

Augustyn K., Zubik M., Bieniek P., *The meaning of a trainers profession deregulation in nowadays sport*, „Ekonomia i Prawo. Economics and Law.”, Polszakiewicz B., Boehlke J. (ed.), Vol. 13, No. 2/2014, pp. 245-258. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.12775/EiP.2014.018>.

KRZYSZTOF AUGUSTYN\*, MATEUSZ ZUBIK\*\*, PAWEŁ BIENIEK\*\*\*

## THE MEANING OF A TRAINERS PROFESSION DEREGULATION IN NOWADAYS SPORT

### SUMMARY

According to recent act of trainer/instructor profession deregulation in Poland, no courses or exams are required to become a trainer or sport instructor. After changes, any common person is allowed to practice sports coaching. The aim of the research was to become familiar with the parents opinion on the act and on their children's attendance to the sport classes. The tool to acquire responds was a 10-question questionnaire of author's project which has been completed by 378 citizens of Małopolska. The results revealed discrepancies in perception of trainer/instructor profession deregulation. Among others, around 60% of parents declared they never checked pro's qualifications and would not mind their work if they had no certifications. Most parents do not focus on the trainers' faculties and legal force of their title. It should be thought-provoking as kids' safety is expected to be priority. There comes the conclusion that the act of deregulation, which is strongly depreciated by experts, is not be-

---

\* Krzysztof Augustyn, The University School of Physical Education in Cracow, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, Section of Theory and Methodology of Athletics, Al. Jana Pawła II 78, 31-571 Kraków, phone: +48 792 990 287, e-mail: [krzysztofaugustyn@g.pl](mailto:krzysztofaugustyn@g.pl) (*corresponding author*).

\*\* Mateusz Zubik, The University School of Physical Education in Cracow, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, Section of Theory and Methodology of Handball, Al. Jana Pawła II 78, 31-571 Kraków, phone: +48 664 975 370, e-mail: [zubikmateusz@wp.pl](mailto:zubikmateusz@wp.pl).

\*\*\* Paweł Bieniek, University of Science and Technology in Cracow, Department of Sport and Physical Education, ul. Piastowska 26a, 30-070 Kraków, phone: +48 517 065 606, e-mail: [plbieniek@o2.pl](mailto:plbieniek@o2.pl).

ing depreciated among parents of children practicing sports. There should be introduced educational campaign which would increase parents' awareness.

**Keywords:** quality in sport, children's and adolescents' sport, deregulation

**JEL Classification:** K40, K29, K49

## INTRODUCTION

According to the act from the 13<sup>th</sup> of July 2013<sup>1</sup> that states about the changes in regulation of some profession, the act of sport from June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010<sup>2</sup> also had to be changed. Due to the newly established law trainer or instructor are no longer a professions and requirements to obtain both of these titles are equal now. Moreover, the procedure of obtaining these titles has been simplified so that every person that has a secondary education, is more than eighteen year old, had not been sentenced with a final judgment for a crime and has got knowledge and experience essential to perform all duties, can become the trainer/instructor of any sport that is associated in Polish Sports Association. What is curious, legislator does not explain how that knowledge and experience should be verified.

The conclusion is that for future educator to be able to conduct sport classes with children or adolescents, no exams verifying knowledge are required. Making the procedure of becoming trainer/instructor easier and not requiring any exams checking the knowledge in this field have faced a lot of criticism from the sport society. According to the former act, in order to get an instructor title one had to complete special course. The course, besides the classes of technic and methodology of sport teaching, included also extensive general part in which future instructor attended basic anatomy, pedagogics<sup>3</sup>, psychology, methodology of teaching children classes<sup>4</sup>. Now, after the change of the act, when there is no obligation to join special courses many people are not sure if future instructors would know how to work with a young organism. They may harm young athletes at the most dynamic stage of their motor development by choosing not proper exercises or putting too

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ustawa z dnia 13 czerwca 2013 r. o zmianie ustaw regulujących wykonywanie niektórych zawodów*, Dz. U. 2013, poz. 829.

<sup>2</sup> *Ustawa z dnia 25 czerwca 2010 r. o sporcie*, Dz. U. Nr 127, poz. 857.

