

## FEATURES OF GENDER IDENTITY AMONG SCHOOLCHILDREN OF DIFFERENT AGES

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**Annotation.** *Purpose.* Gender identity manifestations in schoolchildren were investigated. *Material.* The study involved schoolchildren of 3 -11th forms of the secondary schools (206 – boys, 213 - girls). For the research of age peculiarities in psychological gender, a questioner worked out by Sundry Bam which consists of 60 statements was used. *Results.* A number of aspects of self description which have different psychological characteristics in boys and girls were analysed. A peculiarity of gender identity in schoolchildren, which was identified by the overall number of respondents in whom the androgens personality type was identified, was singled out. Out of 206 boys – 90% have an androgens index, as for the girls – 69.5% refer to androgens personality type. The presence of feminine character qualities in boys and masculine – in girls was found out, which proves maximal development of feminine and masculine in one person. This will help social adaptation of schoolchildren. *Conclusions.* Physical education has enormous potential emotional and physical impact on the formation of gender identity of students and their notions of femininity and masculinity. This can directly affect the formation of life value orientations students in general, including the formation of values in the sphere of physical culture.

**Keywords:** masculinity, femininity, androgenity, gender, identity, schoolchildren, physical education, sport.

### Introduction

Recent time scientists have been paying great attention to gender distinctions, carrying out scientific researches in different spheres of human activity.

Gender, like race, nationality and class, is an important category, which to large extent determines social possibilities of every person [16].

As far as term –sex” has several meanings, then with determining difference between male and female qualities, term –gender” is used.

In 50-60-s American psychologist Robert Staller offered term –gender” to be used alongside with biological –sex”. Basing on the fact that biological roles of men and women do not change, while social requirements to men and women are historically variable, we may say that phenomenon, called –gender” has been existing always, though in integral connection with biological dichotomy of sexes (distribution into two sexes). Change of such global historical epochs of mankind as matriarchy and patriarchy is an approval of this [6].

Modern Ukrainian society is at such stage of its development, where knowledge and information are the main resource and driving force of its effective existence, where higher education forms new intellectually and physically developed personality, who possesses formed gender consciousness concerning realization of his (her) rights and possibilities [8]. And as on to-day there exists an acute problem of gender approach to teaching and education of rising generation. Research of gender problems in sphere of physical culture has not been widely spread, but demand in development and propaganda of gender researches in sphere of physical culture and sports shall not be ignored [3].

Analysis of documents, observations, results of questionings, analysis of scientific literature permit to affirm that modern state of physical culture demonstrate some contradictions in sphere of gender approach to physical education in general. Scientists noted that especially acute is the problem of gender differentiation, connected with action (B.D. Yelkonin, 2001). Program of physical education of comprehensive schools was intended for mean-statistical child and envisaged development only in test normative for boys and girls. But unfortunately it does not consider gender approach to formation of child’s personality that can deform process of development and negatively influence on health [13].

Common education and teaching at schools is called by V.F. Bazarniy (2205) –sexless”, noting that during several generations, there took place disappearance of sex-personality’s personification of young people (especially boys). This resulted in inhibition and neutralization of male bents of boys and female – of girls, even on genetic level [1].

In theory of physical culture, more than in any other humanitarian discipline, natural principles of sex distinctions are constantly considered. Numerous researches in the field of sports concern, in general, sex dimorphism (S. Sokha, 1991; M. Mesner, 2000; Ya. Shakhlina, 2006; 2010; Maers A. M., Lips H. M., 1978). Problems of gender education were studied by such scientists as O.L. Zdravomyslova, A.S. Moskaliova, L.V. Popova, L.V. Shtyliova.

Analysis of scientific researches in gender approach to physical education of schoolchildren’s physical education in general concerns registration of girls and boys contingent, when passing standard tests, with health related sport trainings and development of interest to physical trainings [6, 18, 20, 23]. Scientists also regard gender approach to formation of healthy life style of junior schoolchildren [13].

However, in studied by us literature there was no works, which would deal with gender peculiarities of formation of schoolchildren’s value orientation in sphere of physical culture and sports for formation and

implementation of gender approach to physical education of youth. For researching of this question we think it necessary to, first of all, determine characteristics of gender identity of schoolchildren of different age.

Our researches were fulfilled in the frames of scientific & research works, approved by Ministry of education & science, youth and sports of Ukraine, code 3.1 –Improvement of program-normative principles of physical education at lessons” №01110001733 УДК/7/ДВ/077.5.

**Purpose, tasks of the work, material and methods**

*The purpose of the work* is studying of schoolchildren’s gender identity.

