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## CONNECTING STUDENTS SINCE PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE LOCKDOWN TIME. AN E-LEARNING SERVICE EXPERIENCE

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### ABSTRACT

The arrival of COVID-19 to Spain produced a lot of changes. Government announced alert state, people had to stay at home, people didn't move outside, schools and universities were closed, etc. All changes did that teachers and students had to continue lessons but they couldn't go to school. For this reason, teachers and students had to adapt to a new situation and to use other methodologies and new technologies. Physical Education teachers also had to change our methodologies: using mobile phones, computers and other technologies for trying to students did physical exercise and to continue the physical education lessons. After of some weeks of lockdown, we did a research using a form. Data revealed that students were doing physical exercise at home but they had other problems: students felt alone; they needed to stay with other students; they needed to do physical exercise with friends; etc. For this reason, we decided to change the methodology and use E-learning service. So, we offered the possibility to students of Compulsory Secondary Education to participate in this experience. In this experience the High School Students would offer to Compulsory Secondary Education students some physical activities for connecting and doing them together. These activities could be dance and rhythm, traditional games, motor games, relaxation techniques as yoga, stretching, muscle-strengthening activity and so on. Students decided their preferences. After three weeks doing physical activities at home, students and families gave a positive evaluation of the experience. High school students taught some activities to Compulsory Secondary Education Students, worked together and using technologies. These activities improved the mental and physical health of students.

**Keywords:** Lockdown, COVID-19, E-learning service, physical education, high school

### INTRODUCTION

In Spain, March 14<sup>th</sup> Spanish government announced alert state because COVID-19 was producing a lot of deaths. This alert state was an exceptional situation. This situation was similar in other European countries. With this, all people had to stay at home. Only were allowed fundamental activities as military service, health workers, pharmacies, supermarkets workers and so on. It meant that also teachers and students had to stay at home.

This measure surprised everybody because it was the first time that It was applied. This situation changed the lessons. In this time, the lessons wouldn't be face to face. Lessons had to be virtual. But they had some problems. Was the educative system ready to do it? Were students ready to work at home? Could the students work at home? Could the students continue Physical Education lessons?

At the first moment, from Maestrat High School Physical Education Department decided to send to students some activities for working alone at home. These activities were: to read some books and articles and physical activities about healthy habits, sports, traditional games, and so on; to use the virtual classroom for doing some test, exercise and comprehension activities about physical exercise and sports; to do some physical tasks using the new technologies; etc.









<p>Exercici</p> 	<p>Músculs: Adductors</p> <p>Articulació: Maluc</p> <p>Tipus de contracció: Isomètrica, si la cama està en l'aire sense moure-la, tal com es mostra.</p>	<p>Exercici:</p>  	<p>Múscul/s: Aductores</p> <p>Articulació:</p>	<p>Exercici</p> 	<p>Múscul/s: Gluteos</p> <p>Articulació: Cadera, Rodilla</p>
<p>Exercici</p> 	<p>Músculs: Isquiotibials</p> <p>Articulació: Maluc</p> <p>Tipus de contracció: Isomètrica, si la posició es fixa. Si mourem la cadera amunt i avall, contracció isomètrica.</p>	<p>Exercici:</p> 	<p>Múscul/s: Cuàdriceps</p> <p>Articulació: Rodilla</p>	<p>Exercici</p> 	<p>Múscul/s: Dorsales y flexor antebrazo</p> <p>Articulació:</p>
<p>Exercici</p> 	<p>Músculs: Abdomen</p> <p>Articulació: Espal·la</p> <p>Tipus de contracció: Isomètrica o, igual que anteriorment, si mourem l'espal·la amunt i avall, isomètrica.</p>				

Figure 1. Strength and stretching activities at home. Students had to do the physical exercise and to find the muscle, articulation and kind of muscular contraction

After two weeks lockdown at home with these activities, we decided to research the student situation at home. We thought that was important to know the situation of students because initially the alert state was only for two weeks but, Spanish government decided to prolong it. In other European countries the situation was similar, as example Italy, and people stayed at home during more than one month.

For the research, we created a form (Google) with some questions about physical exercise to compare the situation before and during the lockdown. We asked questions as: How many weekly days do you practice Physical Exercise or Sport? How many weekly hours do you practice Physical Exercise or Sport? What kind of exercise did you do before the confine? Do you play a federate sport? Who are you doing physical exercise with? Which is the reason for you doing physical exercise? Have you increased the number of days of physical exercise? Have you increased the hours of physical exercise? And so on. Finally, we also asked with an open question which are the major changes in their life about the physical exercise.

