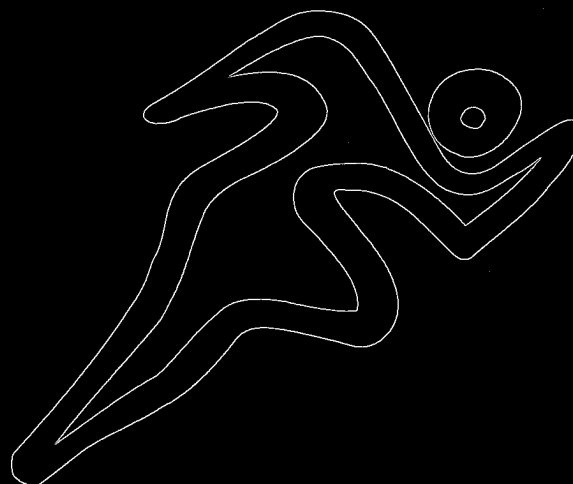


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GENDER DIFFERENCES IN PARTICIPATION AND USE OF LEISURE TIME BETWEEN MACEDONIAN AND BULGARIAN STUDENTS AT TEACHING FACULTIES

Preliminary communication

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Abstract

The sample of examiners was consisted of total of 294 examiners (128 students from "Goce Delcev" in Stip, Republic of Macedonia and 166 from University "Ss. Kliment Ohridski" in Sofia, Bulgaria) from which 211 females and 82 males. Research was realized by using specially designed closed form of questionnaire, composed of 28 questions. Obtained results were analyzed using descriptive statistics parameters. Differences among student's opinions were tested applying descriptive and comparative statistics. In general, differences between genders were noted mainly in questions related with the amount of available leisure time, attendance of sport events, participation in sport during previous education, participation in sport activity in leisure, frequency of weekly sport activity and type of selected sport. All results are greater for male students that in general, suggest on more active use of leisure time for males and greater sport activity during leisure, compared with their female colleagues.

Keywords: *leisure time; students; activities, sport participation, role of universities.*

INTRODUCTION

As time devoted to personal interests, depended from personal preferences and abilities, leisure time gives more satisfaction and joy than time spent at work, faculty and other obligations (Luo & Hu, 2005). Leisure time activities are associated and affect people's happiness (Wei, Huang, Stodloska & Yu, 2015), wellbeing and personal development. In relation with personal development, structured and organized leisure time activities extends the process of acquisition of knowledge, widens cognitive horizons, enriches emotional life, encourages the development of psycho-physical abilities, skills and habits, encourages independence and sociability (Tomić & Hasanović, 2007). Student's life is significantly transformed in many aspects related to changes of obligations, responsibilities, social interactions, emotional challenges, often change of place of living etc. Student finds themselves in a new surroundings and face with lot of new expectations. All these could be very stressful and confusing and according some studies, university students often complain on loneliness, nostalgia, conflicts and disorders in the communication with their peers, as well as an increased stress (Colleen, Conley, Travers, & Bryant, 2013). In this context of many changes, unstructured and unorganized leisure could be a risk factor for development (Arbunić, 2006) and is often related with risk behaviors, use of drugs and other substances of addiction (Bouliet, 2008). Available time and activities during leisure time are closely related with personal happiness, self-control, psychological wellbeing and health – related comfort/discomfort. In this relation according Lu and Hu, (2002), leisure at university students was perceived to have short-term benefits including positive mood, physical fitness and better structuring of time, as well as long-term effects of happiness, health, educational benefits and social integration. Several leisure time studies reports that young people are more happy and satisfied when spending an active leisure time, fellfield with structured activities (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003; Brkljačić, Lipovčan & Tadić, 2012) and university students with more hours for leisure activities during the day are found to be happier and with higher self – control (Brkljačić, et al, 2012).

Upon the issue of leisure time activities, based on study reports, college students are mostly interested in activities like hanging out and having fun, and less interested in activities that require intellectual or spiritual activity (Gril, Puklek, Levpušek, Brečko & Štraus

