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IMPACT OF SPORTS ACTIVITIES ON THE SOCIAL SKILLS WITH PUPILS FROM THE
SECONDARY SCHOOL

УТИЦАЈ СПОРТСКИХ АКТИВНОСТИ НА ДРУШТВЕНУ СПОСОБНОСТ УЧЕНИКА
СРЕДЊЕ ШКОЛЕ

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Abstract: *The aim of the present study is to establish the impact of sports activities on forming social skills with adolescents. The object of the research is 81 students from schools in Sofia – Bulgaria, from the fifth to the seventh grade. The results show that sports activities stimulate the development of collaboration skill.*

Keywords: *Sports Activity, Social Skills, Pupils*

Сажетак: *Циљ ове студије је да се утврди утицај спортских активности на формирање друштвене способности адолесцената. Предмет истраживања је 81 ученик од петог до седмог разреда, из школа у Софији - Бугарска. Резултати показују да спортске активности стимулишу развој способности за сарадњу.*

Кључне речи: *Спортска активност, друштвене способности, ученици*

1. INTRODUCTION¹

The functioning of every person in the society requires constant interactions with other people, social groups, and public institutions. The way these interactions are made depends on one’s social competence and social skills. Social competence reflects the quantity and quality of one’s knowledge and convictions about the essence of social interactions and one’s self-presenting in them. Social skills are the practical aspect, the practical manifestation of social competence.

There is no unanimous definition of the term social skills, but there is consent about their different characteristics. These are the skills, through which the interpersonal interactions and communication are facilitated and which are built on the base of certain social rules and relations. Susan Spence points out the social skills include the numerous verbal and non-verbal reactions, influencing both the perception and the other people’s reply during the social interaction. According to the requirements of the different situations, people can regulate the quantity and quality of their non-verbal replies through visual contact, facial expression, posture, distance, and gestures. Likewise, some verbal means can be used, such as tone and pitch of the voice, frequency and clarity of speech, which could significantly influence the impression on others and their reactions. The author calls these peculiarities skills on micro level, which can be

integrated on macro level in favorable strategy for completing certain social task [1].

Spence and Donovan view social competence and skills as ability, through which one achieves **successful results in the interactions with the others** [2]. Other authors define social competence as **organization construct**, which reflects the child’s ability to **integrate** in his behavior cognitive and emotional skills, so as to be flexible in his **adaptation** to different social conditions and requirements [3].

Children and adolescents face the necessity to cope with various challenging social situations every day. The successful management of the conduct and the interactions with the others in the social environment is connected with possessing a certain repertoire of social skills. **The deficit of social skills** could lie in the base of many emotional and behavior problems during childhood and adolescence. The social skills such as cooperation with the peers, sharing and receiving approval, provide the adolescent with the opportunity to interact effectively and to avoid socially unacceptable answers [4].

According to Slavin [5] the most widely spread approaches for development of social skills are supporting the appropriate social behavior, modeling, and tutorship, applied by the adults as regards a group of children, as this would help the mutual interaction and comparison among them.

¹ Paper was presented at the Conference "Sport, Health, Environment", October 31, 2015 in Belgrade.

The development and building of social skills with adolescents is made entirely through the influence of the factors of the social environment – family, school, and culture. This influence has its specificity regarding the dynamics, applied methods and approaches, and contents [6].

Sports activities, performed by children and adolescents play a significant role on their **development as personalities** and stimulate the development of their **social skills**. Elizabeth Jackson, a researcher from the University of Michigan, points out that the involvement of adolescents in team sports and physical exercises leads to benefits far beyond the mere physical fitness. Children and adolescents develop early their leadership skills, empathy to others, and better expressed aptitude to take care of their health throughout their whole life [7].

N. Holt emphasizes on the fact that the positive results from sports activities with adolescents as regards their social skills are not regularity, but can be defined as “provisional”. The mastering of social skills is achieved through education, including certain techniques and interactions of children and adolescents with “key social agents” – peers, parents, and coaches during the sports activities. It is of utmost importance that coaches orientate the children and adolescents toward achieving team goals and suggest the idea of commitment and of the significance of each player during their fulfillment. They should place priority on the personal development of the athletes, and not on the aspiration for sports victories. The modern coaches should pay attention to learning and implementing new strategies for stimulating certain social and life skills with adolescents [8,9].

