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Physical Education in schools for various age groups, in Przemyśl district

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Abstract

The objective of the study was to assess the status of physical education at different levels of school education in rural and urban areas of Przemyśl County. The study included physical education teachers working in primary, middle and high schools. The analysis showed that most of the schools in the city have better conditions for the implementation of obligatory physical education classes. In addition, most teachers complain about conditions in schools. According to physical education teachers, combined classes, lack of equipment and appropriate sports base are the most common causes of making it impossible for them to accomplish the program of physical education in schools in the Przemyśl County.

Key words: Przemyśl County, primary schools, middle schools, high schools, estimate of lesson, physical education teachers

Introduction

Physical education is one of the most specialized forms of participation in physical culture. It involves children and young people at a pre-employment stage. It is an integral component of the education system and the foundation of physical culture¹. It plays an important role in shaping the personality of a young person². It influences health, fitness level, resilience, endurance and physique³.

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¹ H. Grabowski, *Teoria wychowania fizycznego*, Kraków 1994, pp. 55–58.; J. Śniadecki, *O fizycznym wychowaniu dzieci*, AWF Kraków 1990.

² H. Grabowski, *Co ma wspólnego edukacja fizyczna z edukacją*, „Kultura Fizyczna” 2000, No 1–2, pp. 5–8.

³ H. Grabowski, *Wychowanie fizyczne wobec wyzwań współczesności*, „Kultura Fizyczna” 2001, No 11–12, pp. 4–7.

In the process of physical education one should develop not only the body, but also pay attention to the intellectual, moral, and aesthetic side of human personality⁴. From the pedagogical point of view, it is a way of passing on patterns of values and behaviours related to the body in order to prepare young people to participate in physical culture after completing their education⁵. As it was rightly pointed out by Pańczyk, it is the process of the emotional and practical development of a physically active lifestyle, based on the awareness of, and implementation of development and health related human needs by means of physical culture⁶.

A young person is exposed to many negative experiences that come with modern civilization. This negativity needs to be counteracted by appropriate pro-health behaviour. The development of such behaviour is the responsibility of physical education at school. Providing students with proper habits and pro-health behaviours will affect their future lives. According to Kosiewicz health is closely related to fundamentals of the general theory of physical education and one of the forms of participation in physical culture is physical education, so school becomes particularly important⁷.

Because a reduction in the levels of physical fitness in children and young people has been observed in recent years⁸, the role of physical education teachers in tackling health issues has become decisive. Schools should counteract this unwelcome development through proper understanding and application of the objectives of physical education. The extent to which students are prepared to take part in physical culture will depend on the physical education teacher. The level of school physical education and the physical activity of children and adolescents depends on the state of the school sports facilities infrastructure, the education and approach of teachers⁹ and local and regional traditions in playing certain sports¹⁰. Progress will be more effective if different opportu-

⁴ H. Grabowski, *Bariery kultury fizycznej*, „Kultura Fizyczna” 2000, No 7–8, pp. 1–2.; idem, *Teoria fizycznej edukacji*, WSiP Warszawa 1997.; E. Piasecki, *Cele wychowania fizycznego*, AWF Kraków 2000, pp. 5–20.; B. Karolczak-Biernacka, *Wychowanie fizyczne i sport jako czynnik systemu edukacji*, „Kultura Fizyczna” 2000, No 7–8, pp. 8–12.

⁵ M. Demel, *Szkice krytyczne o kulturze fizycznej*, Kraków 1998, Edition II, pp.21–26.; H. Grabowski, *O wychowaniu fizycznym poważnie*, „Kultura Fizyczna” 2003, No 11–12, pp. 1–4.

⁶ W. Pańczyk, K. Warchoń, *W kręgu teorii, metodyki i praktyki współczesnego wychowania fizycznego*, Rzeszów 2008, p. 61.

⁷ J. Kosiewicz, *Kultura fizyczna i sport w perspektywie filozofii*, Warszawa 2000.