2004; Andrijašević, Paušić, Bavčević & Ciliga, 2005; Arbunić, 2006; Bouillet, Ilišin & Potočnik, 2008; Vrbanc, 2013; Popeska, Ignatov & Sivevska, 2015; Brkljačić et al, 2012). Related with gender, female students are more included in passive forms of leisure time activities such as watching TV, while male students were more interested in participating in sport activities during leisure, visiting sport events, play computer games and read newspapers (Andrijašević et al, 2005; Buckworth & Nigg, 2004; Bouillet, Ilišin & Potočnik (2008). In general, greater involvement in exercise and sport activity is reported for male students, compared with their female colleagues (Buckworth & Nigg, 2004; Andrijašević et al, 2005; Bouillet, et al, 2008; Cardinal, Yan & Cardinal, M, 2013; Lapa, 2015). Differences are also noted in the frequency of participation (Buckworth & Nigg, 2004; Vrbanc, 2013; Broáni, Šutka, Španiková & Vravková (2013), Cardinal, B., Yan & Cardinal, M. (2013) selected type of activity (Buckworth & Nigg, 2004; Bouillet, et al, 2008; Koláriková, Jadrudová, Bobřík & Ondrušová, 2013) motives to participate in sport during leisure. Differences in some of mentioned segments were also noted comparing leisure time activities among university students from different countries (Kondric, Sindik, Furjan – Mandic & Schiefler, 2013; Popeska, et al., 2015).

The aim of this study is to determine the differences between male and female students across the countries about the manners they spend their leisure time, how actively they participate in sport as well as to determine the student's opinion for the role of the Universities in organization of student's leisure time.

METHODS

The study was realized on a sample of 294 respondents, full time students in all four years of study at Faculty of Educational Sciences at University "Goce Delcev" in Stip, Republic of Macedonia (128 students) and The Faculty for Preschool and primary school education at Sofia University "Ss. Kliment Ohridski" in Sofia, Bulgaria (166 students). From the total number of respondents, 128 students were Macedonian and 166 are Bulgarian students. Within the total sample, 211 students (72%) are females, while 82 students or 28% are males. Obtained results are analyzed and presented using analyses of frequencies (f) and percent's (%). Differences in leisure time activities and interests between male and female students from both

countries are determined using t-test for independent samples, chi – square test and Mann-Whitney Test, with level of significance 0.01 ($p < 0, 01$) and 0.05 ($p < 0,05$).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Manners of spending leisure time

Related with the manner of spending leisure time, we were interested about the main preoccupation during the studies, daily number of hours for leisure time, time spent at faculty and learning, leisure time activities in home and out of home as well as frequency of attendances of cultural and sport events. Using t – test, differences between male and female students on a lower level of significance 0.05 ($p < 0,05$) are determined upon the questions of number of daily hours for leisure time, while differences between genders on higher level of significance 0.01 ($p < 0,01$) are obtained for the question related to frequency of attendance of sport events as a content of leisure time (Table 1). There is no statistical differences within the separate samples of males and females regarded the country. Based on the obtained results, male students have more hours per day for leisure time activities, from 4 – 5 hours, while their female colleagues have 3 – 4 hours leisure time during the day. Identical results for males and females are obtained in the study of Brkljačić, Kaliterna Lipovčan & Tadić (2012) also realized on a sample of university students. Similar results for the leisure time during the day are obtained at the sample of Croatian students in the study conducted by RupiĆ & Buntić, (2005); Andrijašević et al (2005) and Popeska & Sivevska (2013) on a sample of Macedonian students.

Based on these results, Bulgarian female students attend cinema and theatres more frequently compared their Macedonian colleagues. Beside personal interests which we found as primary reason for obtained differences, other possible reasons could be find in required financial costs for most of the suggested contents as well as the offer of the local city where the university is located or the offer of cultural and sport events by the university itself. Namely, mentioned activities are organized by the local community and university cultural and sports centers. This emphasize the role of the university in structuring student’s leisure time and contributing to their complete development. This is especially important considering that 59% of males and 51% of females included in the study declared that leisure time activities affects in creation of their character and behavior.

On the other questions related with manner of use of leisure time, no statistical differences between males and females were obtained. For 49% of male students and 45% of female student’s main occupation during leisure time is learning and having fun. Differences between countries within the samples are noted for female students and also confirmed in the study of (Popeska, et al., 2015). Both male and female students spend around 4 – 5 hours per day at the Faculty (81% males and 83% of females) while most of them spend approximately 2 – 3 hours per day learning (52% males and 62% females). The choice of leisure time activities is always one of the most interesting one in leisure studies were most differences are expected, yet we did not obtained statistical differences regarded this questions based on the gender. For male students most preferred leisure activities in the home are use of computer, internet and playing video games (32%), followed by passive rest and listening music (20%) and sport activities in home (15%).

The role of University in organization of leisure time of students.