<sup>3</sup> J. Nowocień, *Trener sportowy w perspektywie pedagogicznej*, [in:] H. Sozański, J. Sadowski (ed.), *Trener wczoraj, dziś, jutro*, Biała Podlaska 2013, p. 101-118.

<sup>4</sup> J. Derbich, M. Mitura, *Kompetencje zawodowe trenera w ocenie polskich i holenderskich szkoleniowców piłki wodnej*, [in:] A. Kuder, K. Perkowski, D. Śledziwski (ed.), *Proces doskonalenia treningu i walki sportowej*, Vol. 9, Warszawa 2012.

much pressure on them. It may result in severe health problems in the future. What is worth emphasizing, it is trainer/instructor duty to take care of children's education, breeding and emotional development<sup>5</sup>. This role seems to be even more responsible than working on physical development and it should be performed by a person that is prepared to do it<sup>6</sup>. It is essential in working with adolescent people at their difficult puberty time, when they develop features that are characteristic for that age like being more rebel and emotionally unstable. Requirements of the field are too high for unprepared person to cope with them<sup>7</sup>.

At this moment it is difficult to anticipate the consequences of the deregulation for the sport. However, it can be predicted that it would be the most meaningful for the youngest sportsmen. This is the group that lacks knowledge the most, is the most inexperienced and cannot defend against unqualified teacher. They usually imitate their trainers and obey their orders uncritically, so it should be a role model – a person qualified and responsible. Since the country government does not control who is working with children, much more responsibility lies on parent shoulder. After all, they make the decision where and what kind of classes sign up their children for. According to that fact, parents opinion on the deregulation should be known, and what are their criteria of choosing the trainer for their children. The issue is very interesting especially because there are some severe concerns about the fact that parents, not involved in any kind of sport and not having a proper knowledge, will fail in choosing a good trainer/instructor. It is possible that because of the changes in law, they become unprotected against frauds who only pretend to be trainers. They can only hope the chosen trainer will prove to be the right one. The situation after the law changes raises the question: how can parents check whether the professionalism of the trainer that is taking care of their children is not reduced only to professional sport outfit?

## 1. THE AIM OF THE RESEARCH WORK

The main aim of the research was to become familiar with the parents opinion on the act of trainers/instructor profession deregulation and on their children attendance to the sport classes. An additional aim was to assess parents concern about the safety during the extracurricular sport classes and their

---

<sup>5</sup> M. Herzig, *Trener - zawodnik - psycholog*, „Sport Wyczynowy”, No. 7-8/2004, p. 475-476.

<sup>6</sup> Sozański H., Sadowski J. (ed.), *Trener wczoraj, dziś, jutro*, Biała Podlaska 2013.

<sup>7</sup> M. Czechowski, *Środowisko wychowawcze klubu sportowego*, [in:] H. Sozański, J. Sadowski (ed.), *Trener wczoraj, dziś, jutro*, Biała Podlaska 2013, s. 257-278.

expectations, like skills and education, towards the person that conducts them. Knowing the answer to the questions above would enable to assess parents awareness of the competences that sport trainer or instructor should possess.

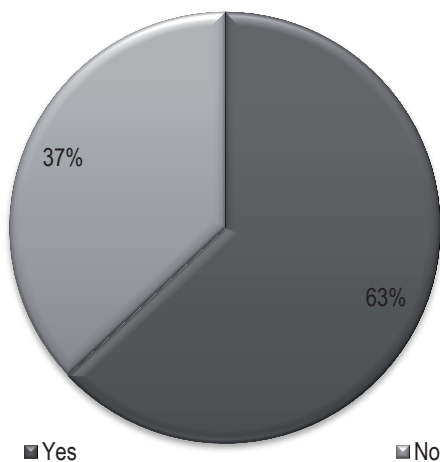
## 2. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Study was conducted on the sample of 378 parents of children training mainly handball, football and athletics from the Małopolska region. The main tool in the research was a questionnaire. It has been distributed online. The questionnaire included ten questions about the opinion on the deregulation of the trainer/instructor profession, safety during extracurricular classes and the expectations of the person conduction the classes.

## 3. THE RESULTS

The results were presented in a form of diagrams with the percentage of the answers for certain questions.

