

Ján KUBIŠ\*

## Interest of Elementary School Pupils in Physical Activities and Recreational Sport in the Region Detva

### Summary

The article focuses on sport activities preferred by elementary school pupils performed at school physical education, on extracurricular school activities (after school activities) or in their leisure time (recreational sport) and the frequency of their implementation. We used questionnaire to survey interests of 224 pupils (100 boys and 124 girls) in four different primary schools (one located in the village and three located in town) in Detva region. The results presented in provided/ given graphs show positive relationship of primary school pupils towards physical and sports activities where sport games, as the most preferred sport activities, came before cycling and swimming. The authors who dealt with above mentioned topics and the relationship of youth towards physical education and other sport activities were: Frömel et al. (1999 ), Gorner, Starši (2001), Michal (2002, 2011), Kollar et al. (2010), Bartik (2005, 2006, 2007, 2009), Bartik, Mesiarik (2009), Buková et al. (2014), Paugschová, Jančoková (2008), Zusková et al. (2013) and other authors.

**Keywords:** recreational sports, sports activities, physical activity, attitude, interest, physical education, sports.

### Introduction

Interests are energizing elements for human and encourage him to activity, they present dynamic features of human's personality therefore they represent inseparable part of its motivational structure (Končeková, 1996). Organized sports are slowly disappearing from schools same as sport teams, rivalry, cheering, sport atmosphere and national pride. According to Hrčka (1995) sport is recreational activity closely connected with leisure time. We consider recreational

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\* Mgr., Matej Bel University, Philosophy Faculty, Department of Physical Education and Sports, Banská Bystrica.

sport and tourism for a basic form of sport and human health is one of the benefits that sport can offer to everybody. The main factor for achieving of expected positive changes is also including physical activity in our life, which has a big potential for maintaining active health and it should become a part of our everyday life. We have to understand active health in broader context, not only as an absence of sickness, physical defects and weakness. It is proven that family as the basic institution in society plays the most significant role in creating of child's lifestyle in all possible areas of life as well as in the way of spending of his free time and it is obvious that school and peers play just the secondary role in this process. Therefore disinterest of parents towards their children has a negative effect on their development. In terms of creating of family's lifestyle should parents show their children preferable model of family living where the trips are not absent, different physical activities are performed, watching of sports and cultural events is supported etc. Not only family but school plays very important role in preparing children for their future life and forming of their interests, too. Teacher's personality or content of the subject can be motivation for their interests, so school/we can guide children towards activities which are desirable for their personality development. An advice of their favourite teacher to join some cultural or physical activity, to read the book, to visit an interesting region of Slovakia can affect pupil's interest and evoke an effort for such activity (Nemec, Nemcová, 2012).

### **Aim**

The aim of this work/research is to examine the relationship of primary school pupils to recreational sport and sporting activities in region Detva.

### **Methodology**

The research was carried out in 2012/2013, 224 pupils in total participated in the research and the research sample consisted of 124 girls and 100 boys from four different primary schools in region Detva:

- Primary School of J.J. Thurzo in Detva / J.J.Thurzo's Primary School in Detva,
- Primary School in School Street in Hriňová / School Road Primary School in Hriňová,
- Primary School Krivec in Hriňová,
- Primary School of M. Kolibiar in Detvianska Huta / M. Kolibiar's Primary School in Detvianska Huta.

The research method used for obtaining data was anonymous questionnaire containing closed questions designed to get overview of the studied sample and of activ-

ities of schoolboys and schoolgirls. For evaluation were used quantitative methods (sum, percentages) qualitative methods (analysis, comparisons) and logical methods

