altruism is also fulfilled, since the work of a PE teacher involves helping and improving peoples' lives (Freeman 1987).

A PE teacher is a person who aims to transmit to his/her students his/her knowledge, but he/she also teaches them his/her axiological system attitude towards the world (Bochenek and Burzynski 2007). The goal of PE is to influence all areas of educational development including the mental and social growth of a student (Freeman 1987). It is now clear enough that the professional tasks and duties of a PE teacher are not as simple and insignificant as people thought they were. Even at the early stage of the initiation of their studies, PE university students are taught important subjects related to the human body and mentality. The public opinion is even worse when they assess the status of sport instructors and coaches of various sporting fields. But if we consider the situation in Cyprus, most of the coaches and instructors are highly educated people who did not have the opportunity to work at schools because of the particular employment policy which exists. All qualified PE teachers had professional preparation in the past, meaning academic courses (general

education), foundation sciences (such as anatomy, physiology, biomechanics and chemistry), teaching practice and eventually specialization.

Although qualified PE teachers expressed their low esteem concerning the status of their profession, it seems that their feelings towards PE are positive. More than nine tenths of PE degree holders revealed via the indication “very much” or “much” that it is important for them to work as PE teachers. More than half of them used to be athletes in the past which gives an explanation to their love towards sporting activities. In many cases the dream of many athletes is to become a successful coach in the future. On the other hand, the profession of a PE teacher has a lot of benefits. According to Freeman (1987) teachers are well paid for their services and enjoy the benefit of long vacation periods; however, the last and greatest positive aspect of teaching as a career is the personal satisfaction it provides. All of those three advantages have made teaching more attractive for them than any other occupation. The results of this research indicated that active PE teachers “T” have the highest salary and status between the three groups. Most of the respondents belonging to Group “O” receive relatively low income but have high occupational prestige. Since they are not able to work at schools they made a preferred choice towards another career in order to be more satisfied. The second group may face problems of esteem and honour but at least their salary is good enough.

In turn, it is not guaranteed that every person who graduated from university or college may become a successful professional. Successful teaching requires a combination of personal qualities and interests. A teacher must want to teach and must enjoy teaching. They must be able to communicate with students (in oral and written form) and also need to be healthy, simply because an unhealthy person is physically less able to do a thorough job of teaching. In PE the teacher must have good motor ability, good coordination, flexibility, strength and speed in order to perform the activities that are going to be taught (Freeman 1987). PE teachers should be credible in the pupils’ eyes, it is only then that they will become the role model and will be followed by their pupils. However, if their behaviour does not reflect the knowledge they impart e.g. speaking about the harmfulness of smoking while actually smoking, they are not to become role models to be followed (Wolny 2010).

We shall turn now to discuss that it should be noticed that more than 70% of qualified PE teachers are either “very much” or “much” active physically do not smoke and they do take care of their nutrition. Physical education teachers and

professionals engaged in sport-related jobs (Groups “T” and “S”) can be considered as exhibiting proper behavioural patterns. Indeed, most of those whose work was related to sports, paid attention to their dietary habits and physical exercise. Qualified PE teachers because of their certain knowledge and education have to be the ideal models of healthy lifestyle and motivate the surrounding population too. Indeed, more than 90% of each group is trying to motivate people to engage in sporting activities. Those who exhibit a strong achievement motivation in PE strive for perfection, have a positive attitude towards learning, formulate appropriate objectives, plan their actions, effectively overcome their obstacles and, their anxiety concerning stressful situations and failure are on the low end (Guszkowska and Rychta 2007).

In schools, physical educators are in a position to be the strongest advocates of a healthy and active lifestyle (McKenzie 2007). A vast literature exists concerning the professional activity of physical educators; however, there are few reports which deal with the actual behaviour of the physical educators as healthy lifestyle models. As it follows from this research, the health awareness of qualified Cypriot PE teachers was influenced by their current jobs in spite of the same educational background with respect to PE. This is supported by the fact that almost 40% of the subjects from Group “O” regretted their choice of PE studies and even Groups “T” and “S” significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) differed in that respect. Physical educators are responsible to inform the younger generation about the benefits of physical exercise and healthy lifestyle in general. It seems that qualified PE teachers who are working in sport related jobs are more active than those who have a different kind of job and therefore they smoke much less than those who belong to the third group. Passive engagement in sports, e.g. watching matches, was high in all three groups and higher than active participation (engagement in physical exercise). In case of Groups “T” and “S”, it may be explained by the requirement that professionals ought to be committed to their fields (Freeman 1987).

Nonetheless, jogging or walking as an activity is the easiest and most affordable way to practise and it is the most frequent way of participation in the three groups. People may walk or run in the streets, in parks or even on their treadmill at home. The next type of exercise which is most frequently pursued by PE degree holders is attending the gym. In the gym individuals can engage in the various classes such as aerobics, step aerobics, dance, yoga, stretching and so on. Besides they can do their own fitness program by lifting weights or even with the facilities related to

endurance. The next sporting activity which was popular among the answers provided was the swimming, since Cyprus is an island; many people like to swim in the sea during the summer and it is costless. Moreover, motivation is known to play a fundamental role in performing prolonged, difficult or unpleasant motor tasks (Guszkowska and Rychta 2007) and the majority of the studied subjects tried to motivate others to be physically active.

Another factor which can contribute to the success of a professional is job satisfaction. A job can be a source of satisfaction if it can fulfil several of the individual's important needs. Thus, job satisfaction is regarded as a function of the extent to which one's needs are satisfied in a job (Koustelios and Tsigilis 2005). According to the results, qualified PE teachers of an older age are more satisfied with their job, which means that those who are not employed at public schools are not so delighted with their occupation. As it was mentioned herein above, according to Crossman and Harris (2006) satisfaction is high at the beginning of a teacher's career, decreasing at the mid point and increasing again at the end. Of course active PE teachers have more positive feelings because teaching is vital for the survival of the community (Freeman 1987) and they might feel that because of their personal contribution students become successful. This result may also depend on the salary because as it is shown in the results active PE teachers have the highest income of all.

A further factor which may also influence their feelings is the higher occupational prestige they have and the fact that they work in the job they have dreamed from the beginning. The participants of the remaining two groups may not be that satisfied because they have spent a lot of money and years during their studies to become teachers but eventually they were not provided with an opportunity to work at schools. The participants of the third group are the most dissatisfied ones, because they do not even work in a job related to sport which they used to love. Moreover, active PE teachers are more satisfied with their position in the labour market since they are governmental employees with more benefits and they also possess the status of teacher. Coaches and sport instructors usually work very hard for many hours and their job is very demanding but their income and status is comparatively low. They do not receive the appropriate respect from the public and sometimes they suffer from the lack of support. The resulting consequences are the increased dissatisfaction towards their job and position in the labour market in general.

In the effort of qualified PE teachers to be recognized and to earn more money, a number of them began to embark on further studies. Based on the results it was found that almost two out of the five subjects undertook additional studies such as master's, PhD, or another degree. The participants of the second group scored the highest percentage in carrying out extra educational papers. It can be justified by reason of their age and the lack of occupational opportunities that are given to them. Nowadays the labour market has become more demanding and an individual encounters difficulties in order to acquire employment in the respective area of their studies. The third group received the second highest percentage whereas only one third of the active PE teachers developed their educational level. It is noteworthy that the most frequent study which was pursued by the subject of all three groups; were the following: master's degrees, diplomas and alternative academic degrees. Only 3.6% of the participants have obtained a PhD degree and that is not so unexpected because it is a well-known fact that such an option would have required an additional, considerable source of financing, a commitment of a significant duration of time since usually a PhD degree requires a 4-year period of study and a conscious effort is needed by any individual undertaking a PhD. All of the above can be considered as a challenging combination that it is hard to be managed and at the end of the day to be concluded with success. In the past, a common complaint which was put forward was that too many physical educators seemed to be non-readers (i.e. uninterested in reading) and their reading habits reflected a seeming lack of general education (Freeman 1987). However, nowadays the number of individuals who are interested in furthering their studies is increasing quite remarkably. More and more individuals would like to be more educated, more qualified and become more specialized in a certain discipline in order to be employed in a more highly respected job with higher income and further potentials.

