



ORGANISING SWIMMING LESSONS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

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ABSTRACT

Swimming is a sport with multilateral impact on the human organism, helpful and wanted mainly due to the possibility of achieving versatile and harmonic physical development and health strengthening, equally necessary for all people of all ages. The refinement of the organization and the adaptive process of swimming lessons, in the direction „Adapted physical activity for people with intellectual disabilities”, would motivate and improve their quality of life. The objective of this work is to determine the "model" for each participant with a disability in the experiment and in accordance we set out the tasks: to establish the current physical condition, swimming skills and the level of progress for each disabled individual, so as to fall in a group with similar in physical capacity and swimming skills, body - abled participants. The implementation of the suggested model will enable people with disabilities to integrate into group training in swimming together with people without disabilities. We believe that the improvement of the organization and the process of adaptation would motivate and improve their quality of life.

Key words: sport, activity, health, people with mental disabilities, integration

The low levels of physical activity and the resulting health issues is an increasing socially significant problem which progressively attracts the attention of specialists in the area. (1). The term activity' is selected as comprehensive in the English language and includes all forms of general motor development, from games to sports, from informal sports and recreation to high achievement sports, and includes all age groups (2). According to the researcher Peltekova, the need for physical activity is much greater in children and teenagers compared to adults. That is why it is important physical activity to be incorporated into their everyday life (3). They should be encouraged to exercise not only in physical education classes but also on weekends and holidays. This is of special

regards to disabled people, the process of physical activity requires that it is implemented in accordance with the specifics of each disability, and may endure numerous changes. Looking for the best means and methods for preventing and diminishing disabilities, specialists increasingly direct their efforts to various kinds of adapted physical activity (APA). As a term that encompasses education, recreation and sports APA gets adopted and affirmed with a multidisciplinary and considerable application (4). Since 2015 the Ministry of Physical Education and Sports has obtained a direct responsibility for the people with disabilities, as it developed a special program for them in the new direction “Sports in free time for people with disabilities”. The optimisation of the motor regime with the means of swimming is a useful method for prophylaxis and treating different health issues (5). The positive effect of systematic sport activities is to be found on the one hand, in various organs and systems of the human body, and on the other, in the

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psychological condition – emotions, feelings, mood, character. (6). Swimming is a sport that has proved its positive impact on people's health and psychological condition in all age groups and as applied to different disabilities. Specialists' experience in this area illustrates that the following factors must be considered – motor abilities, age, degree and particularity of the disability. It is a settled goal of this work to determine a "Model" for each disabled participant in the experiment, which would contribute to the improvement of the organisation and adaptive process of swimming lessons in the direction 'Adapted physical activity for people with intellectual disabilities'.

The purpose of the Model is to preparatory establish the momentary physical condition, swimming abilities, as well as the level of progress that the participant achieves, thus building up the

prerequisites for maximal improvement of the specific abilities, the optimal physical pressure and equality with the rest of the participants in each group. The total sum of points allows for the distributing of individuals into groups corresponding to their physical and swimming abilities.

Tasks:

1. Determining the momentary condition through a test battery (**Table 1**)
2. Distribution into groups (in accordance with the presented results in **Table 1**)
3. Feedback concerning success rates – a periodic test (**Table 2**)
4. Redistribution of groups corresponding the results of (3).

Table 1. Determining of the momentary condition

<i>test</i>		<i>point 1</i>		<i>point 2</i>		<i>point 3</i>		<i>point 4</i>	
		m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f
<i>Running 50 meters (sec)</i>		12 +	14 +	10–11.9	12-13,9	8-9,9	10-11,9	to 7,9	to 9,9
<i>Push ups (number)</i>		to 4	to 2	4-6	3-5	7-9	6-8	10+	9+
<i>Abdominal presses (number)</i>		to 14	to 10	15-19	11-14	20-24	15-18	25+	19+
Swimming skills	exhale in the water	not	not	with fixed support	with fixed support	with a movable support	with a movable support	Without support	Without support
	lies on the water	not	not	with fixed support	with fixed support	with a movable support	with a movable support	Without support	Without support
	swims legs crawl	not	not	with fixed support	with fixed support	with a movable support	with a movable support	Without support	Without support
	swims crawl	not	not	with fixed support	with fixed support	with a movable support	with a movable support	Without support	Without support

Table 2. Feedback on success rates (points for both sexes are the same)

<i>test</i>		<i>point 1</i>	<i>point 2</i>	<i>point 3</i>	<i>point 4</i>
Swimming skills	swims legs crawl	not	with a movable support	without support with gross errors	Yes
	swims legs backstroke	not	with a movable support	without support with gross errors	Yes
	swims crawl	not	with a movable support	with gross errors	Yes
	swims backstroke	not	with a movable support	with gross errors	Yes
	swims another style	not	with a movable support	with gross errors	Yes

CONCLUSIONS

The application of the suggested *Model* gave an opportunity to the participants in the experiment – people with disabilities in the direction “Adapted physical activity for people with intellectual disabilities” - to integrate in group swimming lessons with people with no disabilities, thus providing the former with the possibility of not only improving their health status, physical activity and specific skills, but also of socializing and enhancing their self-esteem and confidence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The applied model is just a small step towards the elaboration of a new adapted methodology of swimming for people with disabilities in an integrated environment. The benefits of the development of such a model would also be relevant for the improvement of reverse integration which is so essential for our society.

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