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LEGAL BASIS OF SCHOOL SPORTS IN POLAND IN THE YEARS 1947–1997 – SELECTED ASPECTS

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Abstract

After almost six years of a consumptive Poland, World War II, the Polish society began to rebuild the basic, destroyed structures of the country. Deep political transformations have undergone fundamental state structures, including education and sport. The National Council was involved in issues of Physical Education was already involved in 1945. At its 9th session, proposals about protection of health and physical education were presented. They were at a time when the Temporary Government of National Unity had already introduced decrees: the creation of offices and boards of physical education and military adoption, and the universal obligation of physical education and military adoption. The establishment of the Sejm in early 1947 resulted in further changes in organizational structures of physical culture. The Act on the Universal Obligation of Vocational Enrollment, Physical Education and Youth Adoption, and the Organization of Physical Culture and Sports, was the impetus for major changes. In 1949, another resolution dissolved all the hitherto centralized institutions of physical culture by appointing the Main Committee of Physical Culture in their place. The aim of this article is to discuss issues related to the statutes adopted during that period and the ordinances which regulated all matters related to the development of widely understood school sport in Poland since 1947 to 1997.

Key words: Poland – school sport – legal bases – years 1947–1997.

Анета Рейман. Правові основи шкільного спорту в Польщі в 1947–1997 рр. – вибрані аспекти. Польща після майже шести виснажливих років унаслідок Другої світової війни почала відновлювати основні зруйновані структури країни. Глибоких політичних перетворень зазнали основні державні структури, уключаючи освіту й спорт. Державна Національна рада зайнялася проблемами з питань фізичної культури в 1945 р. На 9-й сесії вона внесла пропозиції щодо захисту здоров'я та фізичної культури. Це було в той час, коли Тимчасовий уряд національної єдності вже ввів постанови: створення відділів і рад фізичного виховання й військової підготовки, а також обов'язкове зобов'язання з фізичного виховання та військової підготовки. Створення Сейму на початку 1947 р. зумовило подальші зміни в організаційних структурах фізичної культури. Закон про загальнообов'язкову професійну підготовку, фізичне виховання й військову підготовку молоді та організацію фізичної культури й спорту стали поштовхом до великих змін. У 1949 р. наступною ухвалою розформовано всі наявні централізовані установи фізичної культури та призначено на їхнє місце Головний комітет фізичної культури. *Мета цієї статті* – обговорення питань, пов'язаних зі статутами, прийнятими протягом цього періоду, і розпорядженнями, які регулювали всі питання, пов'язані з розвитком найбільш поширеного шкільного спорту в Польщі з 1947 по 1997 рік.

Ключові слова: Польща – шкільний спорт – правова база – 1947–1997 рр.

Анета Рейман. Правовые основы школьного спорта в Польше в 1947–1997 гг. – избранные аспекты. После почти шести изнурительных лет Второй мировой войной Польша начала восстанавливать основные разрушены структуры страны. Глубокие политические преобразования наблюдались в основных государственных структурах, включая образование и спорт. Государственный Национальный совет занялся проблемами по вопросам физической культуры в 1945 г. На 9-й сессии он внес предложения по защите здоровья и физической культуры. Это было в то время, когда Временное правительство национального единства уже ввело постановления: создание отделов и советов физического воспитания и военной подготовки, а также обязательные обязательства по физическому воспитанию и военной подготовке. Создание Сейма в начале 1947 г. обусловило дальнейшие изменения в организационных структурах физической культуры. Закон о всеобщей профессиональной подготовке, о физическом воспитании и военной подготовке молодежи и организации физической культуры и спорта стали толчком к большим переменам. В 1949 г. последующим постановлением расформировано все существующие централизованные учреждения физической культуры и назначено на их место Главный комитет физической культуры. *Цель этой статьи* – обсуждение вопросов, связанных с уставами, принятыми в течение этого периода, и распоряжениями, которые регулировали все вопросы, связанные с развитием наиболее распространенного школьного спорта в Польше с 1947 по 1997 г.

Ключевые слова: Польша – школьный спорт – правовая база – 1947–1997 гг.

1. Reconstruction of State Organizational Structures in Physical Culture (1944–1956). Shortly after the nearly six-year-long devastation of Poland's Second World War and the complicated socio-political situation between the allies of the anti-Nazi coalition, attempts were made to rebuild damaged state structures, including education and sport.

