

The structure of the factors motivating the Romanian adults' physical activities

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Abstract

Background and aims. Finding out the factors which influence the practice of physical activities, other than the usual daily activities, is an important approach which can help adults have better knowledge in this area, can improve the activity of those practicing them, and can help improve the areas supporting these activities.

Methods. Our research was a transversal one, its achievement relying on the use of classical research methods, namely: scientific documentation, survey, statistical-mathematical processing and graphical representation. The survey, achieved in 2005, consisted in a direct individual set of questions under the same circumstances by which we tried to stimulate the subjects' interest to provide objective answers so that the accuracy degree and the value of the answers in the investigation may be as high as possible (0.94). In order to complete our research we used a survey based on a series of 21 questions aimed at 7 categories of problems: why the subjects used physical exercises; who administrates the areas meant for this purpose; the level of knowledge in this domain; the subject's favourite physical activities; health benefits of the physical exercises; social impact of the practice of these exercises; psychological impact of the practice of physical exercises; role of the local public administration in promoting physical activities. The subjects were 537 people (54.94% men and 45.06% women), aged between 35 and 50, from the urban and rural area.

Results. Our study point out the fact that interest in taking part in motor activities depends on the profession and on the educational level. A high interest is present, among those whose daily activity involves intense psychological efforts (28.8%), while the lowest indicator, is registered with those people whose jobs require especially physical effort (mining, heavy industry, etc.) and with those who work in the domain of services (mechanics, electricians, etc.). High levels of interest in motor activities were registered among clerks (27.50%) and among those with domestic preoccupations (16.14%). The main motivational factor for practicing physical exercise is to maintain one's health (34.72%), to improve physical condition (24.28%), to lose weight (18.8%), to keep one's physical balance (16.35%). As for the reasons why the subjects chose the areas to practice physical exercises, we noticed that: 38.45% of the interviewees prefer the areas nearest to their homes; 27.24% chose based on the modern endowment; 22.84% are interested in the quality of the training staff. Among the favourite sportive activities were: aerobic gymnastics (27.27%), fitness (20.73%), dancing (15.61%), winter sports (10.17%), and tourism (26.22%).

Conclusions. The research confirms the initial hypothesis. The results of the survey, for the identification of the motivational factors of the physical exercise practice, outline the psychological and social reasons that determine adults to practice sports.

Keywords: motivation, factors, adults, physical activities.