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STUDY OF MOTION ACTIVITIES OF UNDERGRADUATES AND THE POSITION OF THESE ACTIVITIES IN THE STRUCTURE OF FREE TIME ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION

Knowing what free time activities of the undergraduates are can have a special meaning for the society. University graduates become the managers of the whole society. Alma Mater influences not only their professional interests but also their free time activities. If the students gain the knowledge that the appropriate activity can influence their physical and mental health, they will probably use it, not only during their study, but in their future life as well. What is more important, they will influence in this sphere their children, employees, workers of social community and cultural life, politicians, directors of institutions, etc. (Charzewski, 1997, Prachár et al., 1997). The Universities and their faculties can do a lot in their educational programmes and that is why they analyse free time activities of their students, their attitude to motion activities, and their views about the need for movement activities. In connection with this, they offer students good conditions for realisation of sport-recreational activities. This is the reason why the research was conducted in the Institute of Physiotherapy, Balneology and Medical Rehabilitation (IFBLR) UCM in Trnava.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In total, 87 students of the IFBLR UCM Trnava participated in the research, among them 32 were men and 55 women at average age of 21. The whole group of respondents was divided into trained and untrained, and men and women. Research methods that were used were questionnaire, evaluation of the selected somatic, motor and functional indexes, and correlation relationships. The distribution and collection of the questionnaires was done during winter term in 2009. The questionnaire was aimed at finding out free-time activities of the students, learning the motives for the practical training, finding out the reasons for free-time activities, monitoring physical activities which the students prefer and learning which sport – relaxation activities the students like. Statistical analyses were done using t-test and chi-square.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Question 1: What do you prefer to do in your free-time? (The subjects could mark maximum 5 activities).

Evaluation: in the whole group of IFBLR students, the most frequent answer was meeting with friends (72.4%) (Figure 1). This response is interesting in contrast to the present social philosophy theory of disaffection, i.e. weakening social interactions and stepwise disaffection of the human being from the present community. The question here is what type of meeting friends the students referred to. It can be meeting followed by listening to the music (which is strongly supported by the second free-time activity – 64.4%), or it can be meeting with drug abuse (alcohol, marijuana etc.), i.e. „drug party” more or less. Further analyses of free-time activities could clarify a lot of things. Among other, it can be deduced that subjects prefer passive – receptive activities. High percentage involves listening to the music (65%), surfing the Internet (60%), watching TV (59%) and, to a much less extent, reading books and magazines (44%). Occurrence of physical activities and tourism represent much lower percentage (46%).

The character of the study at IFBLR forces the students to regular physical activities, and thus the higher percentage of exercising is expected. The results would be more acceptable if the students practising sports had been engaged. When comparing male and female free-time activities, it can be seen that in the first place there is meeting friends (M – 84.4 %, W- 65.5%). The 20% difference favouring men is remarkable. Even watching TV is more popular among men. The biggest difference between men and women is in reading books and magazines, 50% in favour of women. In contrast, sports training is the men's domain- 43.8% versus 12.7% in women. Household chores are traditionally found in higher percentage among women. Notable is almost the same interest in physical activities in men (44%) and women (47%). Surfing the Internet is in the second place among free-time activities both in men and women.

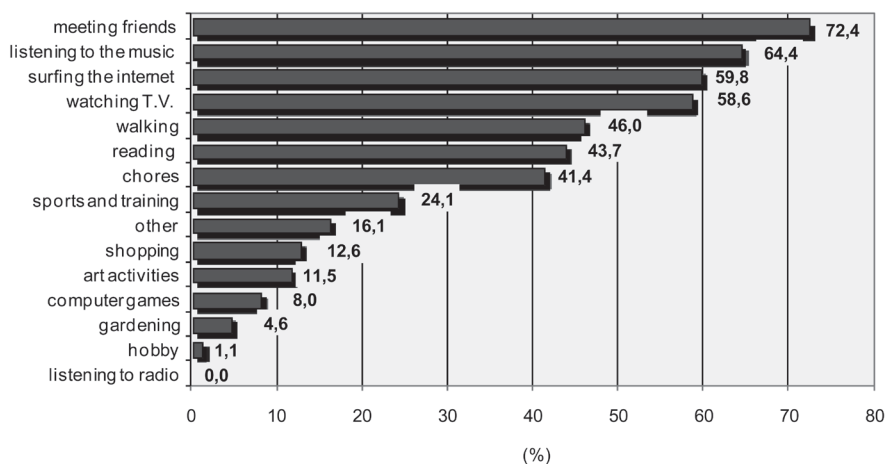


Figure 1.