During this period the development of physical culture and sport was a result of the erosion of various political orientations, mainly the Polish Workers' Party and the Polish Socialist Party. The dispute between

the two parties, which was exclusively political, was mainly concerned with the organizational structure of physical education and sport, the future and the role of workers' sport, and the development of competitive sport called bourgeois. Since mid-1947, the dominant direction in the development of physical education and sport has already been given by the PPR, which has been preparing radical ideological and political changes, modeled on Soviet experiences. After the unification of both parties, PZPR had a decisive influence on the development of physical culture in Poland. From the place where physical education, sports, tourism and recreation were concerned, the social rank, the level of material expenditure and the attitude of the state administration, trade unions, youth and social organizations in these areas were concerned¹.

The Temporary Parliament –the National Council- took into consideration issues of physical education and sports already in 1945. It should be pointed out that this authority did not, in fact, function as the supreme authority of the state, but was used by the ruling party to shape the legal basis of the system, transmission of the party's program to society and the appearance of parliamentary democracy in Poland². At its ninth session, proposals for health protection and physical education were presented. These conclusions were important enough that the Provisional Government of National Unity had already introduced decrees: the creation of offices and boards of physical education and training, and the universal obligation of physical education and military adoption. On the basis of the above decrees in 1946 the Ministry of National Defense created the State Office for Physical Education and Military Training, traditionally referring to the analogous pre-war institution, operating through provincial, district and city delegations³. At the same time the National Council of Physical Education and Military Training was established with the Minister of National Defense, whose mission was to establish the essential Guidelines for the conduct of the PUWFiPW and control over the entire activity of the Office and the implementation of established guideline⁴.

Undoubtedly, a great influence on the physical education and youth sport had number of terms. They stated that: *Today in their own country under the government in the hierarchy of the most urgent tasks, the issue of young people's education occupy one of the first places. Solving it strictly on the level of satisfying spiritual needs would be unilateral and would not correspond to its true desires. Polish youth, having suffered such heavy sacrifices, have the full right not only to return to school and lecture hall but to playgrounds and sports stadiums in order to forget about the most traumatic past*⁵.

The impetus introducing significant changes turned out to be the Act of the Sejm of 25 February 1948 establishing the Council for Youth and Physical Culture, the General Organization of the «Service of Poland» and the General Office of Physical Culture, which resulted in the necessity of applying a new phraseology. Three terms were introduced: physical education, physical culture, sports. The intention of the legislator was to give physical culture the broadest possible meaning⁶. Such formed system did not last long, however, as in 1949 another law dissolved all the hitherto physical institutions of physical culture, calling in their place the Chief Committee of Physical Culture.

At the end of September 1949 appeared a resolution of the Political Office of the PZPR Central Committee regarding to physical culture and sport, which gave high rank to a physical culture. Strengthened the control of the party over sport, establishing the post of sports instructor of the Department of Mass Propaganda of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers Party and the departments of the regional committees. The leadership role of the party in the management of sport resulted in the loss of national identity, the break with the traditions and democratic rules established in the life of sports associations formed during the interwar years. At the same time, the Soviet model began to be introduced⁷. The system was fixed by the Act of December 30, 1949 *about the organization of physical culture and sport*, which in the apogee of Stalinism became the basis of sport organization in Poland. Since then the sport in Poland has been managed by the bureaucratized, centralized administration created by the Soviet Central Committee of Physical Culture. When the monopoly of communist rule was taken over by sport, the road to full sovietization of the sport movement in Poland was open⁸.

Such position can be testified by words of the chairman of the GKKE, Włodzimierz Reczka, who dogma of socialist physical culture described as follows: *The study of Marxism-Leninism, which points to the unity of spiritual*

¹ L. Szymański, From studies on the model of physical culture in People's Poland 1944–1980, [in:] «Role of tradition in shaping the contemporary model of physical culture». AWF Warszawa, 1986. P. 198–199.

² L. Szymański, The role of the People's Republic of Poland in shaping the policy in the field of physical culture and tourism in the years 1944–1980, [in:] *Physical Education and Sport*. 1993. No 4. P. 197.

