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**SCOUTING INFLUENCE UPON THE YOUNG PUPIL'S
INTEGRATION WITHIN FORMAL EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS**

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Abstract

The present study is part of a more ample research which will be presented within the PhD thesis *The influence of the non-formal education upon the young pupil in formal educational contexts*, made at the Doctoral School: Education, Reflection, Development – the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca. Hereinafter, we would like to show to what extent the scouting activities, based on the scout method, have a significant positive influence over the school integration of the pupils from the primary grades into their own class. The applicative pedagogic research unfolds for a year and a half, following the students from the preparatory grade to the end of the first grade. In the study five classes, out of which 41 pupils enlisted at the scouts, are involved, constituting the experimental sample, and their colleagues, 95, representing the control sample. The scouts participated to weekly meetings and to outdoor activities which prove their efficiency according to the socio metric index calculated on the basis of the socio metric test. A matrix was made for each class because the students from both samples did not interact with each other. For each student, the sociometric status was calculated based on the choices and the rejections of his classmates.

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Keywords: Scouting activities, the scout method, school integration, young pupils, socio metric index.



1. Introduction

Presently, ONCR (Romania's Scouts National Organisation) is conducting nationally and locally numerous activities in various areas: training sessions, activities for developing life skills, activities for integrating people with special needs, charity activities, ecological activities, civic education, environmental education, vocational training, seminars, workshops, publications (magazines, leaflets, and brochures), national and international camps, youth exchange programs, fund raisings and many other activities.

The activity on a local level, for this study, was made taking into consideration: *the intellectual development, the spiritual development and the social development*. A number of activities have taken place, divided into two major categories: weekly meetings (40 in number, each lasting 1.30') and larger activities as watching movies, contest through the city, celebrating Scout's Day, outdoor activities, hiking and camping.

2. Problem Statement

Scouting has at its basis the scout method which was implemented at a world level starting with the year 1907, 110 years ago. This method is used by adult volunteers (leaders) who combine its seven specific elements: *education through action (learning by doing), the scout's law and promise, teamwork, the symbolic frame, and the adults' support, the personal progress system, nature*, with the purpose of building a positive and strong character (www.scout.ro).

The World Organisation of Scouting Movement (WOSM) is a global movement, non-governmental and non-profit with over 30 million members from 216 countries and territories, where it is enlisted as a founding member. "Romania's Scouts" National Organisation, which in turn is formed by local centres among which there is the Local Centre Tîrgu Mureş. The latter respects the operating structure of a national Scouts organisation, having an educational offer throughout 16 years (from 5 to 21 years old) based on a non-formal curriculum adapted to each age group (www.scoutmures.ro). In the present study we will refer to the cubs' age group, meaning children from 6 to 10 years old.

3. Research Questions

The fact that the three forms of education potentiate each other with the purpose of ensuring the individual an active insertion in society is known. But how much can the non-formal education intensify the effects of the formal education? We took into consideration scouting, as an example of non-formal education, and we analysed its influence over the primary pupils' school integration.

4. Purpose of the Study

Through this research study, we wanted to find out to what degree scouting activities have a positive, significant impact upon school integration. We have followed 136 pupils from the preparatory grade to the end of the first grade. The children from the experimental sample participated at the meetings and scouting activities for 19 months..

5. Research Methods

The purpose of the present study is to establish in what way the activities based on the scout method have a significant positive influence over the school integration of pupils from the primary grades into their own class.

Scouting targets more areas of development among which the area of social development, where there is strong emphasis on: communication, interaction with other people and respecting the rules of each context. Therefore, we considered that the activities based on the scout method will have a positive influence over one of the challenges that young pupils deal with, and that is integrating within a new group and following new rules specific to the formal context. The **hypothesis** that was shaped, having at the basis this expectation, is the following one: *Taking part in non-formal activities such as scouting significantly changes pupils' degree of integration in the class they belong to.*

In order to follow *the dependent variable*, *the degree of the pupils' integration within the class they are a part of*, we used *the socio-metric method*, which we applied to the two samples, four times. Before we introduced *the independent variable*, *the non-formal, scouting education*, based on the scout method, we applied the pre-test (December 2014); during the formative experiment, we applied the intermediary evaluation 1 (June 2015) and the intermediary evaluation 2 (January 2016); and after the closure of the experiment we applied the post-test (June 2016).

