

## LEASURE TIME SPORT ACTIVITIES AMONG STUDENTS AT TEACHING FACULTIES ACROSS THREE COUNTRIES

*Original scientific paper*

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### Abstract

*Regular physical activity is important factor to maintain a good physical and mental health, physical condition and productivity. Different forms of physical activity are delivered within the educational system, including universities. One of the important issues is to create habits for active and healthy lifestyle which means being physically active as way of life including regular physical activity during leisure time. The purpose of the study was to determine student's interests and motivation to participate in sport in leisure across three different countries and to identify possible differences within three countries – Macedonia, Bulgaria and Slovenia. The study was realized on sample of 354 participants, students at Teaching Faculties in three mentioned countries. Specially designed questionnaire was applied. Results were analyzed using descriptive statistics parameters. Differences across countries were determined using the analyses of variance. Based on result, differences were determined on questions related to importance of sport in leisure, level of activity, frequency of participation, type of preferred sport etc. Obtained results suggest on differences between countries regarded time spend in learning, available time and frequency of physical activity during leisure. Suggestions and recommendations were given for future similar studies as well as for particular actions that can be taken at universities in order to improve the physical activity level of students including sport events, competitions, sport camps and workshops.*

**Keywords:** participation in sport, university students, leisure time, differences

### INTRODUCTION

Well known and widely accepted fact is that physical activity has many benefits for health and wellbeing in all periods during the life span. Promotion of active and healthy life style has been beneficial for improving general fitness and quality of life and reducing the risk for development of many diseases. Yet, according the data from World Health Organization, a continued decrease of level of physical activity is noted. Insufficient physical activity is defined as one of the ten leading factors for the death worldwide. According the global data, more than 80% of adolescents on global level does not meet required criteria for physical activity and globally one in four adults is not active enough (WHO, 2017). The decrease of level of physical activity is noted in all age periods, including the population of university students as well. Life habits of university students, especially their habits for physical activity is important issue considering two points. One is the that the life quality as elderly is determined by health behavior in young adult years (Buckworth, 2001) and in these sense, college or university studies can be considered as last chain in the organized and institutionalized system of physical education within the educational process. The second point is from the aspect of the future roles of the university students. They are the intellectual elite, the future of the world. It is a specific period in life when social skills are built. In this period, young people acquire social roles that lead them in future life. Maintaining habits for healthy and active lifestyle during adolescence is an opportunity to have youngsters that can be a role model and can have positive influence in promoting physical activity (Andrijašević, Paušić, Bavčević & Ciliga, 2005). Therefore, promoting active and healthy lifestyle at colleges and universities as a part of the studies curricula as well as different leisure time programs suggested by the university could be considered as investment in future and wellbeing of the next generations. In this relation, leisure time is a very important aspect that should be carefully considered. As a time released from obligations in personal and professional life, leisure time is a source of joy and satisfaction. (Lu & Hu, 2005). Organized and well-structured leisure time activities, selected by personal preferences and interests, can have a great

impact on different aspects of human life including physical, intellectual, aesthetic, work and moral development. According Tomić & Hasanović (2007), “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, p. 14). The style and life quality of future adults could be highly determined by life and cultural habits that young people acquire during leisure time activities in period of adolescence.

Organized leisure time is important for students at college and universities. The period of university studies is an important period in the lifespan. Beside many positive aspects related with personal development, transition to university could also be very stressful. A student's life is significantly changed from all aspect. Student change their surrounding and face with lot of new expectations, increased academic obligations and responsibilities, new social interests and emotional challenges. Combining all these aspects requires more efficient time management. Students are often faced with increased stress, loneliness, nostalgia; decreased level of self-confidence, lack of communication with peers that often leads to misunderstanding and conflicts (Colleen, Conley, Travers, & Bryant, 2013). These changes affect students' leisure time, which could be factor for development but also a risk factor. Unstructured and unorganized leisure could lead to risk behavior and substance abuse (Arbunić, 2006; Bouliet, 2008). A study conducted on sample of adolescence in Cape Town – South Africa (Motamedi et al, 2020) indicated on connection between unstructured leisure time with boredom, use of polysubstance and sexual debut. The study reported a positive result on implementation of intervention HealthWise that offered structured activities during leisure in period when “there is nothing else to do”. The intervention gives positive results in reduce of usage of polysubstance and for boys a delay of sexual debut.

Well-structured, properly selected and well-organized leisure time activities could help young people to develop their individuality and upgrade their knowledge and personality. According to Mlinarević, Miliša, Proroković, (2007), only time that provides

freedom, satisfaction and fulfillment could supplement personal development. In this relation, many findings from different studies suggest people's happiness is highly affected by activities during (Wei, Huang, Stodloska & Yu, 2015), structured activities in leisure improve happiness and satisfaction of (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003; Brkljačić, Lipovčan & Tadić, 2012). University students that have more time for activities during leisure declare to be happier and with greater self – control (Brkljačić, et al. 2012). Improvement in physical fitness and personal positive mood as result of structured leisure was found to be associated with happiness, well – being and socialization in long term, (Lu & Hu, 2002),