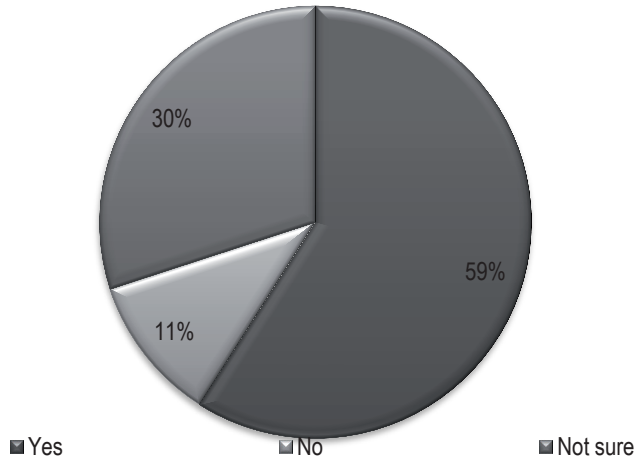
Figure 1. Have you ever wonder if the person that conducts your children sport classes has got a trainer or instructor faculties?



Source: Own preparation based on questionnaire data.

For the question number 1. (figure 1) concerning the verification of trainer/instructor faculties 63% of asked answer that they have verified trainers/instructors faculties.

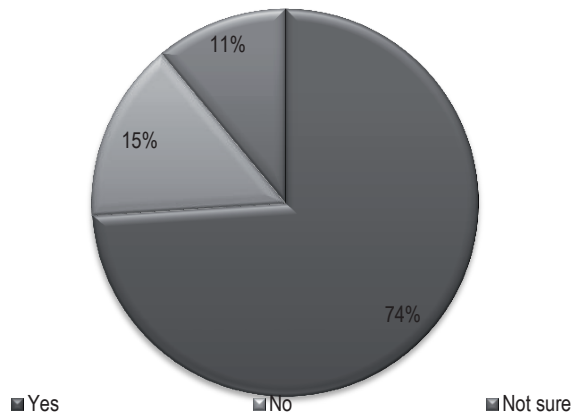
Figure 2. If you know that your children current trainer, work of whom you are satisfied, would you let him continue his work with your children?



Source: As in figure 1.

For the question above (figure 2) about 59% respondents answer that they would continue their work with the trainer even if they know they do not have their faculties. Only 11% of parents would consider changing the trainer for their children.

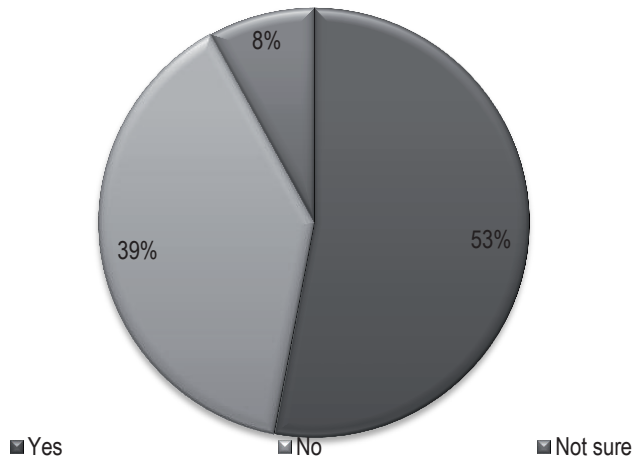
Figure 3. Would you allow a high class former contestant to conduct sport classes with your children, even though they do not have a proper faculties?



Source: As in figure 1.

Almost three-quarter of respondents (74%) would allow the high class former contestant to conduct classes with their children even though they do not have a proper faculties (figure 3). It proves high trust put on the people with high experience in practice. There is a small group of parents (15%) that would not allow for a such possibility.

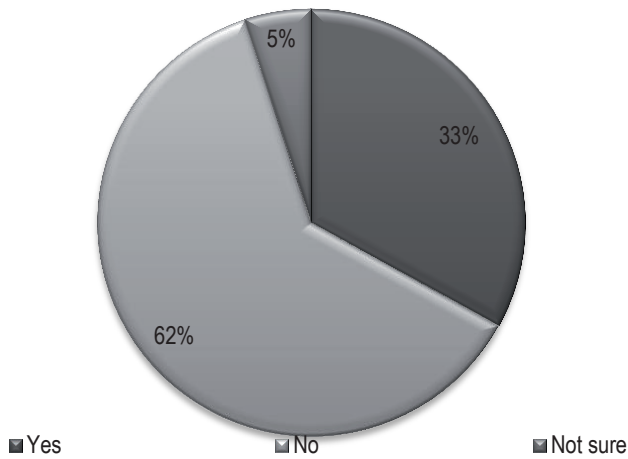
Figure 4. Do you consider long time sport carrier to be enough to work with children efficiently in a certain sport field?



