

PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER AS AN ORGANIZER OF SCHOOL TOURISM FOR CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS

Elżbieta STACH

*Institute of Geography and Spatial Management, Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland
elzbieta.stach@uj.edu.pl*

Keywords:

- organization of excursions,
- recreation,
- school tourism,
- physical education.

Abstract:

School tourism, playing teaching, educational, aesthetic and recreational role, is an important tool supporting normal development of students. The organization of all its forms, starting from the first stage of teaching, allows to prepare young people for taking responsible advantage of them. Raising interest in tourism among students, recreation and sightseeing are not only the basic functions of the school, but they also depend on the personality of a teacher. From the point of view of the core curriculum and learning objectives, and in relation to particular subjects, it seems that one of the most important roles in shaping the characteristics of school tourist traffic is played by physical education teachers. Performing the role of a school tourism animator, they should have the necessary characteristics and demonstrate the interest and willingness to participate with children and teenagers in excursions and devoting often for this purpose their free time. Therefore, it seems particularly important to describe the profile of a physical education teacher, his attitude towards the organization of school tourism and the role that he plays in the tourist activity of children and teenagers.

INTRODUCTION

Physical education, constituting part of physical culture, supports the normal development of children and young people, and as one of the compulsory subjects, it plays a significant role in schools. It is often emphasized that the young generation, living in the era of globalization, dynamic development of civilization and consumerism, needs a mentor who will provide students with the information about the value of healthy lifestyles [3]. To a large extent, they manifest themselves in physical recreation, which affects the renewal and regeneration of physical and mental health through various forms of physical activity. It also aims at mental relaxation that removes signs of fatigue and promotes creativity and improves the efficiency of actions [2,8]. In this context it is worth noting that various forms of physical recreation can also be implemented through tourism, which has nearly always existed in education. Therefore, physical education strongly corresponds with the main objectives of school tourism, whose mission is to promote proper mental and physical development of students [9].

The Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 8 November 2001 on the conditions and ways of organizing sightseeing and tourism by public kindergartens, schools and institutions are listed and defined in the following forms [4]:

- subject trips – initiated and implemented by teachers to supplement the existing curriculum, within a given subject or related subjects;

- sightseeing and tourist trips, in which participation does not require from its participants special preparation and fitness;
- sightseeing and tourist events such as camps, competitions, tournaments;
- qualified tourism events and migratory camps, participation in which requires from its participants special preparation and specialized skills, including the operation of specialized equipment;
- away events – related to the implementation of the curriculum, such as: school camps, winter schools, green schools.

The requirements for the implementation of the physical education subject, as defined in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 27 August 2012 on the core curriculum of preschool education and general education in particular types of schools, show that every educational institution should have a range of activities tailored to the expectations and needs of its students [5]. This act shows that physical education, in addition to the development of physical fitness, should also apply to health education, the aim of which is to develop students' habits of a healthy lifestyle and the ability to create an environment favourable for health. These tasks should be performed from the first stage of teaching. The core curriculum requirements set for the second stage of teaching say that the purpose of education is students' participation in various forms of physical activity and recreational sports, focused on health, leisure and sport and leading healthy lifestyles.

These objectives should be pursued primarily in the course of teaching hours available for physical education classes. Their minimum number is specified in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 7 February 2012 on curriculum framework in state schools [6]. It says that at the first stage of education (in I-III primary school classes) teachers have at their disposal 290 hours of teaching, while at the second stage (in V-VI primary school classes) and at the third stage (middle school classes) they have 385 hours each.

In accordance with the ordinance of the Ministry of National Education of 9 August 2011 on acceptable forms of the implementation of mandatory physical education classes, teachers – from the second stage of education – can implement compulsory physical education classes both in the form of class-teaching activities, as well as alternative activities, among which there are mentioned sports, fitness and health, dancing classes and active tourism. Implementation of the alternative forms should provide for various levels of physical fitness of students, their expectations and local conditions [7].