³ L. Szymański, Physical Culture and Tourism in the Politics of People's Poland 1944–1989. Wrocław, 2004. P. 27 i nn.

⁴ P. Godlewski, Sport in Poland in the context of the political reality of the years 1944–1956. AWF Poznań. 2006. P. 101.

⁵ J. Gaj, K. Hądzelek, History of Physical Culture in Poland. Poznań, AWF, 1997. P. 181.

⁶ P. Godlewski, Sport in Poland in the context of the political reality of the years 1944–1956. Poznań, AWF, 2006. P. 36.

⁷ Ibid. P. 376.

⁸ More on this subject: P. Godlewski, Sporting Sovietism in Poland (1948–1956), [in:] *Studied in the history of physical culture* / ed. T. Jurek. Gorzów Wlkp, 2002. P. 441–455.

and physical development of man, the Soviet theory of physical culture, which treats physical culture as an essential part of nationwide culture, as a great matter which is concerned by the State and the Party, Soviet experience in the struggle for mass and high level of sport and physical education, the magnificent achievements of today's world-leading Soviet sport will be a signpost for us, to awake in us zeal and perseverance in battle for the full development of physical culture in our country⁹.

In the years 1950–1953 significant changes were made in the structure of sport, eliminating the statutory clubs and establishing the divisions: the military, the Central Council of Trade Unions, the People's Sports Association, the Federation of Sport Clubs «Gwardia» The «Start» Cooperative Sport Association and the «Zryw» Association¹⁰, which after many controversies stemming from the pre-war tradition of separating school physical education from competitive sport, have transformed themselves into the School Sports Association¹¹.

October 1956 influenced the ferment in physical education and sport, linked to the critique of the past, the restoration of democratic forms in the sport movement, and the creation of new concepts for the development of these fields¹².

Undoubtedly, the biggest mistake of this period is the takeover by the state administration of a large part of the tasks of social sports movement. As it turned out after many years of experience, these changes did not pass the exam, which was admitted even then mentioned then president of GKKF W. Reczek, who at the national sports council in February 1957 said: *we reorganized sports movement, not counting with our traditions and conditions. (...) Without the need to cross the great achievements of sports movement and half a century of the traditions of many clubs and unions*¹³.

2. The legal Basics of School Sport in 1957–1989. By liquidating the pre-war three-level school, the Ministry of Education has ordered the implementation of a unified curriculum. This program came in 1947, taking into account the 8-year universal school.

It should be pointed out that in this period the primary goal of school education and sport - in relation to the interwar years –did not change. For the purposes of education, as a matter of course, the motor skills, physical fitness, immunity, structure and attitude of the body were emphasized. For the purposes of education, the need to create characteristic features, social and moral attitudes was stressed and the habit of physical activity, and for cognitive purposes it was about learning by the student about the body and its development and understanding the importance of physical education and sport¹⁴.

As it turned out, an enormous amount of primary schools was not prepared for the effective implementation of the program. Hence, based on the instructions of the Ministry of Education of 4 V 1948, at the turn of 1948/1949, 7-grade primary school was established as the basis for future education. It was based on a 4-year secondary school, thus forming an 11-year general upper secondary and upper secondary school.

Curricula have proven to be ahead of the schools in this period. They required a solid material and legal basis. Although their subsequent versions were generally prepared in an atmosphere of polemics, and with a great emotional commitment and contributions from numerous professional teams, the effects of this work were always aware of the lack of comprehensive and methodologically validation of the value of previous editions¹⁵.

On July 15, 1961, the Act on the Development of the Education System was enacted and upbringing. For the first time in new political circumstances, it attached special importance to the physical education of children and adolescents. In the introduction to the law it was raised, among other things, *that teaching and education in schools and other educational institutions aims to comprehensively develop pupils and educate them for the conscious and creative citizens of the Polish People's Republic*¹⁶. An important element was also its provision, stating that elementary school aims to *harmonize the development of students in terms of mental, moral and physical and preparation for learning, in vocational and general education or further education and qualification in the course of work performed*¹⁷.

An important impetus for the further development of school sports was the order of the Minister of Education and Higher Education of 22 IX 1967 on «School Sports Holidays». This decree states that *in order*

⁹ W. Reczek, Soviet physical culture is leading the world *World*. 1953. No. 28. 5, 23.