Sample was 414 Maestrat High School students. This High School was located in Valencian Region. Form was sent using the corporative email. On April 13<sup>th</sup>, we obtained 244 complete forms.

Some conclusions of this research were:

- Number of students increased their voluntary physical exercise during the confine (16.1% not did exercise before and 11.15% not did exercise during the confine)

- Students did physical exercise to get fit (29%), body image (26%) and occupying free time (20%).
- Individual and sports team fell down with the lock down and students but it increased muscle-strengthening activities (from 27.2% to 45.6%)
- Physical Activity has been reduced. Each day people go to work or to buy, for example, walking, running, cycling, etc. With confine people had to reduce these physical activities.
- We think physical exercises at home won't improve the people physical condition. They only will be to maintain it.
- Before confine, they did prefer to do physical exercise alone (40,9%) and with friends (37,6%) but during lock down, students did physical exercise alone (59,2%) and with family (28,1%). With friends fell down 34.9%

With this research, we find out that some of scholar community problem during lock down by Covid-19. They were:

- Students felt alone and they need to stay with other people
- Students need to do physical exercise with friends
- Students need to use new technologies

Maybe, this situation could have to effect to the student mental health. So, from Physical Education we had to help to students and we decided to do a project “Stay at home but keep on moving with your partners”

Main goals of the project were:

- To improve the student health (physical and mental)
- To practice physical activities with partners
- To find out others possibilities about news technologies
- To motivate to students to do physical exercise
- To keep up the Physical Education subject

## **METHOD**

Center for Teaching and Learning (2012) explains “Service-learning refers to learning that actively involves students in a wide range of experiences, which often benefit others and the community, while also advancing the goals of a given curriculum”.

The qualities of service-learning are (Center for Teaching and Learning, 2012):

- Integrative. In this student works together with the community. For this reason, it uses traditional ideas of classroom learning, practicum training or off-campus volunteering.
- Reflective. This is one of the most important things. Reflection to help students to improve their skills and teach. For this they have to use and examine values, opinions, assumptions, etc. for learning.
- Contextualized. Learning of community is an important valour to the students. They help to community but they learn of it. There is a opportunity to connect their knowledge of a disciple and the community knowledge.

- Strength-Based. Detected the strong point of the community and working about them is a good opportunity to students.
- Reciprocal. This methodology offers all parties involved a lot of benefits. To students offer the knowledge develop in a real situation and context. Community also can profit the students knowledge.
- Lifelong. This methodology offers to opportunity to student to have a lifelong experience. Specially if the experience is positive. It rewards to students in a lot of life elements.

Krasny (2020) “social distancing is no reason to stop service learning” So, for doing the project “Stay at home but keep on moving with your partners” we used the E-learning service methodology.

According to Krasny (2020) “It does this by offering opportunities for any student and any nonprofit with an internet connection to form a partnership on short notice. E-service learning has also added new opportunities for busy students to help NGOs overseas, U.S. nonprofits and local governments in other states.”

Orti and Pairalo (2018) presents a learning service experience between students of Compulsory Secondary School and Primary School using traditional games. In this, after a research, Compulsory Secondary School students taught some traditional games around the town to the Primary School students. Goals of the project are: students knew other games for occupying the free time; students used these games for improving your physical condition; students get fit with these games; and so on.

## **Development**

The project called “Stay at home but keep on moving with your partners” was developed during the lockdown time (April 6<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>) because the students couldn’t go outside their home. Although, from April 27<sup>th</sup> could go outside to do physical exercise and individual sport.

We offered the possibility to participate in the project to every students of 1<sup>st</sup> High School course (16 years old), 3<sup>rd</sup> (14 years old) and 4<sup>th</sup> Compulsory Secondary School (15 years old). After the first information, about 83% of students would like to participate in the project.

So, we did 28 team. In each team we found one student of 1<sup>st</sup> High School and from 3 to 5 student of Compulsory Secondary School. Some students knew other students but a lot of students didn’t know others. Our high school receive students from 11 villages.