### **Theoretical analysis**

Recent studies confirm that with increasing standard of living and availability of different kinds of communicational and media facilities, is physical activity of people gradually decreasing. Unfortunately this trend has begun to occur among children and young people where it leads to an increase of inactivity. Many authors like Miklánková et al. (2009), Kanášová (2005) and some others mentioned this situation in their studies and it is believed to be the result of lasting passive way of life. Children are addicted to sedentary activities such as watching television, playing computer games, or surfing on internet instead of actively engaging themselves in some kind of physical activities. To avoid such unfavourable changes it is necessary to integrate optimal amount of physical activity in the daily regime of children and young people (Šimonová, Vladovičová, 2010). We decided to examine physical activities performed by the second level primary school pupils at their free time as well as the motivation which leads them to engage themselves in these activities. According to Bebčáková et al. (2002) physical education is a specific compulsory subject because it is oriented on physical, functional, physical and intellectual development of pupils. Students obtain not only theoretical and practical physical-educational knowledge from certain fields of physical education and sport but one of its aims is a simulation of bio-psycho-social effective lifelong kinetic regime and disease prevention, development and formation of positive attitude of students towards the sport activity and physical education. Studies done by Gorner, Starší (2001) of the sixth and the eighth year pupils on the selected primary schools of Central Slovak region show positive attitude to school physical education and sport. A good job of teachers and popularity of sport created by media is considered to be a very important factor with a positive influence on pupils. Michal (2002) found out that majority of pupils have positive relation to physical education and show an interest in different forms of physical-educational and sport activity. The pupils mostly understand the meaning of physical education and sport from personal and professional perspective, however he adds that practical realization is backward from different objective reasons.

### **Results and discussion**

In Figure 1 we present physical activity performed by pupils in their free time. Data in Figure 1 show that the most favourite free time physical activity

among 12–15 years old pupils are sport and kinetic games, cycling, dancing, skiing, tourism, skating and other type of sport.

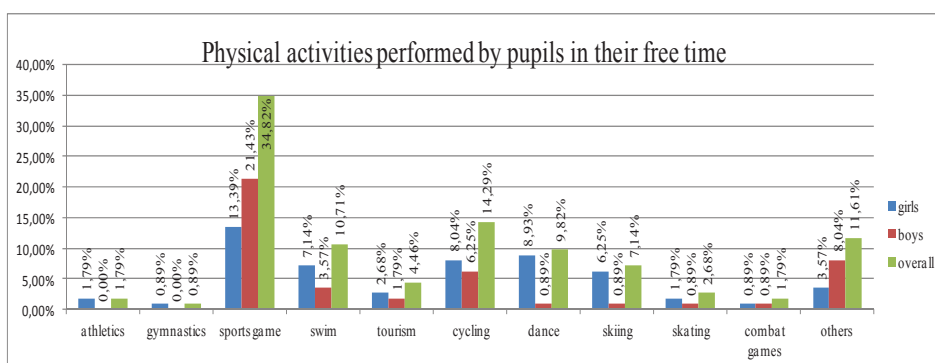


Fig. 1. Physical activities performed by pupils in their free time (Source: Kubiš, 2013)

Czaková, Fifiková studied the very same subject in different age group of students. Their results show that sport games, skating, skiing and swimming belong to the most popular activities among 15–17 years old student on the other hand combat sports and gymnastics are the least popular sports activities.

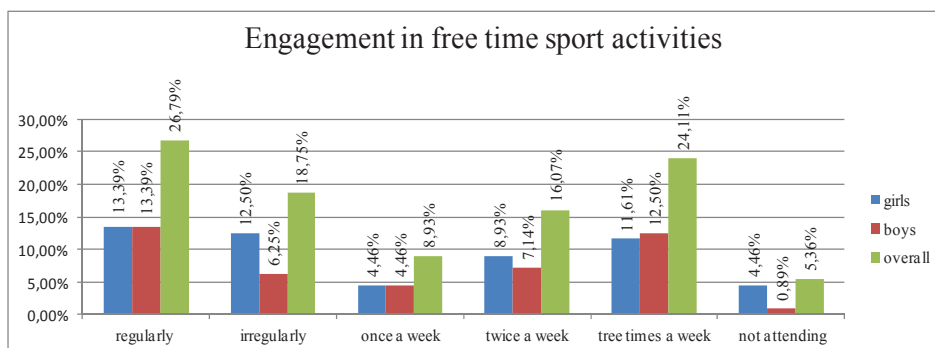


Fig. 2. Engagement in free time sport activities

Figure 2 shows that pupils of the second stage of primary school engage regularly in sport activities in their leisure time. If sports activities positively influence our health, we should participate in chosen sport activity at least three times a week, which in our case was fulfilled by almost half of the pupils. We also discovered that boys engage in sports activities more intensively than girls. Our research has proven the team games (21,53%), cycling (12,35%) and swimming (11,81%) to be the most popular activities performed by our researched pupils. Based on our findings and the findings of other authors (Bartík, Kubiš 2013, Czaková, Fifiková 2011) we consider the team games from long-time perspective

belong to the most popular physical activities in physical education and sport in general as well as in extracurricular activities for the elementary school pupils.