Question 2: If you do exercise or sport regularly, tell us why. (The subjects could write a maximum of three motives.)

Evaluation: in the whole group, all subjects refer to increase in physical condition as the reason for regular training or doing sports (38%) (Figure 2). The expected result of improving health was at the third place (33%). In many surveys with similar focus, the health reasons are usually at the first place. Majority of population finds the health level as the most important, that is, it occupies the first places on their ranking scale. It can be postulated with satisfaction that recreational sports is considered by the subjects to be effective means for fun and distraction (36%), relieving stress (32%) and psychological relaxation (23%). The data concerning the influence of physical activity on mental state of man appears seldom in literature and even among ordinary population it is not favoured. The influence of physical activities is generally understood as the effective intervention on somatic and functional aspect of man. It is interesting that in comparison with other analyses, much lower percentage of answers is in terms of reducing weight (13%) and posture modulation (32%). In these cases, it can be assumed that our students aged 21 do not feel the acute necessity for these interventions. The opportunity for superiority was not concerned by anyone. In monitoring the reasons for exercising in professional sportsmen, these opinions appear quite often. Comparing the answers of men and women among the subjects, it can be postulated that stress relieving is more frequent (47%) in men than in women (23.6%). Surprising is the major difference in trying to enhance own performance in men (28%) and women (4%). Sports in terms of health improvement is postulated by women more often (36%) in comparison to men (28%). Male part of the population

in our group should be healthier. Naturally, women are more concerned with body forming (38%) than men (22%).

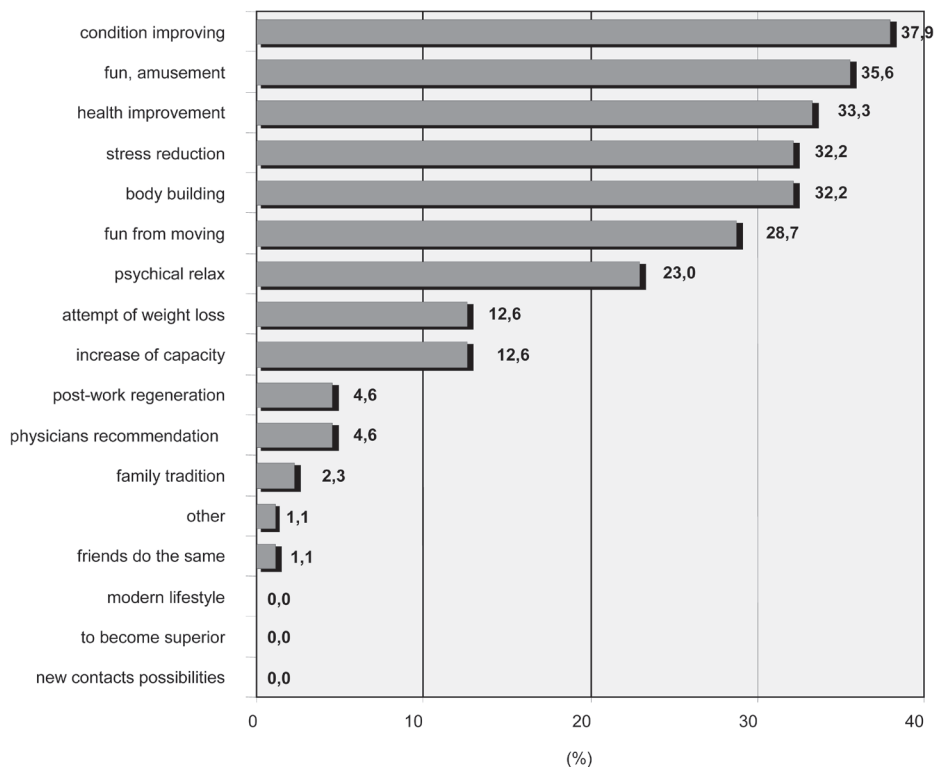


Figure 2.