1<sup>st</sup> High School offered some activities to the others students (Compulsory Secondary High School) and they chose the most interesting activities. Some activities that students offered were: stretching, yoga, muscle-strengthening activities, dance and rhythm, endurance activities, traditional games... Each team had to choose the activities and a schedule for meeting minim two days to week. In the meeting, they had to change information and doing physical exercise together.

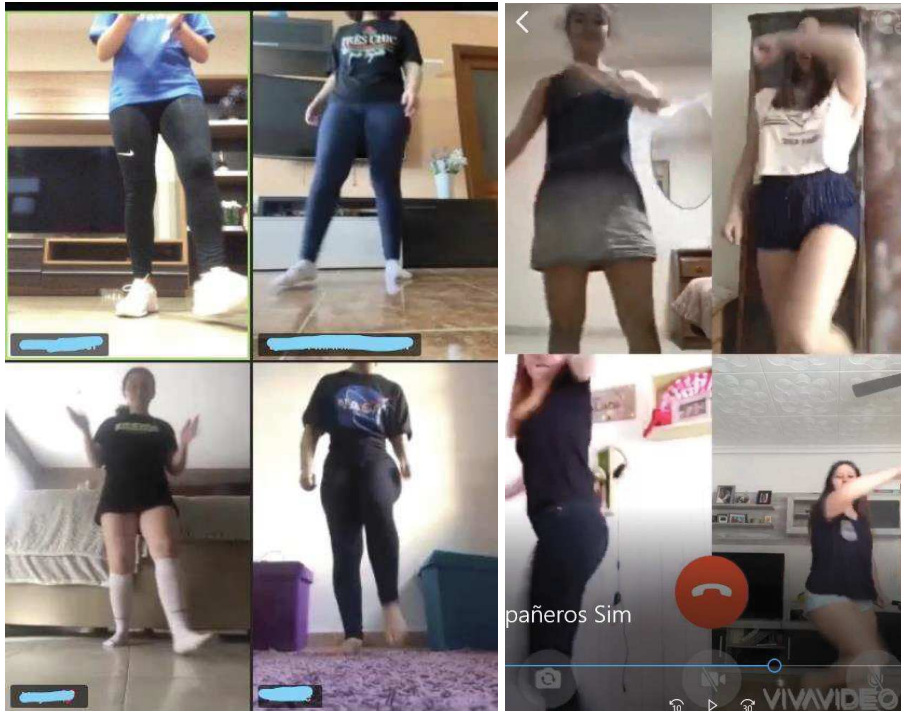


Figure 2. *Dance and rhythm activities*

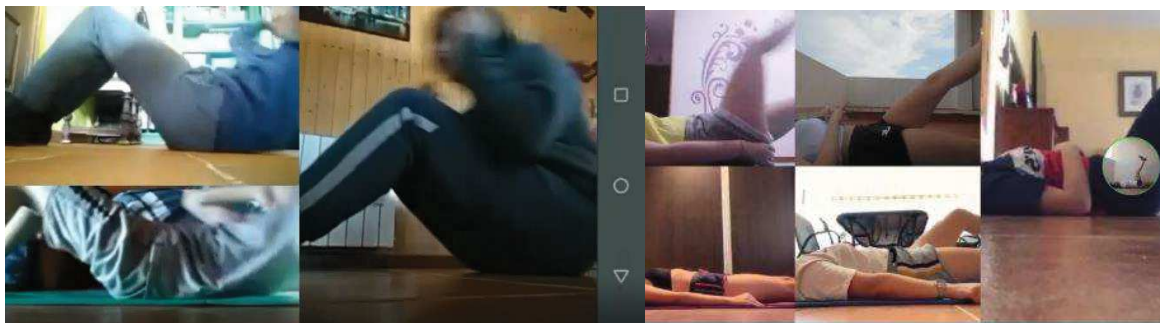


Figure 3. *Muscle-strengthening activities*

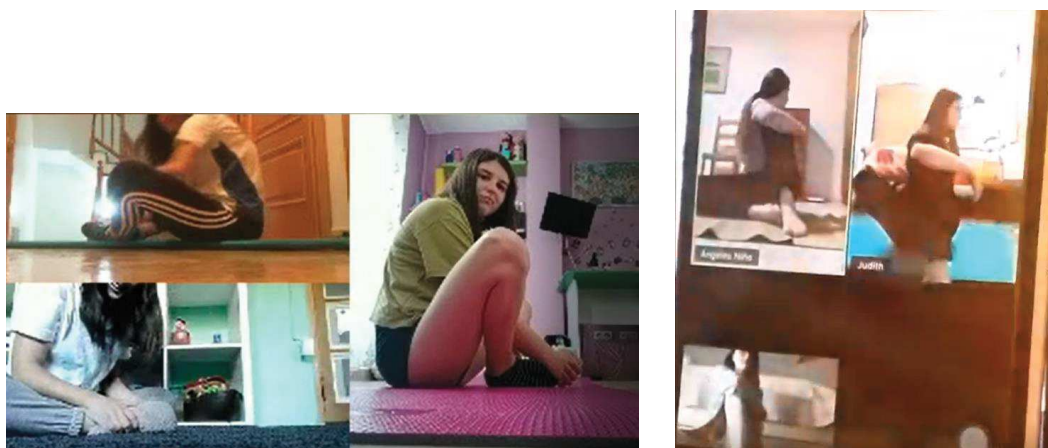


Figure 4. *Yoga, flexibility and stretching activities*

All students were at home and they needed to use new technologies as computers, laptops, mobile phone, tablet, etc. and different App. Each student and team decided that tools they had to use. Most common software used were WhatsApp, Hangout, Zoom, Meet, etc. Meeting was celebrated during 3 weeks and at the end of each week, 1<sup>st</sup> High School course student had to reflect on everything that had happened. After he/she had to send to the Physical Education teacher.

### **Vast benefits:**

We divided the benefits to the educative community in some groups:

- Compulsory Secondary School Students (14 and 15 years old).
- These students Families
- 1st High School students.

To know the project results, we created two forms (google form). One form was for families and other for students. In these forms, we tried to find the evolution of hygiene habits, working habits, physical exercise, relations with other students and as they use new technologies during the project development.

Sección 1 de 2

### Heteroavaluació familiar durant el confinament

Aprofitant el confinament, he proposat a l'alumnat una nova forma de treballar adaptada a les circumstàncies actuals per estimular la pràctica d'exercici físic dins de casa amb companys/es de l'institut. Aquesta enquesta va dirigida a les famílies i ens servirà per fer la valoració del projecte que han fet els vostres fills/es i que l'hem titulat: QUEDAT A CASA PERÒ, MOU-TE AMB ELS TEUS COMPANYS/ES