For solution of our tasks we used the following *methods of the research*: theoretical analysis and generalization of scientific-methodic literature’s data, psychological testing by questionnaire of S. Bem, mathematical-statistical processing of results.

In researches schoolchildren of 3 – 11 forms (419 persons – 206 boys and 213 girls) of comprehensive schools No.13 and No.14 of Poltava participated.

**Results of the research**

Terms –masculinity” and –femininity” are standard ideas about psychological and behavioral qualities, characteristic for men and women, which are connected with differentiation of sex roles. On this base S..Bem developed conception of androgyny (actually – third gender), which gave impulse to world science for reviewing of traditional psychological ideas about –masculinity” and –femininity” [2].

*Masculine* type is characterized by higher expressiveness of such personality’s qualities as indispensability, persistence, bent to possess, bent to defend own ideas, bent to risk, analytical thinking, self-confidence, self –containment [4, 5].

*Feminine* type of personality have such features as shyness, tenderness, detachment, sympathy, ability to console, heartedness, softness, credulity and love for children [4, 5].

*Androgyny* type includes approximately in equal degree masculine and feminine qualities of personality, which are manifested in combination of traditionally male and female characteristics in one person. In the opinion of scientists people of androgyny type are the most adapted to life, feel the leas quantity of stresses, connected with sex-role conflicts [2, 4, 5].

For determination of schoolchildren’s gender identity respondents were offered to be tested as per questionnaire of Sandra Bem, which included 60 characteristics of personality. The participants should have mark out their own, In their opinion, characteristics. Further we determined indicators of masculinity, femininity and androgyny with special formula.

Results of our research showed that most of boys and girls, independent on their age, are of androgyny type of personality.

Table 1

*Results of gender identity’s research (by S.Bem)*

Form	Quantity of schoolchildren	Boys					
		Masculinity		Androgyny		Femininity	
		Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%
3	29	1	3.45	28	96.55	0	0
5	16	0	0	16	100	0	0
6	23	1	8.7	21	91.3	1	4.35
7	15	0	0	14	93.3	1	6.67
8	22	1	4.5	21	95.45	0	0
9	38	2	10.53	36	94.74	0	0
10	12	0	0	12	100	0	0
11	25	3	12	22	88	0	0
Body building	16	2	12.5	12	75	2	12.5
The-quon do	11	0	0	11	100	0	0

Table 2

Results of gender identity's research (by S.Bem)

Form	Quantity of schoolchildren	Girls					
		Masculinity		Androgyny		Femininity	
		Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%
3	25	0	0	18	72	7	28
5	27	0	0	20	74.7	7	25.9
6	17	1	5.8	10	58.8	6	35.2
7	12	0	0	11	91.6	1	8.3
8	21	0	0	15	71.4	6	28.5
9	26	2	7.69	17	65.38	7	26.9
10	15	0	0	11	73.3	4	26.6
11	30	0	0	21	70	9	30
The-quon do	4	1	25	3	75	0	0
Special health group	35	0	0	22	62.86	13	37.1

From 206 boys, who took part in testing, 90% have indicator of androgyny (see table 1). It makes up 194 persons. Only 5 boys, who practice body building and wrestling, have masculine gender identity. Some boys (3 persons) belong to feminine type. i.e. they marked out more feminine qualities in themselves.

Among 213 girls, 148 are of androgyny type (see table 2). It is 69.8%. 30.3% belong to feminine type. Three girls have masculine characteristics. One of them practices the-quon don, other two – swimming. The highest quantity of girls, who have feminine characteristics are first year girl-students of HEE, who, by results of medical examinations, were the members of special health group.

But, in spite of the fact that most of boys and girls are of androgyny type, we carried out separate analysis of qualities, marked out by respondents (by their own opinion).

–Self-confidence” is a feature or personality, who is purposeful and have belief in own forces. This quality was marked out by most of respondent, independent on their age.

Boys and girls from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> forms (90-100%) marked this characteristic. Further, from 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> form percentage of girls, who marked –self-confidence”, decreased. It is interesting that 100% of boys, who practice sports, marked –self-confidence”. Difference between boys and girls was 30-40% in favor of boys.

With difference 10-15% such quality as –buoyancy” was marked more often by boys.

–Strong personality” – is a quality, which belong to masculine type. In spite of this only 20% of 7<sup>th</sup> form boys and 16.6% of 10<sup>th</sup> form boys noted this characteristic.

