

FORMS OF SPENDING FREE TIME BY ELDERLY IN CITY OF RZESZÓW

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- free time,
- elderly

Abstract:

The basis to take up presented subject was the interest by the authors in free time and its forms between the elderly. At the turn of the years we could see the mayor growth in the physical activity of people of third age. More often we can see the organizations and groups that provide active recreation to the elderly.

By the carried researches and analysis we can see through the forms of spending free time, how much of physical activity there is in everyday life and if the subjects of the research are villing to spend their time on active recreation.

INTRODUCTION

Since many years there is a stereotype of the old person that persists, which says, that retiring age is a disaster. Older person is thught of as the impotent, sick, under the 24/7 care being, as the unit isolated from the family and the social life [15].

Maintenance of the well health and the good quality of the elderly lifes is one of the biggest problems of the industralized countries [9].

Eldery, having loads of free time as far as possible, can not only be active in the sphere of realizing themselves but also help other people. They can contribute to different organizations, foundations and collaborations, helping groups. Also, they can take up new roles in families [14].

In late adulthood there are many significant changes in the functioning of physical, mental and cognitive units. Effective adaptation to these changes allows satisfying life despite ongoing process of aging and the inevitable experience of loss (health, fitness and physical attractiveness, prestige, friends, life partner, etc.). The source of resources to increase the chances of positive adaptation to aging and to maintain a high quality of life is physical fitness and intellectual and a network of social contacts and family [7, 13].

S. Hoffman [6] believes that thanks to the benefits obtained from preventive health, as well as through the development of gerontology today know that people over the age of 65 years have a huge potential for learning new skills, setting new perspectives and engaging in physical activity .

Taking an active holiday, although it is in itself attractive and beneficial to health and fitness, also requires an awareness of senior risk of injuries during exercise [18].

Review of many studies in recent years shows that the problems of active recreation (physical) and increased interest in active recreation among different social groups is a significant component of the leading social issues [1, 16].

The study can be concluded that the elderly are increasingly actively spend their free time. They are happy to take part in organized trips, courses, meetings, go out with friends enjoying every moment of their life. Often, they stress that it is for them a second life, a

second youth. Finally, they have time to fulfill their dreams, advancing interests, addressing themselves.

OBJECTIVE OF THE WORK

The aim of the study was to examine leisure activities by older people in the city of Rzeszów. The survey was conducted among people of the third age in order to know how their leisure time, physical activity and physical looks like.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

In this paper, the method was a diagnostic survey with the usage of questionnaire. Prepared questionnaire consisted of 10 questions. Survey data was collected in the interview directly. The results were analyzed and presented in graphical and descriptive way.

Tests were carried out in the form of a questionnaire for people over 60 years old actively belonging to the Senior Club PTTK and the University of the Third Age

in Rzeszow in late May and early June. The survey was anonymous and consisted of 10 questions. Respondents willingly answered to the questions. Number of respondents was 40 people, 20 of each organization. In PTTK the respondents were 12 women and 8 men, while in the Third Age were 14 women and 6 men.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

First chart is a summary of the age of the respondents. Predominant age group in both groups are those aged 60-70 years. The selection was random and not intended. Most seniors belonged to this age group, because these people often spend their time outside the home.

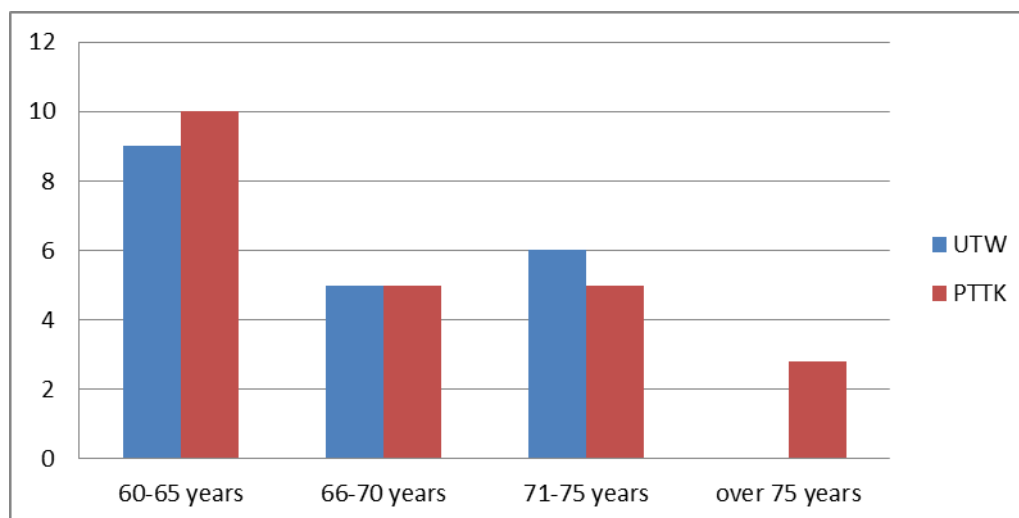


Chart 1. Age
Source: Own researches.