The acquisition of physical fitness, as required by law and general social norms, constitutes only part of physical education. Physical fitness is also defined in the activities aimed at educating children to be active and to take part in recreation and tourism, it is the resultant of the interests of pupils and school activities. Therefore, a significant role is played here by a physical education teacher who has the right tools for the organization of various forms of alternative activities, including school tourism. He is a mentor, who should promote among students knowledge and pro-health attitudes, expressed in a healthy lifestyle, physical activity and the ability to use the resources of natural and cultural environment. The aim of this article is to present the profile of a physical education teacher as an organizer of school tourism, his impact on school tourist traffic, and especially to indicate the preferred forms of travelling and the tasks associated with the organization of trips.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

For the purpose of achieving the objectives of this work, in 2014 there was conducted a survey among teachers in selected primary schools (13 schools) and middle schools (14 schools) located in the city of Krakow. The survey, in addition to the specifications, included questions in the field of organizing tourism, with particular attention paid to questions concerning the barriers and factors affecting school tourist traffic or selection of travel

destinations. Upon receiving completed questionnaires (total 397), there were selected those ones which were completed by physical education teachers. In this way, to the next stage there were classified 44 questionnaires, which constitutes 11.08% of the total number of questionnaires. The answers given by the respondents were analyzed statistically. In this study, there was omitted the analysis of the answers to the introductory questions, that is the ones that were supposed to illustrate important theoretical content, but in terms of school tourism they were of little importance.

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

The research results were based on 44 questionnaires completed by 22 physical education teachers working in primary schools and 22 in middle schools. The survey covered 30 women and 14 men from different age groups: 15 respondents form the age range 31-40 years, the same as in the range of 41-50 years, the next 12 declared the age over 50 years, and only 2 were in their thirties. Most of the respondents were teachers with job seniority longer than ten years (Fig. 1). Staff with teaching and educational experience and acquainted with the problems associated with the operation of schools should have extensive knowledge in the field of organizing school trips. Furthermore, many years of work resulted in the possession of the highest promotion degree. As a result, certified teachers constituted the vast majority of the respondents (36 responses). The remaining teachers held the following titles: contract teachers (2), appointed teachers (4) and interns (2).

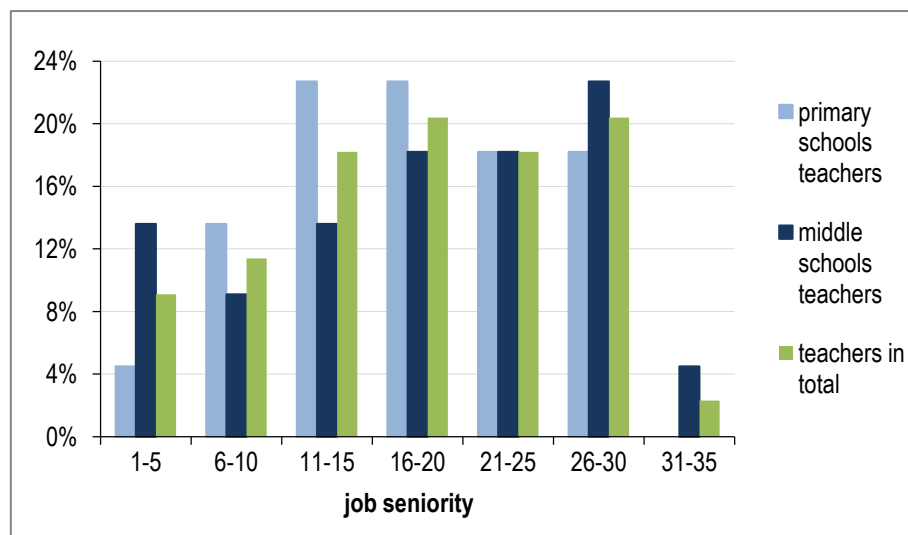


Fig. 1. Job seniority of a physical education teacher
Source: own study based on a survey

Analyzing next question on the number of organized excursions (or participation in them in the role of a counselor) it can be clearly noticed that primary school teachers seemed to be more active. In the school year 2012/13, they participated in 94 trips of all kinds, and in the school year 2013/14, they attended 109 excursions. The middle school teachers declared respectively 69 and 74 trips. Three middle school teachers did not participate in any trips. A slight increase can be observed in both types of schools over those two years. Although given the state of school tourist traffic it is satisfactory, due to a short period under study, it is difficult to determine its reason and durability. It is also worth noting that these results do not reflect the real level of school tourist traffic, due to the fact that in one trip several surveyed teachers could act as counselors.

