



CONTRIBUTION OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS TO HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Human development is the backbone of social and economic development. This sustainable process emphasizes, firstly, that the development is made for humans, involving their participation in achieving economic results and thus in increasing the quality of life.

Physical education and sports have a real contribution to the human development. Instruction in physical education is an active process involving the direct initiative and responsibility of youths regarding their own training.

From the point of view of the relation between physical education and human development all these are necessary so as to ensure productivity and creativity, self-esteem and the sense of belonging to a community.

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1. Introduction

Socio-economic development is achieved by people. This is the reason why we have to create and perfect the human potential based on the investment in man, namely in the learning system, education and culture, professional training and health. The level of education reflects the ability of the individuals to acquire knowledge, to communicate and participate in the social life of the community to which they belong.

Physical education is one of the components of the global education that is involved in increasing the level of education reflected in the individuals' capacities to acquire skills and abilities, knowledge, to communicate and participate in the social life of the community they are part of, by systematically practicing physical exercise.

In the contemporary society, the role of physical education and sports activities is increasing, there being highlighted new tasks and targets regarding their contribution to the education and training of the workforce and also to maintaining its value at high indices (Mitra Gh., Mogoş A., 1980).

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2. Content

Physical education has a real contribution to the human development. Instruction in physical education is an active process directly involving the adolescents' initiative and responsibility in what regards their own training.

As part of the physical education process, there is promoted a "pedagogy of behaviors" (Mitra, Gh., Mogoș, A., 1980), which favors group integration practice, moral behaviors and character traits, as well as the shaping of the attitudinal system demanded at present by the social command regarding the preparation and training of the future citizen.

From the point of view of the relation between physical education and human development all these are necessary so as to ensure productivity and creativity, self-esteem and a sense of belonging to a community.

The relation civilization - attitude is very complex, ample and deep. The background characteristics of the contemporary civilization that mark the defining of people's attitudes are many and it is a difficult task, that of attempting to give an exhaustive presentation of them. Under the circumstances, Băican E. (2002) opted for taking into consideration a number of such background characteristics that he grouped into seven categories. These are the following:

- a) social atomization and social massification;
- b) emphasizing and enhancing the urbanization and industrialization processes;
- c) significant share of some potentially pathogenic socio-cultural phenomena;
- d) accelerating social change and continuous increase of the pace of life;
- e) models of poverty and welfare, respectively, specific to the contemporary civilization;
- f) changing of the roles and gender type basic status;
- g) existence of some inadequate social attitudes, counterproductive to some categories of the population.

a) Social atomization is the process of social structuring specific to the modern type civilization, especially the western one, founded on liberal, individualistic bases. It is concretized in diminishing the social integration of the individuals, in weakening the sense of belonging and purpose, in their becoming lonely and in weakening the ties with the others. That means, implicitly, a diminution of the social support that the individuals benefit from, and thus a diminution of the quality of the interpersonal relationships.

What is happening again in the contemporary society is that this social structuring with atomizing features encounters a process of accentuated social massification; specific to living in large urban communities, to this there being added the increasing interdependences caused by the complexity of life and the process of globalization.



„The encounter of these processes generates an inflationary effect type that affects the whole social edifice in its entirety, including public health. Thus, by drastically diminishing the social support and also the sense of belonging and purpose, there emerges an increase in the frequency of the psycho-affective disorders”. Franz Alexander (quoted by Enăchescu, C., Enăchescu L., 2008), the father of psychosomatics, believes that emotional retention is the illness of the twentieth century. The inflationary effect that was mentioned makes possible the substantial amplification of the structural aggressiveness of the society.

Researches in human ethology argued that, ethologically, man is neither made to live in Robinson's style and nor in crowded masses, but in social structures of community type, which today are put into difficulty in the context of the social atomization and the massification of the society.

The resulting semi-adaptation syndrome increases the structural aggressiveness manifested both directly through physical violence, with its implications in the sphere of the interpersonal relations, and also indirectly, through reflections at psychosomatic and mental health level (Băican, Eugen, 2002).

Ion Stefan (2005) believes that physical education and sports in the current socio-economic context exerts influence on multiple levels, helping female adolescents to express physically, to discharge the tensions induced by the modern highly competitive and also stressful social environment, to obtain an inner balance, an appreciative social image and to demonstrate exceptional physical and motor capabilities.

b) Urbanization and industrialization are defining social phenomena for the modern and contemporary civilization and the facilities that they have brought to the contemporary man's life are of particular importance. At the same time, one also has to take into consideration the negative implications of these phenomena.

They mark by their contents, the individuals' tendency to estrange from the natural environment and to artificialize life. That means a delay and an estrangement from the natural rhythms and implicitly a greater vulnerability in relation to the faster and more pronounced changes of the environmental parameters, which can be seen in the weather dependence syndrome so spread in the modern man.

Băican E. (2002) believes that the tendency towards artificializing life is manifested on more planes. One has to take into account nutrition artificializing, manifested by greatly increasing the share of refined products in the modern man's diet, and also by the excessive chemical processing of foods, by using hormonal preparations to stimulate growth in the animal production, and more recently by introducing transgenic species. Then, the habitat artificializing - manifested by modern housing association with a multitude of artifacts, which give comfort to life but at the same time, among other things, create a true electromagnetic ocean where people live and whose deep effects are still not sufficiently specified.