Persons aged 70 and 75 years old were in the minority, because the respondents answered like that. This group also often uses their free time to follow their own interests, and much less now due to health. We can not look at it overall, because a large group of elderly people is still very physically fit, practicing all kinds of sports and cares about its fulfillment, but looking at these studies, it is still a minority.

The next question (2nd chart) in the survey was education, which is one of the main factors, affecting the choice of forms of activity. People with higher education are people with higher incomes than people with primary education. Similar research studies show the message of CBOS [2], which shows that people (n = 266) are more likely to engage in social

work, hobbies, use the computer and internet, travel, further their education and practice physical activity.

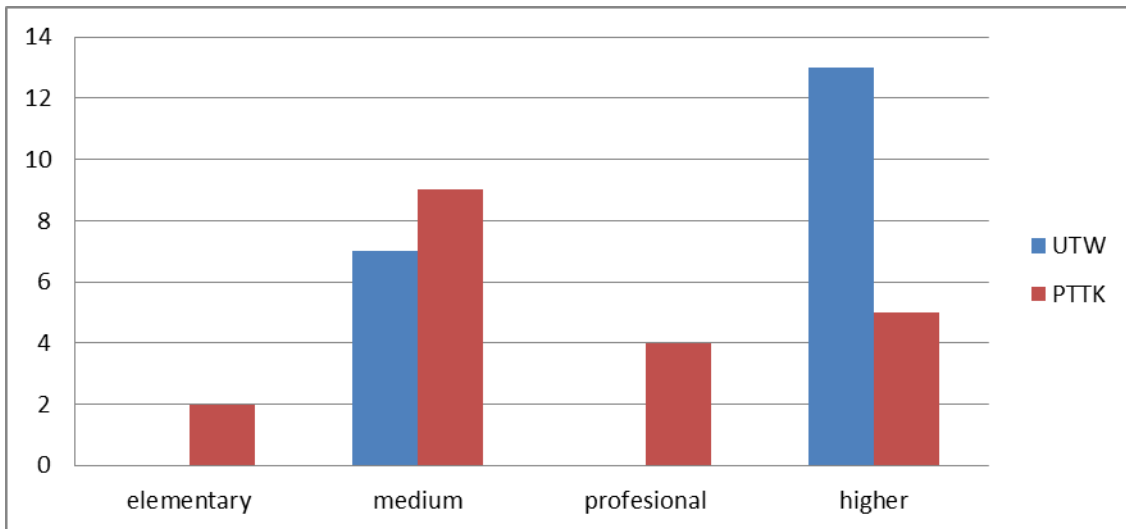


Chart 2. Education
Source: Own researches.

The majority of people with higher education is in Senior Club of the University of the Third Age. That is caused by the fact that those are people coming from wealthy families., and because of it they had an opportunity to educate themselves. In PTTK the majority of respondents answered that they have secondary education. Public matter of the organization has an impact on it.

