

## ANALYSIS OF REASONS OF STUDENTS' LOW PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

*Physical culture, in public consciousness, is perceived as a collection of socially regulated activities, integrated in educational and social processes of young generation and as a creative, recreational and prophylactic kind of activity which allows achieving proper health and physical activity skills level. The study covered 3620 people, who are all Szczecin first and second year students who have physical education classes compulsory in their curriculum. The study was carried out in five universities and was based on the diagnostic probe by means of the questionnaire: "Participating in different physical activities" which included close questions of disjunctive and alternative character and open questions of reference character in order to obtain the respondents' subjective evaluation of the phenomena.*

**Keywords:** physical activity, physical education, university students, lifestyle.

**Introduction.** Physical culture, in public consciousness, is perceived as a collection of socially regulated activities, integrated in educational and social processes of young generation and as a creative, recreational and prophylactic kind of activity which allows achieving proper health and physical activity skills level.

The Poles activity level in physical culture and tourism wanders off the expectations and needs and it results mainly from the youth's low level of knowledge of physical culture merits and body needs. The consciousness barrier relates to the whole society and consequently to youth as well. The reasons of this situation go back to the lack of physical education in schools, universities as well as to the lack of information and promotion of social, health service organizations, television and other mass media. There are some other factors impeding participation in mass physical culture like:

- lack of base (small amount of facilities and cheap sports and tourism equipment)
- insufficient information, promotion and organization of events
- faulty activity of educational institutions
- lack of family tradition in physical culture and tourism
- lack of staff, high costs (Skibniewska, Tomaszewska, 1991).

Apart from internal factors which stimulate or retard undertaking spontaneous human activities, external conditions have a significant influence as well: different natural conditions, space (restricted area retards spontaneous activity, open area stimulates skills), good surrounding atmosphere, music (Umiastowska 1997, 2007).

Importance of exercise in man's contemporary life starts to play more often a significant part. It is possible to observe a "fashion" for exercise in certain social groups. Unfortunately these are not numerous groups yet and it is not very popular to participate in different forms of physical activities in a bigger part of the European community. "Being physically active" is a slogan of a small number of representatives in different countries. Technology and urban development, wide access to "sitting amusements" (TV and internet), extending working time do not support a physically active model of person's development. It is not a phenomenon characterizing an average Pole but it is a problem which appears all over the world. Physicians sound worried, noting an increasing percentage of people who develop typical civilization illnesses.

### Ground and method.

The study covered 3620 people, who are all Szczecin first and second year students having physical education classes compulsory in their curriculum. The study was carried out in five public universities.

The study was based on the diagnostic probe by means of the questionnaire: "Participating in different physical activities" which included close questions of disjunctive and alternative character and open questions of reference character in order to obtain the respondents' subjective evaluation of the phenomena.

The student responses to the open question about low physical activity were divided into six categories. The obtained answers were distinguished due to the following reasons:

- a) connected with impeded access to sports equipment and facilities (small amount of sports centers, lack of own sports equipment, inability to rent sports equipment, expensive tickets for events, etc);
- b) connected with lifestyle (lack of time, hectic lifestyle, long working hours, many professional duties, chase after money, material goods, technical development, sedentary lifestyle, watching TV for long hours, computer games, passive forms of pastime, etc);
- c) connected with character and personality features (laziness, lack of motivation, lack of strong will, instability, mentality, hectic enthusiasm, love of comfortable life, lack of family's support of participating in physical activities, being ashamed of own body, lack of interest in physical exercise, reluctance to physical exercise);
- d) connected with health (lack of fitness, obesity, health condition, disability, negligence, bad habits of nutrition, lack of promoting healthy lifestyle);
- e) connected with lack of knowledge about physical activity (lack of information and encouragement to practice sports, about advantages of physical activity, inability of relaxation, lack of a satisfied and fit model, small amount of physical education classes in schools, boring classes, badly prepared teachers).

The sixth category was created on the basis of declared "I do not know" or lack of the opinion.

The most often mentioned reason for small physical activity is *laziness* (49.74% of the female students and 38.03% of male students). Lack of time, long working hours and many professional duties (26.01% of the female students and 21.98% male students) were mentioned as reasons in the second rank. Difficulties with the access to sports centers and equipment mentioned by 9.69% of female respondents and 14.10% of male respondents were the third reason. Lack of

financial means was declared as a quite numerous fourth reason (10.65% of females and 6.90% of male students) (Table 1).