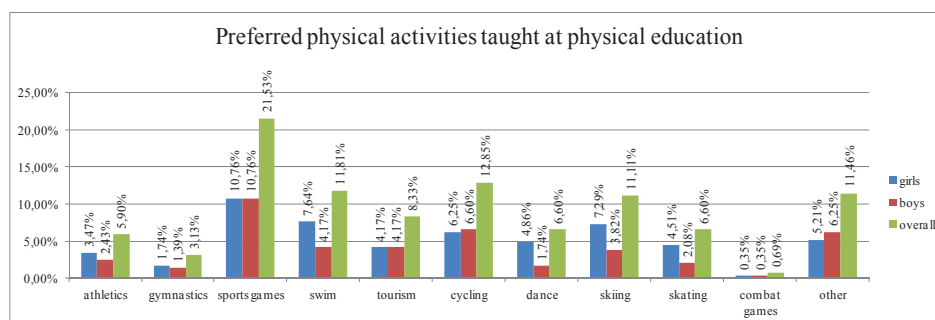


Fig. 3. Preferred physical activities taught at physical education (Source: Kubiš, 2013)

Svačina (Bebčáková, 2011) notes that the lack of physical activity is a factor that occurs simultaneously with obesity and its consequences, such as: increased blood pressure, diabetes, atherosclerosis and cancer. According to the author, in terms of obesity, the lack of physical activity is as dangerous as overeating.

From the studies of the World Health Organization on risk factors, it is clear that physical inactivity or sedentary lifestyle belong to the ten leading causes of death and injury. Approximately 60% – 85% of the world population does not have sufficient movement, which is essential for health. Sedentary lifestyle doubles the risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, increases the risk of developing colon cancer, high blood pressure, depression or anxiety (Ištoňová, 2008).

The results in Fig. 4 show that even in these days of increasing sedentary lifestyle and increasing informatization of society, boys (23,21%) and girls (24,11%) in the second stage of primary schools participate regularly 3 times a week in selected physical activity, which may be considered as a positive relationship towards physical activity.

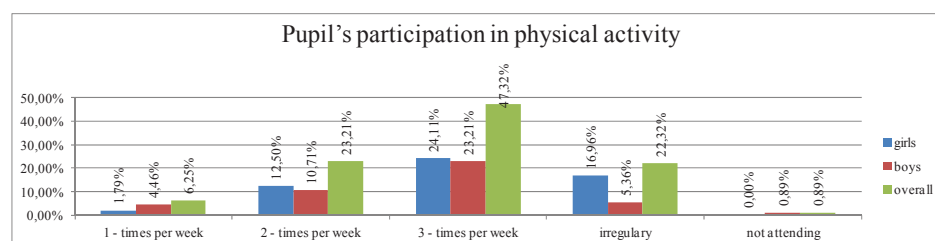


Fig. 4. Pupil's participation in physical activity (Source: Kubiš, 2013)

In the following part of the research we examine pupils' participation in physical activities. The boys do sports mostly in the sport clubs (12,5%) as well as in their leisure time with friends (12,50%), whereas girls do sports mostly on

recreational basis with their friends (22,30%) the second most often used answer was: “something else” (12,50%).

