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***Female participants of recreational sessions of aquarobics***

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**Uczestniczki rekreacyjnych zajęć z aerobiku wodnego.**

**INTRODUCTION**

Objectives of the National Health Programme deal with 18 issues (Narodowy 1996). Among them the issue of increasing physical activity of the population appears first on the list because physical activity is indispensable for proper growth, physical, psychological and social health of children, youth and adults (at any age).

One of many forms of spending spare time is taking advantage of recreational clubs' offer. It refers mainly to inhabitants of urban agglomerations where the offer is much more variegated than in smaller cities (due to greater demand). Fitness clubs offer their female clients very diversified forms of physical activity. One of them is aquarobics numbered among the most recent versions of the modern gymnastics. It is based on different shaping slow exercises (with accessories) conducted to the selected music and pace in a swimming pool. They are mostly exercises of aerobic and strength characteristic created to move against water resistance.

Conducted researches prove the positive effect of aquarobics on human organism (Eider 2001, Eider 2003a, 2003b).

The aim of this work was to obtain information concerning participants of recreational sessions of aquarobics.

**MATERIAL AND RESEARCH METHOD**

Investigated group consisted of 165 women taking part in aquarobics exercises in Szczecin between 1999 and 2002. All women participated in aquarobics 2 times a week for 45 minutes. As far as the period of training is concerned there was significant differentiation among women practicing this recreation form. At the moment of research 23,6% women had 1-3 months of practice, 31,5% - between 4 and 6 months, 18,8% - between 7 and 9 months, 11,5% - between 10 and 12 months and 14,6% - more than one year.

Research material has been obtained from questionnaires distributed among participants of aquarobics exercises and filled by them after training session (without time limit).

## RESULTS OF RESEARCHES

The age range of investigated women amounted from 18 till 58 years. The most numerous group, almost 34%, consisted of women between 31 and 40 years of age. Least numerous was the group of women above 50 years of age (chart 1).

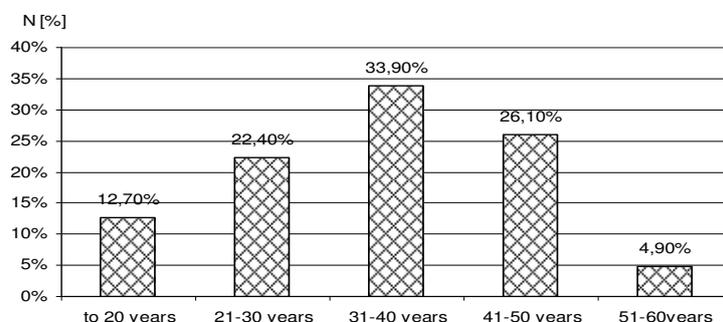


Chart 1. Number of women practicing aquarobics according to their age

Range of body height among women practicing aquarobics amounted from 146 till 178 cm. No fewer than 57,6% investigated women ranked to category between 156 and 165 cm. The lowest percentage of women belonged to the group of the smallest and the tallest ones (table 1).

Table 1. Number of women practicing aquarobics with particular body height and weight

Body height			Body weight		
Przedziały	n	%	Przedziały	n	%
145-150	11	6,7	40-45	3	1,8
151-155	21	12,7	46-50	5	3,0
156-160	37	22,4	51-55	12	7,3
161-165	58	35,2	56-60	19	11,5
166-170	17	10,3	61-65	20	12,1
171-175	15	9,1	66-70	23	13,9
176-180	6	3,6	71-75	41	24,9
181-185	-	-	76-80	28	17,0
186-190	-	-	81-85	14	8,5

Range of body weight among women conducting aquarobics exercises amounted from 44 to 85 kg. The most numerous group - 41,9% of all women - belonged to the 71-80 kg range. The lowest ranges were represented by least number of investigated women (table 1).

Further analysis of investigation results concerned education level of women practicing aquarobics (chart 2). Obtained data show that the most frequent participants of aquarobics training were women with secondary education (including students that constituted 25,6%) and higher education. Girls going to secondary schools had been included among the group with primary education.

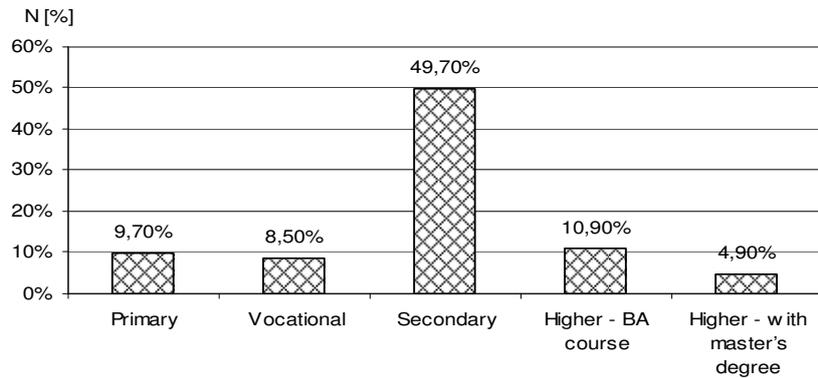


Chart 2. Education level of investigated women

Almost 68% women had been professionally engaged executing mental and physical work. The least group constituted non-working retired women (chart 3).