Schools and universities serves as a main socializing agent and socializing environment, especially in terms of exposure to physical activity (Kretschmann, 2014). They are also very important in structuring students’ leisure time considering the amount of time that students spend there as well as position of the universities as promotor of cultural and sport life of students as a factor for their cultural and aesthetic development. In these regards, we were interested in student’s opinions about the type of leisure time activities suggested by universities, the frequency of students’ participation in it and their personal level of satisfaction regarded this. At all suggested four questions, no significant differences were obtained neither between the samples of males and females, nor between countries within the two samples. The students opinions regarded these issues were following: most of the students from both genders and both countries as well agree that their universities does not suggest enough contents for leisure time (44% males and 41% of females) or by countries 66% of Macedonian males and 54% of Bulgarian males students and consequently, 57% of Macedonian females and 55% of Bulgarian colleagues confirmed this. Regarded the students participation in suggested activities, most of the male students from both countries participate in sports events and competitions organized by the university (42% of Macedonian males and 48% of Bulgarian males),

Table 1. Differences between students in using leisure time

Questions	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
How many hours during the day you have for leisure time	Males	82	2,85	,931	,103	2,718	291	,007**
	Females	211	2,42	,943	,065			
How frequently do you attend sport events	Males	82	2,88	1,280	,141	-3,855	288	,000**
	Females	208	3,49	1,179	,082			

Table 2. Differences between males and females regarded participation in physical activity during leisure time

Questions	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Have you been participating in sport regularly during primary and secondary school?	Males	82	1,28	,479	,053	-3,912	291	,000**
	Females	211	1,54	,509	,035			
Do you participate in physical activity in leisure time in a period of university studies?	Males	82	1,99	,949	,105	-4,385	289	,000**
	Females	211	2,48	,821	,057			
How many times per week are you physically active?	Males	82	3,78	1,579	,174	3,358	287	,001**
	Females	211	3,13	1,444	,100			
Motivation for participating in PA in leisure time.	Males	82	2,74	1,783	,197	-2,025	289	,044*
	Females	209	3,22	1,838	,127			
Type of PA in leisure time – competitive/noncompetitive	Males	82	1,54	,502	,060	-2843	240	,005*
	Females	211	1,73	,461	,035			

* $p < 0,05$ ** $p < 0,01$

while their female colleagues has more diverse interests. Most of the females within both countries mostly attend theatre shows realized by students groups (21% Macedonian females and 31% Bulgarian females), followed by participation in university sport activities (21% Macedonian females and 23% Bulgarian females). They all "sometimes" participate in these activities. These answers of student's emphasis the need from certain changes regarded the participation of the universities in organization and promotion on leisure time activities and its greater participation in student's leisure time..

Participation in sport activities during leisure time.

Based on the results obtained from applied t – test, statistically significant differences at both level of significance ($p < 0,0$ and $p < 0,01$) between males and female respondents are in five from ten questions (Table 2).

Statistically significant differences on a level 0,001 ($p < 0,01$) are obtained for the questions related with participation in sport during primary and secondary school and participation in physical activity in leisure time in period of universities studies. Comparing the personal level of physical activity in a period of university studies and previous stages of education, for both groups (males and females) a higher level of activity during secondary school is reported (35% Macedonian males, 44% Bulgarian males and for females 44% Macedonian and 31% of Bulgarian one). This is also confirmed in the study of Andrijašević et al, (2005). The decrees of level of participation in physical activity during university studies is noted in several similar studies (Buckworth, & Nigg, 2004; Nuviala et al, 2011; Regarded the frequency of participation in sport in leisure during university studies, most of the male examiners confirmed that they participate regularly (56% of Macedonian students and 50% of Bulgarian students), while most of the female examiners occasionally "sometimes" are physically active during leisure (69% of Macedonian students and 60% of Bulgarian students). The higher level of participation in sport and physical activity during leisure of male students compared with females during university studies is also noted in the studies of (Buckworth & Nigg, 2004; Bouillet, et al, 2008; Cardinal et al, 2013; Lapa, 2015). Statistically significant differences ($p < 0,01$) between males and females are also noted upon the question related to the frequency of physical activity in leisure time during the week (Table 2). According the results, most of the male students from both countries reported to be physically active three times per week (25% MS, 37% BS), while their female colleagues two times a week (25% MS and 31% BS). Andrijašević et al (2005), in their findings also confirmed these frequency of weekly participation in sport by gender. Physical activity two to three times per week for college students is noted in researches of Cigrovski, Matković, B., Matković, R., & Jurakić, (2005); Colov & Dasheva (Цолов & Дашева), (1998); Koláriková, et, al., (2013); Vrbanac, (2013). Increased number of weekly frequency of engagement in physical activity is related with greater satisfaction of quality of lives of students (Broáni, et. al., 2013). The type of selected physical activity during leisure is one of the segments where significant differences between males and females occurs. From three type of suggested activities: indoor/outdoor, individual/team activities and competitive/noncompetitive activities, statistically significant differences ($p < 0,05$) between males and females are obtained for participation in competitive/noncompetitive sports. According the results, males are more interested to participate in competitive activities, while most of the females selected noncompetitive one. For the other two types of activities, both male and female preferred outdoor activities (47% MKD male students, 70% BG males' students, 55%