¹⁰ See. eg L. Szymanski. op. Cit. P. 47–52.

¹¹ W. Lipoński, Humanistic Sports Encyclopedia. Warsaw, 1987. p. 334.

¹² zymański L, From studies on the model of physical culture in People's Poland 1944–1980, [in:] *Role of tradition in shaping the contemporary model of physical culture*. Warszawa : AWF, 1986. P. 198.

¹³ J. Gaj, K. Hądzelek. Op. Cit. P. 189.

¹⁴ L. Nowak, Physical education programs and their implementation in general education in Poland in the years 1945–1989. Outline of the problem. [in:] *From the latest history of physical culture in Poland*. T. 4. Edited by Bernard Woltmann. Gorzów Wlkp. : PTNKF Oddz. in Gorzów Wlkp., 2000. P. 229–230.

¹⁵ Z. Jaworski, Physical education program in elementary school in Poland in 1945–1972. Monographs of WSWF in Gdansk. No. 9. Gdańsk 1973. P. 1.

¹⁶ Journal of Laws of 21 July 1961. No. 32. Pos. 160.

¹⁷ Ibid.

to further develop the physical education of schoolchildren, to show the results obtained in this field and to draw the attention of parents and adults to education and the health benefits of sport, the first physical and physical culture of school youth is established on the first Saturday and Sunday of June each year under the name of School Sport Day¹⁸. According to the above, on the days of the indicated holidays, the organization of all activities outside the sports activities was suspended, while the Saturdays during school and intercollegiate sports were established as a free day.

The obligation to organize School Sports Holidays was applied to all primary and secondary schools under the direction of the school authorities with the active support of the School Sports Association. At the same time, a circle of people was set up to organize the holiday. This task was assigned to teachers and youth activists of the SZS¹⁹.

The program also includes the school sports program, which consists of: 1) school and intercollegiate events, competitions, sports tournaments, 2) mass sports games and games combined with competitions; 3) sports and tourism trips; 4) mass sports and gym shows; 5) sports competitions and exhibitions.

An important impetus for further dissemination and development of school sports was the order of the Minister of Education and Higher Education of 23 June 1971 *about the principles of cooperation of social organizations with schools in the implementation of educational tasks*²⁰. According to his instructions, educational work with school students could be organized by the following social organizations and institutions: National Defense League; League of Nature Conservation; The Chief Cooperative Council and associated cooperative organizations; Polish Red Cross; Polish Tourist-Touring Association; School Sports Association; Society of Polish-Soviet Friendship and the Universal Savings Bank. At the same time, the text of the memorandum included a statement specifying the specific role of the SZS, which was to play a key role.

This was also the case when the Minister of Education Order was issued and Higher Education of 25 November 1971 *on detailed rules for the cooperation of the School Sports Association with schools in the implementation of educational tasks and the rules of participation of school youth in the activities of non-school organizations of physical culture*²¹.

According to § 1 of the cited regulation, *the School Sports Association (...) works with the school in physical development and sports for school youth*²². The scope of interoperability was defined here very precisely and included: programming and organizing mass sports activities with all school youth; Organizing youth sports organizers' training and incorporating them into school activities; Taking active part in the extension and construction of school facilities and sports facilities; coordinating out-of-school sports activities conducted with school children; developing other forms of activities for the promotion of physical education and sport among school youth. At the same time, in order to provide the Union with conditions for the implementation of youth program tasks, school administrators were obliged to provide free of charge the facilities and sport equipment of school. The impetus for the development of school sport was also a further regulation of the Minister of Education and Higher Education of 25 November 1971 *on compulsory courses with physical education and sports in schools*²³. In the mentioned order we read, among others «... *extra-curricular physical education and sports are part of the educational and educational process of the school and are aimed at improving health and fitness, developing the interests and sports talents of children and young people ...*». This provision precisely defined the specific role of physical education in the development of youth. Depending on the number of students, the following compulsory physical education and sport activities are provided: up to 200 students – up to 6 hours per week; from 201 to 320 students – up to 8 hours per week; from 321 to 600 students - up to 12 hours per week; Over 600 students – up to 18 hours per week. The aforementioned regulation obliged the compulsory physical education and sport school activities in the SZS sports school sports wheel. These classes were conducted according to a program established by the Board of Directors of the Association, approved by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

The management undoubtedly supporting the development of school sports in schools was the Ordinance of the Minister of Education and Training of 4 VIII 1972 *on the introduction in all types of schools of medial exercises and the organization of large intervals*²⁴. It imposed on the school management the obligation to organize intergenerational breaks, organizations that had to pay attention to the use of all opportunities for students to spend them on the runway, school pitch, etc. It was emphasized that depending on the conditions of the material base and the seasons, the nature of physical exercises, ie games and sport games, sports exercises or dance.