Salutacions,

Joan Ortí Ferreres  
Professor d'EF

Vostè és... \*

Mare

Pare

Tutor

Figure 5. *Family form*

## **RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

At the beginning, student participation in the project was about 83,24 % students (90.2% and 77.2% students of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Compulsory Secondary School and 84.8% 1<sup>st</sup> High School). Project was finished for 81,2% students.

Students form about the project was completed by 82 students.

Data revealed that 15,9% of students did new relations with others high school students; 43.9% had relations with students that they had seen at high school but they hadn't had relations and, 40.2% answered that they had relations with their friends.

Question about the student attitude to do the project data revealed that 32.9% of students were excited with the project, 57.3% was interested and 9.8% didn't interested in it but they did it.

When we asked about if the project helped to do more physical exercise to students, 26.8% students answered that they did more physical exercise and they were happy; 45.1% students did more physical exercise; 24.4% did the same physical exercise; and 8.6% decreased their physical exercise.

Other question was about if the project helped to student to have a habit during the lockdown. Data revealed that 96.4% had a habit for meeting and doing physical exercise with their team.

About using new technologies 24.4% answered that they learnt to use some technologies unknown to their; 57.3% used technologies that they knew but they found new possibilities; 18.3% explained that they only used technologies that they knew.

Also, we asked to students the opinion about the project. 92.7% of students appreciated very positively the project and only a 7.2% valued negatively.

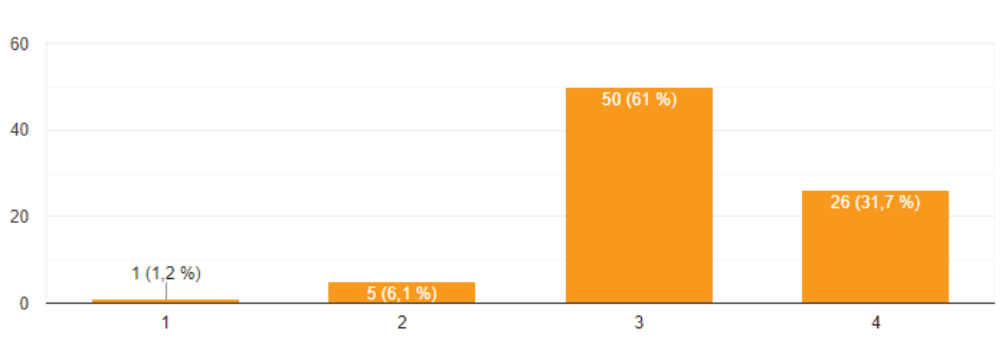


Figure 6. Students opinions about the experience

Families form was completed by 74 families and data revealed that 95.9% of families knew the project and 94.6% families think that their children were interested in the project.