Source: As in figure 1.

Over a half of parents (53%) agrees with the statement that long sport carrier as a contestant is enough to work with children as a trainer or instructor of certain sport (figure 4). However, there was also a big group of parents that does not approve such a solution, and claim that special courses should be required.

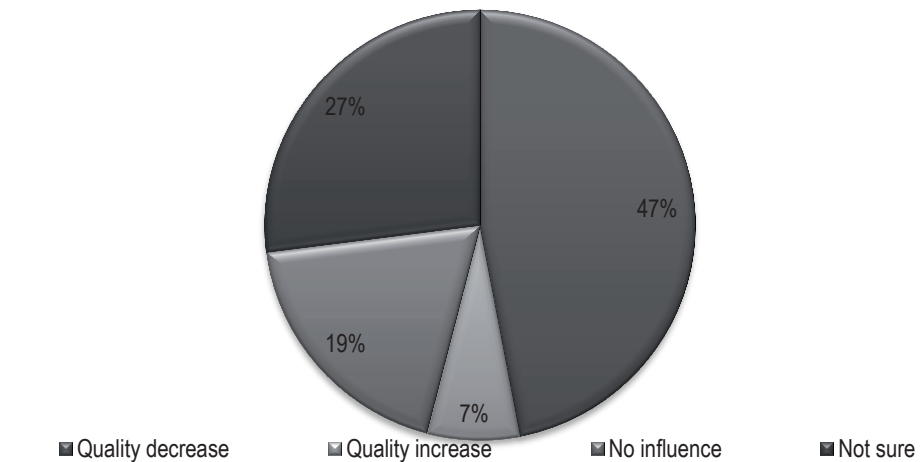
Figure 5. Do you think that experience as a sport contestant in the past is essential for good sport trainer?



Source: As in figure 1.

About 62% of respondents agreed with the statement that experience as a sport contestant in the past is essential for good sport trainer. One-third does not agree with that statement, and about 5% do not have the opinion on the issue.

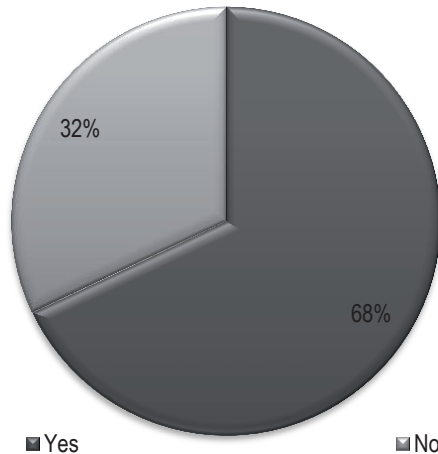
Figure 6. Do you think that deregulation of trainer/instructor profession will influence the quality of conduction sport classes?



Source: As in figure 1.

There are very interesting answers to this question (figure 6). Almost half of parents (47%) claim that deregulation will deteriorate the quality of sport classes, and only 7% has the opposite opinion. Almost one-fifth claim that it will not make any changes (quo status), and a big group of parents (27%) do not know what changes will those law changes make at all.

Figure 7. Would you like the “Ministerstwo Sportu i Turystyki” to verify the knowledge of trainers/instructors by organizing obligatory exam?

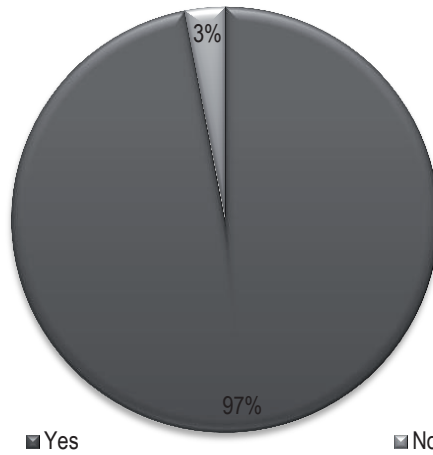


Source: As in figure 1.