⁸ S. Cieszkowski, *Socjologiczno-pedagogiczne podstawy kierowania rozwojem somatycznym i motorycznym dzieci w wieku 7–15 lat z regionu południowo-wschodniej Polski*, Rzeszów 2001, pp. 335–348.

⁹ J. Bielski, *Od czego zależy skuteczność wychowania fizycznego*, „Kultura Fizyczna” 2004, No 11–12, pp. 21–24.; M. Gębora, *Sylwetka nauczyciela w trzech wersjach teorii wychowania fizycznego*, „Kultura Fizyczna” 2003, No 1–2, pp. 26–28.

¹⁰ A. Nowakowski, *Wychowanie fizyczne i sport w szkołach ponadgimnazjalnych powiatu wadowickiego*, [in:] *Wychowanie fizyczne w szkole w okresie reformy programowej systemu edukacji*, ed. by K. Warchoń, Krosno 2011, pp. 41–57.

nities are created for young people who address their own particular needs and interests¹¹. Physical education must get engaged actively and creatively in the process of upbringing¹². Unfortunately, there is considerable concern about the conditions in schools that prevent implementation of physical education programmes.

The main objective of this paper is an attempt to assess and compare the condition of physical education in urban and rural schools in Przemyśl County.

The study poses the following research questions:

- 1) What is the content of the programmes which are implemented by physical education teachers in rural and urban schools in Przemyśl County?
- 2) What obstacles prevent implementation of the programmes of physical education in rural and urban schools?
- 3) What are the conditions of the bases/facilities at schools in Przemyśl County to implement the programme of physical education?

Material and methods

The study was conducted among 156 physical education teachers working in rural and urban schools in Przemyśl County between February 2014 and October 2014. 51.2% of the surveyed teachers work in primary schools, 28.8% in middle schools and 19.8% in secondary schools. The study included schools of different sizes: up to 100, 100 – 300, and over 300 students. The analysis of the results shows that there are more schools (39.3%) in the city with more than 300 students than in the rural areas of Przemyśl County (1.2%). In addition, most of the small schools (under 100 students) are located in rural areas (23.8%).

Most of the teachers surveyed are men, who make up 67.9% of all employees, of whom 36.5% work in rural schools, and 31.4% in the city. 15.3% of women are employed in rural schools in Przemyśl County, and 16.6% in the city. In urban areas, every third teacher is a graduate of a Physical Education Academy, and in rural schools 17.9% are graduates of PEAs.

A questionnaire was used in the study. The statistical analysis was carried out using Statistica 9. The results were presented as numbers and fraction rates. The statistical significance of differences was calculated with the use of the chi-square test.

¹¹ A. Dąbrowski, *Pozaszkolna kultura fizyczna młodzieży – rzeczywistość a potrzeby i oczekiwania*, Warszawa 1997, pp. 30–36.

¹² K. Zuchora, *Wychowanie fizyczne: bliżej dziecka – bliżej zdrowia*, „Kultura Fizyczna” 2001, No 11–12, pp. 19–20.

Results

Tab. 1 Distribution of answers to the questions in the survey

Question	Type of place		Total
	urban area/ city	rural area	
1	2	3	4
1. Are there 4 hours of physical education classes in your school?			
Yes, in all forms	48	65	113
	30.77%	41.67%	72.44%
No	26	2	28
	16.67%	1.28%	17.95%
Yes, only in some forms	9	6	15
	5.77%	3.85%	9.62%
Total	83	73	156
	53.21%	46.79%	100%
2. Are you in favour of the opinion that PE in the lowest classes should be carried out by a professional teacher?			
Definitely yes	73	66	139
	46.79%	42.31%	89.10%
Rather yes	9	6	15
	5.77%	3.85%	9.62%
No	1	1	2
	0.64%	0.64%	1.28%
Total	83	73	156
	53.21%	46.79%	100%
3. Are there any extracurricular sport activities conducted at your school/			
Yes	81	53	134
	51.92%	33.97%	85.90%
No	2	20	22
	1.28%	12.82%	14.10%
Total	83	73	156
	53.21%	46.79%	100%