The above mentioned governmental employment policy which is applied by the MoEC might have an impact on the satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the qualified PE teachers' job and position in the labour market. In the results, the mean of the answers related to the "waiting list" showed that more than 40% of the subjects take the view that this system is "fair" and "very fair" for them. However, the participants who belong to the second and third group believe that the system is unfair. Of course this can be justified on the basis that they have a university degree which cannot be used for the particular kind of job they wished to take. Their salary is

often low and the public do not respect them as coaches and instructors. Besides, it has to be clear that some of the PE teachers were not influenced at all by the employment policy in general and the “waiting list” in particular, because they got employed immediately after their graduation. Some other PE teachers had encountered difficulties in the past, because they were forced to wait for many years until their employment at public schools. If the system was to be changed now and the waiting list was replaced with an examination procedure, it would be very unjust for them since they have already been waiting for a considerable amount of time so probably their answer was positive for these reasons.

Considering the examinations, the results showed that one out of four participants have indicated that they are rather neutral and another one out of the four participants does not wish to have the “waiting list” replaced with examinations. Individuals who graduated ten years ago and whose jobs are no longer related with the subject of PE are probably rather hesitant in undertaking exams since the time has passed by and they are worried that their results in the examination procedure would be disappointing in view of their non involvement in the PE sector. In total contrast, participants who graduated at a later stage still remember the related subjects, their knowledge is up to date and can be applied easily, and therefore they are looking forward to carrying out exams again in order to get employed at schools instead of waiting for their turn. Another fact which might have affected the obtained results is social capital. People take the view that if the employment policy was to be changed, the exams would definitely involve social capital and the whole system would not remain meritocratic. Similarly, the Cypriot literature indicated that a traditional common complaint is that individuals who get employment for governmental jobs that require an examination procedure are those who make use of social capital.

The influence of social capital is inevitable in small countries like Cyprus, because the population is not that large and people generally know each other. In this research the participants were asked about their opinions towards social capital in view of the “waiting list” and of employment at the Cyprus Sport Organization. The results showed that more than half of the respondents believe that the use of favouritism does “not influence at all” or there is just “a low influence” concerning their order in the “waiting list”. This may be due to the fact that the current employment policy is simple and clear for the public. PE degree holders may see their rank in the waiting list through the internet. Almost one-fourth of the participants

believe that social capital is involved either “much” or very much” in their rank as kept in the list. It can be assumed that many of the Cypriots are very suspicious about the involvement of social capital; even if the certain “waiting list” can be seen by everybody they do not trust the system itself. Another factor which may influence their opinion is the fact that many of them have been waiting for a number of years and they began to lose their confidence towards the specific employment policy. Of course nobody can prove that the system is absolutely meritocratic but there is no real evidence for the opposite.

It was very interesting that the results indicated that more than half of the participants believe that social capital is “very much” involved to their employment at the CSO. There are more people in the third Group “O” than in the two other groups, who believe that social capital is involved in the recruitment of CSO and there are no individuals (in the third Group) who have taken the view that social capital does “not influence at all” or “a low influence” is involved. The members of that Group “O” were forced to change their professional career and find an alternative employment. Probably, they did apply for various jobs related to sport in the past but they were not fortunate in terms of getting employed. Perhaps many of them were rejected by the CSO and they realized that the problem was the lack of social capital. The most remarkable point is that none of the participants gave a negative answer towards the existence of social capital in terms of the employment policy applied by the CSO. It is a common “secret” that people who are able to work there have established public relations with the officials.

There has been a common feeling among the PE degree holders that they had been wronged because the government decided that they will no longer be teaching in elementary schools. Due to the fact that elementary teachers have formulated a strong union, PE degree holders have lost the opportunity of working in an important segment, meaning the elementary schools. It is very important to mention that in primary schools physical education does not hold the place it should (Hardman and Marshall 2000). According to the results of this research, more than 90% of the participants of each group believe that PE degree holders are more ideal to teach PE to elementary students. They are familiar with the fact that during the elementary years, children have to develop certain skills (such as co-ordination, balance, movement rhythm, orientation in space, flexibility, reaction time and aerobic endurance) and proper behaviour through sports otherwise they will not be able to

gain these social and conditional abilities successfully at a later stage in their life. Qualified PE teachers, during their studies are learning how, when and what to teach subject to the physiological changes of the body and depending on the psychological stage where the children are. Many (active) PE teachers, who are already employed at secondary schools, revealed that the students usually initiate their studies at secondary schools with a lack of basic skills and a low level of knowledge.

With respect to elementary teachers, only few of them love PE and are able to teach the specific subject properly. The participants of all three groups believe that the lesson of PE in elementary schools is far from ideal. Even if a PE degree holder is not employed at schools and cannot observe the students' knowledge, it is almost certain that everyone has a child in the context of their wider family; and subsequently they may observe his/her physical level. If we argue that a good physical education program is the one in which the majority of the students are enthusiastically engaged and committed to learning which will lead them to value the importance of physical activity and to enjoy a physically active lifestyle, then it can be stated that many school programs have failed from this perspective (Siedentop and Locke 1997). The certain phenomenon, meaning that the lesson of PE is taught by elementary teachers, appears in many countries. Siedentop and Locke also explained that in some schools in America the situation is similar to Cyprus and the children who still do not receive physical education (regularly scheduled and taught by a certified specialist) continue to mock whatever progress has been made at that level. Another project which was conducted by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education in the USA (2001) indicated that in forty-five states, certified PE specialists are recommended but instead of them, classroom teachers teach elementary school PE. Their recommendations also suggested that PE should be delivered by teachers with specialized qualifications in PE instruction at all levels.

According to the results, the subject of PE requires a special handling of the teaching methods and strategies in order to achieve effective teaching. The teacher responsible for physical education needs to have the appropriate experience, be familiar with the whole procedure and be able to guide the students properly. Children must be socialized positively towards sporting activities from the early years of their lives and the teacher should be the key person directly influencing their attitude. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that as part of the PE teacher training programs at large, PE students exercise their teaching practice for a period of one to two years as opposed to

elementary teachers who teach PE only for a duration of six lessons (of 45 minutes). Undoubtedly, PE professionals are provided with a far greater insight relating to teaching practice. What is more, the experience which is gained cannot be compared to the experience gained by elementary teachers who are offered overall with a minimum input regarding the subject matter of PE.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

The process of industrialization and the expansion of cities have greatly influenced the development of the education system. Until the first few decades of the nineteenth century, most of the population had no schooling whatsoever. For the vast majority, growing up meant learning by imitation the same social habits and practical work skills as elders. But as the industrial economy rapidly expanded, there was a great demand for specialized schooling that could produce an educated, capable workforce. In a modern society, people have to be provided with basic skills, be well educated for their physical, social and economic environment, but it is also important that they learn how to learn, so that they are able to master new, sometimes very technical forms of information. Schools and universities do not only broaden peoples' minds and perspectives, but are expected to prepare new generations of citizens that would actively participate in economic life. Specialized forms of technical, vocational and professional training often supplement pupils' "liberal" education and facilitate the transition from school to work (Giddens 2001).

Scholars usually argue that certificates and diplomas are the means of entry to a better paid and more secure job, to a higher status and achievement. But what happens when more and more people invest their time and money so as to become better educated? Can they all get employed, be satisfied and produce effectively? In this research only one kind of occupation in Cyprus was discussed and analyzed but according to literature many countries are facing problems with the emergence of over-educated people which eventually led to unemployment. Castañeda et al. (2009) also stated in their research that Europe is suffering from an economic crisis which significantly affects the levels of unemployment. For this reason, many individuals are considering increasing their educational level. However, this decision can make them overqualified and therefore decrease their employment opportunities even further. As it was mentioned in a previous chapter of this thesis many Cypriot teachers cannot get employed at schools, therefore they accept a job which requires a lower level of education or they all together find employment in a completely different sector.