The socio-metric test (Annex 1) is designed by us and it underlines the preferential status of each student, and his/her relationship with the classmates. Based on the preferences expressed by the students, we established with the help of the socio-metric matrix and the resulted mathematic model, the members of the group who are: popular, accepted, indifferent or marginalized. The socio-metric test has seven questions to which the investigated subjects expressed: their socio-emotional preferences, their feelings of likes and dislikes towards the members of the group-class they are a part of, reporting to different aspects and areas of interest: participating to school and extra-curricular tasks and spending their free time.

5.1. The psycho- pedagogic experiment

The psycho- pedagogic experiment is considered the main method of investigation used in the research, with the purpose of confirming or denying the hypothesis. Verifying the hypothesis will require organising and developing a psycho- pedagogic experiment, along 19 months, from December 2014 until June 2016. The experiment supposes the intentional modification of the conditions of occurrence and development of the phenomenon; that is using the scouting method in order to study its effects upon the integration and adaptation of young pupils to the school environment (Moldovan, & Bocoş, 2016). The experimental design was one of the inter-subjects, but there will also be an intra-subjects analysis in order to see more explicitly the progress of those within the experimental group.

The *psycho-pedagogic* experiment was organised by Tîrgu Mureş county within the activities organised by the Local Centre Tîrgu Mureş - "Romania's Scouts" National Organisation, the Cubs age branch (6-10 years). During the *psycho-pedagogic* experiment, three semesters, there were periodic weekly meetings and outdoors activities (example Annex 2). Three areas of development were followed: the social one, the intellectual and the emotional one, according to the scouting pedagogy provided in *The cubs leader's guide* (Petrea, 2010).

5.2. The participants' sample

After the presentations made to the parents, a number of 41 students were enlisted at the scouts, from five classes, which constituted the experimental group and the other 95 classmates formed the control group (Table 01.). We have chosen this way of selection as it is a non-formal activity, at which participation must be voluntary and to occupy that part of the individual's time that he/she wants to allocate.

Table 01. The experimental group and the control group

School	Grade	Students	Experimental group	Control group
Secondary "Romulus Guga"	Preparatory class A	17	4	13
Secondary "George Coşbuc"	Preparatory class A	30	3	27
Secondary "Europa"	Preparatory class C	28	14	14
Secondary "Mihai Viteazul"	Preparatory class A	30	11	19
Secondary "Mihai Viteazul"	Preparatory class B	31	9	22

The pupils enlisted at the scouts joined, within "Romania's Scouts" National Organisation – The Local Centre Tîrgu Mureş, the children who were already members of the organisation. We consider this aspect beneficial, as one of the scouting principles is „the big one helps the small one”, where „the big one” can also be the one with some experience in scouting, it is not necessarily about age.

5.3. The content sample

The symbolic frame that dresses the scouting pedagogy, for the cubs' group age, is *The Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling. Through the symbolic frame a series of development areas are targeted, each associated to one character from the story. The areas of development are done gradually, during the 4 years dedicated to this age branch, the children being aware that they are in the territory of the character that rules the respective development area.

For the present study we started from *the Enlisting period, meetings with parents and activities specific for the entrance of the cubs within Haitic and of adjustment*, then three areas of development were followed (the social development area - *Chill's territory*, the intellectual development area - *Baloo's territory* and the emotional development area - *Kaa's territory*). All the meetings and the activities that were projected and developed as a formative experiment for this study are described in detail in *Guide for meeting and scouting activities. Age group 7-10 years* (Moldovan & Bocoş, 2017).

5.4. The stages of the pedagogic research

According to the specific of the psycho-pedagogic experiment, there are three stages described the present research: the pre-experimental stage, the formative experimental stage, and the post-experimental stage.