About 68% of respondents would like the “Ministerstwo Sportu i Turystyki” to verify the knowledge of trainers/instructors by organizing obligatory exam of basic informations required to work with “living organism”. According to the act of deregulation trainers/instructors should possess such knowledge, however the ways to verify it were not established.



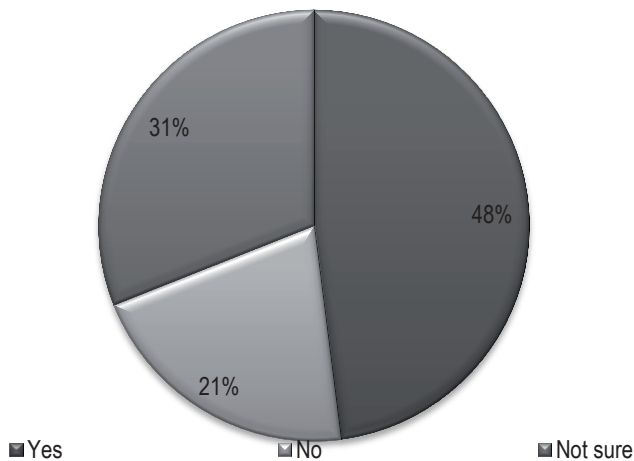
Figure 8. Have you ever thought of your children's safety during sport classes?



Source: As in figure 1.

The answers for the question (figure 8) show how important to parents is the safety of their children during sport classes (97%). Only 3% of respondents answered that they had never thought of their children safety during sport classes.

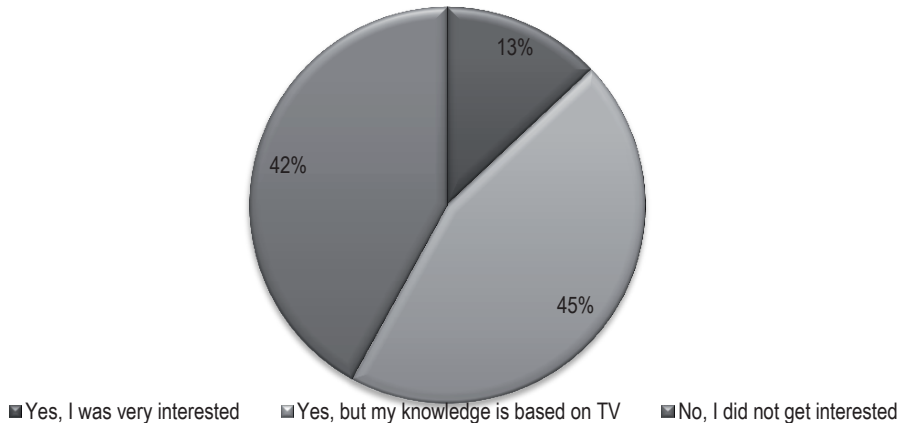
Figure 9. Do you consider sustaining injuries during sport classes as random situations or being connected to the bad organization of classes?



Source: As in figure 1.

Random situations are the cause of about 48% injuries according to parents, about 21% claims that injuries are connected with bad organization of the people responsible for it. As much as 31% is not able to decide what is the cause of sport injuries.

Figure 10. Did you ever get interested in deregulation of trainer/instructor profession?



Source: As in figure 1.

The last question considered parents knowledge of the act of deregulation of trainer/instructor profession. The results are clear. Only 13% of respondents have a broad knowledge about the issue of deregulation. On the other hand the knowledge of 45% of parents is limited only to the basic information from mass media. It is concerning for authors that as much as 42% of parents do not know anything about the act, and that in a result of it a person with no education can take care of their children.

## CONCLUSIONS

The results of the survey are extremely interesting as they reveal the fact that parents evaluate the act of trainer/instructor profession deregulation more positively than people connected to sport. Taking children to the extracurricular sport classes they care more about the style of conducting them their subjective opinion on the trainer than about his education. Parents trust more in the experience gain during sportsman carrier in the past than in trainer faculties and legislation. There may be two different reasons of such an approach. First of all, trainer/instructor faculties did not have a good reputation

in the past. Preparation courses, mandatory for everyone that wants to gain a trainer or instructor title used to be organized by a private firms. The quality of such courses was not good at all, and passing rate was usually 100%, so many random persons did pass the final exam and end up with a trainer/instructor title.