Question 3: Give a reason if you do not exercise or train regularly at present (the subjects could mark maximum three reasons).

Evaluation: The lack of free-time or missing free time is generally marked as the main reason for not exercising or doing sports. The reasons are mainly an internal barrier (psychological). Why the lack of free time indeed? Why do the students mark this as the main reason? It is a fictive reason. People lack the right information about recreational sports and do not have proper knowledge. Even in our analysis, the lack of time (27.6%) and indolence (27.6%) is the major reason (Figure 3). It is surprising that subjects confirm indolence to such a high percentage. This is very rare in respondents. Both reasons are not cardinal indeed. A quarter of the subjects in the whole group states the lack of exercise opportunities (25.3%) as the reason

for movement inactivity. Even this reason cannot be accepted. There are a lot of simple but effective motion activities independent of special places, instruments, actions, services, group exercises etc., thus hypothetically, this reason is named out of ignorance. Further study or career prospects is of newer origin, and 2 decades ago they were not mentioned at all. These can reduce the necessary time set for exercise. Inexplicable is the reason that they do not know how to start (4.6%).

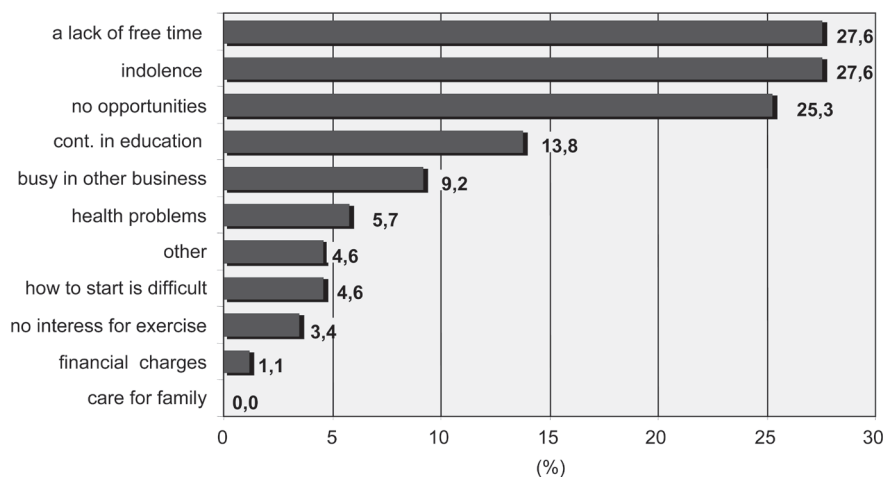


Figure 3.

Question 4: If you do exercise or sport, mark 3 activities you do the most during the year.

Evaluation: In-line skating was in the first place in the whole group (36%), Figure 4. This sport-recreational activity was at the bottom of the scale several years ago. The increasing interest in recent years is a pleasant improvement. The interest in swimming (31%) represents the good choice of physical activity of our respondents. This discipline was marked as physiologically most effective and suitable for average population. Home exercising of students is positive as well (22%) which can demonstrate understanding of the meaning of exercise, time sparing and getting used to training even in poor conditions. Fast walking is not exploited that much (18%). Low percentage in taking use of games in the whole group can be hypothetically explained by the domination of women in this group, who for example, never played football. The data about walking and hiking (26.4%) and cycling (23%) are positive. However, there is surprisingly low interest in aerobics (9%).