Table. 1

*Students opinion on reasons of low physical activity of society [%]*

<b>Opinions expressed by the students</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Z<sub>a</sub></b>
Lack of time, long working hours, large amount of duties	26,01	21,98	15,22**
Lack of information on advantages of taking up physical activity	7,16	4,88	2,85**
Lack of motivation	7,01	4,64	3,01**
Lack of sport facilities & organized activities	9,69	14,10	3,58**
Lack of funds	10,65	6,90	3,93**
Lack of interest in and reluctance to physical activity	6,61	4,15	3,23**
Culture of education, lack of traditions	5,80	3,97	2,53
Laziness	49,74	38,03	7,02**
Pursuit of money, material goods	3,43	2,63	1,40
Sedentary lifestyle	2,47	3,23	1,05
Television, computer	7,37	6,72	0,76
Bad habits	1,97	0,49	3,91**
Lack of answer	7,26	16,61	8,77**

Men and women opinions statistically differ significantly in five categories on the reasons of low physical activity of the Poles (Table 2) and only in case of reasons connected with access to facilities and sports equipment categories such difference has not been noted. Opinions of the studied categories connected with lifestyle, features of character and personalities differ most of all. There were also more male respondents than female who could not express reasons for low physical activity of the society.

Lifestyle and personality were stated as dominating factors in low physical activity of our society by students from all agglomerations. More women (over 50%) than men connect that fact with lifestyle. A bigger group of male than female students could not give grounds for low physical activity of the society. The least numerous group (11.63%) appeared in the studied group of women, originating from the countryside observing difficult access to sports facilities and equipment as the grounds for low physical activity (Table 3).

Table 2

*Students' opinions on the reasons of low physical activity of the society with the respect of sex [%]*

<b>Reasons of low physical activity</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Z<sub>a</sub></b>
Connected with access to sports centers and equipment	20,33	21,00	0,97
Connected with lifestyle	63,42	36,81	16,49**
Connected with the character and personality	62,31	48,41	7,58**
Connected with health	7,52	5,07	11,89**
Connected with lack of knowledge about physical activity	15,89	14,22	3,32**
I do not know	7,27	16,73	25,70**

Table. 3

*Students' opinions on reasons of low physical activity of the society with the respect of place of living [%]*

<b>Reasons of low physical activity</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Big city</b>	<b>Small town</b>	<b>Village</b>
Connected with access to sports centers and equipment	<b>F</b>	18,54	18,32	11,63
	<b>M</b>	19,76	18,04	16,91
	<b>Z<sub>a</sub></b>	0,32	0,69	0,81
Connected with lifestyle	<b>F</b>	54,13	55,35	51,60
	<b>M</b>	31,91	33,87	30,92
	<b>Z<sub>a</sub></b>	8,07**	5,31**	4,86**
Connected with the character and personality	<b>F</b>	57,45	55,48	56,81
	<b>M</b>	42,95	45,31	51,21
	<b>Z<sub>a</sub></b>	5,20**	1,55	2,43*
Connected with health	<b>F</b>	7,93	6,95	9,63
	<b>M</b>	7,88	8,06	6,76
	<b>Z<sub>a</sub></b>	0,46	1,70	1,50
Connected with lack of knowledge	<b>F</b>	11,58	10,29	12,29

about physical activity	<b>M</b>	11,48	12,32	13,53
	<b>Z<sub>a</sub></b>	1,36	0,16	1,24

### Conclusions and final remarks

Jan Amos Komensky divided a day into three equal parts already 300 years ago - and he assigned different tasks to each part – the first was assigned to sleep, the second to work, and the last one was assigned to different everyday needs and duties. It is very difficult to establish how much time should be devoted to physical activity at different stages of ontogenesis. To bring any effect, physical exercises have to be performed at least twice a week (best everyday) and they must be intensive – the effort has to be higher than everyday activities and they must last long enough. It is a very individual matter and it depends on capabilities of every person.

Three environments: family, school and contemporaries influence the creation of proper attitude to physical culture participation, expressed by undertaking different physical exercises.

Family environment considerably stimulates child's development. It works due to the micro-system organization in which it develops. These activities consists of: proper environment differentiation consisting of people, animals, objects and environmental behavior - stimulating individual to universal activity in this environment and fulfilling different needs models. Parents socialize their children in different ways. One forms of interaction is their model that they give to their daughters and sons themselves. They include not only behavior but proceeding standards transmission as well.

School which is responsible most of all for equipping students with knowledge and skills necessary to process and model proactive activity behavior, uses all sources - from very traditional (reproductive realization of the program contents without any creative activities) up to those which we would like to name modern (and we would cover all activities connected with student's participation in the process of creation and teachers' creative work). In order to have full effects of school environment work, they should be based on widely understood concept of all its participation factors.

The environment of contemporaries (transforming in adult life in professional environment) exerts enormous informal influence on the individual. A wish to identify oneself with the group leaders and to adapt for certain group interests influence person's behavior.

The performed studies and statistical analysis allow formulating certain remarks:

1. *Laziness* is the most often mentioned reason for low physical activity of the Poles. The respondents mentioned lack of time, long work hours and many professional duties on further positions.

2. Type of university and the respondents' origin differentiate their opinions on low Polish activity - medical and physical education students represent similar opinions.

3. Agglomeration size of the respondents' origin does not differentiate statistically much their opinions on the reasons of low physical activity of the society.

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