The social skills, which the adolescents master during their sports activities, such as team orientation, leadership skills, organization skills, communication, empathy, maintenance of strong friendly relationships, improvement of the control over their emotions, pro-social behavior, are kind of “personal capital” they could use throughout their entire life and apply it in different situations.

2. METODOLOGY

The aim of the present study is to determine the peculiarities of the influence of sports activities on pupils’ social skills. The main task of the research is to make a comparative analysis of the quantitative and qualitative parameters between the social skills of pupils, involved in sports activities along the guidance of a coach, and the rest of the pupils not involved in such activities.

Participants:

The research was done among 81 pupils from two schools in the city of Sofia – Bulgaria. Of them 37 (45,7%) are girls and 44 (54,3%) are boys. Their distribution along grades is the following: 21% from the fifth grade; 29.6%

from the sixth grade, and 49.4% from the seventh grade. The average age of the researched individuals is 12.6 years (Min = 11; Max = 15; SD = 0, 98).

Research methods:

Inquiry. The questions are grouped in two sections – demographic block and motor activity. Information about the gender, age, grade of the researched pupils was collected, as well as about the different kinds of motor and sports activity, characteristic for them, and the duration of their involvement in the sports activity.

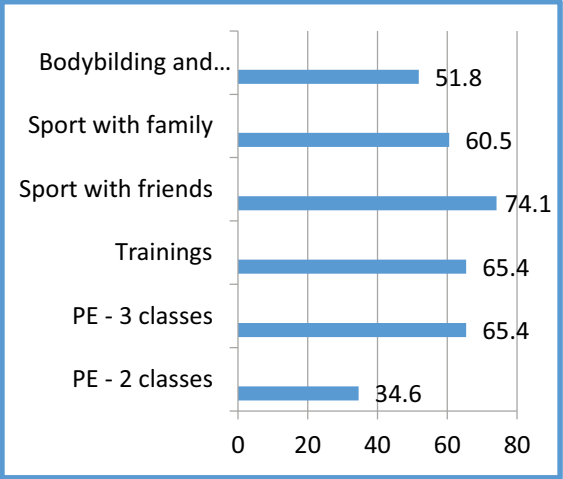
The test was developed especially for this research on the base of the theoretical premises and the model, applied in the creation of the methods– SSRS (child version) – Social Skills Rating System [9]. It comprises 21 items, grouped along 4 factors – Empathy, Self-control, Cooperation, and Assertiveness. The replies of the researched individuals are marked along a three-degree Likert-type scale: 1 – never; 2 – sometimes; 3 – often.

- The scale “Empathy” describes behavior aimed at understanding the others’ problems and showing commitment. It consists of 6 items, such as “i try to understand my friends when they are angry, upset, or sad.”; “I listen carefully to my friends when they talk about the problems they have”. The coefficient of internal consistency is $\alpha = 0,76$ (coefficient of Cronbach);
- The factor “Self-control” unites statements, which are connected with pupils’ behavior in conflict or irritating situations, or reaching a compromise. There are also statements, connected with behavior reflecting obedience for the requirements on behalf of the others. Examples: “I ask adults for help when the other children hit me or push me”; “I maintain my desk in order.” The scale consists of 5 items. The internal consistency is $\alpha = 0,7$;
- The scale “Cooperation” unites 4 items, connected with readiness for help and common actions. For example: “I am actively involved in school activities such as sports and clubs”; “I invite my classmates to join in certain activity or game”. The coefficient of internal consistency of the items is $\alpha = 0,52$;
- The scale “Assertiveness” is related to statements, which are a direct expression of feelings and convictions, defending one’s rights while respecting the others. Assertiveness is a very important quality as regards social interactions. The scale consists of 6 items such as the following: “During discussions in class I speak in a calm voice”; “My friends know I like them, because I tell them so or show it to them”. The Cronbach index for this scale is $\alpha = 0,58$.

The statistical processing is made through variation, comparative, and factor analyses.

3. RESULTS

The first stream of the analysis is connected with establishing the types of motor activity with the pupils. The data show that the P.E. classes are the most popular among the pupils (Picture 1).