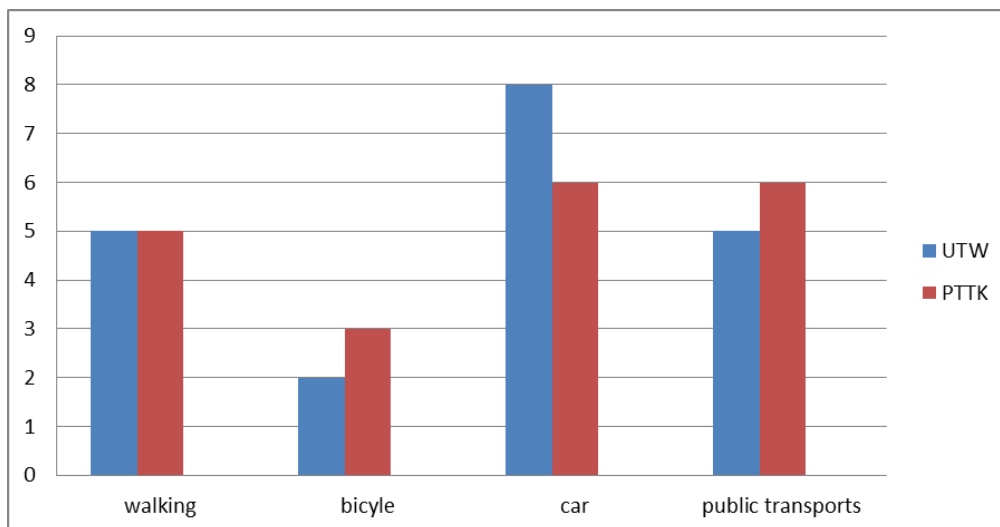


Chart 3. Mean of transport
Source: Own researches.

Next question (3rd chart) applies to means od transport. The better part of respondents chose car as their mean of transport. It says, that this is the most common and comfortable way of travelling in the age of XXI century. It ensures safe and fast reaching the destination. Probably the people, who choose that kind of transport, are those, who have higher education or secondary one and they can afford it. Public transport also enjoys a big popularity among respondents. It is popular way of travelling between seniors due to its low costs of travelling and it does not involve high psychical activity. When it comes to moving by bike or walking,

most of the respondents answered, that they prefer walking. It is caused by they state of health, because sick people or the ones with no physical condition, resign from moving by bicycle.

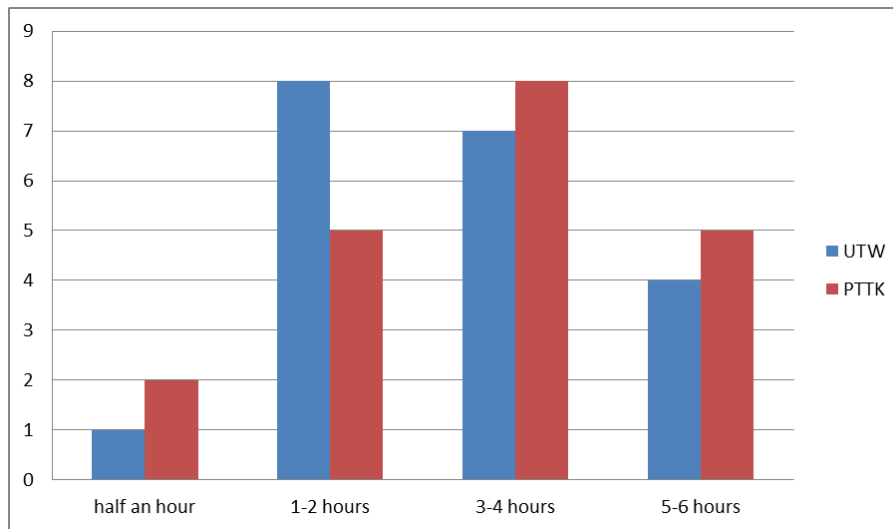


Chart 4. Free time
Source: Own researches.

Each of us has free time, that we can use on realizing our own interests and on resting. As well the seniors are the group of people, that can enjoy free time during the day. Between the respondents (4th chart) most of them have from 3 up to 4 hours of free time during the day (around 40% in both groups) That is due to the fact, that those are the people in the retirement age, living in blocks of flats, not having major responsibilities. A large part has at least 1-2 hours of free time, and only three respondents answered, that they have only half an hour during the day of the time just for themselves.