The turn of the sixties and seventies of the last century is a period of further efforts to fully adapt the dimension and forms of physical education classes to the needs of school children. The prospective goal of this period was to obtain at least 5 hours of organized physical education classes per week in the student's

¹⁸ Official Journal of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (hereinafter: DzUrzMOiSW). № B-10. Pos. 122 (OW3-6000/12/67).

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ DzUrzMOiSW, No. B-8. Pos. 52 (No. SW3-0720 / 7/71).

²¹ DzUrzMOiSW. № B-16. Pos. 101 (no SW4-0171 / 8/71).

²² Ibid.

²³ DzUrzMOiSW. № B-16. Pos. 102 (no SW4-0171 / 9/71).

²⁴ DzUrzMOiSW, no. B-4, pos. 38 (No. KF1-0171 / 1/72).

schedule. In reference to the above, on April 6, 1973, Resolution No. 85 of the Council of Ministers *about the further development of physical culture was adopted*²⁵. It stated that, a new system of physical education, sport and recreation should aim to achieve a high level of fitness for students, as well as to develop habits and skills in recreation and sports. It has also been suggested that the size of the physical education, sport and recreation activities per student be successively increased to reach 6 hours per week in 1985. The outgoing for these expectations was the provision of § 2 *Ministers (...) will provide conditions for the implementation of the new system of physical education, sport and recreation for children and young people as well as the intensification of the activities of the School Sports Association*. This meant that the SZS was the main guide in the development of school sport.

This assumption was, in a sense, right. It was primarily the SZS who was the protagonist of the spartakiadamovement in which the school youth participated. The first Polish Youth Spartakiada was held in Wrocław in 1969 on the occasion of the XXV anniversary of the People's Republic of Poland. The next Games organized in 1979 was awarded the title of the Polish Youth Championships. The Organized Athletes' Cup for the «World Youth» Cup was also very popular. His sports competitions became the basis for the 1973 Sports Illustrated badge called «Universal Sports Badge». Many positive effects have brought numerous actions popularizing sports among school youth, such as «sports holiday» or «sports winter».

At the beginning of the political transformation, ie in 1989, the «Report about physical culture in Poland» prepared under the auspices of the Committee on Physical Culture of the Polish Academy of Sciences. According to this study, at the end of the 1980s, the level of physical education and sport was very diverse, from high to almost zero. The level of influence was affected by the overall condition of schools, among others. Poor base facilities, equipment and hygiene, besides focusing on emergency purposes rather than prospective goals, retargeting the educational process, treating pupils objectively, and accepting as the main criterion of the level of physical education in a sports school of a narrow group of pupils²⁶.

This phenomenon was accompanied by a decrease in the interest of young people in the compulsory physical activity (sports), in schools and out-of-school sports clubs²⁷.

3. The Legal Basics of School Sport After the Political Transformation (1989–1997). Introduction of the transformation of the entire state system in the early 1990s resulted in the change of the legal basis of school sport. On September 7, 1991 the Sejm passed a new law on the education system. According to its preamble: *Education in the Republic of Poland is a common good of the whole of society; It is guided by the principles contained in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland (...) The school should provide every pupil with the necessary conditions for its development, prepare him to fulfill his family and civic duties based on the principles of solidarity, democracy, tolerance and freedom*²⁸.