MKD female students and 56% BG female students). Most of the Macedonian male students selected team activities (33%) while their Bulgarian colleagues preferred individual one (54%), For sample of female students, most Macedonian students prefer team activities, while their Bulgarian colleagues selected individual one (58%). Interest of females for individual, occasional and not organized activities is confirmed by Vrbanac (2013).

Different motives for participation in physical activity is also issue in which differences between genders occurs (Table 2). Leading motive reported by males is interest for sport, while for females is impact of sport is maintaining good health and wellbeing. These motives are followed by positive influence on personality, impact of sport on reducing stress and mental fatigue and experiencing positive emotions. Other study reports confirmed these results (Colov & Dasheva (Цолов & Дашева), 1998; Popeska & Jovanova – Mitkovska, 2014; Ignatov, 2016). Good condition and health, relaxation through sport were also defined as two from totally six defined motivational factors for sport in leisure reported in the study of Kondric et al, (2013). Other four factors were defined as action and friendship; sport and action with friends (popularity), social status and sport events. Positive attitude toward sport and physical activity are important for future teachers and they are not related with gender but with the personal point of views. In this regard, related the question for the meaning of using leisure time for being physically active, most of the student's answers refers to: question of personal choice (36% Macedonian male students and 41% Bulgarian female students), manner of quality use of leisure time (37% Bulgarian male students), investment in personal health and well – being (36% Macedonian female students). All these, related with mainly internal motives that lead students to participate in physical activity in leisure and selection of different activities that are mainly oriented toward personal improvement, in general, suggest on very positive attitudes toward leisure time physical activity in students not depending from their gender, which is also confirmed as answer to one of the questions. More than half of the interviewed students from both sexes declared that they are satisfied from the way they spend their leisure time. Based on other studies, academic obligations, family and social obligations and luck of time are the most frequently reported barriers for students and reasons not to have leisure time as they want to (Daskapan, Handan Tuzun, & Eker, 2006).

CONCLUSION

Obtained results point out on statistically significant differences between males in females regarded the amount of hours per day that they have for leisure time, attendance of sport events as a content of leisure, active participation in sport in previous stages of education and participation in sport during leisure in period of university studies. In all these questions better results in a sense of higher number of hours per day for leisure, higher number of attendance of sport events and higher level of physical activity is noted for males compared with their female's colleagues. Men were also more physically active per week during leisure compared with woman and as expected, differences also occurs in selection of type of physical activity. Men were more interested about participation in team in competitive sports, while females preferred noncompetitive activates. Both genders preferred outdoor sports for their leisure time and they considered leisure time activities as important for their personal development. These results in general confirms the general opinion that men are more interested and engaged in sport then women, but could be also a question of personal choice or a result of previous movement habits where in general males were more encouraged in active con-

tents and games, while females were more oriented toward creative, not so active and more rhythmical activities.. The issue of possibilities to impact on personal development of students - future teachers, bring us back to the role of the universities to propose, organize and realize different forms of sport activities that will fulfill students leisure time and will make that time a factor for personal growth and development. From the instance of Teaching Faculty, key role in this process will be at university teachers that teach subjects related to pedagogy of leisure time, art, music and physical education. At University level, these activities should be initiated and organized by different university centers like: university cultural center, university sport center, university media center organizing cultural, drama and art groups, music and sport events, alumni clubs etc. Participation of students in students unions and memberships in different university clubs and centers will ensure relation between students real interests and suggested and organization of activities from the Faculties and University. Students could be also included in promotion of this events among colleagues, but also their involvement as initiators, volunteers, participants or consumers.

In this regard, Universities should be initiators and organizers of many different sports activities as a contents of student's leisure time, organized as participation of University teams in different sports that integrated the competitive component and organization of leisure time activities without the competitive component.

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