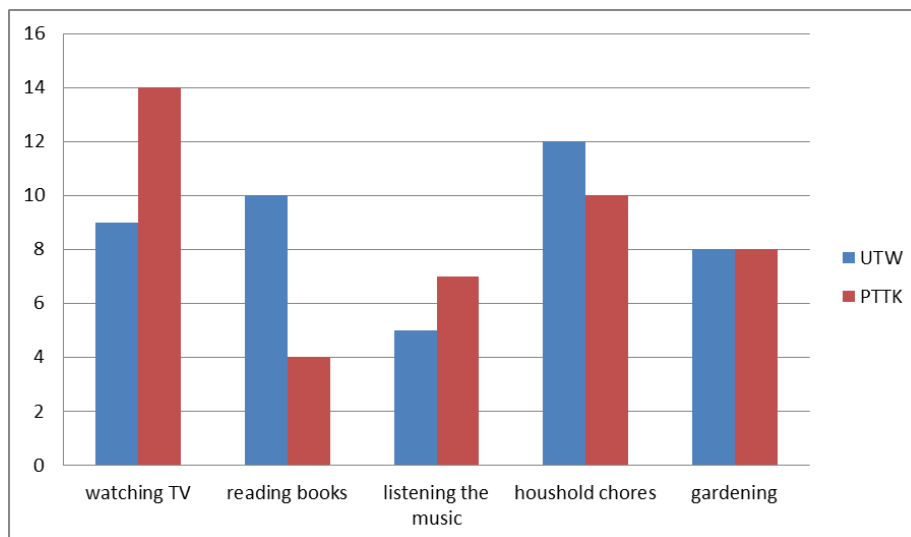


Chart 5. Forms of spending free time
Source: Own researches.

In the question „forms of spending free time” (5th chart) the respondents could choose more then one answer. Free time is used in very varied ways. Watching tv is the most popular form of spending it between the members of PTTK Senior Club, it does not involve major physical activity and is generally available. The wide range of tv channels and its varied

topics, enjoys a big interest between seniors. It is often caused by the state of health that does not allow the other ways of spending that time. Members of the University of the Third Age pointed domestic activity meant as cleaning, cooking, looking after grandchildren, as the most common way of spending free time. Only people from the University of Third Age chose „gardening”.

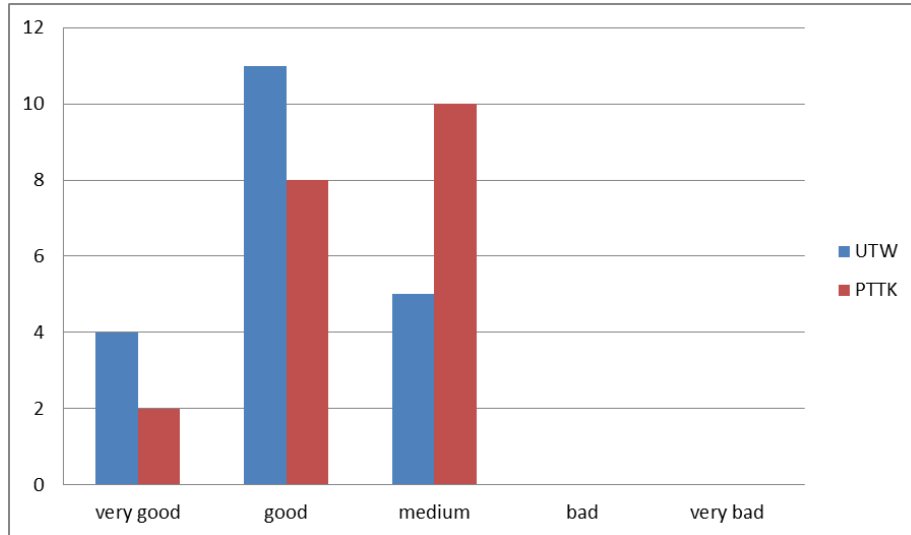


Chart 6. Economical state
Source: Own researches.

Another question (6th chart) applies to the assessment of the economical state of the respondents. Most of them is already retired, few of them are still working or occasionally earning. In that question, the respondents from the University of Third Age, evaluate their economical state as good, on the other side, members of PTTK as average. It is due to the fact that seniors from University of Third Age have higher education and what comes from it better financial situation. Between the respondents, also happened answers pointing even a very good economical state, there were no answers describing the situation as bad or very bad.