This thesis seeks to highlight the fact that many qualified PE teachers are dealing with the above described phenomenon because there is higher supply than

demand in their sector. Of course the fact that PE degree holders are not able to teach in primary schools is also a significant factor which affects the whole situation in a negative way. The aim of this research was not only to discover the possible occupational, economic and social problems but to find out the attitudes of qualified PE teachers towards healthy and sport-related lifestyle, to discover their feelings about the employment policy (waiting list), if there is any involvement of social capital in their employment (subject to the views expressed) and their satisfaction or dissatisfaction regarding their position in the labour market. Finally, this thesis discusses the social status in view of the status consistency of qualified PE teachers’.

*Based on the results it can be stated that hypothesis one is confirmed.* PE is not regarded as a “real discipline” in the Cypriot schools. It is frequently marginalized, and many parents and students believe that it is a “waste of time”. They do not realize the various benefits that physical activities may prompt to their health and lifestyle in general. PE as a subject contributes greatly to the development and growth of young people. It is commonplace that undertaking regular sporting activities and exercise help children build and maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints, controlling body weight, reducing fat and developing efficient function of heart and lungs. It should be emphasized that schools have a unique opportunity in providing adequate physical activity for all children on an equal basis through official compulsory physical education programs (WHO 2003). Children all over the world have the right to be taught PE by a professional teacher and become socialized through sporting activities as early as possible in order to maintain an active lifestyle throughout their lives. If authorities and decision makers were sharing the assumption that a physically active lifestyle can significantly contribute to the quality of an individual’s life, they would ensure that PE remains an important element in every school (Brandl-Bredenbeck 2005).

In many countries including Cyprus, it is elementary teachers who teach the subject of PE in primary schools. It is believed that children aged six to twelve are not properly taught the subject of PE. Qualified PE teachers are obviously more familiar with the whole world of sports and also familiar with the appropriate teaching methods related to PE. The duration of their studies is three to four years and during this time they get extensive experience on how children should be educated in different ages. How is it possible for traditional elementary teachers to teach PE at the level that qualified PE teachers would be able to teach it, in view of the fact if their education in PE lasted only

for a few months? Do they really know what and how to teach to children in PE classes as well as qualified PE teachers do? Besides, a research conducted in 2002 indicates that the prevalence of obesity among Cypriot children aged 10 to 11 is around 10%. This percentage shows that the occurrence of obesity in Cyprus is as high or in certain instances greater than in other developed countries (Savva et al. 2002). Obesity is associated with a lack of physical exercise (which facilitates energy expenditure) and energy intake (Jabłońska et al. 2008). If children are not physically active and do not take care of their nutrition, the consequences can be tragic.

In addition, all qualified PE teachers share the same opinion that elementary teachers are not ideal to teach PE in primary schools and that qualified PE teachers are more capable of teaching the given subject. The results revealed that active PE teachers who work at public schools are dissatisfied with the students' progress on PE. Their opinion can be justified on the basis of the fact that students are lacking the basic background related to PE in view of the fact that not properly qualified teachers were teaching them. They all share a negative feeling and opinion about the formulation of PE classes in elementary schools. Of course many of them believe that the fact that qualified PE teachers cannot teach in elementary schools has resulted in encountering difficulties in their career. They are of the opinion that the waiting list became longer owing to the fact that there is a limited level of demand regarding their employment by schools.

In secondary public schools the problem which is created is that many active PE teachers are old and some of them had been waiting for fifteen to twenty years until their employment. Probably their enthusiasm for teaching has decreased through the years and the way they plan the lessons and the curricula might not be as effective as it should be. It might also be one of the causes that led to the fact that a low level of esteem has been attributed to the given subject, since in some cases the subject is not taught properly. Qualified PE teachers who are now young and have to wait for some years for their assignment to schools, will probably have the same feelings as the ones described above since by the day they get employed there is less drive or enthusiasm. Will they be ready to teach all kinds of sport and physical exercise with patience and love after the elapse of so many years? Will they still serve as healthy role models for their students? There is a possibility that by that time they will lose their original skills as physical educators. On the other hand, the decision makers managed to establish a brand new curriculum with innovative objectives based on the up to date necessities so

as to develop the Cypriot educational system in general. All the school subjects are included in one special book published by the MoEC. All the aims and purposes of PE are explained in adequate detail in that special book. It also refers to the teaching strategies from the pre-schooling ages until the last grade of lyceum. The evaluation process is described in detail in order to help both students and teachers perform better. Nevertheless, in practice if we wish to obtain a better educational system then all requirements formulated by the decision makers need to be fulfilled.

*The second hypothesis of this thesis is rejected.* The majority of qualified PE teachers are working in sport related jobs or as active PE teachers. Only sixty-nine qualified PE teachers chose an occupation unrelated to their university degree. Since they can not work as PE teachers at schools; their job opportunities are limited. They have the opportunity to work at sport clubs and federations and/or to invest in setting up a private business that will operate as a gym. In Cyprus the salary of PE instructors (at gyms) is low and in federations only those with great social capital may be involved. It has to be stressed that managing a gym requires huge funding and there is no guarantee that the business will finally render profit and that it will be prosperous. Furthermore qualified PE teachers encounter new challenges in terms of their job opportunities which have decreased even further; sport clubs/ gyms no longer employ a properly qualified PE teachers on the contrary they employ individuals who have obtained diplomas issued by certain entities and these diplomas certify them to work as gym instructors; the owners of the gyms seem to prefer this option because they pay them a lower salary than the salary they would pay to qualified PE teachers. The individuals attending the courses organized by the entities have to comply with minimum requirements; they attend conferences only for a few days and then after the elapse of the conference they are considered as gym instructors. The situation relating to the coaching degree is arguably the same with the aforesaid situation. Sport teams do not need a qualified PE teacher to coach their teams. It suffices for them to employ an individual that has a coaching diploma for the specific sport. In view of the above, it is obvious that qualified PE teachers have limited opportunities to find a job related to sport that will satisfy them.

*The third hypothesis according to which, the status of qualified PE teachers who are employed in the public sector is crystallized and they are more satisfied with their job is justified.* Since active PE teachers are older than the other participants, and they work as governmental employees, their occupational prestige is higher and so is their

salary. Obviously their income is higher in comparison to the other two groups, not only because of the beneficial nature of their work (i.e. they are governmental employees with high income) but because of the increasing years of work. Their level of education is not as high in comparison to the level of the remaining two groups but they were qualified with the PE university degree which was a stepping stone for their teaching career. PE teachers are generally satisfied with their job. Individuals from the second and third groups who work in the private sector appear to be more educated than PE teachers (according to the results) but their income is lower, as well as their occupational prestige. When the results were examined with respect to gender there were not any significant differences. The variable of age proved to be the most conceited and impinged on the greatest differences between the qualified PE teachers. Group “O” seems to consist mainly of over-educated people since they undertook further studies (in addition to the PE degree) and they are the least satisfied with their salary and job.

PE teachers who are employed at public schools receive higher respect from the public, higher income from their job, and more benefits (in general) from their professional career. Individuals from the second and third group who are not employed at schools, are not that satisfied with their position in the Cypriot labour market. It is especially the participants of the Group “O” who are more dissatisfied with their job and position. In other words, they feel disappointed because it seems to them that they embarked on a meaningless study and subsequently their time was not spent in a productive way and beyond that a considerable amount of money was invested by their parents, which they will never be able to repay them. In addition, despite the above they have not gained any considerable advantage in terms of their professional career. Qualified PE teachers who are working in sport related jobs “S”, seem to be more satisfied than the individuals of the third Group “O”, probably because of their commitment towards sports and PE and even if they were unable to get employed at schools in order to teach they managed to apply their knowledge and educational background in a similar field of work. Usually individuals who are involved in sports and in particular those who have studied sport sciences and PE; are very passionate and have the need to transmit their knowledge, skills and energy to the surrounding people. They often try to encourage others and support them to get involved in sporting activities. Probably that is another reason for their job satisfaction.