Physical education teachers implemented various forms of school tourism (Fig. 2). They mostly prefer the organization of away events (often referred to as overnight events)

lasting more than one day, which included school camps, white schools, language schools and sports camps (32 out of 44 teachers, which constituted more than 72.7% out of the total number of teachers going on trips with students). The popularity of this form of travelling was due to its attractiveness – such trips were connected with the change of residence and discovering new places. The possibility of the implementation of the curriculum by teachers on school camps and sports camps was certainly another significant factor. Eight teachers answered in the survey that they also organized other forms of travelling than those listed in the Regulation of the Ministry of Education of 2001. Six of them mentioned trips associated with the participation in sports competitions that due to their travel destinations belong to trips of recreation and sports nature. The two other teachers mentioned trips of an integrative nature, whose main objective was to build positive relationships between students and to develop friendly relationships. Qualified tourism events turned out to be the least popular, which may be mainly due to the lack of appropriate qualifications and relevant skills by the respondents and eligibility to take care of students during such trips.

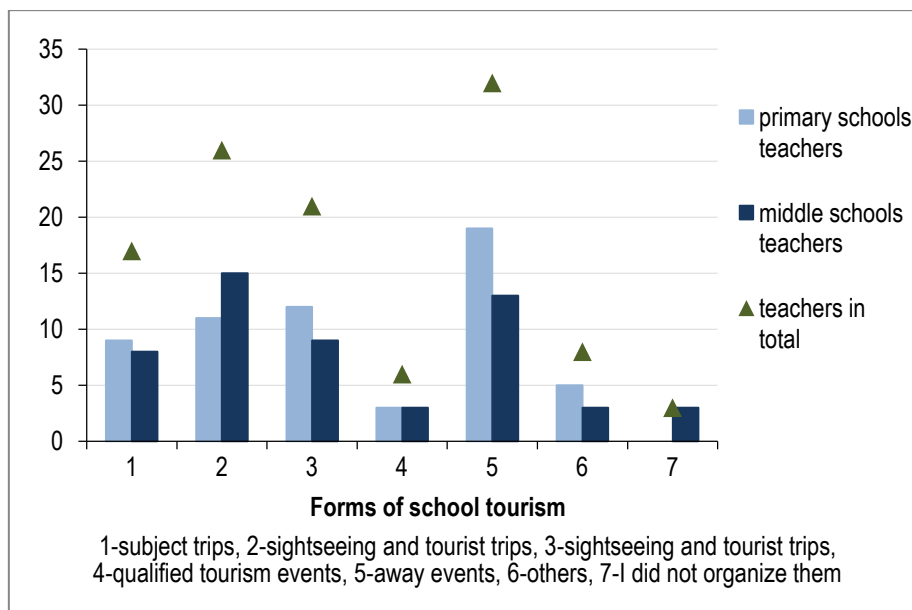


Fig. 2. Forms of school tourism most often organized by physical education teachers (according to the forms stated in MEN Regulation)
Source: own study based on a survey

It was confirmed by the responses to the question about holding tourist qualifications. Only 17 teachers declared having them (6 primary schools and 11 middle schools teachers), out of whom two respondents had more than one. The vast majority of the respondents mentioned holding the licence of the head of school trips (14 responses). Other responses included: the licence of a tour guide (2 answers), the head of holiday camps for children and teenagers, a camp counselor, a ski instructor and the instructor of physical recreation (1 answer each). There was no person holding the licence of a tourist guide (both urban and mountain). It is satisfactory, however, that the vast majority (68.1% of all respondents) declared participation in trainings (or workshops) concerning the organization of school trips.

Given the duration and objectives of trips, teachers most often organized one-day subject trips which contained elements referring to the core curriculum (Fig. 3). Such trips were organized by 29.2% of all travelling teachers. 26.8% of the respondents organized several-day trips, which were mainly stays on school camps, sports camps or white schools.

