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RESEARCH ON SPORTS ACTIVITIES AND RECREATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN BOLJEVAC (SERBIA) AND CHIPROVTSI (BULGARIA)



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Introduction

Physical activity

The importance of physical activity for the human body is first and foremost reflected in the role of maintaining its healthy function, both physically and healthily, and mentally.

Physical activity, if exercised in a moderate and adequate manner that varies from person to person and depends on one's characteristics, such as gender, age and constitution, affects the overall preservation of vitality, fitness and vital functions.

Sport recreation is a part of sport or exercise in which it is practiced for its own sake, while the motives differ from person to person. So some start exercising for the sake of socializing, having fun, relaxing, enjoying the better appearance and therefore for better health. All of this is one of the strong motivators that drives people to be active and choose an activity that suits them and interests them.

As the main goal of sports recreation we can state that building positive habits in everyday life. A special focus would be on leisure activities, which should be filled with activities that have a positive effect on mood and health, and thus reduce illness and stress.

Physical (sports) activities are known to lower cholesterol levels, lower blood pressure, relieve the effects of diabetes and regulate body weight. The most common reasons for not engaging in sports and physical activities are: lack of interest, motivation, time, health problems and lack of financial resources. It is very important that young people, who find it difficult to decide on some form of exercise, should choose activities that are easy and interesting for them, such as leisure activities 30 minute walk.

Benefits of engaging in physical activity

Regular physical activity shows positive influences on physical and mental health, in fact the whole psychosocial development. Research shows that if children play sports and are physically active, they will later retain such habits as they grow up. For children and young people, motivators and positive role models can also be successful athletes.

Research

Description of the sample and methods

The first objective of the study was to examine whether young people and to what extent they engage in sports (physical) activities in both areas studied. The second objective was to determine whether there was a difference in the level of satisfaction with the offer and quality of sports activities between the surveyed areas. The target group was young people aged 15-35 from



Boljevac (Serbia) and Chiprovtsi (Bulgaria). The survey was composed of 15 questions and 200 respondents participated. All data were collected by a survey method, which was voluntarily and anonymously completed by the respondents. The data processed are explained below.

Gender of respondents

(50.26%) men and (49.74%) women participated in the survey. The gender distribution is fairly uniform.

Education of respondents

An overview of the survey shows that 66.32% of the secondary school respondents participated the most in the survey, followed by (10.36%) higher education respondents, (9.84%) university education, (7.25%) primary school respondents education and (6.22%) respondents Master / Ph.D.

A way of engaging in sports activities

Daily, individually optimally dosed, physical activity has a beneficial effect on the organism as a whole and leads to various positive physical and psychological changes. Based on the data presented, it can be seen that approximately the same percentage of respondents from both surveyed areas engage in sports activities for recreational (45.9%) respondents from Chiprovtsi and (43.2%) respondents from Boljevac. A slightly larger percentage of respondents (39.8%) from Chiprovtsi are actively engaged in sports activities, while in Boljevac they are actively engaged in sports activities (33.7%). We conclude that young people from both surveyed areas engage in recreational sports activities for the most part.

Weekly time spent playing sports

At the recommendation of the SZO on Physical Activity in the Function of Preserving and Improving the Health of Children and Young People, more intense physical activity, which includes strengthening the muscles, should be exercised at least three times a week. Regarding the time spent in sports activities, the highest percentage of respondents from both areas answered that they use 1 hour a week for sports activities, while (10%) of the respondents from Chiprovtsi spend 2 hours practicing sports, and almost twice as many respondents from Boljevac (19%) spend 2 hours. Change and visual leap occur in the category of 3 hours or more (38%) of respondents from Chiprovtsi and (32%) of respondents from Boljevac.

Respondent sports activities (multiple choice)

The results of the research show that in both surveyed areas, the majority of young people are recreational walking - Boljevac (50%), Chiprovtsi (37.8%). Then in Boljevac followed by running (42.1%), gym (27.4) as well as cycling / roller skating (22.1%). Group sports are current in both surveyed areas in approximately similar percentages. As for young people in Chiprovtsi, in addition



to walking from sports activities, gym (18.4%), aerobics (15.3%) and dance (15.3%) are represented.

Reasons to engage in sports activities (multiple choice)

When asked what are the most common reasons for engaging in sport activities, the largest percentage (49.5%) of respondents from Boljevac responded that I preserve my health, while (25.5%) of respondents from Chiprovtsi cited health as a reason. In addition, (47.4%) respondents from Boljevac and (23.5%) respondents from Chiprovtsi participate in sports activities due to their good fitness. Due to their socializing and atmosphere, (30.5%) respondents from Boljevac and (22.4%) respondents from Chiprovtsi responded. Also, a higher percentage (43.2%) of Boljevac respondents said that they wish to improve their physical appearance by training, compared to those from Chiprovtsi (23.5%). We conclude that respondents from Boljevac are more aware of the importance of engaging in sports activities and the impact physical activity has on psycho-physical health.

