

GENDER AS A DETERMINANT OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN MIDDLE-AGED PERSONS IN REPUBLIC OF SRPSKA

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Abstract

A sample of the research entities consisted of a total of 1,628 subjects sub sample on the basis of gender (men = 916 / 56.3%, women = 712 / 43.7%). Stratification of the causes was made according to the criterion of life-span (mean life), the age range of 40-65 years (according to the WHO criterion). In order to ensure a satisfactory proportionality of representation of the territory of the Republic of Srpska, the survey included four regional units (Banja Luka - 41.6%), Doboj-Bijeljina region - 26%, Sarajevo-Zvornik region - 19.7%) and Trebinje-Foča region -12.7%), thus creating a premise for generalizing the results of the research for the territory of the Republic of Srpska. The results showed that half of the respondents did not constitute an important determinant of commitment towards physical training of middle-aged persons in the Republic of Srpska.

Key words: physical exercise, physical activity, gender, middle age.

Introduction

The concept of physical activity can be viewed through the context of its manifestation in everyday life activities of man. It encompasses all movements that increase the energy consumption of the human organism above spending in peace. Under this type of activity are generally understood everyday activities - walking, cycling, climbing stairs, working in the house, shopping, etc. (Nešić, Srdić, Jovanović, & Vukajlović, 2014). On the other hand, physical exercise implies planned and purposeful physical activity whose primary goal is the improvement of health and physical fitness (typical forms of this type of activity are fast walking, cycling, aerobics and active hobbies, such as gardening or competition sports) (Ostojić, S., Stojanović, M. & Milošević, Z., 2013). Human movements are not only mechanical phenomena, but they are realized by the physiological activity which is primarily the result of continuous chemical changes in the body, which create the energy necessary for movement and motion. All these elements are unified in a whole unique harmony by rhythm, as a very important element of movement and motion. Each movement is structured from three basic elements: 1) energy elements (primary movement occurrence); 2) mechanical elements (secondary movements); 3) Elements of the rhythm of movement and motion (Nićin, 2009). Physical exercise is a test for many homeostatic control systems of the organism, because exercise directly or indirectly affects many physiological parameters in the human organism (heart rate, breathing speed, body temperature, etc.) (Nešić, Srdić,

Jovanović, & Vukajlović, 2014). The National Medical Institute in the United States recommended it as an optimal level - 60 minutes of moderate physical activity every day, which represents a level that makes it possible to achieve positive results for the health of man as a whole.

Some studies that have so far dealt with different contexts of a healthy lifestyle (Booth & Chkravarthy, 2002; Pierro, Mannetti, & Livi, 2003; Sharkey & Gaskill, 2008) have prioritized the need for regular physical exercise, with particular emphasis on activities dominated by contents of aerobic character (Nešić & Rajić, 2015). This only confirms already scientifically based attitudes about the positive impact of physical activity, that is, on the values of regular exercise as an indispensable component of a healthy lifestyle (World Health Organization, 2007).

Physical activity, especially regular physical exercise, in middle-aged people is a significant factor that is related to the quality of life. People who are physically active feel more fulfilled, and therefore they are in better health. Therefore, it is possible to talk about the importance of physical activity for middle-aged people as: (1) the factor of health promotion; (2) an important factor in recreation and active recreation; (3) basic means for raising the work and defense ability of each individual (Anastasovski, 2003).

Studying various aspects of the social functioning of middle-aged people is very important. Not only because of the large number of adults who are

currently living in this period of time, but also because this period covers a significant range of individuals' lifespan. It is about a period that starts between 35 and 40 years, and ends between 60 and 65 years (Lachman, 2004), which clearly indicates that the minimum age limit can be more clearly determined. One of the reasons is that the perception of middle age in society varies, that is, depends on the different criteria of observation (physical appearance of a person, reproducibility, social status, work engagement and productivity, bio-physiological parameters, etc.) (Schaie & Willis, 2001).

Although the Republic of Srpska is trying to "catch up" with the developed countries in the region, demographic data show that the health aspect of quality of life is at a very low level. The deficit of the physical activity of the population is marked as one of the risk factors that affect the health of the entire population, especially the middle-aged person. In this sense, the following issues can be identified as problematic: (1) there are no relevant data on the level of physical activity of the middle-aged population in Republic of Srpska, (2) scientifically founded knowledge of the relationship between the level of physical activity and the subjectively assessed health status of this population in the Republic of Srpska are not consistent, and (3) there are no programs that provide good references to the opportunities for physical training of the middle-aged population.