–Persistence” is an indicator, which belongs, in opinion of scientists, to masculine characteristics and it is proved by results of our research. Boys marked this quality by 15-20% more often than girls.

–Courage” – is purely male characteristic. 80-100% of boys marked this feature. It is interesting that 96.5% of 3<sup>rd</sup> form boys marked this feature. In this case we should note that choice of this quality by 3<sup>rd</sup> form pupils (8 years old) is more desirable than actual their characteristic. In our opinion it can be the result of education at school of sex-role stereotypes, which are an integral part of sex-role approach in teaching and education. We see that even at 8 years old age boys mark those qualities, which, in their opinion, should be compulsory for real men, but not those qualities, which actually they possess. This fact is approved also by such characteristic as –athleticism”. 86.2% of 3<sup>rd</sup> form boys sooner strive for being athletically built and the desired they take as real. While boys, who practice body building, take themselves more critically. Only 68.7% of them marked this characteristic.

Girls did not show any interest to –athleticism”. Only 14.6% of 5 form girls marked this quality and it is necessary to note that all they practice sports. Up to 11<sup>th</sup> form percentage of –athletic” girls reduced to 13.3% and among first year students, who are the members of special health group, only 11.4% chose –athleticism”.

Concerning purely female (feminine) characteristics it should be noted that –shyness” was marked by 62% of 3<sup>rd</sup> form boys, 33% of 5<sup>th</sup> form boys, 40% of 7<sup>th</sup> form and 59% of 8<sup>th</sup> form boys. Further the percentage of boys, who chose this characteristic, reduced.

–Fenderness” we used to consider purely a feminine feature. But 62% of 3<sup>rd</sup> form boys, 53.9% of 5<sup>th</sup> form, 53% of 7<sup>th</sup> form 81% of 8<sup>th</sup> form and 64% of 11<sup>th</sup> form boys marked this quality.

–Fidelity” was marked mostly by girls. Comparing girls’ age categories we can see that 96% of 3<sup>rd</sup> form girls marked –fidelity”, while only 46% of 9<sup>th</sup> form girls made the same choice. It is interesting that 87.5% of boys (of 18 years old age), who practice body building, also marked –ifidelity” as a feature of their personalities.

–Analytical thinking” was marked by 20% higher quantity of boys than girls.

Purely male qualities –bent to risk” and –abilities to leadership” were marked more often by boys than by girls. But 56% of 3<sup>rd</sup> form girls, 35.7% of 5<sup>th</sup> form, 41% of 6<sup>th</sup> form and 46% of 11<sup>th</sup> form girls mark –bent to leadership”. Such characteristic as –bent to risk” was chosen by girls of 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> forms (from 40 to 60%).

I.e. on the one hand we see that actually masculine qualities are marked oftener by boys and feminine qualities – by girls. But it can also result from sex-role education at school, which forms determined stereotype behavior of boys and girls [16]. On the other hand we registered the fact that some boys marked feminine qualities and some girls – masculine. It is proved by total quantity of schoolchildren of androgyny type. Results of researches fulfilled by A. M. Maers, H. M.Lips., S. Spence, R. Helmrich also prove it. Their data witness that girls, who practice sports, excellently combine a number of masculine qualities, having high level of feminine ones [21, 23].

### Conclusions:

Thus, in spite of a number of critical remarks, addressed to conception of androgyny, it remains to be significant and is applied in further researches, in Ukraine inclusive. As on to day such ideas as combination of feminine and masculine features of character in one personality is propagated in science.

It is proved by total quantity of schoolchildren with androgyny type of personality. From 206 of boys, - 90% have indicator of androgyny and among 213 girls – 69.5% are of androgyny type. But it should be noted that such purely maculin features as –ourage”, –bent to risk”, –athleticism”, –sd-confidence”, –bent to leadership” were marked by 20-40% oftener by boys than by girls. Purely female features were marked by 40% oftener by girls. They are such features as –ifidelity” and –tederness”.

In our opinion physical education has great potential of emotional and physical influence on formation of gender schoolchildren’s identity and their ideas about feminine and masculine. It can directly influence on formation of schoolchildren’s value orientations, including formation of values in sphere of physical culture.

The purpose of our further researches will be studying of different age schoolchildren’s gender peculiarities of formation of motives, interests and values in sphere of physical culture.

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**Cite this article as:** Marchenko O.Y. Features of gender identity among schoolchildren of different ages. *Pedagogics, psychology, medical-biological problems of physical training and sports*, 201, vol.1, pp. 37-41. doi:10.6084/m9.figshare.894388

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Received: 22.10.2013  
Published: 28.12.2013