The data obtained as a result of the socio-metric test's application were analysed through the socio-metric matrix, the data of the socio-metric test being registered into a table with a double entrance, where both horizontally and vertically the pupils are registered. For each class there was a matrix made,

so that the students of the two samples did not interact, therefore, they do not know each other. For each student it was written down the selection (+) or the rejection (-) of the classmates, making a total (following the vertical of the matrix) of both the selections and the rejections. Having the data of the socio-metric test written down in the matrix the index of the socio-metric status was calculated. This **socio-metric index** reveals the position occupied by the student within the class and it is calculated following the formula: $I = n/(N-1)$ where n represents the number of selections received by the student, and N represents the number of the group members (the class):

$$I = \frac{\text{Received selections} - \text{Received rejections}}{N - 1}$$

In order to be able to compare the two samples, considering that the number of students is different, we have calculated what percentage of the students from the experimental group is popular, accepted, indifferent or marginalized and how many of the students from the control group are popular, accepted, indifferent or marginalized.

6. Findings

The next table shows the percentages obtained by the two samples during the *pre-experimental stage*, at the pre-test evaluation:

Table 02. Comparing the results obtained by samples at the application of the socio-metric test

The psycho-social preferential value	The experimental sample	The control sample
Popular	15%	6 %
Accepted	41%	42 %
Indifferent	5 %	6 %
Marginalized	39 %	46%

We can notice that the percentages of the accepted and indifferent values are only with one percentage higher than those from the control sample, but in terms of popular and marginalized values, the extremes of the groups, the differences are much bigger between the two samples. The percentage of the popular value is higher in the case of the experimental sample than the percentage of those from the control sample, and in the case of the marginalized students the percentage is reversed, still in favour of the experimental sample. Figure 1 was made in order to also compare graphically the two samples:

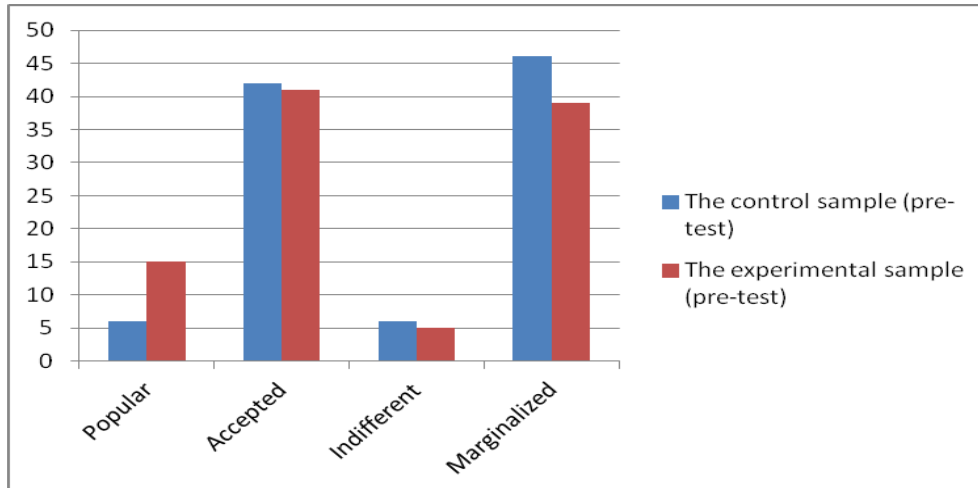


Figure 01. Comparisons of preferential psycho-social values of the two samples

In Table 03. are presented the results obtained on both samples, at the application of the socio-metric test within the formative experiment stage, more precisely the intermediary evaluation 1 and the intermediary evaluation 2.

Table 03. Comparing the results obtained on samples at the application of the socio-metric test

Tests	Preferential psycho-social value	Experimental sample	Control sample
Intermediary 1	Popular	14 %	6 %
	Accepted	59 %	40%
	Indifferent	0 %	2 %
	Marginalized	27 %	52 %
Intermediary 2	Popular	32 %	8 %
	Accepted	44 %	40 %
	Indifferent	5 %	8 %
	Marginalized	19 %	44 %

We can notice that in the case of the intermediary evaluation 1 the percentages are not as similar as they were in the pre-test, but significant differences between the two samples have started to appear. If in the case of the experimental sample the highest percentage, of 59%, represents that of the accepted students, while in the control sample the percentage of 52%, the highest, represents the marginalized students. The percentage of the popular students in the experimental sample is more than twice as high as the one in the control sample (14% versus 6%).

We can also notice at the second intermediary evaluation that the percentage of the accepted students in the case of the experimental sample is the same as the percentage of the marginalized ones in the control sample. The percentage of the popular ones increased significantly in the case of the experimental sample reaching a percentage of 32% from the total of the students who participated in the intervention programme – meetings and scouting activities.

