

# INNOAGON and Physical Education in Modern Education

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## ABSTRACT

In contemporary Polish education, there is a discernible crisis in physical education classes for the Alpha generation, with the number of children and young people being exempted from such classes increasing steadily. Teachers are attempting to enhance the appeal of school physical education by orienting these classes towards sports. While this has facilitated exposure to diverse forms of physical activity, it has concomitantly distorted the fundamental objectives of physical education. The pursuit of knowledge, the cultivation of skills, and the promotion of health-enhancing attitudes are pivotal aspects of the physical education curriculum. However, the emphasis on competitive sports has led to a narrow focus on specific skills and competitions, overshadowing the broader benefits of physical activity for health. The integration of modern technologies into the teaching process has further exacerbated this issue, contributing to the ongoing crisis in physical education in Poland. To address these challenges, it is recommended that INNOAGON (innovative agonology) be incorporated into the physical education curriculum as a tangible and effective measure. This approach aims to maintain the fundamental goals of physical education by promoting continuous development of students' bodies, minds, and spirits, underpinned by utilitarian human values that have been developed over centuries. The integration of scientific, preventive, and complementary medicine in the domains of combat sports, individual sports and team sports is a key aspect of INNOAGON, ensuring the reinforcement of the objectives of physical education. The successful realisation of the acquisition of motor skills by children and young people for their universally understood physical and mental health can be achieved through the implementation of INNOAGON in physical education within the context of modern education.

**Keywords:** Alpha generation, Beta generation, Mental health, Physical activity, Physical health

## INTRODUCTION

During the pandemic, a considerable decrease in physical activity among individuals of all age groups was observed (Klimczak et al., 2021). After the termination of lockdown measures in Poland, an evaluation of the physical well-being of children and adolescents was conducted, which revealed a substantial decline in motor activity and physical fitness among Generation Z and Alpha (Zembura et al., 2022). However, it was emphasised that this decline is not unexpected, but rather a continuation of an existing trend, as interest in physical activity among young people has gradually been declining

alongside technological advancements and the increasing availability of these technologies to them (Piepiora et al., 2024a). This decline in interest has also been observed in physical education classes in schools (Hardman, 2008). Moreover, those who do participate are not as engaged in the exercises as they were prior to the pandemic (Li et al., 2024). This is particularly evident in the Alpha generation, among whose there has been a steady increase in the number of students being exempted from physical education classes (Piepiora, 2024a). Consequently, contemporary education is facing a crisis of physical education classes for the Alpha generation. This phenomenon has given rise to unresolved questions concerning the state of school physical education in Poland (Ministerstwo Sportu i Turystyki, 2024).

The previous solution was for the Polish Ministry of Education to focus the core curriculum on physical education, allocating two hours for classroom lessons and two hours for optional activities (Warchoń, 2017). This approach entails that, within the context of primary education, students engage in two hours of mandatory physical education lessons, integrated within the school's curriculum, complemented by two additional hours of elective classes, which may encompass sports, dance, tourism, or fitness and health activities (Rogacka, 2017). Following the implementation of these guidelines in Poland, it was found that most schools offered pupils the opportunity to participate in sports-focused extracurricular activities (Eurydice, 2009). Consequently, educators endeavour to enhance the appeal of physical education by designing these activities to mirror the sporting preferences of the Alpha generation (Organista et al., 2024). However, this approach has been met with criticism, as it has been deemed to be inadequate. The implementation of these guidelines resulted in the facilitation of opportunities for physically gifted individuals to enhance their performance in their chosen sport, while concurrently leading to a decline in physical activity among those who perceived physical education as a chore (Chaput et al., 2020). While this initiative did succeed in introducing young people to a diverse array of physical activities, it simultaneously resulted in a misalignment of the fundamental principles of physical education. It is imperative to acknowledge that physical education is designed to equip students with the skills necessary to maintain a lifetime of responsible body care through engagement in physical activity, with an emphasis on fostering awareness of their physical fitness and health (Osiński, 2022). In the context of physical education, the primary objective is the acquisition of knowledge, the development of skills, and the cultivation of desired attitudes, namely, pro-health, pro-social, and pro-somatic. The pro-health orientation of physical education entails the attainment of appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes through physical activity (Madejski & Węglarz, 2022). Consequently, sport constitutes a mere means to the end of achieving the goals of physical education. It is therefore erroneous to consider the sporting achievements of pupils to be the goals of physical education (Bielski, 2012).

The Alpha generation currently enrolled in physical education classes in Polish primary schools engages with a singular sport, resulting in a narrowed focus on the particulars of a single competitive discipline (Fijałkowska et al., 2019). However, these young individuals often overlook

the broader benefits of the physical activities they perform for their personal well-being, both physically and mentally (Drygas et al., 2021). This issue is further compounded by the incessant introduction of novel technologies into the teaching process. Polish education has not yet fully adapted to smart technology, and new artificial intelligence solutions are already being introduced into the teaching process (Piepiora, 2024b). These measures are exacerbating the crisis in physical education classes in Poland.