The impact of financial status on engaging in sports activities

Most people think that exercise requires expensive equipment, fitness or gym memberships, not thinking that for some activities they do not have to spend money, but only their free time (running, hiking, biking, rollerblading, etc.). We can conclude that the largest percentage of respondents from Boljevac (65.3%) and Chiprovtsi (61.2%) believe that their financial status does not affect their activity in sports at all. With this information, young people from both surveyed areas showed their awareness in this field and refuted the claim that money is needed for recreational sports.

Satisfaction with the offer of sports activities and the quality of sports content in relation to the place of residence

Using the t-test, it was found that there is a significant difference in the degree of satisfaction with the offer of sports activities and in the degree of satisfaction with the quality of sports content of respondents living in Chiprovtsi and respondents living in Boljevac. Based on the results obtained, we conclude that the respondents from Chiprovtsi are more satisfied with the offer of sports activities and the quality of sports content. Such a result can be explained by socio-cultural differences (customs, social norms, a lifestyle that follows a particular climate, economic status) and psychological differences (personality traits, values and interests of the individual).

Track sports events

In the sample surveyed, the selected respondents in the two surveyed areas said that in most cases sports events in their place of residence are sometimes monitored. It should be noted that the respondents from Boljevac, however, in a larger percentage follow, regularly and sometimes, sports events than the respondents from Chiprovtsi (36.7%) who never follow sports events.



Satisfaction with the existing sports infrastructure

When asked how satisfied they are with the existing sports infrastructure in the place of residence, the respondents stated that (59.2%) of the respondents from Chiprovtsi were satisfied with the sports infrastructure in their place, while a much smaller number (5.3%) of the respondents from Boljevac was satisfied. While in the category, partially satisfied are the respondents from Boljevac.

A way of informing about the possibilities of playing sports

Regarding the way of informing about sports activities, we note that (66.3%) of the respondents from Chiprovtsi are informed via the Internet, and (16.3%) through the media, while the young people from Boljevac are informed in the largest percentage (52.7%) through acquaintances and friends. Based on these downsides, we can conclude that Boljevac youth use and perhaps trust more traditional channels of information through friends and acquaintances, while young people in Chiprovtsi are more oriented towards digital information.

Conclusion

Physical activity has a positive importance and influence on the health of the individual, quality leisure time, positive attitude towards work and life, preservation of the environment, quality of interpersonal relations, growing up and education of young people. With such an accelerated pace of life leading into the 21st century, stress is increasing in the lives of young people, and thus their health and efficiency at school, at work or at college are impaired. Exercise is lifted by young people, and thus their ability to take exams at school or college, which can ultimately result in greater responsibility in society or at work, as well as reducing and controlling stress levels.

Why is it important to be physically active?

- Raising awareness of the importance of physical activity is an issue that requires broader social inclusion, with an adequate multisectoral, multidisciplinary and culturally acceptable approach.
- Most children who play sports and are physically active in childhood will retain such habits later on as they grow up.
- Physical activity has a positive impact on development - children who, from a young age, engage in some kind of sports activity, develop work habits and self-discipline from an early age.

Nowadays, the pace of life is accelerated and full of obligations, so lack of time is one of the most common reasons for not engaging in physical activity, but also a problem that regular exercisers must deal with. Proper allocation of free time would greatly help with health care as it has been proven that only 30 minutes of daily exercise, even in several shorter segments, has a health benefit.



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The results of the research showed that most of the respondents were engaged in some physical activity recreationally. They spend most of their free time walking and running, showing their health care. A relatively small number of respondents in Boljevac are satisfied with the offer of activities that they can take part in their place of residence, while in Chiprovtsi, satisfaction with the offer and quality of sports content has been recorded.

Recommendations

Some possible improvement measures would be to enrich the offer and expand the sports facilities available to children and young people, establish sports clubs and empower them to give every young person the opportunity to practice themselves in the desired sport.

Another possibility is the construction of sports fields and courts, especially green areas, which we clearly saw as a need among the young people in Chiprovtsi, and to enable them to spend their free time on them socializing with friends and giving them the opportunity to grow their love one day, according to the particular sport and maybe encourage other friends to go out and hang out without modern technology. Based on the results obtained, it can be concluded that the specificity of the socio-economic context in both countries has an impact on the very phenomenon of engaging in sports activities in young people.