For these reasons, this research aimed at identifying one of the important segments of quality of life, and it refers to full determination as a factor of commitment for exercising regular physical training in middle-age persons in Republic of Srpska.

Methods

The research had the character of a transversal non-experimental empirical study. A sample of the research entities consisted of a total of 1,628 subjects sub sample on the basis of gender (men = 916 / 56.3%, women = 712 / 43.7%). Stratification of the causes was made according to the criterion of life-span (mean life), the age range of 40-65 years (according to the WHO criteria, UN: WHO, 1982). In order to ensure a satisfactory proportionality of the representation of the territory of the Republic of Srpska, the survey included four regional units (Banja Luka - 41.6%), Doboj-Bijeljina region - 26%, Sarajevo-Zvornik region - 19.7%) and Trebinje- Foča region -12.7%), thus creating a premise for generalizing the results of the research for the territory of Republika Srpska.

The survey was of a survey type, where a questionnaire was used as the basic instrument, specially created for the purposes of this study. The variables of the research were divided into two spaces: (1) independent (semi) and (2) dependent (dealing with sports and recreational activities, self-assessment of daily physical activities, reasons for dealing with sports and recreational activities).

For the selection and processing of empirical materials, the following statistical procedures were applied: descriptive - distribution of frequencies) and comparative - a) discriminatory, contingency analysis - χ^2 test, since the variables dominated by the empirical gradients were nominal scales, and using the cross-tabulation obtained data are arranged and shown in the form of a contiguity dimension table; b) Factor analysis, made possible by the nature of a number of variables defined and arranged in the form of ordinal scales. All statistical conclusions were conducted at a significance level of 0.05 (Sig., 05).

Results and discussion

The scope and focus of the research conditioned the need to detect certain characteristics of the samples related to the specificity of their physical activity, primarily from the position of identifying physical activities that can be considered regular physical exercise and, in a wider sense, participation in sports and recreational activities.

By inspecting the respondents' responses to the indicator of regular physical exercise (exercising sports-recreational contents at least three times a week), most are not physically active (58.9%), which is also confirmed by a statistically significant difference (Sig. = 0.000). When considering the percentage of those who have applied to take part in some form of sports-recreational exercise (41.1%) (Table 1), this result may be considered to correspond to the observed tendencies that exist in the Republic of Srpska area, which indicate unsatisfactory coverage of citizens in regular forms of sports and recreational activities (Republički zavod za statistiku, 2017). When analyzing results in relation to gender, it is notable that there are no significant differences among physically active persons (men = 20.5%; women= 20.6%), or about one fifth of the respondents, both male and female gender, declare themselves as regular recreational practitioners. The influence on the occurrence of statistical significance is reflected in non-recreational persons, where men are dominated by the overall score 35.7%) (Table 1).

Table 1: Contingency analysis results (gender)

Gender	Dealing with sports and recreational activities		Σ
	practitioners	non practitioners	
Men	334 20.5%	582 35.7%	916 56.3%
Women	335 20.6%	377 23.2%	712 43.7%
Σ	669 41.1%	959 58.9%	1628 100.0%
$\chi^2 = 18.117$			Sig. = 0.000

One of the essential elements of a healthy lifestyle is certainly physical activity characterized by aerobic processes in the body. In this context, special physical activities, primarily dosed exercise, are focused on the development of aerobic abilities, which make up the dominant determinant of active lifestyle (Nešić, Srdić, Jovanović, & Vukajlović, 2014). Hiking, cycling, swimming and the like are some of the most useful activities that are recommended as the dominant aerobic recreational activity, primarily because there are almost no contraindications to their use. The results of the contingency analysis show that those in the group of physically active subjects are present almost in majority, i.e. they are very frequently used (47.7%). Occasionally, 14.9% of respondents use them in physical exercise, while in almost one third (37.4%) it has been identified that running, swimming and / or riding a bicycle is almost never the content of sports and recreational activities. In terms of gender differentiation, it is evident that a higher percentage of men appear in these percentages as part of regular physical exercise / activity, compared to women who are dominated with "occasionally" or "very rarely" responses (Table 2).