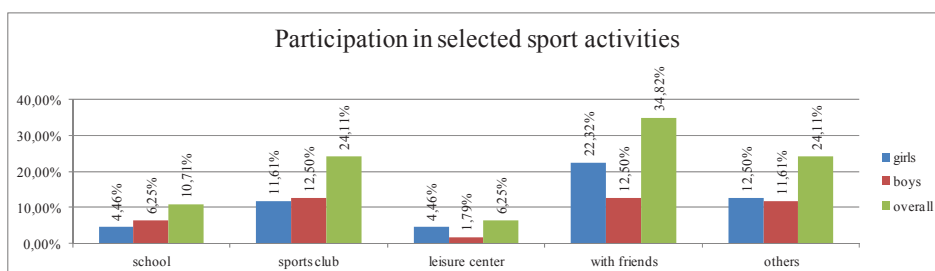


Fig. 5. Participation in selected sport activities (Source: Kubiš, 2013)

School is one of the entities involved in the education of students outside the classroom, and in particular by targeting the young population to the positive use of their leisure time (Liba, Uherová, 2003). In terms of humanization and democratization of education and teaching, it is necessary to create favourable conditions for the possibility of sports, based on the interest and preferences of primary school pupils.

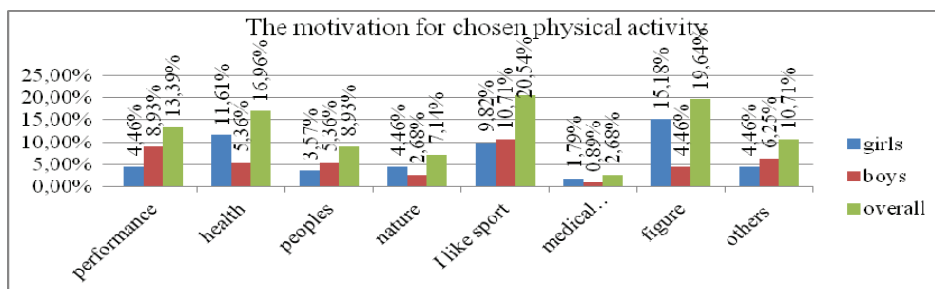


Fig. 6. The motivation for chosen physical activity (Source: Kubiš, 2013)

Unidirectional orientated technocratic society requires deeper psycho motoric knowledge of a child and a creative humanistic attitude in PE area in primary education. The concept of open curriculum enables teachers the great space for preparation, but on the other hand it requires a great deal of responsibility. There is an important requirement for teachers ‘creativity (Vladovičová, Novotná, 2007). An analysis of the majority of scientific studies shows, that PE is one of the children’s favourite subjects.

As mentioned above, children’s motivation and activation for physical activity is very important nowadays. From Fig.6 is obvious that the positive relationship to sport is the main source of motivation for more than 20% of pupils. The loss of body fat, health strengthening, positive relationship to sport and activities performed in nature are the main motives for girls for engaging themselves in

physical activities. On the other hand health strengthening, activities in nature, contact with people, physician's recommendation as well as positive relationship to sport are the main motives to participate in sport and physical activities for boys.

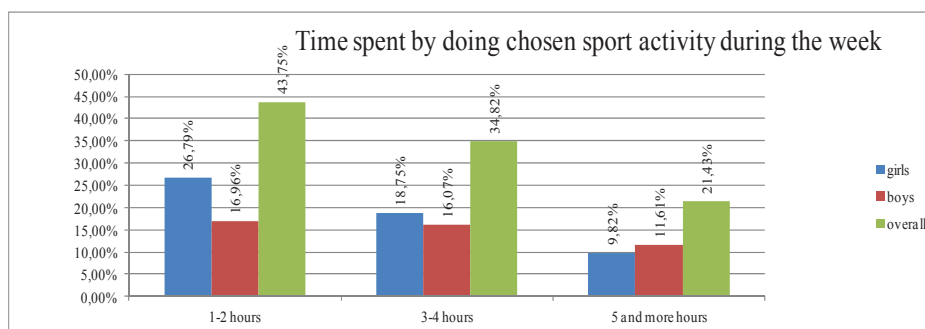


Fig. 7. Time spent by doing chosen sport activity during the week (Source: Kubiš, 2013)