On the other hand, people who achieved a lot during many-year-long carrier are considered as authority among common people in the society. It seems, that if they devoted whole lives to the sport, their experience and knowledge should be sufficient to conduct classes of a good quality. However, it is often being forgotten that successful athletes have spent many years in senior clubs, where training load is very heavy and there is only one goal – to win. If they carry out trainings imitating their own trainings that they used to have in a senior club, it may overload young sportsmen, leading to injuries or even stop their sport and, what is even worse, psychomotor development<sup>8</sup>. It has to be always remembered that the main objective of teaching sport, besides<sup>9</sup>. Proper skills to do it cannot be gained only by making sport carrier in the past.

Another problem of the Polish adolescents sport are the criteria according to which parents evaluate the quality of trainer's or instructor's work. Rarely there are educational aspects, more often the successes that children achieve. Unfortunately, this type of thinking has only good short-term results and brings temporary successes. Looking further ahead, it will not shape a complete contestant who is able to achieve the peak possibilities at their senior years. Studies show that only about 20-25% of well doing young sportsmen maintain their position during senior years<sup>10</sup>. The reason of such poor results may be too early specialization and the will to achieve temporary successes which stops young talents development<sup>11</sup>. It is disturbing what authors noticed, that most of sport organizations in advertisement campaigns mention sport successes as the first and the most important advantage. Still, they cannot be blamed, as this is what parents expect from their children trainer. The increase in number of private sport schools that are being established recently, that is found by parents' not government's money may have an influence on the situation. Private school have to adjust to the free market poli-

---

<sup>8</sup> Z. Naglak, *Kształtowanie gracza na podstawowym etapie*, Wydawnictwo AWF, Wrocław 2010.

<sup>9</sup> H. Sozański, *Sport dzieci i młodzieży, vademecum trener*, RCMSKFiS, Warszawa 1994.

<sup>10</sup> H. Sozański, *Dobór i kwalifikacja do sportu*, RCMSKFiS, Warszawa 1997.

<sup>11</sup> M. Spieszny, L. Walczyk, *Piłka ręczna: Program szkolenia dzieci i młodzieży*, COS, Warszawa 2001.

cy and become attractive to potential customer (a parent), in other way they will lose competitive advantage. Unfortunately, young sportsmen lose the most in this situation.

Overambitious trainers with a strong will to win often omit individuals that mature later. Such people at their early years do not represent a high sport capability and because of that are not useful in achieving immediate successes. Such trainers usually are not aware of the fact that late maturity may create a favourable conditions to some motor skills development, which may result in a great sport achievements in the senior age<sup>12</sup>.

The answers for the further questions showed an interesting and at the same time odd tendency. Even though, most of the parents would let a person with a rich sports experience but no education to train their children, almost 65% claimed that sport carrier is not necessary. Most of parents also claim that broad access to the trainer/instructor profession will decrease the sport classes quality level. Those statements are contrary to the previous ones about the instructor/trainer faculties. It may prove parents confusion, and the fact that they do not know what is the best for their children. Another proof is that most of parents (70%) would like to verify trainer/instructor skills with an obligatory exam. It would evaluate person's ability to carry out trainings with children. Unfortunately, they are deprived of this kind of help by the government, and have to remember that they are the only institution to control the quality of their children sport education. In a fact it is their duty to choose a right person to train their children. There is a question left, will they be capable of choosing appropriate person, who would be competent enough to look ahead on the sport issue<sup>13</sup>?

Summing up our consideration, it is worth to remember that the study is one of the first made in the field, as the act of deregulation has been established in the second half of the year 2013. The authors agree that similar studies should be carried out in a future among people involved in the situation (trainers and parents) to show how the act is working and what are the changes. In a fact their opinion may influence the government to provide some adjustments in the act in case of inefficiency.