*According to the results, the fourth hypothesis is also justified.* Social capital is mostly mobilized and influences the employment of qualified PE teachers at the Cyprus Sport Organization. On the one hand most of the participants believe that social capital is mostly implicated in that specific employment field whereas they have taken the opposite view that social capital does not exert such influence with respect to the waiting list. Individuals, who belong to the Group “O”, believe that social capital influences their employment in the CSO and their order in the waiting list as well. In other words, they believe that the particular policy is unfair in a certain respect. Apparently in Cyprus many people consider this phenomenon as a social problem because it does not promote meritocracy and many well-educated and intelligent people do not have the opportunity to get employed in a job that is suitable for them and their educational background and expertise. CSO is a semi-governmental organization which offers the opportunity of a great salary and many other benefits for those who work there, however the available positions for employment therein are quite limited. There is no other formal sport organization in Cyprus apart from the CSO.

Considering the “waiting list” the opinions are diverge. According to the analysis of the results many qualified PE teachers support that this kind of employment policy does not leave any room for injustice and/or connections cannot be really used so as to accommodate the needs of a particular individual. They are of the opinion that if the system is altered and is replaced with an examination procedure, social capital will play a key role concerning employment. On the other hand, many people take a different standing on this issue. They are of the view that if an examination is set into place, the results will indicate who are the most capable and the best suited to get employed. In particular, the participants of the Groups “S” and “O” believe that the existing employment policy is unfair. For a long period of time, they do not have the chance to work in a field which is relevant to their studies (to teach PE at schools) and afterwards at the stage when they are too old and probably have forgotten what they learnt during their university years, they get called by the MoEC and they are suddenly expected to teach with patience and commitment. They are very disappointed with the whole situation and they believe that entrance examinations would be an ideal tool in proving that they are the ones who are ideal to teach at schools. Group “T” believes that the system is fair and that setting up entrance exams would cause other kind of problems. Besides, many PE teachers were

forced to wait for a long period of time until they got assigned at schools and in this respect it would be unjust for them if the next generation of qualified PE teachers did not have to wait for their turn of employment. In addition, almost everyone knew about the existence of the so called waiting list except the oldest subjects who were the first ones to create the surplus supply before the creation of the unexpected waiting list in that period.

*The last hypothesis of this research is also accepted.* There are great differences regarding the attitudes towards physical education, healthy lifestyle and sporting activities between the groups of qualified PE teachers. PE teachers are less active than those who work in sport-related jobs but PE degree holders who work in different professions “O” are much more inactive. The second Group “S” indicated that they consider it as important to get employed eventually as PE teachers and it is worth noting that in this group the majority of the participants indicated that they were not smoking which reveals that they wish to maintain their physical stamina and overall retain a healthy lifestyle. It is a positive result that almost all qualified PE teachers take care of their nutrition since they have all graduated from PE universities and know the significance of a healthy diet very well. They also believe that physical activity throughout life is vital for everyone; so they always try to motivate people to get involved and undertake physical exercise. Finally almost every qualified PE teacher loves sport in general and that is the reason why they may watch different matches or competitions in order to be more informed (educated) about new scores, talents, techniques and strategies or simply for entertainment purposes.

The social problems that have been discussed in this thesis are influencing many individuals’ lives and the consequences are dramatic. The evidence from this research seems to indicate that there is a gap between what the subject of PE should provide to children with and what is actually taking place in the Cypriot schools (in relation to PE). Besides the social status of qualified PE teachers is affected by the specific employment policy, by the low occupational prestige they receive, by the limited job opportunities related to their studies and by the fact that they have not been provided with the opportunity to teach PE in elementary schools. Cypriot children do not remain unaffected. On the contrary, Cypriot children are also affected by these problems because they do not receive the most effective teaching in terms of PE from the elementary school teachers. According to Pfister and Reeg (2006) in

many countries the mass media report that there is a percentage amounting to more than 30% of children who tend to be obese and even the easiest kinds of the physical exercise cannot be performed adequately, for example the exercise of forward roll has become a difficult exercise for them. The level of fitness has a close correlation with sport which means that the quality of the PE/sport lessons is very important.

In addition, sport is learned in the course of a socialization process, via “self-training in and through social practices”. Socialization with respect to sport in general can also be described and interpreted as a series of projects in which the individuals interact with their material as well as with their social environment (Pfister and Reeg 2006). Teachers are not only responsible to communicate their knowledge and various skills to the kids. They have to persuade children in a positive way to love sporting activities; to convince them that they have to take on board a certain sporting activity and continue practising it throughout their lives. Children must choose between ambivalent messages and interpret them according to their own experience. They should learn how social arrangements, physical activity, sport and games work and how to deal with them meaning that they will learn social competences and will develop patterns of practices (Pfister and Reeg 2006). It should be emphasized that those children whose experience in PE is not so good can be “turned off” for life (Penney 1998).

A teacher that will be responsible to teach PE to children must know exactly how and what to teach them. The tasks of PE differ according to the different stages of age. A physical educator must be familiar with the different physiological stages of a child’s body. They must be prepared to develop a child’s balance and coordination, sense of rhythm and flexibility in a specific period of age otherwise the child will not be able to learn and improve those skills later on. PE teachers as well as parents, must provide the framework of and opportunities for sporting activities; they must reward children’s participation in sport or their sporting success and they have to encourage children’s’ participation in competitive sports too (Pfister and Reeg 2006). It is recommended that the government and more specifically the officials of the MoEC should reconsider the immense importance of PE in terms of the significant benefits which can be gained by children. Officials who are responsible for implementing an educational program should recognize that quality teaching makes a difference to pupil learning (Armour and Yelling 2004). High quality professional learning for

teachers is a central factor in determining the quality of teaching; therefore, it is a key issue to make the right choice as to who of those teachers will be teaching at schools.

Since qualified PE teachers study for four years in order to be able to teach PE at schools, it means that they are specialists and experts in the specific field. It can be expected that elementary teachers know better how to teach general subjects and how to behave with children since their major subject is pedagogy; however this consideration does not prove that they can teach PE lessons properly too. Highly ranked officials need to act as soon as possible in order to prevent further and worse problems in the educational system and in peoples' health status as well. Physical exercise and PE must be a way of living, a style of living for everyone in order to prevent several diseases and maintain health. Furthermore, all qualified PE teachers must realize the importance of being role models actively supporting healthy lifestyle in the community they live in. They must be active/energetic and take care of their nutrition. It is also essential to teach their students in an effective manner. They have to update their knowledge continuously through related research works, review the latest trends on the new teaching methodologies and skills that may improve them. On many occasions, it was proved that various tasks which used to form parts of a PE lesson in the previous years have scientifically been proved to be dangerous for the human body.

Decision makers need to reconsider seriously the governmental employment policy and find a solution that will give job opportunities to all qualified PE teachers. They should employ qualified PE teachers according to their knowledge and commitment and not according to their rank on the waiting list. It would also be essential if qualified PE teachers could teach PE in primary schools as well. If qualified PE teachers are able to use their university knowledge and work as PE teachers at schools, their studies (years of effort in universities and money) will finally become justified. Their status may also become more consistent; and probably they will be more satisfied with their position in the labor market and with their occupational prestige, since their salary will be higher. In addition considering the fact that this study has been a first attempt to investigate this topic in Cyprus further recommendations can be made for future studies particularly after the realization of the new curriculum at public schools. There is a possibility that the status of PE will gain its initial prestige and consequently the status of qualified PE teachers will change.

It must be stressed that politicians and members of the parliament must take into consideration the influence of social capital in every sector of the Cypriot community. The Parliament owes to give the first message of respect towards meritocracy to the citizens; especially to the new generation, which calls for equal treatment and equal opportunities. Politicians should provide a feeling of safety to the citizens, make them feel certain and secure for their future.