Figure 7 shows that on average 26,79% of girls do chosen physical activity for one or two hours a week, 18,75% of girls exercise for three or four hours a week and only 10% of girls exercise for more than five hours a week. In case of boys is the intensity of physical activity performed during the week rather different, almost 17% of boys do some kind of sport activity for about four hours a week and 11,61% of boys do their chosen physical activity for five or more hours a week. According to Liba (2010) the key reason of unhealthy lifestyle is the lack of physical activities at school and in pupils' leisure time caused by strong influence of media and computers, commercial direction of sport clubs, financial status of families, social conditions etc. As a result of spreading trend of passive lifestyle in a modern man life is occurrence of lifestyle diseases. Slezák, Melicher (2008) state that almost half of the Slovaks suffer from overweight and quarter of Slovak population is obese. Even at the age of younger school age we can already see abnormalities such as obesity, incorrect body posture, which can eventually lead to breathing problems, diabetes, digestive diseases, cardio-vascular diseases, oncological diseases.

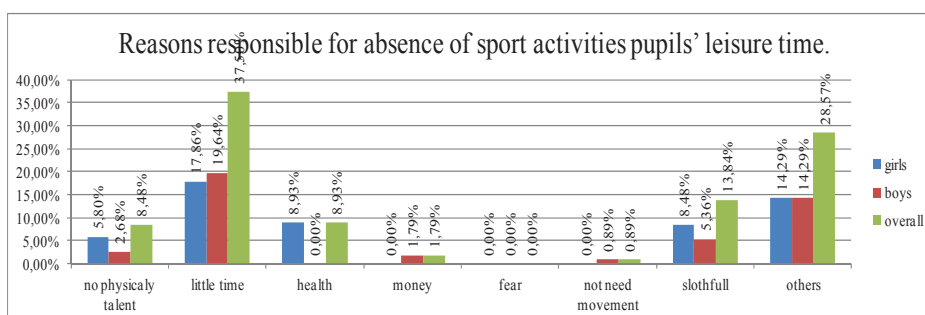


Fig. 8. Reasons responsible for absence of sport activities pupils' leisure time (Source: Kubiš, 2013)

In the following part we pay attention to some reasons responsible for the absence of the sport activities in free time activities of researched pupils. It is very interesting or even upsetting that for more than 17% of girls and 19% of boys is lack of time the main reason for not doing any sport activities. Results show that laziness or lack of talent for sport are other reasons provided by girls and also by boys for not doing any physical activity. It is very encouraging that the reasons such as fear of mockery, health problems, no need for exercise or lack of finances had only minimal occurrence in our researched group of pupils. It is clear that for more than 70% of all respondents is subject physical education very attractive and most of them consider it for their favourite school subject (33,04% of boys and 37, 50% of girls). Gorner, Starší (2001), Bartík (2009) came to the similar conclusion in relation to sport and physical education as a school subject. Our research sample included also 2,68% of boys and girls who dislike sport and physical education. Almost a quarter (24,11%) of all pupils were indecisive and marked the answer: “possibly” (Fig. 1). In spite of the increasing number of students, who don't practice actively, and insufficient and often substandard conditions for the implementation of the educational process in the subject of physical education and sport , in terms of our results and the results of other authors (Görner, Starší 2001, Michal 2011) author can state, that this subject is still highly popular among other subjects.

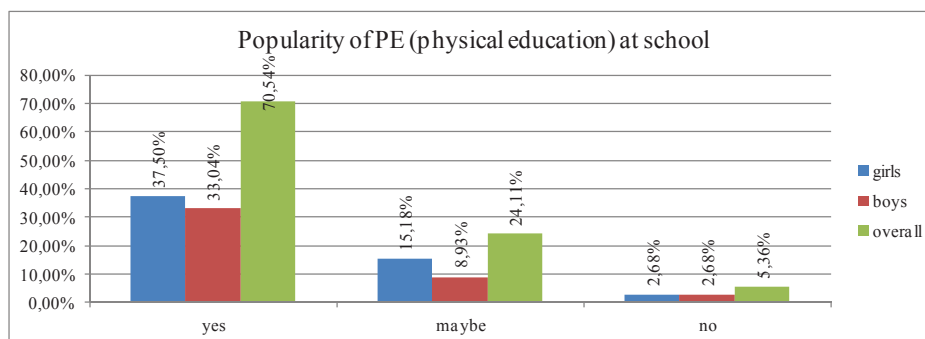


Fig. 9. Popularity of PE (physical education) at school (Source: Kubiš, 2013)

Physical education teachers can motivate pupils to a positive relationship to any physical activity by organizing special physical education within extra-curricular activities based on the findings and knowledge of physical activities preferred by students. The results in Fig. 10 say that almost half of the students (49,11%) do not attend sport activities within extracurricular activities or out of classroom physical edu.