We have made Figure no. 2 in order to also compare graphically the two samples at the intermediary evaluation 1 and Figure no. 3 in order to highlight the results from the intermediary evaluation 2:

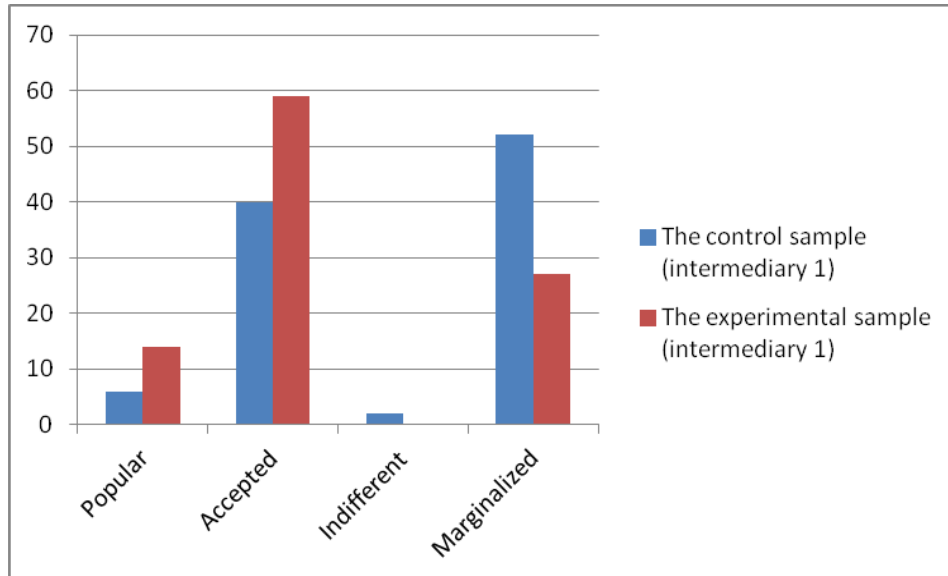


Figure 02. Comparisons of preferential psycho-social values of the two samples – intermediary 1

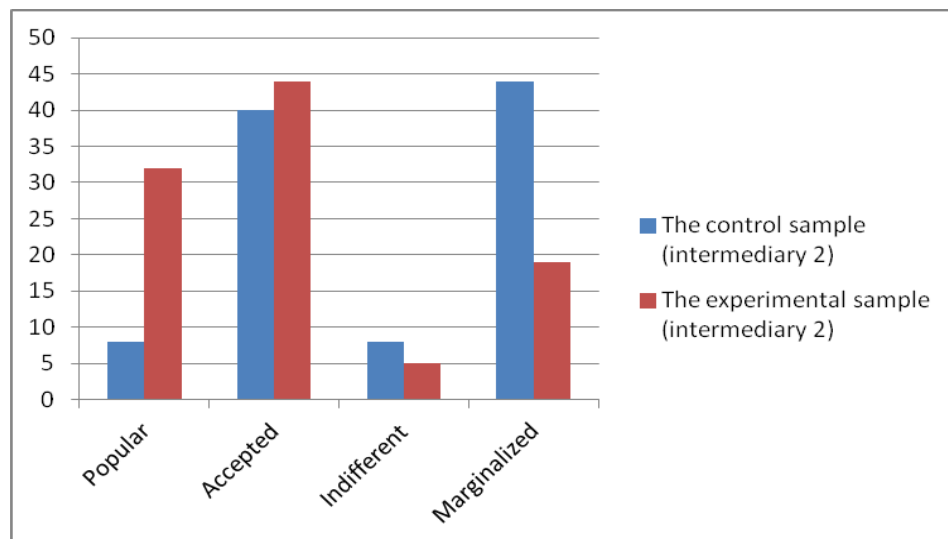


Figure 03. Comparisons of preferential psycho-social values of the two samples – intermediary 2

After the formative experiment's stage there was an evaluation called post-test in order to see the changes that resulted after the participation of the experimental sample to the scouting activities.