1	2	3	4
4. Are the problems associated with the implementation of the PE programme an important element of the discussions at e.g. pedagogical council meetings?			
Yes	20	33	53
	12.82%	21.15%	33.97%
No	63	40	103
	40.38%	25.64%	66.03%
Total	83	73	156
	53.21%	46.79%	100%
5. Do you think there should be objective and standardized tests of motor skills introduced?			
Yes	31	52	83
	19.87%	33.33%	53.21%
Rather yes	27	10	37
	17.31%	6.41%	23.72%
No	11	7	18
	7.05%	4.49%	11.54%
Rather no	14	4	18
	8.97%	2.56%	11.54%
Total	83	73	156
	53.21%	46.79%	100%
6. Do you think there should be systematic tests to assess physical fitness?			
Yes, regularly twice a year	44	25	69
	28.21%	16.03%	44.23%
Yes, once a year is sufficient	25	40	65
	16.03%	25.64%	41.67%
No	14	8	22
	8.97%	5.13%	14.10%
Total	83	73	156
	53.21%	46.79%	100%
7. How do you evaluate the system of sports competitions conducted by the School Sports Association?			
Definitely negative	2	0	2
	1.28%	0,00%	1.28%

Tab. 1 (cont.)

1	2	3	4
Rather negative	14	8	22
	8.97%	5.13%	14.10%
No opinion	11	33	44
	7.05%	21.15%	28.21%
Quite positive	48	28	76
	30.77%	17.95%	48.72%
Definitely positive	8	4	12
	5.13%	2.56%	7.69%
Total	83	73	156
	53.21%	46.79%	100%
8. What is the attitude of teachers of other subjects in your school to physical education and sports training of children and young people?			
Definitely negative	3	0	3
	1.92%	0.00%	1.92%
Rather negative	11	5	16
	7.05%	3.21%	10.26%
No opinion	49	53	102
	31.41%	33.97%	65.38%
Quite positive	17	10	27
	10.90%	6.41%	17.31%
Definitely positive	3	5	8
	1.92%	3.21%	5.13%
Total	83	73	156
	53.21%	46.79%	100%
9. Facilities and conditions for conducting obligatory PE classes			
Sports hall	7	12	19
	4.49%	7.69%	12.18%
Gym	76	31	107
	48.72%	19.87%	68.59%
Substitute gym	43	24	67
	27.56%	15.38%	42.95%
Swimming-pool	7	0	7
	4.49%	0.00%	4.49%

1	2	3	4
School-hall	15	9	24
	9.62%	5.77%	15.38%
Outdoor playing field	46	59	105
	29.46%	37.82%	67.37%
Athletics track and field	21	20	41
	13.46%	12.82%	26.28%
Green areas near the school	20	23	43
	12.82%	14.74%	27.56%
10. Which content of the physical education programme do you do in compulsory PE lessons?			
Sport team games (mini stg)	80	72	152
	51.28%	46.15%	97.44%
Gymnastics	82	73	155
	52.56%	46.79%	99.36%
Athletics	82	73	155
	52.56%	46.79%	99.36%
Music and movement exercises	41	25	66
	26.28%	16.03%	42.31%
Field Athletics	63	62	125
	40.38%	39.74%	80.13%
Winter sport	59	45	104
	37.82%	28.85%	66.67%
Activity games and plays	78	71	149
	50%	45.51%	95.51%
Swimming	30	1	31
	19.23%	0.64%	19.87%
others	9	1	10
	5.77%	0.64%	6.41%
11. What obstacles prevent you from implementing the PE programme?			
Lack of facilities	35	42	77
	22.44%	26.92%	49.36%
Lack of equipment	32	55	87
	20.51%	35.26%	55.77%

Tab. 1 (cont.)