Table 2: Frequency of exercise of physical activity of aerobic character (running, swimming and / or riding a bike)

Gender	Physical exercise of aerobic character			Σ
	very often	occasionally	very rarely	
Men	190	21	123	334
	28,4%	3,1%	18,4%	49,9%
Women	129	79	127	335
	19,3%	11,8%	19,0%	50,1%
Σ	319	100	250	669
	47,7%	14,9%	37,4%	100,0%

$\chi^2 = 45.367$ $Sig. = 0.000$

Studying the motivation of participants in sports recreation involves examining a number of aspects that are essential for their commitment to specific recreational programs, activities, contents, etc. In other words, motivational determinants can be seen as an interest in specific individual engagement in leisure time. Therefore, the factors that organize, direct and determine the duration of their recreational activities, whether they are exercised independently or within the framework of recreational organizations (Nešić & Rajić, 2015). Our research as well focused on one of the important indicators related to the reasons that can be essential for active involvement in the physical activities of a recreational character. This research space was detected using a scale of motivation for dealing with sport and recreational activities whose construct consists of eight aspects. They relate to the context of the motive for participation in the sport and recreational activities in the form of a five-stage Likert scale which, by determining the

scalar averages, assessed the intensity of the motive preference questionnaire used in the research (Perić, Nešić, Romanov, Marković, Mišković, Jezdimirović & Stupar, 2016). The results show that the characteristics of the sub sample are mainly reflected on the intensity of the motivation scale, but not on its scale. With both sexes, there is a tendency to see the reasons for inclusion in sports-recreational activities in a positive context, which is indicated by the total scalar averages distributed on the positive part of the scale (men = 3.76; women = 3.66). Since positive motivation of moderate intensity has been identified in the total scalar average (for both sub sample), individual indicators (with their scalar averages) have enabled the creation of a structure of the hierarchical expression of the motive/ reasons for exercising recreational physical exercise. With both subunits, there is an almost identical distribution in the ranking of reasons that are opting for exercising physical training. In the male population, the most intense reason is the improvement of health (4.72), while in the case of women it is the mood (4.53). In the second hierarchical place, men identified the mood (4.59), and women the improvement of health (4.47). The distribution of other motives are in the hierarchical view of the presence identical while smaller differences are noticed only in their intensity (scalar averages), but not in scalar direction. The lowest scalar averages, and hence the intensity of the manifestation, have reasons defined by the motives of achievement (men = 2.31; women = 2.90) and self-indication (men = 1.87; women = 1.67) (Table 3)

Table 3: Reasons for choosing to participate in the sports and recreational activities

Men		Women		
Motive	Sv	Rang	Motive	Sv
Health	4.72	1	Mood	4.53
Mood	4.59	2	Health	4.47
Reduction in body weight	4.29	3	Reduction in body weight	4.03
Fan and entertainment	4.19	4	Fan and entertainment	3.91
Hanging out	4.13	5	Hanging out	3.90
Relaxation	3.98	6	Relaxation	3.84
Achievement	2.31	7	Achievement	2.90
Self-evidence (be trendy)	1.87	8	Self-evidence (be trendy)	1.67
Total Sv: 3.76			Total Sv: 3.66	

Descriptive indicators of the reasons for doing physical exercise have created the preconditions for detecting this space through identification and its latent structures (motivation factors for physical exercise). Since the values of the scalar averages in both subunits were not statistically significant, especially in terms of purchasing scalar values, this is the determination for the scope of factor analysis aimed at identifying the latent structure of the sub

sample as a whole (criterion: physical exercise participants). In the case of data that are complex and presented in the form of ordinate scales, a factor analysis was added as a justified statistical procedure. The validation of the unresolved consensus of the scale (based on Cronbach's alpha coefficient) determined its good validity (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.914), which is in accordance with the recommended theoretical value of minimum 0.7 (DeVellis, 2003).

In the previous procedure, the adequacy of data for factor analysis was assessed. By checking the correlation matrix many coefficients of value of 0.3 and more were recorded.