At the end of the debate on possible negative effects of the act of trainer/instructor profession deregulation, it has to be emphasised that the problem does not only concern sport of the youngest. It was the study devoted

---

<sup>12</sup> J. Raczek, *Antropomotoryka – teoria motoryczności człowieka w zarysie*, Wydawnictwo Lekarskie PZWL, Warszawa 2010.

<sup>13</sup> K. Sas-Nowosielski, *O niektórych społeczno-pedagogicznych aspektach roli trenera*, „Sport Wychynowy”, No. 1-3/2008, p. 517-519.

to the children's sport, as the authors consider them to be the most vulnerable to the trainer's incompetence group. However, sport in general becomes more and more common among different age groups, and in a result many people was not to try snowboard, ski, or even work out at the gym under the supervision of instructor. In situations at hand uneducated trainer may be also a danger to the health and skills of his clients. There is an instant growth in the popularity of so called "personal trainers" that take care of their clients physical activity almost every day. Not adequate exercises, that are not appropriate to the age and condition including illnesses, may be harmful even for adults. To make the matter worse, sometimes grownup people are similar to children, and due to gain the perfect body they obey all trainer orders, even the most ridiculous.

The changes will probably influence the professional sport. No doubt, quality of nowadays is directly related to the result, and they depend mainly on the well qualified coaching stuff. What will be the opinion of Polish Sports Association, where with the most talented Polish representatives always worked trainers with the greatest interdisciplinary knowledge? It raises the question, did the "Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości" predict all of those consequences? Independent observers claim, that giving a broader access to the trainer/instructor profession was not a bad idea. Nevertheless, will that change in law help Polish sport soar to new heights (like it did in Germany, UK, France and the USA) after a years of severe problems (only two golden medals on Olympic Games in London)?<sup>14</sup> What would Polish sport look like after such changes in a future? Next few years, that make many sportsman and trainers worried, will give us the answer. So far it is the great unknown.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Czechowski M., *Środowisko wychowawcze klubu sportowego*, [in:] H. Sozański, J. Sadowski (ed.), *Trener wczoraj, dziś, jutro*, Biała Podlaska 2013.
- Derbich J., Mitura M., *Kompetencje zawodowe trenera w ocenie polskich i holenderskich szkoleniowców piłki wodnej*, [in:] A. Kuder, K. Perkowski, D. Śledziwski (ed.), *Proces doskonalenia treningu i walki sportowej*, Vol. 9, Warszawa 2012.
- Herzig M., *Trener - zawodnik - psycholog*, „Sport Wyczynowy”, No. 7-8/2004.
- Naglak Z., *Kształtowanie gracza na podstawowym etapie*, Wydawnictwo AWF, Wrocław 2010.

---

<sup>14</sup> A. Zieliński, *Jak pracuje się w Belgii nad rozwojem trenerów*, „Trener 101”, No. 2/2012, p. 4-11.

- Nowocien J., *Trener sportowy w perspektywie pedagogicznej*, [in:] H. Sozański, J. Sadowski (ed.), *Trener wczoraj, dziś, jutro*, Biała Podlaska 2013.
- Raczek J., *Antropomotoryka – teoria motoryczności człowieka w zarysie*, Wydawnictwo Lekarskie PZWL, Warszawa 2010.
- Sas-Nowosielski K., *O niektórych społeczno-pedagogicznych aspektach roli trenera*, „Sport Wyczynowy”, No. 1-3/2008.
- Sozański H., *Dobór i kwalifikacja do sportu*, RCMSKFiS, Warszawa 1997.
- Sozański H., Sadowski J. (ed.), *Trener wczoraj, dziś, jutro*, Biała Podlaska 2013.
- Sozański H., *Sport dzieci i młodzieży, vademecum trener*, RCMSKFiS, Warszawa 1994.
- Spieszny M., Walczyk L., *Piłka ręczna: Program szkolenia dzieci i młodzieży*, COS, Warszawa 2001.
- Ustawa z dnia 13 czerwca 2013 r. o zmianie ustaw regulujących wykonywanie niektórych zawodów*, Dz. U. 2013, poz. 829.
- Ustawa z dnia 25 czerwca 2010 r. o sporcie*, Dz. U. Nr 127, poz. 857.
- Zieliński A., *Jak pracuje się w Belgii nad rozwojem trenerów?*, „Trener 101”, No. 2/2012.