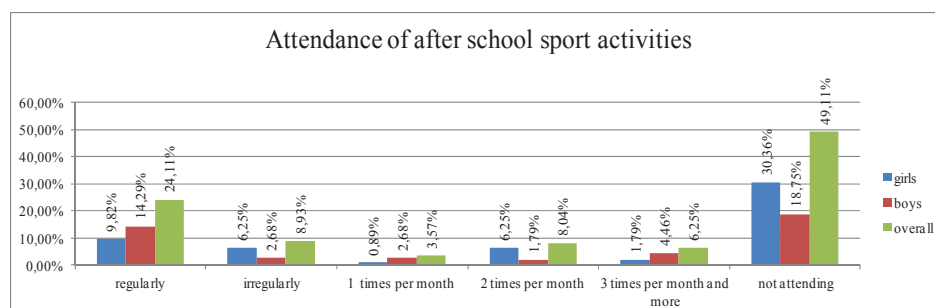


Fig. 10. Attendance of after school sport activities (Source: Kubiš, 2013)

Fig. 11 shows, that students attending these activities have rather good experience, which prevails negative experience. 18,75% of girls and 16,96% of boys have good experience with the extra-curricular sport activities.

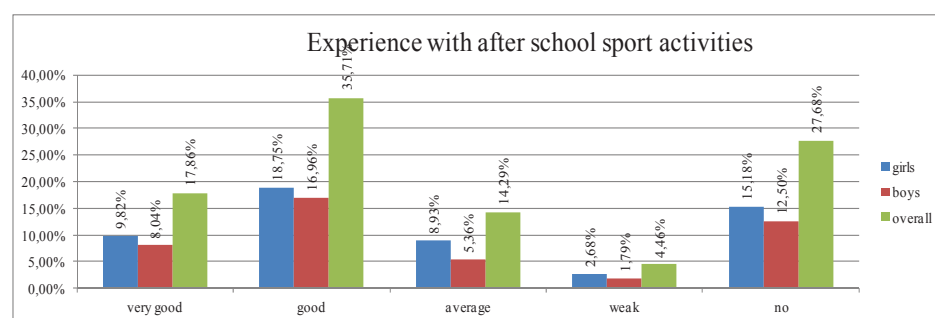


Fig. 11. Experience with after school sport activities (Source: Kubiš, 2013)

Finally we were interested if the pupils will have further interest to devote themselves to some sport activity in future. It is satisfactory even at the present time when the society prefers technology and passive lifestyle the primary school pupils already realize how important is sport for them and their life. The given results in Fig. 12 show that nearly 70% (67,86%) of students would like to do some sport activity even in the future. Here are the following findings about the boys: 31,25% of boys answered that they want to do some sport activity even in the future, 9,82% of boys didn't know if they want to do some sport activity further in the future and only 3,57% of boys wouldn't like to do any sport activity. Compared to the boys, the results related to the last question were more positive with the girls. Only 0,89% of girls don't want to do any sport activity, 17,86% of girls don't know if they want to do it, and 36,61% of girls would like to do some sport activity in the future.