## **INNOAGON AS AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO HEALTH**

In consideration of contemporary scientific discoveries, an examination of INNOAGON's approach to health concerns is recommended. INNOAGON, an acronym derived from the term 'innovative agonology,' signifies a novel scientific discipline founded by Roman Maciej Kalina (Piepiora et al., 2022). INNOAGON posits that the fundamental phenomenon in identifying the risk of losing health and life, as well as in overcoming these threats in practice, is always a 'struggle' (Kalina, 2023). It refers to the full social spectrum by recognising the struggle in the lives of individuals, societies, and the entire world. This encompasses the process of fostering awareness regarding the identification and eradication of violence and aggression (Witkowski & Kalina, 2023). Consequently, the INNOAGON approach emphasises the interdisciplinarity of science, preventive medicine, and complementary medicine (Kalina, 2023).

INNOAGON is a comprehensive concept encompassing the promotion, prevention, and therapy of all dimensions of health, with a focus on optimising individuals' preparedness for survival in diverse circumstances (Witkowski & Kalina, 2023). This approach integrates from the micro to the macro level. INNOAGON also assumes care for the continuous development of the body, mind and spirit of individuals through the practice of utilitarian human values that have been developed over the centuries (Kalina & Bagińska, 2023). It is an intergenerational approach that recognises the arguments of representatives of all contemporary generations, based on mutual kindness and respect. This agreement is further supported by technological progress through interdisciplinary approaches (Piepiora, 2024b).

## **INNOAGON IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

In contemporary Poland, the primary method through which physical education is delivered is through sports activities (Yıldırım, 2021). This encompasses popular sports, including team sports and, to a lesser extent, track and field events. However, few educational institutions possess the capacity to offer swimming instruction in a swimming pool. Conversely, gymnastics has experienced a decline in popularity (Piepiora et al., 2024b). However, the utilitarian values of gymnastics, developed on the basis of the Swedish and German systems, are invaluable. The aim of gymnastics in the Swedish system was to strive for the harmonious development of the bodies of the participants, to improve their physical condition and to help

them maintain a healthy lifestyle. In contrast, the German system prioritised instilling discipline in young individuals, enhancing their physical resilience, and cultivating their motor abilities, often employing equipment and tools (Jezierski & Rybicka, 2002). The exclusion of gymnastics from contemporary physical education curricula consequently results in the inadequate motor and fitness preparation of young people (Zembura et al., 2022). Moreover, the educational methods previously employed in gymnastics, which were found to be effective in promoting discipline, are now regarded as violent in the contemporary educational context (Broer et al., 2025). Consequently, the crisis in physical education in Poland can be attributed to the abandonment of some of the physical culture values that have been developed over generations (Piepiora et al., 2024b).

The crisis in school physical education is deepening due to the narrowing of young people's physical versatility. However, attempts are being made to maintain the attractiveness of these lessons by focusing on sport. Therefore, the solution to this problem is seen in the inclusion of INNOAGON in the physical education core curriculum (Piepiora, 2024b). The overarching aims of physical education, which include shaping attitudes and motivation, acquiring knowledge and understanding, improving body control skills, and enhancing physical fitness and condition, will be reinforced by an interdisciplinary approach integrating science, preventive medicine, and complementary medicine (Kalina, 2023). This interdisciplinary approach will encompass the study of combat sports, individual sports, and team sports. The knowledge and skills acquired by young people will have an impact on preventive medicine, for example in relation to injuries: the ability to fall correctly (education in judo in the area of combat sports), the ability to jump correctly (education in gymnastics in the area of individual sports), the ability to grip correctly (education in handball in the area of team sports). Moreover, there will be implications for complementary medicine, such as in relation to quality of life: the ability to breathe fully (karate training in the area of combat sports), the ability to coordinate breathing while running (training in athletics in the area of individual sports), and the ability to work together in a team (training in volleyball in the area of team sports).

In this sense, the objective of physical education in modern schooling will not only be to alleviate students' stress between lessons through sport, but also to facilitate their comprehension of the rationale behind their actions, the knowledge they are acquiring, and the methods by which they can apply this learning. Consequently, knowledge about INNOAGON should be a priority in modern, responsible education in physical education, grounded in the utilitarian values of humanity that have been developed over centuries (Piepiora, 2024b). This approach should be implemented with the support of intergenerational understanding, facilitated by popular culture, and without the presence of aggression or violence. The utilisation of technological support is also recommended (Piepiora et al., 2024a; Piepiora et al., 2024b). The physically educated will begin to identify with the hypothesis on the supreme value criteria of the global civilisation, which is the survival of people and nature in an undeveloped form with responsibility for future generations (Piepiora & Kalina, 2023).

## CONCLUSION

This article does not seek to critique the introduction of the new core curriculum for physical education classes in Poland, which emphasises quality, innovation, continuity, purposefulness, and universality (Ministerstwo Sportu i Turystyki, 2024). However, there is the prospect of expanding the aims of physical education to include the INNOAGON postulates, which in practice should complement and strengthen the new core curriculum (Kalina, 2023). The integration of joint activities and initiatives at all levels is imperative for achieving substantial improvements in the health and physical condition of children and young people. This approach will empower the younger generation to resist the pervasive influence of technology in all aspects of their lives, instead promoting an active lifestyle in natural environments. Consequently, the INNOAGON generation may exhibit a level of physical activity that significantly exceeds that of the predicted Beta generation (McCrindle, 2025).

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