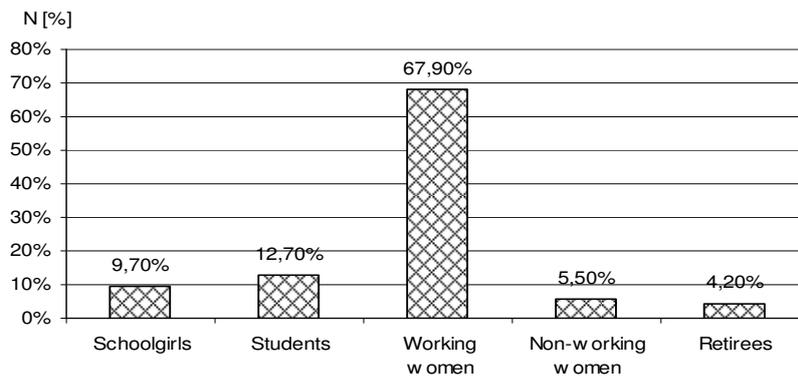


Chart 3. Professional status of investigated women

Among respondents prevailed married and unmarried women (chart 4).

## DESCRIPTION OF OBTAINED RESULTS

Modern recreational clubs offer many new forms of physical activity. Aerobics (physical exercises providing increased amount of oxygen) is a popular form of physical recreation practiced by schoolgirls, students, mature women. One of its variant is water aerobics often called aquarobics (Eider 2003a, Grodzka-Kubiak 2002). This form of physical activity is based on slow shaping exercises (with accessories) conducted to the selected music and particular pace in a swimming pool 150 cm in depth (in case of body of water is has to guarantee full safety of participants). Recreational aquarobic means various exercises adapted

to the age of participants, their swimming ability and general physical efficiency. During aquarobics exercises participants move against water resistance. This kind of activity helps to shape and strengthen almost all muscle groups in a dynamic way. Moreover water takes the strain off the joints and spinal column which is extremely helpful in fight against back pains (Iwanowski 1997).

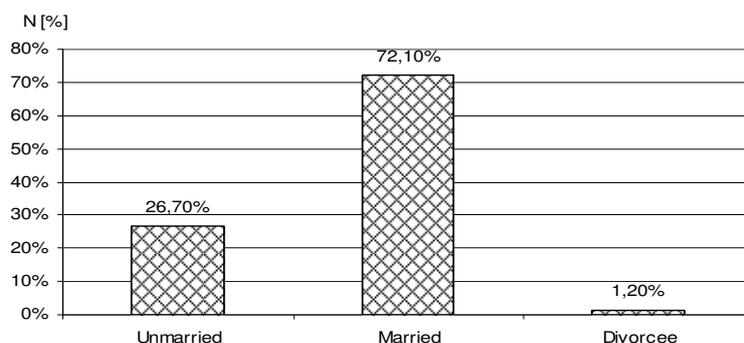


Chart 4. Marital status of investigated women

Nowadays in fitness clubs we can meet women at different age, with particular somatic features, education level, professional status. They strive for healthy lifestyle ensuring good frame of body and mind since today professional activity and all kind of civilization facilities confine active way of life more and more thus influencing human health negatively.

On the basis of obtained data an approximate so called „model of a participant of aquarobics training” can be defined. They are mainly 31-40 years old women, not very tall, with overweight, having secondary or higher education, married, representing different, mainly sedentary occupations.

Proper practice of aquarobics improves the level of motor ability (Eider 2003b), decreases surplus of adipose tissue and has a positive influence on health in general (Eider 2003a).

## CONCLUSIONS

1. Aquarobics training is mostly popular among women between 31 and 40 years of age.
2. The most numerous group of aquarobics training participants has secondary and higher education.
3. Practicing aquarobics is one of many factors determining healthy lifestyle.

## SUMMARY

The aim of this work was to gather information concerning persons taking part in recreational aquarobics training. The investigated group consisted of 165 women taking part in aquarobics training in Szczecin between 1999 and 2002. All respondents participated in

aquarobics sessions two times a week for 45 minutes. There was significant differentiation among women as far as the period of training is concerned. Obtained data had been collected from questionnaires distributed among female participants of aquarobics sessions and filled by them after training (without time limit).

Aquarobics training is mostly popular among women of 31-40. Its participants have mostly secondary and higher education. Practicing aquarobics is one of many factors determining healthy lifestyle.

### **STRESZCZENIE**

Celem niniejszej pracy było uzyskanie informacji dotyczącej charakterystyki osób uczestniczących w rekreacyjnych zajęciach z aerobiku wodnego. Materiał badawczy stanowiło 165 kobiet uczestniczących w zajęciach z aerobiku wodnego w Szczecinie w latach 1999-2002. Wszystkie ankietowane kobiety chodziły na zajęcia 45 minutowe 2 razy w tygodniu. Wśród ćwiczących występowało znaczne zróżnicowanie w zakresie posiadanego stażu uczestnictwa w tej gimnastyce rekreacyjnej. Zebrany materiał otrzymano z ankiet rozprawdzonych wśród uczestniczek rekreacyjnych zajęć z aerobiku wodnego. Była ona wypełniona po skończonych zajęciach (bez czasowego limitu).

Zajęcia z aerobiku wodnego cieszą się największym zainteresowaniem wśród kobiet w wieku 31-40 lat. Uczestniczkami zajęć są przede wszystkim kobiety posiadające wykształcenie średnie lub wyższe. Uprawianie aerobiku wodnego jest jednym z wielu czynników rzutujących na prowadzony zdrowy styl życia.