An important provision of this law, which influenced the development of school sports, was the provision of art. 56, which decided *that schools and institutions could operate (...) associations and organizations whose statutory purpose is to work with children and youth either expanding or enriching the form of didactic and educational activities and caring school*. The basis of the activities of these associations was the Act of April 7, 1989 – *Law about Associations*²⁹ and the Detailed Act of 18 I 1996 *about physical culture*³⁰. These laws, in their basic content, regulated the mode of creation and the rules of functioning of physical culture associations. It also introduced new regulations to school sport and its organization. Since then the SZS has lost the legal monopoly to organize sport and recreation activities at the school environment. As we know, organizations involved in the implementation of tasks related to the broadly understood physical culture include: sports clubs; inter-school sports clubs; popular sports clubs; parish sports clubs. This directory is not a closed directory. In addition to the four most commonly used organizational forms of physical culture in the student environment, there may be other organizations as long as their goals and statutes are consistent with the applicable legal order.

The characteristic feature of these associations was that they were developed under the previous Act of 3 July 1984 *about physical culture*³¹. They have acquired legal personality through the entry into the register of physical culture associations run by a governmental body with general jurisdiction (voivode). Already - under the rule of the previously binding 1984 Act – starting in 1994, students' sport clubs (UC) were started. The creation of

²⁵ *Monitor Polski*. 1973. No. 21. Pos. 123. See In addition: J. Cepcer, April Resolution of Physical Culture and the Meaning of Physical Culture in 1973. In the recent history of physical culture in Poland. Vol. Collective work under ed. B. Woltmann, Gorzów Wlkp. 2002. P. 297–304.

²⁶ Committee on Physical Culture of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Report on Physical Culture in Poland. Warsaw, 1989.

²⁷ Z. Zukowska, Physical Culture of Youth in Educational Institutions. From the Research Workshop. Warszawa : AWF, 1987; J. Gaj, K. Hądzelek. Op. 206–207.

²⁸ Journal of Laws 2016.1943 t.j. of 2016.12.02.

²⁹ Journal of Laws 2017.210 t.j. of 2017.02.03.

³⁰ Journal of Laws 2007.226 t.j. of 2007.12.04.

³¹ Journal of Laws 1984 with later changes.

these new organizational forms of school sport resulted not so much from the desire to meet the expectations of the environment, as with misunderstandings about the role of school sport that occurred between the Office of Physical Culture and Tourism and the SZS. Student sports clubs were sanctioned 2 years later, in 1996, under the Act on Physical Culture.

The definition of the student sports club contained the provisions of art. 7 Act of 18 I 1996 about physical culture, which provided that the student sports club was an association of physical culture *sui generis*. It was not registered in the National Court Register, but entered in the register maintained by the competent county governor (the mayor of the city with county status). This simplified procedure was designed to facilitate the setting up of such clubs³². As stated in the content of the article. 7 of the aforementioned law, the legislator has seen in this organizational form a factor that will positively influence the development of widely understood school sports. These assumptions seemed to be right, because these associations were active in the environment of children and youth and were inextricably linked to schools; they were based on an existing base and school facilities; engage young people to participate in publicly accessible sports; they helped to promote sports talents and organizers.

An important breakthrough in the development of school physical culture associations with legal personality started the program «Sport of All Children», which was introduced by the decision of the President of the Office of Physical Culture and Tourism of 13 April 1994. This decision was also established inter-ministerial Sports Committee of Children and Youth. One of the main tasks of the program was to expand the base of school sports primarily by providing comprehensive assistance in the development of primary school education. The program of action of these clubs has introduced sports «minidisciplines» in canoeing, football, volleyball, tennis, archery and cycling.

Activities undertaken by the «Sports of All Children» program have turned out to be in line with social expectations, in particular parents, teachers, and children themselves. The best thing about this was that, according to the state of the day on 6 April 1996 – the day of the new Act of 18 I 1996 about physical culture came into force – more than 2200 student sports clubs were registered⁶⁸.

4. Summary

The legal-organizational basis of school physical culture in Poland depended to a large extent from the political, social and economic system of the state. After World War II until 1989 – with a few exceptions – mandatory system with central directives, where there was no place for pluralism and self-governance.

After 1989, new forms of school sport were developed. This process continues to this day and is constantly being supplemented by new elements of the «infrastructure» of physical education school.

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³² See. A. Nowakowski, Legal status of student sports clubs in Poland. *Scientific Journal of the Higher School of Management in Częstochowa*. 2001. № 3 (15). P 5–15.

⁶⁸ W. Sawicki, School of Physical Education. Warsaw, 1997. P. 8.