1	2	3	4
Too few hours of PE	17	38	55
	10.90%	24.36%	35.26% ^C
Combining classes	46	46	92
	29.49%	29.49%	58.97%
Lack of sanitary facilities	27	27	54
	17.31%	17.31%	34.62%
Co-educational groups	12	15	27
	7.69%	9.62%	17.31%
12. What kind of organizational system is used in PE lessons?			
All PE lessons in regular classes (class system)	52	49	101
	33.33%	31.54%	64.74%
1–2 hours in regular classes, remaining hours as elective but obligatory classes	31	24	55
	19.87%	15.38%	35.26%
13. If there are elective lessons how are they organised?			
In groups of the same grade/level	4	3	7
	7.41%	5.56%	12.96%
In combined inter-class groups	17	13	30
	31.48%	24.07%	55.56%
In a system of regular lessons	14	10	24
	25.93%	18.52%	44.44%
In an extra-curricular system at school	6	9	15
	11.11%	16.67%	27.78%
In an extra-curricular system outside school	1	1	2
	1.85%	1.85%	3.70%

*statistical significance was found as $P < 0,005$

The fourth hour of physical education is implemented in classes, both in the rural and urban areas in about 30–40% of schools. It is worth considering that in almost 1 in 5 schools in the city this hour is not implemented at all, and about 6% of urban schools, and about 4% of rural schools carry out the fourth hour only in certain classes (Tab. 1, Q1:). Particularly noteworthy is the fact that extra-curricular sports activities are held in 50% of urban school and at every third rural school in the district of Przemyśl. In approximately 13% of rural schools activities of this type do not take place at all (Tab. 1, Q. 3).

Problems related to the implementation of the programme of physical education are discussed at meetings of the Pedagogical Councils in 1 in 5 rural schools. They are also an issue for discussion in about 13% of the schools in the urban areas of Przemyśl County (Tab. 1, question. 4). Most of the physical education teachers who teach in both urban and rural schools believe that PE in the lowest classes should be carried out by a professional teacher. Only a few of them have their doubts about it (about 6% of the teachers in the city and about 4% of students in rural areas). On the basis of the figures it can be said that 1 in 2 teachers working in urban schools and every third teacher working in the rural area believe that there should be objective and standardized tests to assess the level of students' motor skills. Approximately 17% of the teachers in all Przemyśl schools and about 6% of teachers in Przemyśl County rural schools have their doubts as to whether the introduction of such tests is justified. After the analysis of the data some statistical significance was found (Tab.1, Q.5). The study showed that about 30% of the surveyed teachers from the city believe that physical fitness tests to assess students should be carried out twice a year. This view is shared by approximately 16% of the teachers working in rural schools in Przemyśl County. Approximately 26% of the surveyed teachers from rural schools in Przemyśl County and 16% of teachers from the city of Przemyśl believe that such tests ought to be carried out only once a year (Table 1, Q.6).

In assessing what the approach of physical education teachers to the system of sports competitions conducted by School Sports Association is, it may be noted that one in three respondents from the city and every fifth teacher from a rural school has a quite positive attitude. Approximately 21% of physical education teachers working in rural schools do not have an opinion on this subject. The same situation applies to 7% of teachers from the city. The recorded results showed statistical significance.

After analysing the attitude of teachers of other subjects to the problems of physical education and sports training of children and adolescents, it can be concluded that there are no significant differences between urban and rural areas. 30% of teachers working in both rural and urban areas cannot comment on the matter (Tab. 1, Q. 8).

Based on the data analysis it can be concluded that in rural areas in Przemyśl County 40% of schools have an outdoor playing field, and 20% a gym. In the city there are gyms in 1 in 2 schools, and outdoor playing fields in every third school. It is significant that there are swimming pools in 4% of schools in Przemyśl itself, but none in the rural areas of the district.