As a concluding remark, it is evident from the overall results of this thesis that the future of qualified PE teachers who have either graduated 10 years ago or recently or in the years to come will be extremely challenging in view of the fact that their job opportunities are minimal. It seems unlikely that the employment policy applied by the MoEC will change any time soon and therefore this will preserve the situation as it is. However, what should be stressed is that Cypriot society, like other societies encounters an economic crisis which has had an effect in the way that people consider their future. It is not farfetched to argue that over the years to come the number of people choosing to enrol in a PE degree course will diminish even though this is the subject matter that they would prefer to follow as a professional career. Probably PE will be chosen simply as a hobby and not as a career since it is evident that it will not assist individuals in retaining a satisfactory level of living in a society in which everything has become so expensive to acquire. Therefore, in view of the above, all the decision- makers would have to take drastic decisions if they wish to ensure that the PE course would have a vital role in the future. A society from which PE disappears would be a society in which its people would encounter severe health problems and their quality of living would be poor and at risk since PE would not serve any longer as a means of spiritual enhancement.

## SUMMARY

There is scientific evidence that in many countries the public attributes to PE have the following characteristics: a low status, inadequate teaching; and therefore, the work of physical educators is considered as non-essential. These phenomena have not been investigated by anyone in Cyprus from a sociological perspective. The author wanted to discover the social status of Cypriot qualified PE teachers regardless of their actual occupation. The aim of the research was to give answers to the following main questions: What is the status of PE in Cypriot schools? What are the actual occupations of qualified PE teachers? To which degree; are qualified PE teachers satisfied with their job and with their position in the Cypriot labour market and is their status crystallized? What are their opinions regarding the governmental employment policy and social capital in relation to their employment? And finally what are their attitudes towards sporting activities and healthy lifestyle? The basic method of the research was survey method which was complemented by in-depth interviews and the analysis of documents. The survey was conducted on the entire population of qualified Cypriot PE teachers (N=1880) regardless of their actual job. The researched population (n=531) was classified into 3 distinct groups: 1) active public school PE teachers, 2) those who are engaged in sport-related jobs and 3) those engaged in other jobs unrelated to sport. The results revealed that PE is not highly appreciated and that PE teachers are not respected by the wider Cypriot public. Active PE teachers' status is crystallized and they are the most satisfied with their job. The participants, whose job is related to PE and sports, can be admired by the youngsters in terms of their healthy lifestyle. The subjects who are still waiting for their employment at public schools tend to believe that the governmental employment policy is unfair. Moreover, there was a consensus among the subjects regarding the great influence of social capital in their employment. Last but not least, decision makers should ensure that the subject of PE is taught properly by specialized PE teachers so as to retain its importance at schools. They also need to reconsider the governmental employment policy and the influence that social capital exerts in every sector of the Cypriot society.

## Summary of PhD Thesis in Hungarian

Számos országban tudományos kutatások bizonyították, hogy a testneveléssel kapcsolatos nézetek, attitűdök szerint a tantárgy státusza alacsony és nem megfelelően tanítják, és a testnevelők munkáját sokan nem tartják fontosnak. Ezt a jelenséget szociológiai szempontból *Cipruson még nem vizsgálták*. A szerző célja a ciprusi végzett testnevelő tanárok társadalmi státuszának vizsgálata volt, függetlenül azok jelenlegi munkájától. A kutatás célja a következő kérdések megválaszolása volt: Hogyan jellemezhető a testnevelés helyzete a ciprusi közoktatásban? Milyen állásokat, pozíciókat töltenek be a végzett ciprusi testnevelő tanárok? Mennyire elégedettek a végzett testnevelők a munkájukkal, illetve a munkaerő-piaci pozíciójukkal és mennyiben jellemző rájuk a státusz-kristályosodás? Mi a véleményük a kormány vonatkozó foglalkoztatáspolitikájáról, illetve a társadalmi tőke munkavállalásukkal kapcsolatos jelentőségéről? És végül, hogyan viszonyulnak a sportoláshoz és az egészséges életmódhoz? A kutatás fő módszere a survey-módszer volt, melyet dokumentumelemzés és mélyinterjúk egészítettek ki. A kérdőíves vizsgálat a végzett ciprusi testnevelő tanárok teljes populációjára (N=1880) irányult, függetlenül azok jelenlegi állásától. A vizsgált mintát (n=531) három almintára lehetett felosztani: 1) a közoktatásban aktív testnevelő tanárok, 2) egyéb, sporttal kapcsolatos foglalkozást űzők, illetve 3) egyéb, nem sporttal kapcsolatos állásokban dolgozók. Az eredmények rávilágítanak, hogy ciprusi közvélemény a testnevelés tantárgyat, illetve a testnevelők munkáját nem becsüli nagyra. A közoktatásban dolgozó testnevelő tanárok státusza a legkonzisztensebb, és ők azok, akik a leginkább elégedettek munkájukkal. A kutatás testnevelés, illetve sport területén dolgozó résztvevői egészséges életmód terén megfelelő mintául szolgálhatnak a fiatalok számára. A válaszadók közül, akik a mai napig várják, hogy elhelyezkedhessenek a közoktatásban, sokan nem tartják igazságosnak a jelenlegi kormányzati foglalkoztatáspolitikát. Mindemellett a válaszolók többsége egyetértett azzal, hogy a társadalmi tőkének nagy jelentősége van munkavállalásuk során. Ahhoz, hogy a tantárgy visszanyerje jelentőségét az iskolában, fontos lenne, hogy a döntéshozók biztosítsák, hogy a testnevelést minden szinten az arra speciálisan felkészített testnevelő tanárok tanítsák. Érdeemes lenne továbbá átgondolni a vonatkozó kormányzati foglalkoztatáspolitikát, illetve a társadalmi tőke hatásának visszaszorítását a ciprusi társadalom minden szegmensében.

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## APPENDIX A

### The questionnaire used for the data collection

Dear colleague,

The purpose of this investigation is to study the social status of the qualified PE teachers in Cyprus. The sample was selected randomly from the waiting list of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Your co-operation will contribute to the success of this research. I will appreciate your willingness to take part in this investigation. Your names will not be published in the report on my research and this is the reason why **you should avoid writing your name/surname in the actual questionnaire**. I kindly request you to answer all of the questions. If you like to give further comments; you can do so by inserting them in this questionnaire. Please, be so kind to answer the questions according to your true opinion. The final conclusions will summarize all respondents' answers.

Thank you for your patient and your co-operation.

**Diana Christodoulou**

1) To which degree are you satisfied with your job? (please circle the suitable number)

(1) not at all    (2) low    (3) mediocre    (4) much    (5) very much

2) To which degree is it important for you to work as a P.E. teacher?

(1) not at all    (2) low    (3) mediocre    (4) much    (5) very much

3) Do you wish if you had studied something else, irrelevant to sport sciences?

Yes     No

4 a) Gender:    Woman     Man

b) Age: 20-25 years old     26-35 years old   
36-45 years old     46-65 years old

c) Marital Status: Single     In a relationship     Widower   
Married     Divorced

5) Do you smoke?    Yes     No

6) Do you take care of your nutrition?    Yes     No

7 a) Are you involved in any sporting activity this period? Yes  No

b) If yes, what kind of sporting activities?

Jogging/walking  swimming  ball games (soccer, basketball... etc)   
 Gym  tennis  other: (explain).....

c) If yes, how often do you practice?

(1) not often at all (2) rarely (3) sometimes (4) often (5) very often

8 a) What is your current full-time job?  
 .....

b) Do you work in any additional/secondary part-time job? Yes  No

c) To which degree are you satisfied with your salary of your full-time job?