The next table shows the percentages obtained after the calculation of the socio-metric index for each student from the two samples:

Table 04. Comparing the results obtained on samples by applying the socio-metric test

Tests	The psycho-social preferential value	Experimental sample	Control sample
Post-test	Popular	42 %	4 %
	Accepted	46 %	42 %
	Indifferent	5 %	3 %
	Marginalized	7 %	51 %

If in the case of the experimental sample the highest percentages were for the popular and accepted students (42%, and 46%), in the control sample the highest percentages are for the marginalized and accepted students (51%, and 42%). The number of students from the experimental sample who are marginalised by their classmates has decreased considerably, reaching 7% from the total of students who are a part of this sample. In Figure 04. the two samples are compared graphically:

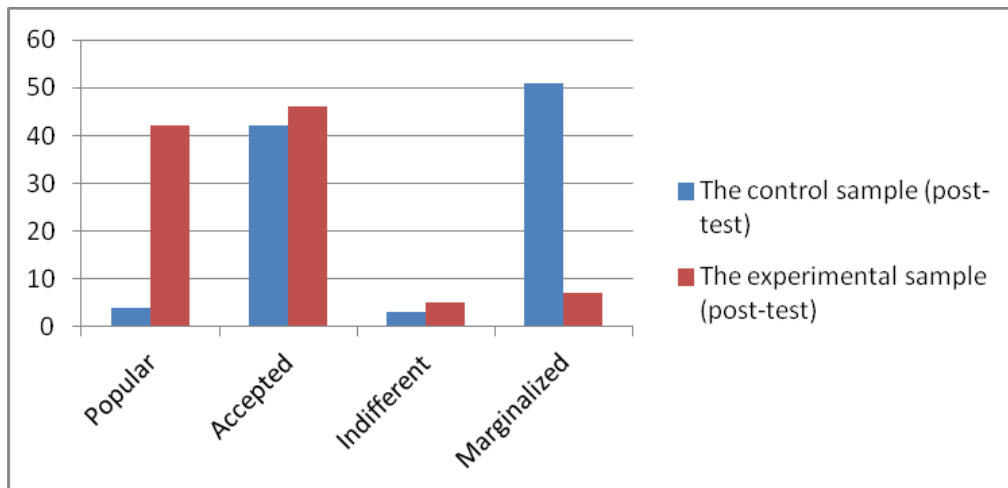


Figure 04. Comparisons of preferential psycho-social values of the two samples

The post-test evaluation was made at a distance of 18 months from the first evaluation. Further, we will present the evolution of the two samples by comparing the four evaluations. For the control sample we have made Table no. 5, where we compared the percentages of the preferential psycho-social values:

Table 05. The percentages of the preferential psycho-social values of the control sample

	Popular	Accepted	Indifferent	Marginalized
Control sample (pre-test)	6%	42%	6%	46%
Control sample (intermediary 1)	6%	40%	2%	52%
Control sample (intermediary 2)	8%	40%	8%	44%
Control sample (post-test)	4%	42%	3%	51%

These percentages can be better noticed, for each evaluation, in the next figure:

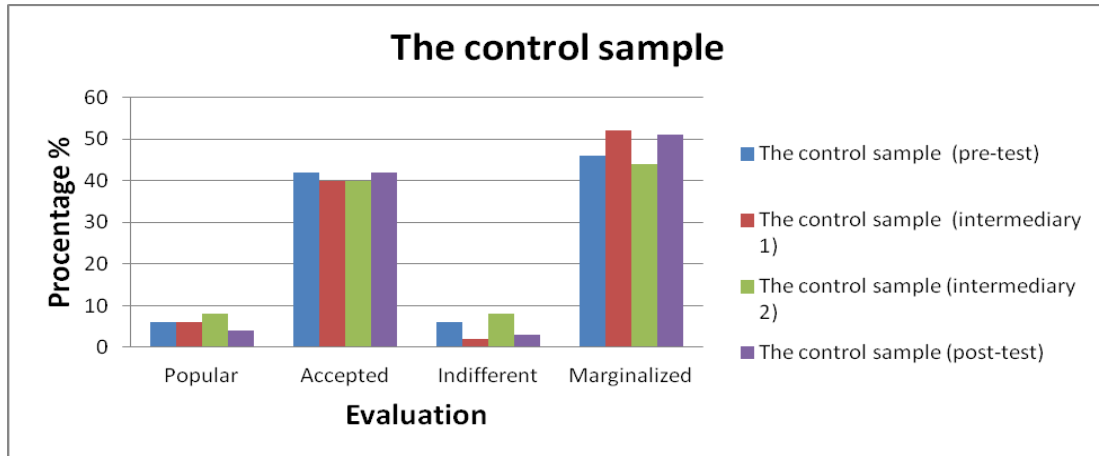


Figure 05. The preferential psycho-social values of the control samples

Following Table 05. and Figure 05. we notice that there are no significant changes in the structure of the control sample. The percentages are similar in all four evaluations, so we cannot say that there have been obvious modifications regarding the preferential psycho-social values in the case of the students who did not participate at scouting activities. Therefore, we can state that the control sample does not modify its structure.

For the experimental sample we have made Table 06. where the percentages of the preferential psycho-social values are compared:

Table 06. The percentages of the preferential psycho-social values of the experimental sample

	Popular	Accepted	Indifferent	Marginalized
Experimental sample (pre-test)	15%	41%	5%	39%
Experimental sample (intermediary 1)	14%	59%	0%	27%
Experimental sample (intermediary 2)	32%	44%	5%	19%
Experimental sample (post-test)	42%	46%	5%	7%

These percentages can be better noticed, for each evaluation, in the following figure:

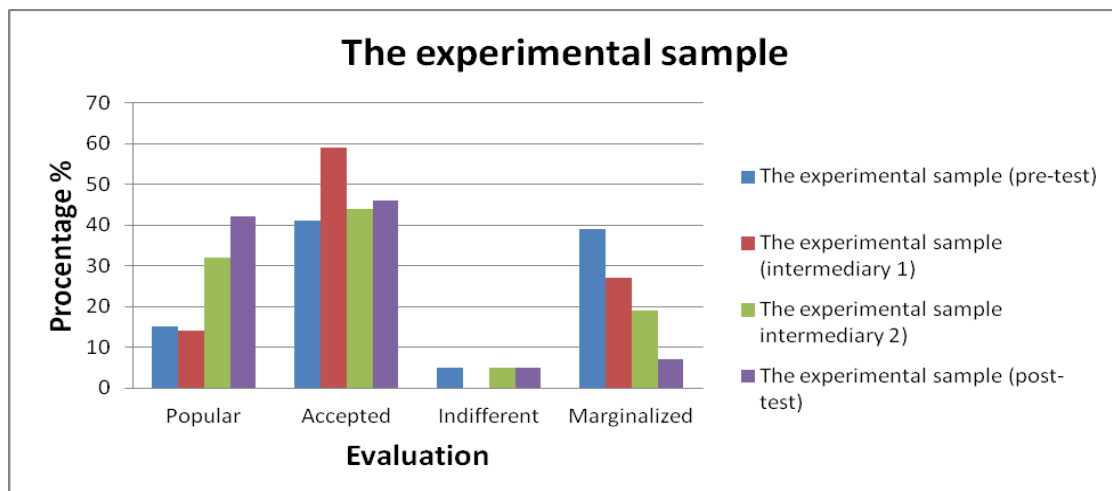


Figure 06. The preferential psycho-social values of the experimental samples

By analysing Table 06. and Figure 06. we can notice significant changes in the composition of the experimental sample from one evaluation to the other. The percentages for the „popular” category increase progressively, more precisely, if at the pre-test we have 15% of the students who constitute the experimental sample, as „popular”, their percentage goes up to 42% at the post-test. In exchange, regarding the „marginalized” group of students from the experimental sample, their percentage goes down progressively from 39% at the pre-test to 7% at the post-test. The percentage of those accepted and indifferent is relatively constant by comparing evaluations.

7. Conclusion

This study contributes to the highlight of the positive effects that scouting has over young pupils regarding school integration. By testing the research's hypothesis we have found out that non-formal scouting educational activities determine significant modifications to the degree of pupils' integration within the class they are a part of.

The results obtained through the socio-metric test have highlighted that fact that the students from the control sample maintain their status in their classes and implicitly the degree of integration in the school environment throughout the entire research. While the experimental sample changes its composition, the students modify their status in the classes they come from, all along the research. These results highlight the increase of the degree of school integration, more precisely into the class group for those who participate at the non-formal scouting activities.