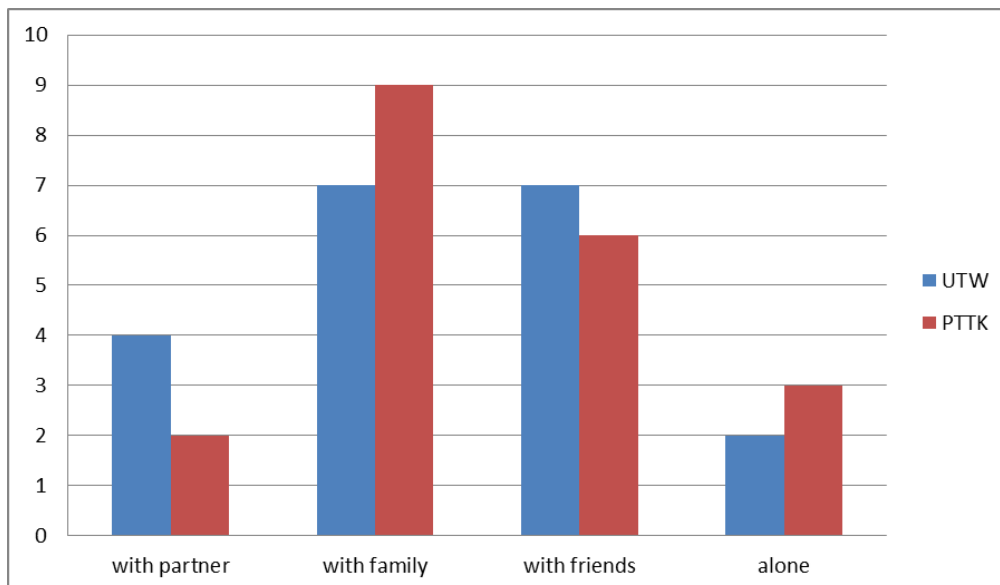


Chart 7. With whom I spend free time
Source: Own researches.

Friends have a really big part in every persons life, they make us feel loved, needed and we have an opportunity to share our interests with others. Thanks to the other person we do not feel lonely. Free time spend with family, life partners or friends, enjoys the big popularity. Seniors answered (7th chart), that they prefer to share their free time with closest family, life partner or friends. It is caused by the fact that a human being needs to herd with other people, they need to share their adventures, together time flows faster and happier.

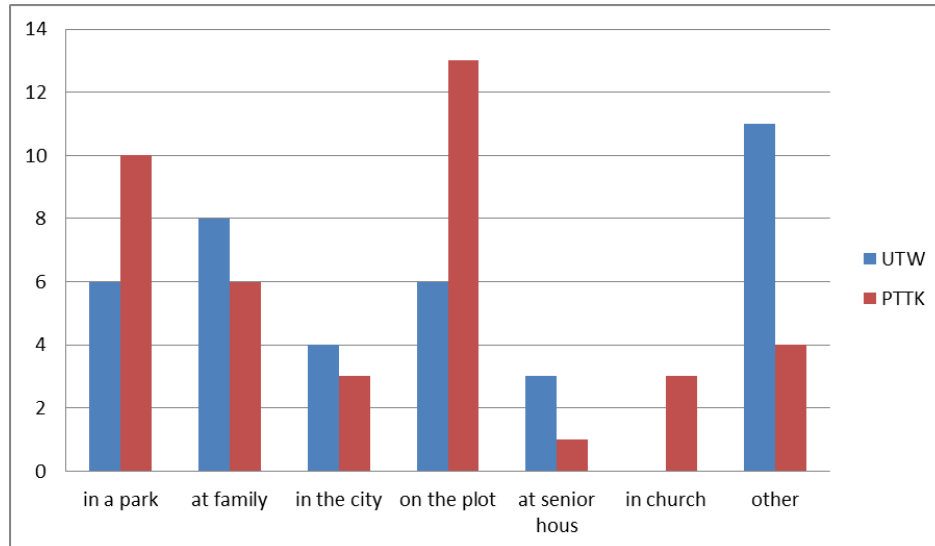
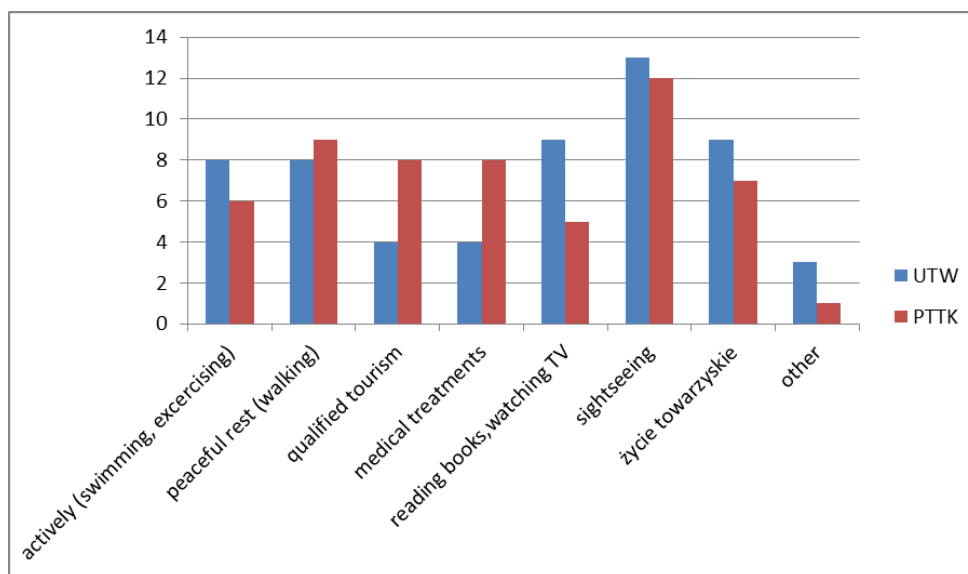