(1) not at all satisfied (2) low (3) mediocre (4) much (5) very much

d) To which degree are you satisfied with your salary of your additional/secondary job? (If you have)

(1) not at all satisfied (2) low (3) mediocre (4) much (5) very much

9 a) Do you motivate other people to get involved in sports? Yes  No

b) If yes, to which degree?

(1) very rarely (2) rarely (3) sometimes (4) often (5) very often

10) According to your view, what is the public opinion in Cyprus regarding the prestige attributed to the following professions?

<u>Medical Doctor:</u>	<b>0%</b>	10	20	30	40	<b>50%</b>	60	70	80	90	<b>100%</b>
<u>Teacher:</u>	<b>0%</b>	10	20	30	40	<b>50%</b>	60	70	80	90	<b>100%</b>
<u>Taxi driver:</u>	<b>0%</b>	10	20	30	40	<b>50%</b>	60	70	80	90	<b>100%</b>
<u>Sales-man:</u>	<b>0%</b>	10	20	30	40	<b>50%</b>	60	70	80	90	<b>100%</b>
<u>Bar-man:</u>	<b>0%</b>	10	20	30	40	<b>50%</b>	60	70	80	90	<b>100%</b>
<u>Decorator:</u>	<b>0%</b>	10	20	30	40	<b>50%</b>	60	70	80	90	<b>100%</b>
<u>PE teacher:</u>	<b>0%</b>	10	20	30	40	<b>50%</b>	60	70	80	90	<b>100%</b>
<u>Governmental:</u>	<b>0%</b>	10	20	30	40	<b>50%</b>	60	70	80	90	<b>100%</b>

Other: .....	0%	10	20	30	40	50%	60	70	80	90	100 %
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11) When did you graduate from your PE studies? (year) .....

12 a) What is your opinion about the “waiting list” regarding your employment to public schools?

(1) very unfair (2) unfair (3) not fair/not unfair (4) fair (5) very fair

b) To which degree, do you believe that “social capital” influences the PE teachers’ position on the “waiting list”?

(1) no influence at all (2) low influence (3) mediocre (4) much (5) very much

c) Would you prefer to replace the “waiting list” with examinations in order to get employed at schools?

(1) not at all (2) little (3) yes and no (4) much (5) very much

d) Did you know about the existence of the “waiting list” before you made decision about your study? Yes  No

13) To which degree do you believe that “social connections” influences the PE teachers’ employment in Cyprus Sport Organization (CSO)?  I do not know

(1) no influence at all (2) low influence (3) mediocre (4) much (5) very much

14 a) When you were a child, did you use to have extra-curriculum sporting activities?

Yes  No

b) If yes, what kind of sporting activity?

.....

c) If yes, how often did you practice?

(1) very rarely (2) rarely (3) sometimes (4) often (5) very often

15) Were any of your parents an athlete? Yes  No

16 a) When you were a child, were you a competitive athlete? Yes  No

b) If yes, to which sport? .....

17 a) Did like PE classes when you were a student (at secondary/high school)?

(1) not at all (2) not much (3) yes and no (4) much (5) very much

b) Did like your PE teachers when you were a student (at secondary/high school)?

(1) not at all (2) not much (3) yes and no (4) much (5) very much

18) Did any of your PE teachers used to be a role model for you? Yes  No

19) Did any of your PE teachers advise you to study PE? Yes  No

20) Did any of your parents advise you to study PE? Yes  No

21) To which degree the theoretical subjects were difficult for you when you were a student? (1) very easy (2) easy (3) mediocre (4) difficult (5) very difficult

22) Which branch did you follow in high school? Classico  Emporiko   
 Practico  Economico   
 Xenogloso  Eniaio

23) Which of the following factors motivated you to study PE?

- You loved sports more than anything
- It seemed to be the easiest study
- You were an athlete, and you wanted to become a coach
- You liked the idea that if you could employed at schools, you would have all the governmental benefits
- Because in Cyprus, to be a PE teacher is not considered a difficult job
- Other factors (explain).....

24) In which country did you study PE? .....

25 a) To which degree did you prefer the following subjects which were taught at the University?

Theoretical subject matters:	0%	10	20	30	40	50%	60	70	80	90	100%
Practical subject matters:	0%	10	20	30	40	50%	60	70	80	90	100%

b) For how long did you undertake a teaching practice at the University?  
 .....(months)

c) What was the final grade of your PE degree?

(1) pass (2) mediocre (3) good (4) very good (5) excellent

d) To which degree, did you like the teaching practice?

(1) not at all (2) not much (3) mediocre (4) much (5) very much

26) What was your first job after your graduation?

.....

27) For how long have you been waiting till you got employed at public schools?

(if you are employed at the present).....(years)

28 a) Have you ever worked in a different profession (non-sport related job)?

Yes  No

b) If yes, for how long? .....

29 a) After the enrollment of Cyprus in the EU, did you ever consider to work abroad as a PE teacher? Yes  No

b) If you did not go, what was the reason?

.....

c) If you did go, what was the duration?

.....

30 a) Have you done any further studies? Yes  No

b) If yes, what?  Bachelor degree (explain).....

Master (explain).....

PhD (explain).....

Another course (explain).....

31) How often do you watch sporting matches or competitions?

(1) never (2) rarely (3) sometimes (4) often (5) very often

32) To which degree do you believe that traditional elementary teachers are ideal to teach PE in elementary schools?  I do not know

**0%** 10% 20% 30% 40% **50%** 60% 70% 80% 90% **100%**

33) To which degree do you believe that PE teachers are capable to teach PE in elementary schools?  I do not know

**0%** 10% 20% 30% 40% **50%** 60% 70% 80% 90% **100%**

34) How do you evaluate your salary comparing to the average salary that has been determined to be **€1697**?

(1) much lower (2) lower (3) almost the same (4) higher (5) much higher

35) To which degree, are you satisfied with your position in the labour market?

I do not know  
(1) not at all (2) not much (3) mediocre (4) much (5) very much

36) What is your opinion about the way that PE classes are taught in elementary schools?

I do not know  
(1) not good at all (2) not so good (3) mediocre (4) good (5) very good

37) To which degree, are you satisfied with the children's' progress in PE after they complete the elementary school and initiate their secondary education?

(1) bad (2) not so good (3) mediocre (4) good (5) very good  
 I do not know

Αγαπητέ/ή Συνάδελφε,

Ο σκοπός αυτής της έρευνας είναι η μελέτη της κοινωνικής θέσης των πτυχιούχων Φυσικής Αγωγής της Κύπρου, είτε αυτοί είναι διορισμένοι είτε όχι. Η επιλογή του δείγματος έγινε με τυχαίους αριθμούς από τον κατάλογο διοριστέων της Εκπαιδευτικής Υπηρεσίας. Η συνεργασία σας θα συμβάλει ουσιαστικά στην επιτυχία της έρευνας. Γι' αυτό θα εκτιμήσω ιδιαίτερα την προθυμία σας να συμμετάσχετε σ' αυτή. Πρέπει να τονιστεί από την αρχή πως η έρευνα αυτή δεν μελετά άτομα. Ονόματα ατόμων δεν θα συμβάλουν ουσιαστικά στην επιτυχία της έρευνας. Γι' αυτό μη γράψετε πουθενά το όνομά σας. Σας παρακαλώ να απαντήσετε τις ερωτήσεις με τρόπο που να αντανακλά τα πραγματικά σας συναισθήματα. Τα τελικά αποτελέσματα θα συνοψίζουν τις ανταποκρινόμενες απαντήσεις. Σας παρακαλώ επίσης να απαντήσετε όλες τις ερωτήσεις. Αν θέλετε να κάνετε επιπρόσθετα σχόλια, χρησιμοποιήστε οποιοδήποτε κενό χώρο του ερωτηματολογίου.

Ευχαριστώ για τη συνεργασία σας.

