

## LEISURE TIME OF STUDENTS AT THE BELGRADE UNIVERSITY AND THE UNIVERSITY OF SKOPJE

*Preliminary communication*

**Elena Petković and Sasa Pavlović**

*Primary school "Vožd Karadjordje", Svilajnac, Kusiľjevo, Serbia*

### **Abstract**

*In his or her leisure time an individual can fulfill time and use it according to personal wishes, needs and interests. The goal of this research was to determine how much leisure time students have and how they use it, and if they do or go to sport activities (visit performances, do they have a hobby, which equipment do they have, do they travel) The research had transversal character. It was realized with the sample of 2158 students at Belgrade University and 757 students of the University of Skopje. For the processing of data acquired by empirical research the procedures of descriptive statistics for the determination of the significance of the differences between leisure time of the students and Pearson's test  $\chi^2$  were applied. On the basis of the data acquired by the survey of the students, it can be stated that students are in a great number interested in continuous organizing of regular lessons of physical education on their faculties. By the use of the survey it was determined that there is variety of wishes, needs and interests for the participation in some sport recreational activities during regular hours as well as in their free time.*

**Keywords:** *sport activities, boys, girls, Pearson's test  $\chi^2$ , obesity, Hypokinesia, regular lessons of physical education, physical abilities, working ability,*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Physical Activity is a basic need of human organism. We can comprehend leisure time only if we consider it with work and the position of a man at work, as an integral part of man's time, which is socially conditioned and cannot be studied without economic, political, cultural and historical facts. Socio economic status is in direct connection with doing sport recreational activities in free time.

In economically developed countries it is indicated that there is an increase of financial expenses which are the consequence of physically inactive and obese individuals. The studies indicate that 6% of the total expenses which are related to the health care for the consequences of body inactivity and obesity (World Health Organization, 2003).

Hypokinesia represents the biggest health issue in many countries. The change of a lifestyle, including more sport recreational activities can lead to the diminishing a number of diseases or premature deaths. Under the notion recreation we consider everything that man does, i.e. in his leisure time and which contributes to his refreshing, and improving of his existence and creation of new positive characteristics (Leskosek, 1980:101) Tiso said that: "Physical activity can help or change the role of many drugs while no drug can be a substitute for movement" (Mitić, 2001:264).

In ancient times leisure was a natural part of life rhythm, when the nature activities differed "otium" (leisure), which brings satisfaction and the activities of nature "negotium" (negative of leisure), which is full

of efforts to fulfill elementary needs, disharmonic activity, with which a person is not identified. A prominent French sociologist Dumazdier, defines leisure time in which it is presented as: *a collection of activities in which an individual can freely indulge, whether to take a rest, or to have fun, or to develop voluntary social participation, informing or additional education, after one has released oneself from all professional, family or social duties* (Friedman and Neville, 1972:680).

Insufficient physical activity directly influences the reduction of physical abilities, and thus on the reduction of working ability and the ability to do everyday life duties and the ability to enjoy in various leisure time activities. Insufficient physical activity directly influences the worsening of the quality of life of an individual and population, i.e. on the functioning of the society as a whole. This is seen in all spheres of modern human community and it has direct negative consequences, primarily on health aspect, which is directly applied to economical aspect, socio economic aspect, safety aspect and everything up to the political aspect of the society (Bonneau & Brown, 1995; Colidiz, 1999; Vuori, 2004; Tomkison, 2007; Kallings, Leijon, Hellénus, & Stahle, 2008).

By the analysis of different comprehensions of leisure time it can be said that leisure time represents (relative) freedom of choice (Kacavenda Radic, 1986) with the application of free activities.

Lesnik (1986) agrees that leisure time does not mean idleness, but the time that a man has according to his forces and duties, powers and interests, in accordance

with general conditions and circumstances in which he lives.

Leisure time is an element which is predicted whether it is used for resting or entertainment voluntarily is engaged according to creative abilities, whether general informing or rising of the level of knowledge is in question, when we are free from professional and family duties (Božović, 1998:67).

By the research of Descanap, Handan, Eker, & Eker (2006) it was determined that the lack of time prevent students mostly to have physical activities. The parents pay more attention to academic success than to exercising.

## METHODS

The goal of the research was to determine the radius and eventual differences of leisure time of the students of the Belgrade University and the Skopje University. In this systematic non experimental research the survey research technique was used, transversal cut, and for the collecting of data the technique of survey was used. The sample of examinees consisted of 2158 students of Belgrade University and 757 students of Skopje University. In the processing of the data apart from descriptive statistics for the determination of the significance of the differences between leisure time of the students the Pearson  $\chi^2$  was applied.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The students of Belgrade University (34,49%) think that they have enough free time, while the students of Skopje University mostly think that they do not have enough leisure time(41,99%). The students of Belgrade University 35,66% think that they have partially leisure time and 26,50% think that they do not have leisure time at all. The students of Skopje University as well as of Belgrade University the least

percentage frequency who do it have free time.

Hi quadrant test and the level of statistical significance  $p=0,04$  indicate that between the students of Belgrade and Skopje Universities there is statistically significant difference in the presence of free time.

The female students have almost the same percentage frequencies of free time, in relation to all three answers.

Hi quadrant test and the level of statistical significance  $p=0,74$  indicate that between female students of Belgrade University and Skopje University there is no statistically significant difference considering free time.

Godin & Shepherd (1986) determined that the girls are less convinced that physical activity can help them in keeping health or improving of body looks. The female students do not participate in highly risky sports and they are more interested in individual physical activities, for example walking, aerobics or dancing.