According to Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin's criterion, the required recommended value of 0.6 (Kaiser, 1970; 1974) was exceeded in this case at a statistically satisfactory level (0.749). Also, Bartlett's spherical test (Bartlett, 1954) reached a statistical significance (Sig. = 0,000) indicating the invertibility of the correlation matrix (Table 4). An analysis of the main components obtained after Oblimin rotation revealed the presence of two components with characteristic values over one, which explain 61.87% and 13.76% variance. However, the resulting fracture diagram showed the existence of a clear fracture point already behind the first component (Figure 1). Based on Kattel's criterion (Kattel, 1966), it was decided to retain only one component. This single-factor solution explained the completely acceptable part of the total variance (61.87%), which is in line with the recommended procedures for interpreting the results of factor analysis (Pallant, 2009).

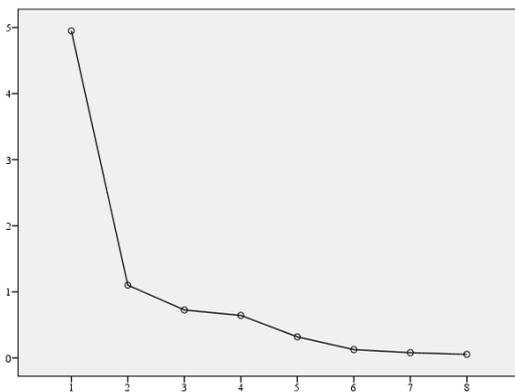


Figure 1: Scree Plot scale of motivation

Table 4: Descriptive indicators of motivation scale

Item scale	Sv	Structure matrix	Communalities
Fan and entertainment	4.0 5	.930	.864
Hanging out	4.0 1	.911	.830
Relaxation	3.9 1	.907	.823
Health	4.5 9	.871	.759
Reducing body weight	4.1 6	.845	.715
Mood	4.5 6	.677	.458
Achievement	2.6 0	.574	.329
Style of life	1.7 7	.414	.172

KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy = 0.749

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity = 12537.241 Sig. = 0.000

All 8 variables gave the corresponding factor weight to the single extracted component (Table 4), which established that the applied scale for identifying reasons / motives for dealing with sports and recreational activities of middle-aged people has good validity. Based on these results, one can talk about the existence of a general motivation factor for dealing with sports and recreational activities in this population of the respondents. Although it is a single-factor solution and it is dominated by objects that can be seen as motives of social interaction (entertainment, socializing, relaxation), that is, in the hierarchy of manifestation within the factors (matrix of structure) take the first three places. At the very beginning, the motives are related to achievement and self-indication (current social trend). Therefore, it can be concluded that middle-aged persons, through eventual inclusion in some of the sports recreational facilities, are primarily trying to satisfy the need for social contact, and then it is only then possible to "seek" ways to advance unhealthy aspects of health (eg weight reduction, similarly). At least they are encouraged by the fulfillment of some fashion trend or sporting achievement. Such findings are confirmed by other similar studies (Maltby & Day, 2001; Ryan, Williams, Patrick, & Deci, 2009; Nešić & Rajić, 2015).

In the context of our research, it can be concluded that the gender was not a significant determinant of the commitment to physical training of middle-aged persons in Republic of Srpska. The results of this research should also be considered in the context of the physical (non) activity of middle-aged people living in the age of highly developed information technologies (which make life much easier, and at the same time they drastically change their life habits, where this part of the population is still getting used to), rapid and radical changes in the working and social environment (which ruthlessly change the current way of life and work of this population), as well as general tendencies in lifestyle (sedentary, reduced movement, improper diet, lack of physical activity, etc.). All this leads to general alienation of people, especially those of middle age, who are still a working part of the population and "hurry" to provide their families (in an increasingly uncertain economic and political transition environment), while neglecting their own health. Especially those of habits that are related to physical activity and exercise. The correlation of such tendencies in the territory of the Republic of Srpska can certainly be sought in a number of previous studies (Schneider & Becker, 2005; Siostrom, Oja, Hagströmer, Smith & Bauman, 2006; Ali & Lindstrom, 2006; Lučev & Tadinac, 2008; Jurakić & Heimer, 2012).