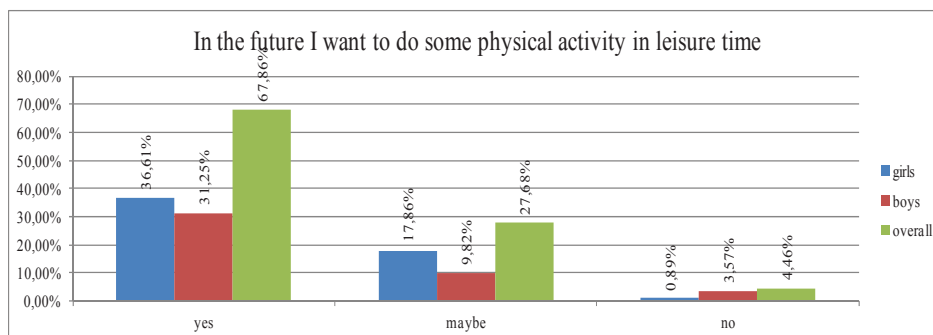


Fig. 12. In the future I want to do some physical activity in leisure time (Source: Kubiš, 2013)

## Conclusion

The aim of this study was to determine the current status in the relationship of elementary school pupils toward physical and sport activities. We assume, that the results of this study will contribute to the improving and targeting the management of physical and sport activities of elementary school pupils at a given stage and point to the possibility of improving the attractiveness of the content. It will create space for the satisfaction of their interest and help teachers, coaches, educators and parents to adapt their leisure time to the interests of pupils. At the same time we assume, that each current study of the trends and opinions on implementation of physical and sports activities will help us to reveal the current values of the second stage pupils at primary schools.

Our findings clearly confirmed, that the second stage pupils of elementary schools in region of Detva have positive relationship towards team games as well as to physical education and sport. Based on my results We can conclude the most common sport activity the students have participated in are sport games, cycling and of winter sports it is mainly skiing. The respondents have stated, they participate regularly 3 times a week in selected activities. The reasons and motives why the respondents do these selected physical activities are positive relationship to sport, body forming, losing weight, health issues as well as increasing sport performance (Bartík, Kubiš 2013).

Most pupils stated, that they do sports especially in friendly surrounding with friends, in sport clubs and during extracurricular sport activities. The most common answer in terms of experiences with extracurricular sport activities was, that they have good or very good experiences.

Our recommendations is to improve the educational process in school physical education as well as in extra-curricular physical education, implement unconventional physical and sports activities, modernizing the curriculum, forms and methods of work. Modernize sport facilities and material equipment of

schools. Mobilize cooperation with parents and school sports clubs to improve pupils' attitude towards school physical education and regular physical activities and sports, and particularly the 2nd stage of primary school. Greater attention must also be paid to the theoretical education of the pupils in Physical Education and Sports.

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## Abstrakt

### Záujem žiakov základných škôl o pohybové aktivity a rekreačný šport v regióne Detva

Cieľom tejto práce je skúmať vzťah žiakov druhého stupňa základných škôl k pohybovým aktivitám a rekreačnému športu v regióne Detva. Taktiež sa autor v článku venuje otázkam, ktorým aktivitám sa žiaci venujú najčastejšie či už v školskej telesnej a športovej výchove alebo mimoškolskej čiže rekreačnej športovej činnosti a tiež frekvenciou ich vykonávania. Použitou výskumnou metódou bol dotazník, použitý na výskumnej vzorke 224 žiakov (100 chlapcov a 124 dievčat) štyroch základných škôl (1 dedinská a 3 mestské školy) v regióne Detva. Na základe zistených výsledkov, ktoré autor prezentuje v použitých grafoch vyplýva pozitívny vzťah žiakov základných škôl k pohybovým a športovým aktivitám. Medzi najviac obľúbenú pohybovú a športovú aktivitu patria športové hry pred cyklistikou a plávaním.

S predloženou témou týkajúcou sa záujmov, postojov, názorov a vzťahov mladých k telesnej výchove a športu, ako aj k fyzickým a športovým aktivitám, ktoré sú s nimi veľmi úzko prepojené sa v minulosti zaoberali: Frömel et al. (1999), Gerner, Starší (2001), Michal (2002, 2011), Kollár et al. (2010), Bartík (2005, 2006, 2007, 2009), Bartík, Mesiarik (2009), Buková et al. (2014), Pauschová, Jančoková (2008), Zusková et al. (2013) a iní autori.

**Kľúčové slová:** rekreačný šport, športové aktivity, pohybové aktivity, postoj, záujem, telesná výchova, športové hry.