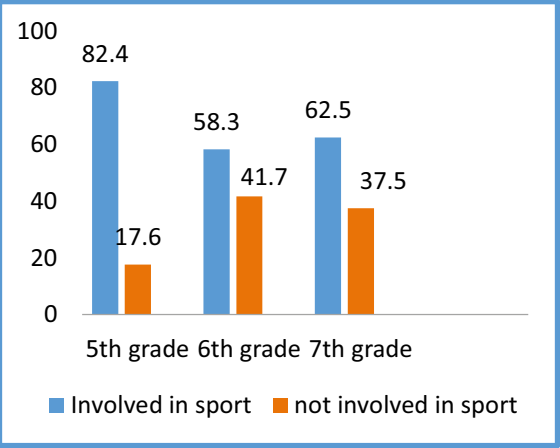


Picture 1: Relative share of the pupils involved in different types of motor activity

Almost 2/3 have pointed out they have three classes a week, and the rest – two classes a week. Regardless of the fact that the attendance is obligatory, this is a type of motor activity which provides rhythmical activities under the guidance of a sports pedagogue.

On the second place, according to the number of participants, is sport with friends during the pupils’ free time. The average duration of these activities is 6 hours per week. The popularity of this type is determined by the individual possibilities and wishes of the participants as regards the time and the ways of its using. The existence of good sports facilities in the city is a condition, which could add to the spreading and establishing of this type of motor activity among young people, and respectively to preserving their health and proper physical development. Over a half of the researched individuals say they practice sports together with their families, mostly at weekends, and especially during holidays. Every second pupil takes part in bodybuilding, aerobics, dancing classes, and others, and their average duration is M=2,57 hours per week.

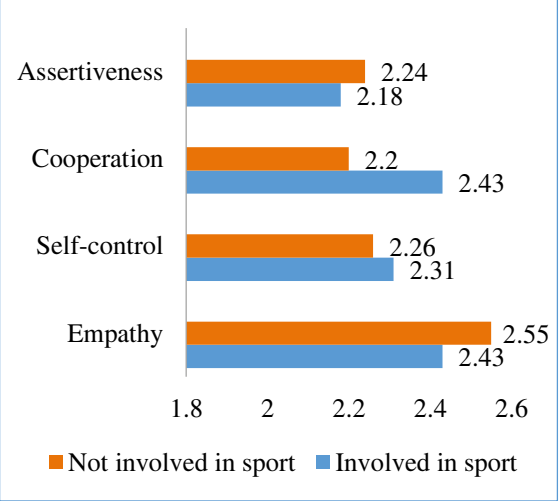
In order to achieve the aim of the study, special attention should be paid to the results, connected with the pupils’ involvement in different kinds of sport, under the guidance of a coach. Of all researched individuals, 56.4% have stated they practice some kind of sport, and the relative share of the girls, involved in sports, is 70.3%, and of the boys – 61.4%. The sports, preferred by the girls are swimming and volleyball, and by the boys – football and karate. The average duration of the training sessions is 4 hours per week. We are impressed by the fact that with age, the relative share of those involved in sport decreases (Picture 2).



Picture 2: Distribution of those involved in sports and those who are not, according to their grades

The possible reasons could lie in the greater number of school assignments or in the personality changes, appearing during the teen age. This result could be due to random factors, because of the small number of researched individuals.

Later on in the research, a comparative analysis of the level of social skills between those involved in sport and those who are not was made. We determined higher values of the self-control skills and cooperation with the pupils involved in sport (Picture 3).



Picture 3: Mean values of the social skills with those involved in sport and those who are not

The difference is statistically reliable only as regards the cooperation skill – $u = 2,39$; $\alpha = 0,01$ (Mann – Whitney). Having in mind that the sports-competitive activity is connected with achieving common goals, and that the success in a sports competition depends to a great extent on the competitors’ skills to perform mutual actions, this result is completely logical. In addition, most of the researched individuals practice team sports, where the achievement of each player results from his ability to act together with his teammates, and to have mutual strategies.