In this context, the problem of the physical (non) activity of middle-aged people opens the core question - how to restore and further develop healthy living habits, and at the same time not be the "victim" of technological innovations and socio-economic transition? Because sports and recreational activities and physical exercise are becoming less competitive compared to the "benefits" offered by the virtual world of information technologies, while at the same time they are the only healthy and natural way of preserving and improving health. Answers to these and similar questions need to be sought in intensifying scientific research and public affirmation of their results. Based on the results of this and similar previous related studies, it is possible to recommend practice focusing attention (and activities) on the following aspects of improving sports recreation: (1) Permanent and intensive education of middle-aged people on the values and impact of physical exercise on health and the development of healthy living habit; (2) Establishment of a purposeful and developmentally sustainable system of recreational sport in Republic of Srpska, conceived in the form of regular physical training of the widest population through organizations and institutions of recreational sport; (3) Reaffirmation of sports recreation in companies (establishment of a "worker sport" system); (4) Development of a strategy for the development of recreational sport in the Republic of Srpska.

Conclusion

The current position of the world scientific and professional public, in particular the World Health Organization, clearly determines the phenomenon of pronounced tendencies that in middle-aged people, and especially women, there are habits in which adequate physical activity is not adequately represented. This tendency is noticeable in almost all developed environments where there are no major material or cultural barriers, especially when it comes to the regular exercise of quality recreational programs and content. Therefore, in propagating a healthy lifestyle and physical activities as an integral part, a wider social initiative and scientifically funded research is needed, as one of the ways of motivating this part of the population in the Republic of Srpska. Especially if we take into account the analysis of social movements in the world that show that by the middle of the 21st century more than half of the developed world population will be over 50 years of age. Special attention will be paid to health care and quality of life strategies by the activities of a healthy way of conducting leisure and related activities, sports and recreational activities. In this context, special recreational aerobic activities should be considered as the most appropriate form of activity for middle-aged people. This points to the current tendencies for promotion and the increasingly intense recognition of Outdoor Recreation, which is becoming increasingly popular in the world, and the focus is on people of middle and senior age (Naidoo, Ramseook-Munhurrin, Seebaluck, & Janvier, 2015).

The results of this study showed the tendency that a part of the middle-age population of the Republic of Srpska, is not sufficiently engaged in sports-recreational activities. A minority of respondents in this study who declared themselves to exercise physical activity that can be characterized as regular physical exercise are almost equally distributed in relation to full affiliation. This means that gender cannot be considered as a significant determinant of physical exercise. Also, regarding the reasons for dealing with sports and recreational activities, there was no significant difference based on full membership, since both men and women are primarily involved in meeting the needs for social contact. And within this dominant motivational segment, of course, there is also a demand for the promotion of certain aspects of health. We can therefore consider that the essential determinants of participation in regular forms of recreational exercise are in some other aspects of life and work of these individuals, which could be the task of detection in any of the following similar studies.

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SPOL KAO ČINILAC OPREDJELJENJA PREMA FIZIČKOM VJEŽBANJU OSOBA SREDNJE ŽIVOTNE DOBI U REPUBLICI SRPSKOJ

Sažetak

Uzorak entiteta istraživanja je sačinjavalo ukupno 1628 ispitanika, subuzorkovanih na osnovu spolne pripadnosti (muškarci = 916/56,3%; žene = 712/43,7%). Stratifikacija uzroka je izvršena prema kriterijumu pripadnosti životnoj dobi (srednja životna dob), starosnog obuhvata od 40-65 godina (prema kriterijumu WHO). Da bi se obezbijedila zadovoljavajuća proporcionalnost zastupljenosti teritorije Republike Srpske istraživanjem su bile obuhvaćena četiri regionalne cjeline (Banja Luka - 41,6%), Dobojsko-Bijeljinski region - 26%), Sarajevsko-Zvornički region - 19,7%) i Trebinjsko-Fočanski region -12,7%) čime su stvorene pretposavke za korištenje rezultata istraživanja za područje Republike Srpske. Rezultati su pokazali da spol ispitanika ne predstavlja bitnu odrednicu opredjeljenja prema fizičkom vježbanju osoba srednje životne dobi u Republici Srpskoj.

Ključne riječi: fizičko vježbanje, fizičke aktivnosti, spol, srednja životna dob.

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