Leisure time has three main functions: relaxing, entertainment and leisure and the development of personality (Dumazedier, 1967, according to Ilshin, 2002). The analysis of the results on the question: "Have you through physical education lessons acquired needed knowledge on the basis of which you could do exercise in your free time?" shows that the highest percent of students partially acquired the knowledge for this. The higher percent of students reports that they have needed knowledge for individual exercising, and the least percent of students who have not acquired the needed theoretical and sport technical knowledge trough their primary and secondary school for individual exercising. All that caused statistically significant difference between the students of the two universities with the level of statistical significance  $p=.00$ .

Table 1. Numerical and percentage frequency of the students' free time

Answers	Belgrade	%	Skopje	%
Yes	297	34,49	131	41,99
Partially	307	35,66	104	33,33
No	254	29,50	75	24,04
$\chi^2 = 6,319$		df=2	$p = 0,04$	

Table 2. Numerical and percentage frequency of female students' free time

Answers	Belgrade	%	Skopje	%
Yes	296	22,82	105	23,60
Partially	508	39,17	175	39,33
No	488	37,63	156	35,06
$\chi^2 = 0,59$		df=2	$p = 0,74$	

Table 3. Numerical and percentage frequency of the level of the acquired knowledge trough physical education on the basis of the activities that students can practice in their free time

Answers	Belgrade	%	Skopje	%
Yes	246	28,57	61	19,55
Partially	339	39,37	130	41,67
No	276	32,06	120	38,46
$\chi^2 = 10,21$		df=2	$p = .00$	

Table 4. Numerical and percentage frequency of the level of acquired knowledge through physical education lessons on the basis of which the female students can exercise in their free time

Answers	Belgrade	%	Skopje	%
Yes	324	24,98	88	19,78
Partially	555	42,79	186	41,80
No	417	32,15	166	37,30
		$\chi^2=6,49$	df=2	p=.03

Almost identical situation is for the female students, where the higher percent has partially acquired needed knowledge. In the second place by the frequency is the sufficient knowledge and the least presence is of those who have not acquired theoretical and sport technical knowledge through their primary and secondary education for individual exercising. All this has influenced statistically significant difference between the female students of the two universities with the level of statistical significance  $p=.03$

According to the research of the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (1997) girls and boys have different interests for certain activities, different notions, perceptions; they have different motives and barriers considering physical activity. Students are more interested for competitions while female students usually see their physical engagement as a way of regulating their body weight.

#### CONCLUSION

Physical activity is the basic need of human organism. Reduced physical activity in Europe is responsible for around 600000 deaths per year. Two thirds of humans over fifteen years in European Union do not reach recommended level of physical activity (WHO – Regional Office for Europe, 2006). Socio economic status is in direct link with doing sport recreational activities in free time. Hypokinesia represents the biggest health problem in many countries. The change of lifestyle, including higher span of sport recreational activities can lead to the reduction of number of diseases or premature death. According to the data acquired by the survey of the students of the Belgrade and Skopje Universities, it can be concluded that students do not have enough leisure time and that they have not sufficiently acquired sport technical knowledge which would enable them to exercise individually.

#### REFERENCES

Božović, R. (1979). *Iskušenje slobodnog vremena* [The temptation of free time. In Serbian.] Beograd: Mladost.

- Bonneau, J., & Brown, J. (1995). Physical ability, fitness and police work. *Journal of Clinical Forensic Medicine*, (2), 157-164.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Guidelines for school and community programs to promote lifelong physical activity among young people (1997). *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 46 (RR6), 1-36.
- Colditz, G. A. (1999). Economic costs of obesity and inactivity. *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, 31(11), 663-667.
- Daskapan, A., Handan, E., Eker, T., & Eker, L. (2006). Perceived barriers to physical activity in university students. *Journal of Sports Science and Medicine*, (5), 615-620.
- Friedman, G., & Naville, P. (1972). *Sociologija rada* [Sociology of work. In Serbian.] Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša.
- Godin, G., & Shephard, J. (1986). Psychosocial factors influencing intentions to exercise of young students from grades 7 to 9. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 57, 41-52.
- Ilišin, V. (2002). Interesi i slobodno vrijeme mladih. *Mladi u oči trećeg milenija* [Interests and leisure time of the young. *The youngsters at the turn of the third millennium*. In Croatian.] In V. Ilišin & F. Radin (ed.). Zagreb: Institut za društvena istraživanja.
- Kallings, L.V., Leijon, M., Hellénus, M.L., & Stahle, A. (2008). Physical activity on prescription in primary health care: a follow-up of physical activity level and quality of life. *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports*, 18, 154-161.
- Leskošek, J. (1980). *Teorija fizičke kulture* [The theory of physical culture. In Serbian.] Beograd: NIP Partizan.
- Lešnik, R. (1986). *Pedagogija slobodnog vremena neizbježan zahtjev sadašnjosti*, *Pedagogija*, (3), 281-286.
- Mitić, D. (2001). *Rekreacija* [Recreation. In Serbian.] Beograd: Fakultet za sport i fizičko vaspitanje.
- Tomkinson, G. R. (2007). Global changes in anaerobic fitness test performance of children and adolescents (1958–2003). *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports*, 17, 497-507.
- Vuori, I. (2004). Physical inactivity is a cause and physical activity is a remedy for major public health problems. *Kinesiology*, 36(2), 123-153.
- World Health Organization (2003). The European Health Report (2002). Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe, WHO Regional Publications. Retrieved January, 14, 2010, from: <http://www.who.dk/europeanhealth-report>.

Correspondence:

Elena Petković

Primary school "Vozd Karadjordje"

ulica Glavna ulica, bez broja, 35226 Svilajnac, Kusiľjevo, Serbia

E-mail: petkovicelena@yahoo.com.