The study shows that swimming lessons are conducted by 20% of the teachers in urban schools, and about 1% of the teachers working in the rural schools of the district. Further analysis of the data showed no significant differences between urban and rural areas. Both in rural and urban schools every second teacher organises team sports, athletics, gymnastics, games and activities, and about 40% of

teachers working in rural and urban areas follow the curriculum as far as track-and-field activities are concerned (Tab. 1, Q.10).

After analysing the problems that affect the quality and content of classes it can be stated that one in three respondent teachers working in rural and urban schools finds fundamental difficulties in the implementation of the physical education programme due to combining classes. The lack of sanitary facilities is an impediment to approximately 17% of teachers from both the city and the countryside. Shortage of equipment is a reason for complaints made by 20% of teachers in the city and up to 35% of the respondents from the rural areas.

When assessing the kind of organizational system of PE lessons in schools, no significant differences between urban and rural areas were found. The system of regular lessons is applied in 30% of both rural and urban school. Approximately 20% of schools in the city and about 15% of rural schools in Przemyśl county district implement a system of physical education lessons: 1–2 hour class system (regular classes), and the remaining as elective but obligatory courses. An elective class system is implemented in 25% of schools in the city and in 25% in the rural areas. In the inter-class groups, activities of this type are carried out by 1/3 of the urban and 1/4 of the rural schools. The study which was conducted shows that the differences between urban and rural areas are small. (Tab., Q.13).

Discussion

To sum up, one can say that some schools in Przemyśl County face serious problems with both facilities and teaching staff. Only a small number of schools have a gym (about 8% of rural schools and about 4% of urban schools) and a swimming pool (about 4% of the schools in the city and none in the countryside). In contrast, gyms can be found in 50% of schools in the city and in 20% of schools in rural areas. The state of the material base/ facilities significantly affects the quality of the courses and greatly reduces their content.

According to a report published by the Supreme Chamber of Control in 2010 in more than a half of all schools in Poland the physical education curriculum was not adapted to the infrastructure available to schools and in 11 audited institutions the sports base (due to the lack of appropriate gyms and sports equipment), limited the scope of programme implementation and increased the risk of accidents¹³.

After an inspection of public and private schools in 2013 the SCC found that 16% of schools in Poland are too poorly adapted to complete the programme due to a lack of adequate sports facilities and equipment¹⁴. A similar situation prevails

¹³ *Informacja o wynikach kontroli. Wychowanie fizyczne i sport w szkołach publicznych*, NIK Warszawa 2010, pp. 9–10.

¹⁴ *Informacja o wynikach kontroli, Wychowanie fizyczne i sport w szkołach publicznych i niepu-*

in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. Physical education in schools is struggling with financial problems. Lack of sufficient resources negatively affects the quality of games activities organized by schools¹⁵.

According to Pańczyk physical education lessons implemented outside school are more promising in encouraging physical activity after completion of schooling but much more difficult to organise and implement. This form of teaching is very demanding of the teachers¹⁶. Unfortunately, most of the schools in Przemyśl County do not have access to green spaces located near schools. About 13% of urban schools and about 15% of rural schools in the district are able to organise physical activities outdoors.

Physical education lessons in every third school in the county of Przemyśl are in regular class-lessons. According to the SCC 2013 Report this system of education is predominant in Polish schools¹⁷.

A small number of schools in both rural and urban areas in Przemyśl County organise elective activities (about 20% of urban and 15% of rural schools). A similar situation takes place in other schools in Poland. According to the SCC Report of September 6, 2013¹⁸ fewer than 50% of middle schools and three primary schools in forms IV – VI and two secondary schools introduced elective classes (sports, dance, health and active tourism). The reason for this state of affairs is connected with the absence of adequate sports infrastructure and inadequate qualifications of teachers.

In three-quarters of Polish schools more than half of the students surveyed stated that better school and sports equipment are necessary in order to improve the quality of the courses¹⁹. As noted by Grabowski, physical education has been downgraded to a defensive position.

