

Name and surname of the author:

**Mgr Alicja Plewa**

Name and surname of the supervisor:

**Prof. dr hab. Janusz Kirenko**

Topic of the dissertation:

**Physical activity in the structure of health behavior of junior high school students**

Key words:

Health, health behaviour, physical activity, physical fitness, school youth

### **Summary:**

The research topic of this paper is the question of physical activity and fitness in the structure of health behaviour of junior high school students. Talking about the structure, it has to be noted that this notion covers the complexity and the variety of the content.

Health behaviour is the category of human behaviour which forms the lifestyle. It then is a derivative of both subjective dispositions and social and cultural background. The taking of pro- or anti-health behaviour is a matter of choice from the accessible, in a given culture, models of behaviour related to health. The basis of such choices are the recognized values, their prioritisation as well as the place of health and its definition in this hierarchy.

Focusing on the physical activity and fitness as the primary element of the structure of health behaviour enables the presentation of the mutual relations between its particular components constituting a unity.

The dissertation attempts to present the relations between the level of physical activity and fitness, and the undertaken pro- or anti-health behaviour. It was assumed that there exists a bilateral relation between the health oriented attitude and the physical activity and fitness.

The awareness of the value of pro-health behaviour leads, among others, to the undertaking of the regular physical activity, which is connected to the higher physical fitness and vice-versa. The pleasure and additional energy, which is liberated by physical activity, intensifies the will to extend this activity to the other areas of health oriented behaviour, resulting in a pro-health attitude. It was assumed, that the high level of physical activity and fitness will affect the undertaking of health oriented behaviour more often.

This assumption has been verified by analysing the period of the youth's puberty, maturation and formation of their awareness. This phenomenon is accompanied by the intensive biological, emotional and social changes. The youth, in this particular period of their development, are prone and

and vulnerable to formation of the behaviour conducive or not to health.

The knowledge of the youth behaviour in terms of health is indispensable for the creation of the educational programmes directed both to students and their parents. The obtained information can serve to construct the instructional and teaching materials for teachers, pedagogists and educators conducting the above mentioned programmes. The information can be used to create recovery and prevention programmes, indicating the areas which demand a special interest both from the parents and teachers, and the policy makers.

The assumptions of the following dissertation are compliant with the currents of health education, which researches the processus of raising to health and teaching about health, which essence is the development of the person's personal dispositions by providing the knowledge, forming the value system and the behaviour related to health.

The main structure of the paper is determined by two parts: theoretical and empirical. The intention of the first of the mentioned ones (chapter one) was to present the questions regarding health, health behaviour, health oriented lifestyle, physical activity and fitness, as well as the age category of the youth in the period of their puberty in its early phase. The first chapter explains concepts and definitions constituting the core of the thesis. The issue of health and its conditionality has been discussed. The question of health as a value has been presented. The definitions of health behaviour and its variety have been overviewed. The question of formation and changes of health behaviour has been explained. The terms of evaluation of health and its influence on behaviour, and health oriented lifestyle have been introduced. The theoretical problems connected to physical activity and fitness have been presented, focusing mainly on their essence and the terms related to them. The role of physical activity in the individual life of a human has been explained, the methods of its evaluation have been described as well. This chapter discusses the age category of youth in their early adolescence. The changes in the young organism in the physical, motoric, emotional and social spheres have been described, as well as the problems occurring in this period of maturation. In the closing part of the chapter the health condition of school youth in Poland has been presented.

The empirical part consists of five chapters. The first of them (chapter two) discusses methodological aspects of own research covering: the subject and the goals of the reserach, problems and working hypotheses, variables and indicators. The chapters contains a description of the selection of a test sample, as well as methods, techniques and research tools applied. This chapter presents also the organisation and the course of the research as well as the methods of the statistical analysis.

The results of own research are presented in chapters three, four, five and six.

The first of them (chapter three) presents the extensive diagnosis of the health behaviour declared by the school youth in the field of physical activity, nutrition and personal hygiene. The

ways of spending spare time have been presented and the scale of risky behaviour in everyday activity of school youth has been commented. In the final part of the chapter, the placing of health among personal values surveyed among the school youth, and the different ways of defining it, have been presented.

Chapters four and five present the analysis of the health behaviour in the context of physical activity and fitness of the researched youth. The taking of the health oriented behaviour in the fields of: physical activity, nutrition, personal hygiene and free time activity have been analysed. The scale of destructive behaviour connected to: the sedentary way of spending free time, unhealthy nutrition, smoking, drinking alcohol and unjustified slimming has been described. These chapters discuss the placing of health among personal values, as well as ways of defining health regarding the level of physical activity and fitness of the youth surveyed.

Chapter six describes the relation between the level of physical activity and fitness of the school youth and their health, identified through the asymmetry of movement connected to the improper movement patterns.

The culmination of the dissertation is the discussion of the results, containing the verification of the formerly presented hypotheses and the closing, where the pedagogical implications have been included.

The presented paper definitely does not exhaust the complex questions undertaken. However, it provides interesting regularities and comparative analyses of the data derived from a broader research of Health Behaviour in School-aged Children. The results of the dissertation may constitute an important tool in undertaking the activity for the health of school youth and the promotion of the health oriented lifestyle, including the active lifestyle.

The paper contains also: bibliography, list of tables, list of diagrams and the annex.

Alicja Plewa

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