Related about relations with other people, 10.8% families explained that their children had relations with new friends, 48.6% with people that they knew but they hadn't relations and 33.8% with their friends.

Findings of the study revealed that 80% of families think that their children did more physical exercise with the project and 18.9% think that they did the same. Only 1.1% of families think that they decreased the physical exercise during the project.



Families explained that their children had a working habit (91%) and children had learnt to use new technologies (29.7%) and other possibilities that technologies that they knew (50%) even 9.5% families said that children didn't learn any about new technologies.

Finally, we asked to families to give a score to the project. Families gave 5 points (32.4%) and 4 points (47.3%). It meant that families were liked with the project.

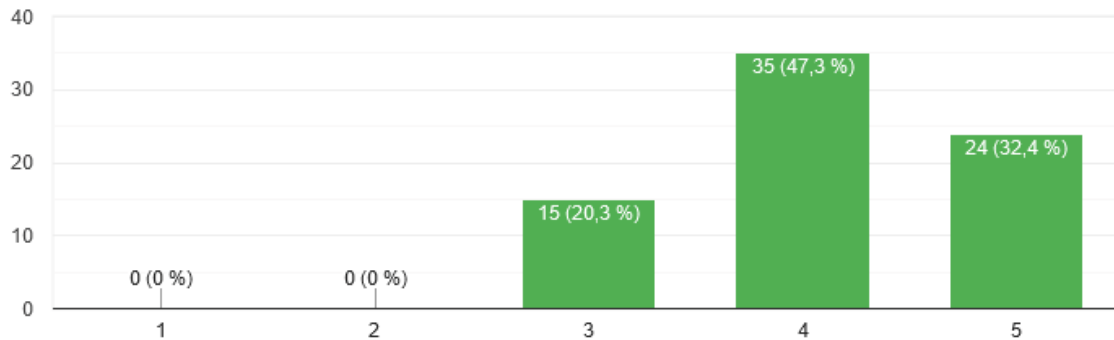


Figure 6. Families opinions about the project experience

## CONCLUSION

Lockdown by COVID-19 was an unusual opportunity to research and to prove other methodologies because this is an exceptional moment of life.

In the education is important to get goals of the studies but it's always more important to protect students and their mental and physical healthy.

From Physical Education we have to help to the students to learn in movement, to learn about the movement and move them. We have to remember that one of the most important value of Physical Education subject is to do that students to enjoy the fun of participation and develop active lifestyles. It has many associated benefits for their life.

“Stay at home but keep on moving with your partners” project born after we analyzed the student situation at home. In this analysis we found that students wished doing physical exercise with their friends and they felt alone. It was the motor of the project: to help to the movement to students and to continue their Physical Education studies at home.

After some weeks, we found that families and students had enjoyed with the project. Project motivated to students to do physical exercise at home, to meet with other high school partners, in sometimes unknow students, to keep some healthy habits, to continuous the physical education lessons, to use new technologies and to find out other possibilities of them, and so on.

Service learning is a good methodology for students to work with other community people as hospital, elder people, foundations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), nonprofit organization (NOPs), etc. In our case, community people were the Compulsory Secondary Students and their families. So, 1<sup>st</sup> High School offered the service to the educative community to help them.

This methodology helps to students to know the social reality, to participate with others community members, to learn with them, to reflective about the social problems and experiences, to connect the discipline knowledge with the social reality, etc. And when people stay at home is possible to use E-Service learning. “E-service learning may prove itself as one of the most effective ways to prepare students to solve the kinds of problems they will encounter once they start their careers.” (Krasny, 2020)

It's necessary to use different methodologies more than it will be possible to lock down in the future.

Finally, In this link you can find a video about the project  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zly6Ok6nY9E&t=2s>

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