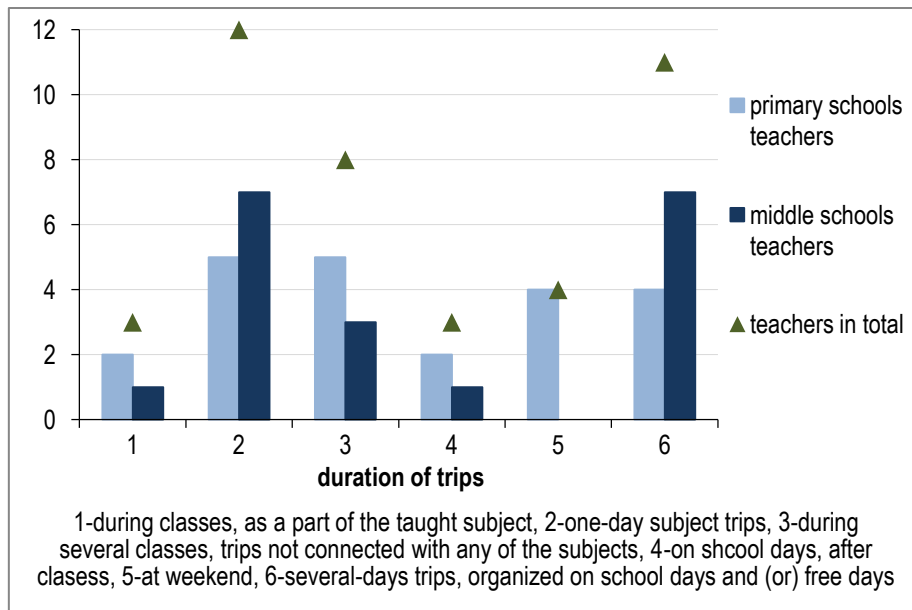


Fig. 3. Types of school trips most often organized by physical education teachers (according to their duration and objective)

Source: own study based on a survey

Further analysis of the responses showed that organized trips strongly corresponded to active tourism, which was indicated by more than 26.8% of teachers (Fig. 4). This allows to say that the main objectives of many trips were the needs associated with the increasing physical activity among students, caring for their health and well-being. It seems, therefore, that various elements of physical activity related to recreation and sport contained in the itineraries of these trips, reflect the profile of a physical education teacher.

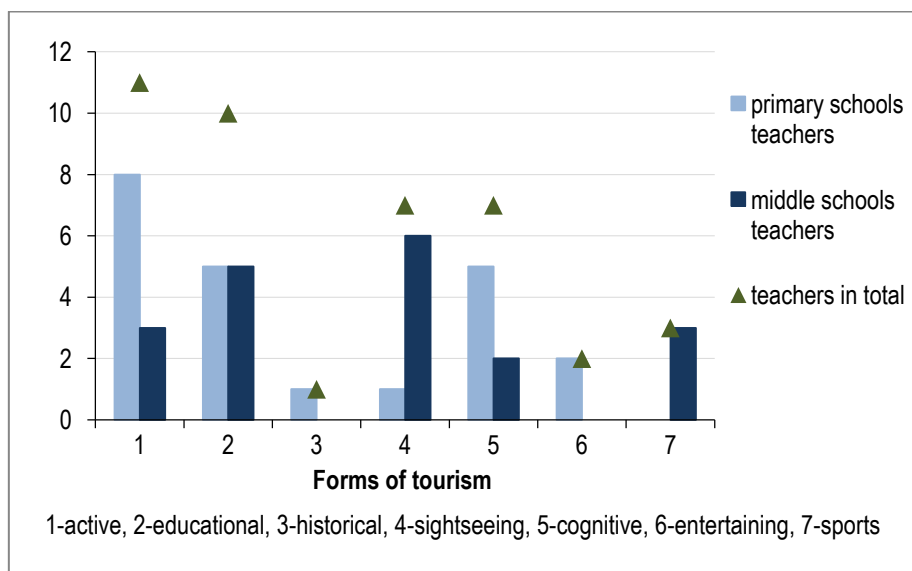


Fig. 4. Forms of tourism implemented during school trips

Source: own study based on a survey

The organization of each trip requires the right choice of the travel destination. Attractive natural and cultural environment of such places can significantly affect the increase of students' knowledge about the surrounding world. The respondents answered that tourist attractions (58.5% of responses), attractiveness of the itineraries (58.5% of responses), and low cost of the stay (53.6% of responses) were the most significant factors affecting the

choice of the travel destination (Fig. 5). However, among those factors which did not have much significance were: travel agencies` itineraries (46.3% of responses), the popularity of the place (31.7%) and the number of the participants (31.7%).