4. CONCLUSION

The involvement in systematic sports activities during the teen age is undoubtedly one of the most significant factors for the development of the physical qualities, for health prevention, for the self-confidence and wellbeing of young people. The experimental results from a number of studies undoubtedly prove the favorable influence of sports activities on the development of one’s personal growth. In the present study the results show that sports activities are also a factor for the social development of a person. They stimulate the development of the cooperation skill, which is a premise for successful interactions in different spheres of social life. Readiness for cooperation, for involvement in common acts and for realization of team goals is of great importance for the prosperity of modern people in the sphere of both their personal and their business relations.

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ДИСКРИМИНАЦИЈА ЖЕНА У СПОРТУ

DISCRIMINATION OF WOMEN IN SPORTS

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Сажетак: У тексту се наводе аргументи за тврдњу да је спорт област у којој недвосмислено постоји врло јасна и чак изражена, отворена дискриминација жена. Спорт је делатност која је увек у успону и која се карактерише сталним унапређивањем активности, организације, логистике, лидерства, система тренинга, пратећом медицином. Присутност толерисане дискриминације у, и ван спорта, уопште не спречава доток новца у ту грану, али успешно ограничава привилегије на све ужу спортску елиту, готово по правилу, ексклузивно мушког састава. Формула онемогућавања жена у спорту је „што више моћи - то више политике“ и узвратно, „што више политике - то више моћи и више новца“, а последично - мање жена. То су те баријере моћи које жене тек морају да пробију. Ауторка још уочава као могуће правце развоје такмичења са мешовитим спортским екипама, иначе већ увелико присутне у колеџским спортским такмичењима Северне Америке.

Кључне речи: Жене, спорт, дискриминација, историја спорта, мешовите женско мушке екипе

Abstract: This article presents arguments for the authors’s claim that sport is an area where clearly exists open discrimination against women. Sport is an activity which is still rising, which is characterized by constant improvement of operations, organization, logistics, leadership, training system, supporting medicine. Tolerated discrimination in and outside the sport, does not at all prevent the flow of money in this branch, but effectively restrict the privileges to the elite of sports, which a thinner, exclusively male composition. Formula of disabling women in sport is "more power - the more politics" and in return, "the more politics - more power and more money," and consequently - fewer women. Those are the barriers that women have yet to break through. The author still sees as a possible development directions the competitions with mixed sports teams, already present in university sporting events in North America.

Keywords: Women, Sports, Discrimination, History of Sports, Mixed Female Male Teams

1. УВОД¹

Жене још увек често доживљавају дискриминацију када се ради о њиховим могућностима бављења спортом, како аматерским тако и професионалним. Ова дискриминација се манифестује даљим преовладавањем стереотипа, недостатком резервних структура и структура подршке за спортисткиње и девојчице које показују потенцијал у спорту, потешкоћама усклађивања посла/спорта и породичног живота, проблемом реинтеграције на послу, неадекватном медијском покривеношћу женских спортова и ограниченом природом приватног финансирања. Недостатак жена међу судијама у спорту представља посебну препреку за постизање равноправности жена и мушкараца у спортским активностима. Без обзира на напоре које чини Међународни олимпијски комитет (ИОС), учешће жена у судским телима је и даље маргинално у већини земаља чланица Савета Европе. То јасно представља дискриминацију жена и девојчица и противно је

принципима Савета Европе. Заправо, Повеља о европским спортовима, коју је усвојио Савет Европе 1992. и која се ревидирала 2001. године, гарантује промоцију бављења спортом за све делове становништва (члан 6.) и изричито наводи забрану дискриминације (члан 4.). У свом првом члану дефинише одређене принципе, међу којима је и „омогућити сваком појединцу-ки да учествује у спорту" и „штитити и развијати моралне и етичке основе спорта, те људско достојанство и сигурност особа које се баве спортом"[1].

Спорт је област у којој недвосмислено постоји врло јасна и чак изражена, отворена дискриминација жена, још увек нимало дотакнута друштвеним напорима и успесима у смањивању дискриминације жена као у неким другим областима, нпр. на тржишту рада и политици. Познато је да се успешна спортисткиња (па и спортисткиња уопште) постаје у породичној мануфактури и да је далеко време када ће у Србији феномен супруга тренера, оца или брата тренера заменити оне које би биле најадекватније, а то су

¹ Овај текст је настао као део пројекта: Друштвене трансформације у процесу европских интеграција – мултидисциплинарни приступ, на коме је ауторка ангажована, а који је финансиран од стране

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