Chart 8. Where I spend free time
Source: Own researches.

Chart number 8 shows the answers applied to the question where the seniors spend their free time. PTTK Senior Club as the first answer chose their plot due to the fact most of them live in the city. They want to rest from the city traffic and noises from the streets, so they go to their plots. Between members of the University of Third Age, most common way was spending their free time with family. There were also answers such as: courses from the University, swimming pool, travelling, chalets, sports, bridge, bicycle trips, and from PTTK: trips, walks, swimming pool and bicycle rides.



Wykres 9. Free time during turistic-recreational trips
Source: Own researches.

Each of us have time to rest and relax, as well the right to use it on different kinds of entertainment. Seniors from both, the University and PTTK with majority of answers, pointed that the most common form of spending free time is sightseeing(9th chart). It is connected with many trips and travels which the Club they are members of, organizes.

Big part of people also chose, peaceful resting, walking, lying on the beach and social life. It is for sure due to the needs they meet during that time. Ones rest with their friends and share conversations, the others prefer lying on the beach and reading books. The balance was maintained between qualified tourism and medical treatments. It is connected with the fact, that those are the „disciplines” that usually need bigger financial input, but in reference to the question about economical state of respondent, we are aware of the fact that most of them is leading a life at a satisfactory level. When it comes to qualified tourism it is indicated that one needs adequate health and adequate preparation for practising certain field. People who are members of previously mentioned clubs, profit from the courses which are offered to them by the club and thanks to that they can enjoy life. Basically every activity done by seniors depends on what they can do in certain moment.

More often it is proposed to the elderly to continue the education at the University of Third Age. Besides the permanent education, the University give an opportunity for environmental integration, educate in ones own field of interest and self intelectual and physical input [8].

To compare, according to the researches made by CBOS, main forms of activity took up by seniors are: watching TV, going to church, meeting with friends at homes and listening to radio and music. The group is formed by the oldest pensioners, the ones who are the worst educated, in the most vulnerable material situation and who badly evaluate their state of health. The average member of that group is 74 years old. It should be emphasized that a large part of people belonging to it, declares to have a lot of free time with which they do not know what to do. The barrier to taking up any activity by them, is as it seems poor state of health and difficult financial situation- big part of these forms is connected with some expenses [2].

From the Dobrzyń, Kołodziej and Starosolska [3] researches, it is shown that people spend their free time doing things listed below - watching TV – 77% respondents, reading books and magazines – 68%, shopping- 62%, meeting with friends – 51%, also 50% spend time on cooking, 49% on walking, 26% helps family (in cooking -4%, in cleaning-5%, taking care of grandchildren-8%, in household chores-6%, taking care of disabled sister-1%).

Similar results we can see in researches of Guldynowicz and Koperwas [5] where the most common form of spending free time was listening to radio and watching TV, because the mass media was not only informational function but also it has an entertainment. Reading books and press is also very popular.

Besides the fact that it is a general knowledge that physical activity has a positive impact on state of health and quality of life, from the researches on the participation of Poles in movement recreation and sports, conducted by GUS in 2008, we know that 3/4 (79,3%) of the population after 60 years of age is physically inactive [4].

In many works, it is emphasized that elderly, who have inactive lifestyle, declare to have a bad or average state of life, and even there is a higher risk of showing the symptoms of depression [12,17].

CONCLUSIONS

In the light of presented results and researches made by Łukomska and Wachowska [11], old age ceases to be a period of helplessness and passivity, and it becomes time of activity and satisfaction from fulfilling their dreams and desires.

In conclusion, free time in every age is important and has an impact on psychical and physical health. It is mainly used as a renewal of the vital forces after previously done chores. It has a big impact on the aging process (much slower) and improves the state of health. Taking up any kind of activity by seniors, gives them loads of happiness, health and makes them feel young and beautiful.

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