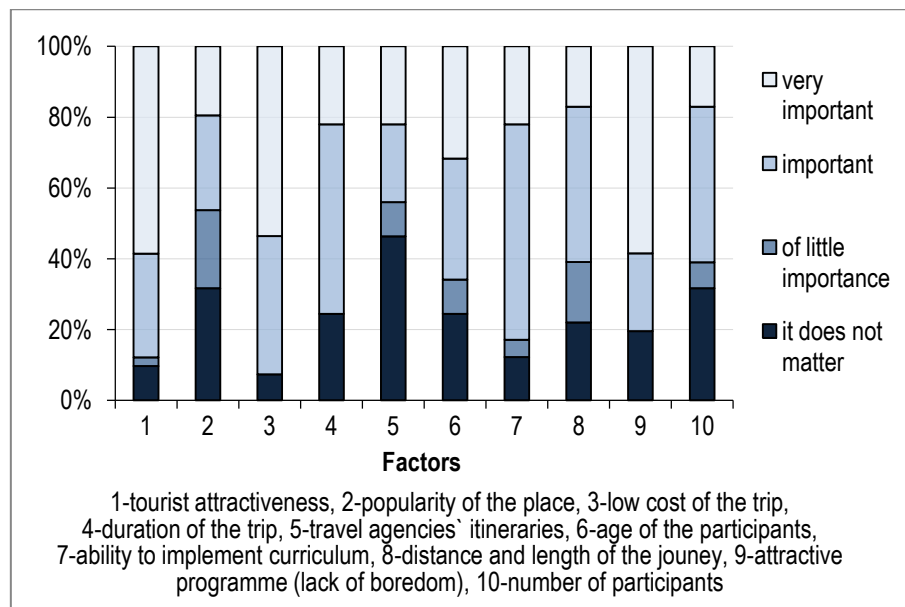


Fig. 5. Factors affecting the choice of the travel destination
Source: own study based on a survey

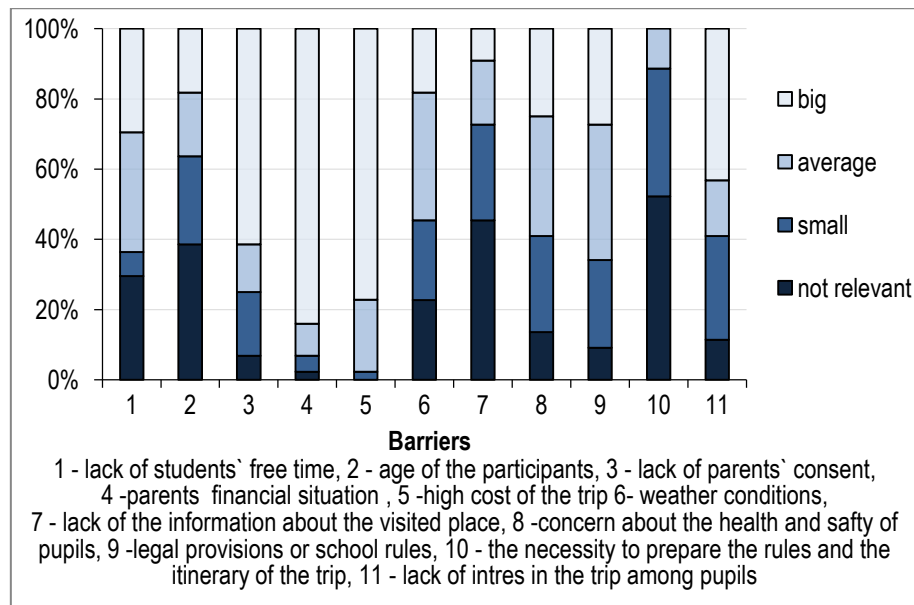


Fig. 6. Barriers affecting the size of school tourism
Source: own study based on a survey

The essence of the tourist traffic constitutes also its size, which is influenced by a variety of economic, social, organizational and legal factors. In the case of school tourism they should be discussed in relation to two groups – pupils and teachers. The most important seem to be the ones that make it difficult or even impossible to practice tourism, referred to, in the literature, as barriers or ‘inhibitors of tourist activity’ [1]. From the point of view of the surveyed teachers, the biggest obstacle affecting the tourist activity of students, and thus the size of school tourism was ‘the financial situation of their parents’ – it was declared so by up to 84.1% of the respondents (Fig. 6). In the second place, the respondents pointed out ‘the

cost of the trip' (77.2%), and in the third place 'lack of parents' consent' (61.4%). It should be emphasized that parents refusal may have been due to the lack of awareness among them of the fact that trips constituted an important source of many benefits. It may have also been due to parents' concerns about their child's safety during such a trip, as well as because of the expenditure that parents needed to incur for this purpose. It is satisfactory that 'the need to prepare the rules and the itinerary of the excursion' by the teachers, thus the whole documentation, which is mandatory while planning trips, did not constitute a significant problem for the respondents. According to more than a half of the respondents (52.2%) it was of no importance, and 36.4% of the respondents answered that its impact on the size of school tourist traffic was small. In addition, no response indicating its big impact was given.