Χριστοδούλου Νταϊάνα

1) Πόσο ευχαριστημένοι είστε με το επάγγελμά σας; (κυκλώστε τον κατάλληλο αριθμό)

(1) Καθόλου (2) Λίγο (3) Μέτρια (4) Πολύ (5) Πάρα πολύ

2) Σε ποιά βαθμό είναι σημαντικό για εσάς να εργάζεστε ως γυμναστής/γυμνάστρια;

(1) Καθόλου (2) Λίγο (3) Μέτρια (4) Πολύ (5) Πάρα πολύ

3) Θα προτιμούσατε να είχατε σπουδάσει κάποιο άλλο επάγγελμα, άσχετο με αθλητισμό; Ναι  Όχι

4 α) Φύλο: Γυναίκα  Άνδρας

β) Ηλικία: 20-25 χρονών  26-35 χρονών   
36-45 χρονών  46-65 χρονών

γ) Οικογενειακή κατάσταση: ελεύθερος/η  δεσμευμένος/η   
παντρεμένος/η  Χήρος/α   
χωρισμένος/η

5) Καπνίζετε; Ναι  Όχι

6) Προσέχετε την διατροφή σας;    Ναι     Όχι

7 α) Αθλήστε αυτή τη περίοδο;    Ναι     Όχι

β) Αν ναι, σε ποιά άθλημα;

Γυμναστήριο     Κολύμπι     Ποδόσφαιρο, καλαθόσφαιρα, πετόσφαιρα   
Τρέξιμο/περπάτημα     Αντισφαίριση     Άλλο  (εξηγήστε) .....

γ) Αν ναι, πόσο συχνά; (κυκλώστε τον κατάλληλο αριθμό)

(1) Καθόλου    (2) Σπάνια    (3) Μερικές φορές    (4) Συχνά    (5) Πολύ συχνά

8 α) Πού εργάζεστε αυτή τη περίοδο;

.....

β) Έχετε κάποια δεύτερη εργασία/δουλειά;    Ναι     Όχι

γ) Αν ναι, τι δουλειά;

.....

δ) Σε ποιά βαθμό, είστε ευχαριστημένοι με τον μισθό σας από τη δουλειά σας;

(1) Καθόλου    (2) Λίγο    (3) Μέτρια    (4) Πολύ    (5) Πάρα πολύ

ε) Σε ποιά βαθμό, είστε ευχαριστημένοι με τον μισθό σας από τη δεύτερή σας δουλειά; (αν έχετε)

(1) Καθόλου    (2) Λίγο    (3) Μέτρια    (4) Πολύ    (5) Παρα πολύ

9 α) Παροτρύνετε άλλους ανθρώπους να ασχοληθούν με κάποιο άθλημα;

Ναι     Όχι

β) Αν ναι, σε ποιά βαθμό;

(1) Πολύ σπάνια    (2) Σπάνια    (3) Μερικές φορές    (4) Συχνά    (5) Πολύ συχνά

10) Ποιά πιστεύετε ότι είναι η γενική άποψη στην Κύπρο, για το κύρος του κάθε επαγγέλματος;

Γιατρός:	0%	10	20	30	40	50%	60	70	80	90	100%
Δάσκαλος:	0%	10	20	30	40	50%	60	70	80	90	100%
Ταξιντζής:	0%	10	20	30	40	50%	60	70	80	90	100%
Πλασιέ:	0%	10	20	30	40	50%	60	70	80	90	100%

<u>Bar-man:</u>	<b>0%</b>	10	20	30	40	<b>50%</b>	60	70	80	90	<b>100%</b>
<u>Διακοσμητής:</u>	<b>0%</b>	10	20	30	40	<b>50%</b>	60	70	80	90	<b>100%</b>
<u>Καθηγητής Φυσικής Αγωγής:</u>	<b>0%</b>	10	20	30	40	<b>50%</b>	60	70	80	90	<b>100%</b>
<u>Κυβερνητικός Υπάλληλος:</u>	<b>0%</b>	10	20	30	40	<b>50%</b>	60	70	80	90	<b>100%</b>
.....	<b>0%</b>	10	20	30	40	<b>50%</b>	60	70	80	90	<b>100%</b>

11) **Πότε αποφοιτήσατε από τη γυμναστική ακαδημία;** (χρονολογία)

.....

12 α) **Ποιά είναι η γνώμη σας για τον κατάλογο διοριστέων για την εργοδότησή σας στα σχολεία;**

(1) Πολύ αδικο (2) Άδικο (3) Μέτρια (4) Δίκαιο (5) Πολύ δίκαιο

β) **Σε ποιό βαθμό πιστεύετε ότι το ρουσφέτι επηρεάζει τον κατάλογο διοριστέων;**

(1) Καθόλου (2) Ελάχιστα (3) Μέτρια (4) Πολύ (5) Πάρα πολύ

γ) **Σε ποιό βαθμό θα προτιμούσατε να αντικατασταθεί ο κατάλογος διοριστέων με εξετάσεις για την εργοδότησή σας στα σχολεία;**

(1) Καθόλου (2) Ελάχιστα (3) Μέτρια (4) Πολύ (5) Πάρα πολύ

δ) **Πριν πάτε για σπουδές, γνωρίζατε για την ύπαρξη του καταλόγου διοριστέων;**

Ναι  Όχι

13) **Σε ποιό βαθμό πιστεύετε ότι το ρουσφέτι επηρεάζει την εργοδότηση των**

**Γυμναστών στον Κυπριακό Οργανισμό Αθλητισμού (Κ.Ο.Α);**  Δεν γνωρίζω

(1) Καθόλου (2) Ελάχιστα (3) Μέτρια (4) Πολύ (5) Πάρα πολύ

14 α) **Όταν ήσασταν παιδί, κάνατε κάποιες εξωσχολικές αθλητικές δραστηριότητες;**

Ναι  Όχι

β) **Αν ναι, τι κάνατε;**

.....

γ) **Αν ναι, πόσο συχνά;**

(1) Πολύ σπάνια (2) Σπάνια (3) Μερικές φορές (4) Συχνά (5) Πολύ συχνά

15) **Ήταν κάποιος από τους γονείς σας αθλητής στο παρελθόν;** Ναι  Όχι

16 α) *Κάνατε πρωταθλητισμό στο παρελθόν (σαν αθλητής);* Ναι  Όχι

β) *Αν ναι, σε ποιά άθλημα;*

.....

17 α) *Όταν ήσασταν μαθητής/τρια, σας άρεσε το μάθημα Φυσικής Αγωγής;*

(1) Καθόλου (2) Ελάχιστα (3) Μέτρια (4) Πολύ (5) Πάρα πολύ

β) *Όταν ήσασταν μαθητής/τρια, συμπαθούσατε τους καθηγητές/τριες Φυσικής Αγωγής;*

(1) Καθόλου (2) Ελάχιστα (3) Μέτρια (4) Πολύ (5) Πάρα πολύ

18) *Ήταν κάποιος από τους καθηγητές/τριες Φυσικής Αγωγής το πρότυπό σας;*

Ναι  Όχι

19) *Σας συμβούλεψε κάποιος από τους καθηγητές σας στο σχολείο, να σπουδάσετε καθηγητής/τρια Φυσικής Αγωγής;* Ναι  Όχι

20) *Σας παρότρυνε κάποιος από τους γονείς σας να σπουδάσετε τη συγκεκριμένη σπουδή;* Ναι  Όχι

21) *Όταν ήσασταν μαθητής/τρια, σε ποιά βαθμό τα θεωρητικά μαθήματα ήταν δύσκολα για σας;*

(1) Πολύ εύκολα (2) Εύκολα (3) Μέτρια (4) Δύσκολα (5) Πολύ δύσκολα

22) *Ποιά κλάδο ακολουθήσατε στο λύκειο;*

Κλασσικό  Εμπορικό  Πρακτικό   
Οικονομικό  Ξενόγλωσσο  Ενιαίο

23) *Ποιά/ποιά από τα ακόλουθα ήταν τα κίνητρό σας για να σπουδάσετε Φυσική Αγωγή;*

Η αγάπη σας για τον αθλητισμό και την γυμναστική

Επειδή η Φυσική Αγωγή θεωρείτε εύκολη σπουδή

Επειδή ήσασταν αθλητής/τρια και θα θέλατε να γίνετε προπονητής/τρια

Γιατί όταν θα διοριστείτε, θα έχετε όλα τα πλεονεκτήματα μιας κυβερνητικής δουλειάς

Επειδή στην Κύπρο, το επάγγελμα του καθηγητή/τριας Φυσικής Αγωγής στα σχολεία δεν θεωρείτε δύσκολο

Άλλο (εξηγήστε) .....