Participation in physical education lessons and practicing physical exercise in the spare time empowers female adolescents with information on healthy lifestyle, so that the contemporary life risk factors (sedentarism, obesity) can be reduced.

c) Socio cultural phenomena involved in changing the attitude of the individuals of a society are defining for the contemporary civilization. It has to be noted that they have to be seen in the context of background values that define the modern type civilization, namely, the materialistic mentality, psychosis performance, contemporary hedonism.

In what regards adolescents, these socio-cultural movements translate into behavioral problems represented by pregnancy and birth in female adolescents, use and abuse of alcohol and other substances, leaving home, delinquency, in the context of the specific values, attitudes and practices.

One has to mention the increase of the share and the variety of the addictive behaviors seen in the context of growing acculturation and proliferation of various subcultures and countercultures in the contemporary civilization, and also the intensification of the social anxiety syndrome manifested by running away from the social life and withdrawing from any competition. Both the addictive behaviors and the social anxiety are, in fact, attributable to the increasing dissatisfaction that individuals feel in relation to social life (Băican, E., 2002).

The positive effects of practicing physical exercises are felt in psychomotor plane, strengthening the practitioner's self-confidence and disciplining behavior. Recent research conducted in the field of sports and physical education have shown the correlation between the physical effort results and the morality quality, character strengthening, strong psychological balance and a great struggle capability of the physical exercise practitioner.

d) The acceleration of the social changes and the continuous increase in the pace of life are obvious phenomena that every individual has to face more or less. They induce increased uncertainty and difficulties in adapting to social life in what concerns the possibility of mastering the multiple participations that the individual has in the social life. These represent the semi-adaptation syndrome, which is associated with increased chronic stress. The acceleration of the social changes is associated with a permanent complexification of the social life and an increase in the frequency and extent of the dramatic sociopolitical and cultural changes. There are also to be mentioned in the context, the implications of the media sphere in which the contemporary man lives in what regards the increase of the pace of life. All these have an impact on the somatic and also psychic level through stress mechanisms.

Physical education and sports, by its means, induces to the individual a state of well-being, a high morphological and psychological balance, increased physiological parameters, and increased professional and social longevity.



e) The fact that poverty leaves its mark in a specific and dramatic manner on adopting an attitude is evident. Yet, less obvious is the fact that contemporary welfare has negative implications in terms of adopting sanogene healthy attitudes, by facilitating the afferent lifestyles. Mostly, one has to take into account the overfeeding problem associated with food artificialization, there emerging the problem of obesity, a major problem of the modern civilization. Of the U.S. population over 50% suffers from obesity or body overweight. There has to be signaled the increase in the share of eating disorders: bulimia and anorexia, sedentarism, with its implications in the cardiovascular pathology, and also on other planes.

„The existence of some trends, in the wealthy social categories that are seen as expressions of refinement and good taste, but that promotes health risk behaviors, also creates specific problems in the public health. Historically, the first wave of addiction to heroin and cocaine at international level was recorded in the Parisian artistic circles at the end of 19th century – the beginning of the 20th century”.

Educational policies promote the systematic practice of physical exercises in motor programs that aim to increase the number of young lovers of physical exercise and to optimize healthy behaviors.

f) The changing of the roles and gender type status is a reality in the context of the evolution specific to the modern democratic society, but also in relation to the developments brought about by the Feminist Movement. In this context, Băican E. (2002) recalls the results of a longitudinal research carried out in Germany during the last half of the 20th century which resulted in significant changes in the woman's body, noting a significant increase in the level of getting male hormones by the woman's body, a pilosity increase and also the same changes at the osteo-muscular level. These changes were seen by many specialists as an expression at the biological level of the newly assumed social roles and of the related lifestyles changes, respectively.

The biological consequences of these changes are seen in the increase of the difficulties experienced in the couple relationships, with the full set of social consequences, both in what concerns the adults and, also, children. These changes in the roles and gender type status proliferate a whole set of lifestyles that involve elements specific to risk behaviors for the society.

g) The category of population of interest especially regarding inappropriate social attitudes is the category of adolescents and youths. In the context of the value and action orientation specific to the contemporary civilization, the society has towards this category of population, a "schizoid attitude" (Băican, E., 2002). On one hand it requires from them precocious maturation and an autonomous life, and on the other hand it forbids them the means to do so.

At the biological level, puberty starts faster and maturation occurs faster today than a few generations ago. At the psychological and social level, and also at the socio-



professional one, maturation is today delayed because of the increased complexity of the social life, taking into account the psychological maturation both cognitively and especially affectively. Affective immaturity is currently blamed for in relation with the growing share of the addictive behaviors.

3. Conclusions

Knowing the pedagogical essence of the reasons urging adolescents to participate in the physical education and sports activities helps the specialists in this field to highlight the formation principles of the student's personality, and also to provide the logistics and the efficiency of the instructional-educational process; these aspects contribute to creating a positive motivation to participate in the physical education and sports classes and to practice physical exercises in the spare time.

The arguments outlined above lead us to affirm that the profound macro-social changes mark radically not only attitudes and behaviors, but also intimate mechanisms of formation and self structuring.

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