PE suffers from financial, material and personnel shortages. It is marginalized by the authorities. The problem affects not only individual Polish regions, but other developed and developing countries as well²⁰.

In the SCC survey²¹, students reported that in PE classes they liked practising the leading sports (about 28% of respondents) and gymnastics (about 20% of stu-

blicznych, Warszawa 2013.

¹⁵ P. Paluch, *Wychowanie fizyczne i sport w Rosji na Ukrainie i Białorusi*, „Kultura Fizyczna” 2005, No 1–2, pp. 25–29.

¹⁶ W. Pańczyk, *Aktywność fizyczna w społeczeństwie konsumpcji a wychowanie fizyczne*, „Kultura Fizyczna” 2002, No 5–6, pp. 1–4.

¹⁷ *Informacja o wynikach kontroli, Wychowanie fizyczne i sport w szkołach publicznych i niepublicznych*, Warszawa 2013, p. 12.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 9.

¹⁹ *Informacja o wynikach kontroli. Wychowanie fizyczne i sport w szkołach publicznych*, NIK Warszawa 2010, pp. 9–10.

²⁰ H. Grabowski, *O wychowaniu fizycznym poważnie*, „Kultura Fizyczna” 2003, No 11–12, pp. 1–4.

²¹ *Informacja o wynikach kontroli, Wychowanie fizyczne i sport w szkołach publicznych i niepublicznych*.

dents). Other sports (e.g.; tennis, winter sports, aerobics, fitness, Nordic walking) and activity games were hardly ever offered. Teachers employed in schools in both rural and urban areas in Przemyśl County carried out similar content to the curriculum. In most classes team sports, gymnastics, games and activities, athletics and field athletics are implemented. It can be assumed that conducting such a syllabus content is associated with the facilities/base and the conditions in the schools.

Most teachers from Przemyśl County believe that physical education in the lowest classes should be conducted by a professional teacher. Such a teacher is only employed in classes I-III in very few schools in Przemyśl County. This problem was noticed at the end of the nineties by Jaworski, who said that in classes I-III there are no separate physical education lessons and the programme was carried out within the framework of integrated education by the form teacher²².

Conclusions

The conducted research and analysis led to some meaningful conclusions:

- 1) Better conditions for the implementation of obligatory physical education lessons are found in the majority of urban schools.
- 2) In both the rural and urban schools in Przemyśl County most teachers implemented team sports, gymnastics, athletics, games and activities.
- 3) According to physical education teachers, the most common reasons that prevent them from implementing a programme of physical education in schools in Przemyśl County include: combining classes (identified by approximately 60% of teachers), lack of equipment (about 56%) and the lack of a base/facilities (about 50%).
- 4) According to teachers working in rural and urban schools, PE lessons should be conducted by professional teachers.

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Wychowanie fizyczne na różnych poziomach edukacji szkolnej na terenie powiatu przemyskiego

Streszczenie

Celem badań była ocena stanu wychowania fizycznego na różnych poziomach edukacji szkolnej na terenach wiejskich i miejskich powiatu przemyskiego. Badaniami (kwestionariusz ankiety) objęto nauczycieli wychowania fizycznego pracujących w szkołach

podstawowych, gimnazjalnych i ponadgimnazjalnych. Przeprowadzona analiza wykazała, iż lepsze warunki do realizacji obowiązkowych zajęć wychowania fizycznego posiada większość szkół znajdujących się w mieście. Dodatkowo można stwierdzić, że większość nauczycieli narzeka na warunki panujące w szkołach. Według nauczycieli wychowania fizycznego łączenie klas, brak sprzętu i brak odpowiedniej bazy to najczęstsze przyczyny uniemożliwiające realizację programu

Słowa kluczowe: powiat przemyski, szkoły podstawowe, gimnazjalne, ponadgimnazjalne, ocena lekcji, nauczyciele wychowania fizycznego.