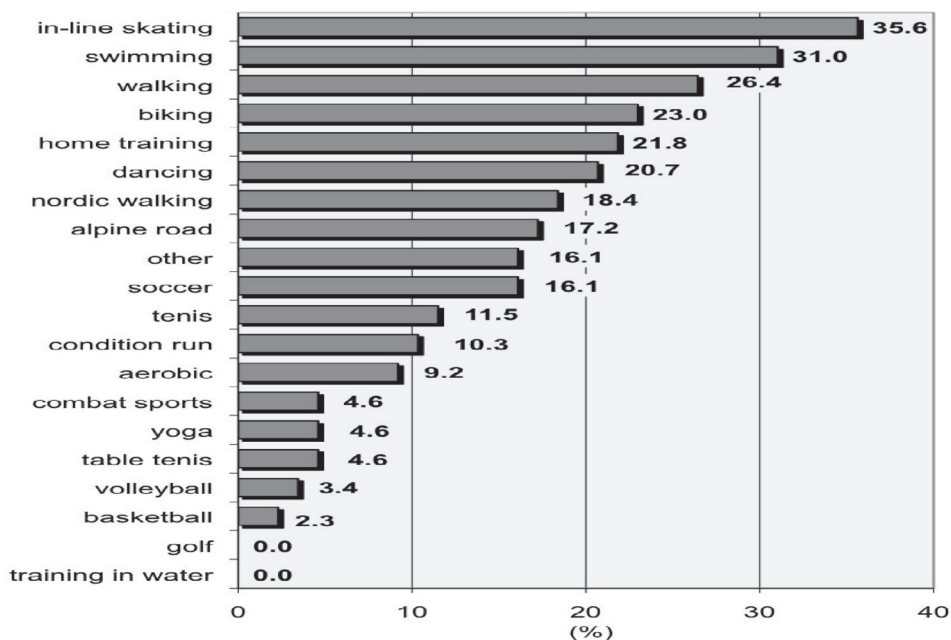


Figure 4.

Question 5: When you do not do sports or exercise regularly, mark the activity which you would prefer.

Evaluation: In the whole group, 45% of subjects wish to swim. This activity is at the top of the activities among adults throughout the country, but not only in Slovakia. In our study, the second place was occupied by dance, which is surprising. Hypothetically, the reason can be female prevalence in the group. The high percentage of people interested in dance is influenced by the better offer of this activity by services. It can also be proposed that TV dance shows helped the promotion. Differences were found in the intention to swim (M-15.6%, W-36.4%) and to dance (M-3%. W-34%) comparing the interests in sports activities in men and women who are studying at IFBLR. Both these differences are statistically significant. There are interesting wishes of women taking part in martial arts, which were positioned higher than in men. Similar situation was found for in-line skating (M-3%, W-13%). Women tend to play volleyball more often and of course, do aerobics as well.

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ABSTRACT

The authors observed free-time activities of 21-year-old students of physiotherapy at the University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava. The responses of 87 students in three grades of bachelor 's study were evaluated in this research. The questionnaire mainly focused on the subjects engaged in sports and those who do not do sports. Men and women were evaluated separately. In the set of free time activities, the receptive (movement unresponsive) nature of common activities was acknowledged. Chummy gatherings (72%) were preferred to listening to music (64%), to surfing the net (60%) and to watching TV (59%). The activities connected with physical activity (movement of the body) follow, but some were at the bottom of the scale. The results corresponded at this point with the results of some other undergraduate workplaces, in fact, they were similar. It was noteworthy that the first 3 movement unresponsive activities occurred in higher percentage in men in comparison with women, the first 2 were even perceptually more frequent in those respondents engaged in sports. The most important reason for exercising was the effort to improve physical condition, the next was entertainment, and surprisingly, the improvement of health condition was the third. Lack of free time was the reason for passivity in movement as well as laziness. Among those respondents who were not engaged in sports activities up till now, the highest percentage incline to swimming. Considerable interest was in dancing and in-line skating.

Key words: *free time activities, free time of the undergraduates, students of physiotherapy, recreational engagement in sports, sport and recreational activities, movement and inactivity, hypokinesis*