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APPENDIX 1

A. Socio-metric test

Explanations for students: Try to be honest; your answers will remain secret and will, under no circumstances, influence your relationships.

A.

1. If you received a task that requires teamwork, what classmate would you like to work with?
.....
2. If you received a task that requires teamwork, what classmate would you not like to work with?
.....

B.

1. With what classmate would you rather spend your free time?
2. Who wouldn't you like to spend your free time with?.....

C.

1. If one of your classmates moved with his/her family to another city, who would you like it to be?
.....
2. Which classmate would you feel sorry about if he/she moved with the family to another city?
.....

D.

1. Who would you like as a partner in a hiking?
2. Who wouldn't you like as a partner?

E.

1. If there was dancing, who would you like to dance with?
2. Who wouldn't you like to dance with?

F.

1. Who is your best friend from the classroom?
2. Who wouldn't you like as a friend?

G.

1. You are going camping and in the bus there are only 3 seats available. Who do you pick from your classroom for those 3 seats?
2. You are going camping with your class and in the bus there are 3 seats less than students. Who do you chose to get off the bus and stay home?

B

Unit meeting – table taken from the *Guide for meetings and scouting activities. Age group 7-10 years* (O. Moldovan, M. Bocoş, 2017, pp. 29-30)

Planning		
Location:	Syndicate House	
Date/ Duration:	March 24 th 2015	90 min.
Description of the meeting:		
- purpose	Poems composition with the theme “My town”.	
- instructive educative objectives	A. To evaluate last week's activity, <i>Quest in the city</i> . B. Each patrol to make up a poem with the theme “My town”. C. To recite to composed poems.	
- activities / duration	1. <i>Hippodrome</i> – game 2. Evaluation of the activity <i>Quest in the city</i> 3. Composition of poems with the theme “My town”. 4. Reciting of poems and their evaluation 5. Attendance	10 min. 25 min. 35 min. 10 min. 10 min.
- curricular resources	“the meeting cubs”, white papers for the flipchart, marker, white sheets of paper, pencils	
- description of the meeting	<p>The activity will begin with the cubs and the scouting greeting.</p> <p>1. We will play Hippodrome, a game that the children have already played with the Daring, and which they love. Everybody will sit in a circle, and the leader suggests to the cubs to participate to a racehorse and he/she presents the objectives they have to attain: right turn, left turn (the cubs go to the indicated direction), jump, double jump, triple (the cubs say <i>hop, hop-hop, hop-hop-hop</i> according to the given order), thorn pit (the cubs cry out <i>Ouch, ouch, ouch!</i>), water pit (the cubs hold their noses and say <i>bla-bla-bla</i> while imitating a dive), the official tribune (the cubs salute with their head up straight), the men's choir (the cubs say <i>Oooo</i> with a deep voice, beating their chest), the women's choir (the cubs cry <i>Aaaaaa</i> like hysteric women and raise their hands above their heads), the photographers' group (the cubs imitate the photographers and say <i>Pac-Pac</i>), and at the end there is a moment of maximum happiness. (The National Organisation „Romania's Scouts”, 2012 – <i>The cub, friend with everybody. Guide – The Project of the francophone cubs</i>, p.16) The game will repeat this time by replacing the game horses with the monkeys that are following Mowgli, and the leader introduces elements specific to the symbolic frame.</p> <p>2. After the game, the children will sit in a semicircle and will analyse the activity from March 17th - <i>Quest in the city</i>. They will identify the positive and negative aspects of the activity and will make suggestions for the future meetings.</p> <p>3. The quest from the city gave the children the opportunity to find out more about Tîrgu Mureş, so the leader will ask them to make, on patrols, a poem with the theme „My city”. The poems are one of Chill's requests, so the leader will take the commitment to send these poems to the eagle.</p> <p>4. After the poems have been finalised, each patrol will assign a spokesperson to recite the poem in front of the semicircle. The poems are appreciated with applause, and the one that is considered the best will receive scouting applause.</p> <p>5. The activity will end with the attendance and diving of the „meeting cubs”.</p>	
Special considerations	Each patrol will be supported by a volunteer or by an explorer.	
Meeting responsible	Oana Moldovan	