24) Σε ποιά χώρα σπουδάσατε Φυσική Αγωγή;

.....

25 α) Σε ποιό βαθμό, προτιμούσατε τα ακόλουθα μαθήματα στο Πανεπιστήμιο;

Θεωρητικά Μαθήματα:	0%	10	20	30	40	50%	60	70	80	90	100%
Πρακτικά Μαθήματα:	0%	10	20	30	40	50%	60	70	80	90	100%

β) Για πόσο χρονικό διάστημα είχατε πρακτική άσκηση (teaching practise- διδακτική) στο Πανεπιστήμιο;

.....

γ) Ποιός ήταν ο γενικός βαθμός του πτυχίου σας στη Φυσική Αγωγή;

(1) Βάση (2) Μέτρια (3) Καλά (4) Πολύ καλά (5) Άριστα

δ) Σε ποιό βαθμό, σας άρεσε η πρακτική άσκηση (teaching practise-διδακτική) στο Πανεπιστήμιο;

(1) Καθόλου (2) Ελάχιστα (3) Μέτρια (4) Πολύ (5) Πάρα πολύ

26) Ποιά ήταν η πρώτη σας εργασία/δουλειά, μετά την αποφοίτησή σας;

.....

27) Για πόσο χρονικό διάστημα περιμένατε μέχρι να διοριστείτε; (αν είστε διορισμένος/νη)..... (χρόνια)

28 α) Εργαστήκατε ποτέ σε κάποιο άλλο επάγγελμα άσχετο με αθλητισμό;

Ναι  Όχι

β) Αν ναι, για πόσο χρονικό διάστημα;

.....

29 α) Μετά την ένταξη της Κύπρου στην Ε.Ε. σκεφτήκατε να μεταβείτε στο εξωτερικό για εργοδότηση;

Ναι  Όχι

β) *Αν δεν πήγατε, ποιοί ήταν οι λόγοι;*

.....

γ) *Αν πήγατε, για ποιούς λόγους και για πόσο χρονικό διάστημα;*

.....

30 α) *Κάνατε κάποιες άλλες σπουδές;* Ναι  Όχι

β) *Αν ναι, τι κάνατε;*

- Άλλο πτυχίο (εξηγήστε).....  
 Μεταπτυχιακό-Master (εξηγήστε) .....  
 Διδακτωρικό-PhD (εξηγήστε) .....  
 Άλλο δίπλωμα (εξηγήστε) .....

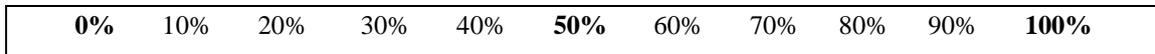
31) *Πόσο συχνά παρακολουθείτε αγώνες/διαγωνισμούς οποιουδήποτε αθλήματος;*

(1) Ποτέ (2) Σπάνια (3) Μερικές φορές (4) Συχνά (5) Πολύ συχνά

32) *Σε ποιό βαθμό, πιστεύετε ότι οι δάσκαλοι είναι οι ιδανικοί για να διδάσκουν*

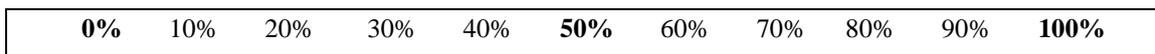
*Φυσική Αγωγή στα δημοτικά σχολεία;*

Δεν γνωρίζω



33) *Σε ποιό βαθμό, πιστεύετε ότι οι καθηγητές/τριες Φυσικής Αγωγής είναι ικανοί να διδάξουν Φυσική Αγωγή στα δημοτικά σχολεία;*

Δεν γνωρίζω



34) *Πώς θα σύγκρινате τον μισθό σας με τις μέσες μηνιαίες απολαβές των Κυπρίων πολιτών που είναι €1697;*

(1) Πολύ χαμηλότερος (2) Χαμηλότερος  
(3) Ίδιος περίπου (4) Ψηλότερος (5) Πολύ ψηλότερος

35) *Σε ποιό βαθμό, είστε ικανοποιημένοι με την θέση σας στην εργατική αγορά της Κύπρου;*

Δεν γνωρίζω

(1)Καθόλου (2) Ελάχιστα (3) Μέτρια (4) Πολύ (5) Πάρα πολύ

36) **Πόσο καλά και σωστά πιστεύετε ότι διδάσκεται το μάθημα της Φυσικής Αγωγής στα δημοτικά σχολεία;**  Δεν γνωρίζω  
(1) Καθόλου (2) Όχι και τόσο καλά (3) Μέτρια (4) Καλά (5) Πολύ καλά

37) **Σε ποιό βαθμό, είστε ικανοποιημένοι με την απόδοση των μαθητών στη Φυσική Αγωγή αφού εισέλθουν από το δημοτικό στο γυμνάσιο;**  Δεν γνωρίζω  
(1) Καθόλου καλή (2) Όχι και τόσο καλή (3) Μέτρια (4) Καλή (5) Πολύ καλή

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Structure of the in-depth interview by qualified PE teachers**

- What was your relationship with sport prior to your initiation of your Physical Education studies?
  - Did you use to have an active healthy lifestyle?
  - Were any of your parents an athlete?
  - Were you an athlete? If yes, in which sport?
  - Have you ever competed to a national competition?
  - Were you a systematic spectator in any kind of sport?
- Did you like the course of Physical Education during your high school years?
  - Did you like your PE teacher?
  - Did any of your PE teachers at your secondary school advise you to study PE?
  - Have you ever pretended that you were sick in order to avoid a PE class?
- What was the motivation that inspired you to go abroad and study physical education?
  - Did any of your parents advise you to follow the particular study?
  - Did physical education studies seem to be easier than any other type of studies?
  - Did you have an obsession with a specific sport that motivated you to continue with your physical education studies?
  - Were the theoretical and/or scientific subjects difficult for you in high school?
  - Were you aware of the fact that following your graduation you would be unable to work as a PE teacher at schools? If you knew about this problem, why did you still chose to study physical education?
- Please describe (if any) your most important experience(s) regarding your university PE studies.
  - What was your favorite class?
  - Did you prefer theoretical subjects more than practical subjects? What was the proportion of these classes?
  - Did you have to undertake a teaching practice? If yes, what was its duration?
  - Were you a good student?

- Did teaching practice have an impact on the way that you assessed teaching? Did you like it?
- What were the major difficulties that you encountered during your studies at the University?
- After you graduated from physical education did you get employed in any kind of sport related work?
- Did you prefer to continue with additional/further studies instead of working?
- What was your first job after your graduation?
- Did you choose to work in a different profession in order to earn more money?
- What efforts did you make in order to get employed in a sport related job?
- Are you satisfied with your monthly salary of your current job? In what kind of job do you work?
- After the accession of Cyprus in the EU, did you ever thought to go abroad and work as a PE teacher? If yes/not, what were the reasons?
- What is your relationship with physical activities nowadays? Are you involved in sporting activities regularly? In which sport?
- Do you take care of your nutrition?
- Do you smoke?
- Do you give any kind of advice associated with healthy lifestyle to the surrounding people of your environment?
- Do you motivate other people to get involved with sports?
- What is your opinion about the “waiting list”?
- Do you believe that this system is fair?
- What is your opinion about the social connection in relation to the “waiting list”?
- Is there an exception applied regarding any candidates enrolled in “the waiting list”?
- Do athletes have more opportunities to get employed? What is your opinion?