The final stage of the data analysis confirmed that school tourism promotes learning, creates opportunities for the rest and recreation and at the same time, allows to explore the world and contributes to better health and well-being. 36.4% of the respondents believed that the most important function of school tourism is 'the improvement of the health and physical fitness of students'. Then, 'the creation of desired, valuable attitudes' (29.5%), 'the ability to acquire social contacts with other participants'(20.5%), 'the acquisition of knowledge' (11.3%) and finally 'health improvement' (2.3%). On this basis, it can be concluded that school trips organized by physical education teachers in the first place fulfill the health function associated with well-being and development of physical disposition and shape appropriate attitudes of the young generation to physical activity.

SUMMARY

The introduction of the young generation into the world of physical culture, which is responsible for developing in children and teenagers positive attitudes towards the rational and active use of leisure time, constitutes the main objective of physical education in schools. This objective can be achieved by tourism, implemented within the framework of so-called alternative courses of physical education. In this way, the teachers of this subject have the opportunity to promote tourism and leisure time activities.

The Results of the surveys conducted among physical education teachers in both primary and middle schools showed that both groups were willing to take the effort of organizing trips. Preferred by them forms of tourism were away events, especially students' stays on school camps and school sports camps. Group participation of the entire class allowed teachers to continue teaching their subject, that is why it seems that the choice of this form of tourism resulted from the ability to implement the core curriculum during the trip. Due to this fact, missing school and classes by students from a particular class did not stop the learning process.

Physical education teachers include in the itineraries of the organized trips elements of physical activity, which makes most of them correspond to active tourism. Due to the fact that this form of tourism fosters active behaviours, physical fitness and health, it should be noted that most trips organized by physical education teachers are the consequence of the implemented learning objectives contained in the Polish educational law.

Another sign of a close relationship between physical activity and school tourism was the response given by the respondents of the survey that a trip plays in students' life two basic functions: educational and health. In their view, practicing tourism teaches responsibility and resourcefulness, ability how to cooperate in a group and shapes physical activity. It is therefore desirable to organize school trips as often as possible and encourage as many students as possible to participate in them. Therefore, the barriers affecting students' tourist activity and the size of school tourist traffic should be eliminated to the most possible extend. In the respondents' opinion these were mainly high costs of trips, insufficient financial capabilities of the families of pupils and the lack of parental consent. It seems that all of these

inhibitors are complementary, which means that economic factors are the greatest barriers to tourist activity of children and teenagers.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Alejziak W. (2009), *Determinanty i zróżnicowanie społeczne aktywności turystycznej*, AWF, Kraków.
2. Derbich J. (2011), *Pedagogiczne rozważania o wychowaniu, aktywności fizycznej i zdrowiu*. A. Kaźmierczak, J. Kowalska, A. Maszorek-Szymala (eds.) *Paradygmaty współczesnej kultury fizycznej i zdrowotnej*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, pp. 55–64.
3. Król K. (2011), *Rekreacja ruchowa w obliczu współczesnych potrzeb człowieka*. A. Kaźmierczak, J. Kowalska, A. Maszorek-Szymala (eds.) *Paradygmaty współczesnej kultury fizycznej i zdrowotnej*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, pp. 225–236.
4. Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej i Sportu z dnia 8 listopada 2001 r. w sprawie warunków i sposobu organizowania przez publiczne przedszkola, szkoły i placówki krajoznawstwa i turystyki (Dz.U. 2001 nr 135 poz. 1516).
5. Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 27 sierpnia 2012 r. w sprawie podstawy programowej wychowania przedszkolnego oraz kształcenia ogólnego w poszczególnych typach szkół (Dz.U. 2012 poz. 977).
6. Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 7 lutego 2012 r. w sprawie ramowych planów nauczania w szkołach publicznych (Dz.U. 2012 poz. 204).
7. Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 9 sierpnia 2011 r. w sprawie dopuszczalnych form realizacji obowiązkowych zajęć wychowania fizycznego (Dz.U. 2011 nr 175 poz. 1042).
8. Sankowski T. (2001), *Wybrane psychologiczne aspekty aktywności sportowej*, AWF, Poznań.
9. Żukowska Z. (2006), *Aktywna turystyka młodzieżowa i jej wartości w wychowaniu do zdrowego stylu życia*. Z. Dziubiński (ed.) *Aksjologia turystyki*, Salezjańska Organizacja Sportowa, Warszawa, pp. 271–281.