Related to the organization and structure of leisure time of university students, the selection of contents in leisure is very important. This is related with many factors, such as personal interests, preferences, availability and current offer of leisure time contents etc. Academic work and finance are closely related to students' leisure time habits (Lu & Hu, 2002). Speaking about activities in leisure, many study evidence for different contents during leisure such hanging out and having parties. For young people, spiritual and intellectual activities are less interesting during leisure. (Andri-jasevic et al. 2005; Arbunić, 2006; Gril, Puklek Levpušček, Brečko & Štraus 2004; Bouillet, Ilišin & Potočnik, 2008; Huzjan, 2010; Badrić, Prskalo & Šilić, 2011; Vrbanc, 2013; Popeska, Ignatov & Sivevska, 2015; Brkljačić et al, 2012; Kvesic et al. 2018). Passive intellectual leisure activities are in negative correlation with the feel of happiness at the students (Brkljačić et al. 2012). On the other hand, sport activities during leisure time are one of the "active" forms of leisure. Many studies report different results regarding the participation of university students in sport during leisure. The study on Croatian university students show that every second male student participated in some physical recreation activity, compared to every fourth female student that participate in any sport or recreational program during leisure (Andrijasevic et al. 2005). Study evidence for higher participation in sport activities in leisure of male compared to female students. (Buckworth & Nigg, 2004; Bouillet, et al. 2008; Cardinal, Yan & Cardinal, M, 2013; Lapa, 2015) and regarded the type of the sport activity male students are more involved in team activities (Buckworth & Nigg, 2004; Kolárikova, Jaďud'ová, Bobrik & Ondrušová, 2013) and competitive sports (Bouillet, et al. 2008). In recent years, there is a significant increase of interest for extreme sports in leisure (Hakowicz et al. 2013). Motives related with enjoyment, psychological and physical conditions, ego etc are identified for choosing extreme sports in leisure (Lijun, Chlebosz, Tower & Morris, 2019).

Analyzing the benefits from sport, sport participation was highly associated with resistant of drug and alcohol addiction, significantly related with physical and psychological well – being, positive social feedback and lower anxiety – depression scores (Kirkcaldy, Shephard & Siefen, 2002). Students that are more physically active and are involved in sport programs during leisure time reported fewer health related discomforts (Andrijasevic et al. 2005), greater satisfaction of quality of their lives increasing with greater number of weekly participation of physical activity (Broáni, Šutka, Špániková & Vravková, 2013) as well as greater satisfaction with life appeared at the students who are participating in sport (elite or recreate level) compared with the highest dissatisfaction with life appeared in students with sedentary life style (Nemček & Wittm Annova, 2013). Despite reported positive effects, different studies reports for significant decrease of movement when enrolling at university (Buckworth, & Nigg, 2004; Nuvala, Gómez- López, Pérez Turpin, & Nuvala, 2011; Gošnik, Špehar, & Fučkar Reichel, Grill et al. 2004). Such condition is reported more for females compared with male students and is closely

related with previous life habits. (Buckworth, & Nigg, 2004; Nuvala et al. 2011). This is associated with weight gains, health and psychological issues. (Andrijašević et al. 2005; Brkljacic et al. 2012).

The difference between reported positive effects from involvement in leisure time physical activity and continuous decrease of level of physical activity during university studies arise the question for the importance of the university education in raising the awareness for importance of sport for health and lifelong well-being. In this regard, universities and faculties itself has important role in a sense of educating sport for live, but also to contribute by creating a possibility to participate in sport during studies. Such importance is specially emphasized and important for Faculties of education, where preschool and primary school teachers are educated. In this regard, the subject of this study are students from Teaching Faculties in three different countries, particularly their attitudes for physical activity during leisure time. This study aims to determine differences in student's opinions across three different countries regarded their interests and participation in sport during leisure and in this relation the differences in national awareness raising importance of sport for healthy lifestyle among university students, future teachers.

## METHODS

The total sample of participants included 354 examiners (271 females and 83 males), students at Teaching Faculties at three different Universities in three different countries: Faculty of Educational Sciences at Goce Delcev University in Stip, North Macedonia (128 students), Faculty of Education at University in Ljubljana, Slovenia (60 students) and The Faculty for preschool and primary school education at Sofia University "Ss. Kliment Ohridski" in Sofia, Bulgaria (166 students). The study sample was comprised from students from all four years of study at study programs Pre – school education and Primary school education at three Teaching Faculties. The average age of participants was 21,2 (SD +/- 1,8). The participants were recruited by convenience sampling. Participation in the study was anonymous. Students participated in it voluntarily. In all three countries, the research was conducted in the same period following same research protocol.

The data were collected using closed form type questioner. . It was composed from general questions refereeing to demographic characteristic of participants and other 9 questions are multiple-choice questions, 1 two items question and 2 open type questions. The questions are related with student's sport activity during their previous education and during university studies (frequency of participation in sport, selected activities), the importance of physical activity and motives to participate in sport in leisure, preferred type of sport activity during leisure time etc. The original version of the questioner was designed on Macedonian language that further, with front and back translation was translated to Bulgarian and Slovenian Language. The validation of the instrument is done and is presented in separate study which is process of publication.

Data were processed with descriptive statistics and comparative statistics. Frequencies (f) and percent's (%) were presented and analysed. Because of the page limitations numerical data are not presented in tables. The full data are available at the authors. The analyses of variance (ANOVA) were applied to determine differences between three countries. The hypotheses were tested at level 0.05. Statistical package SPSS 19 was applied for data processing.

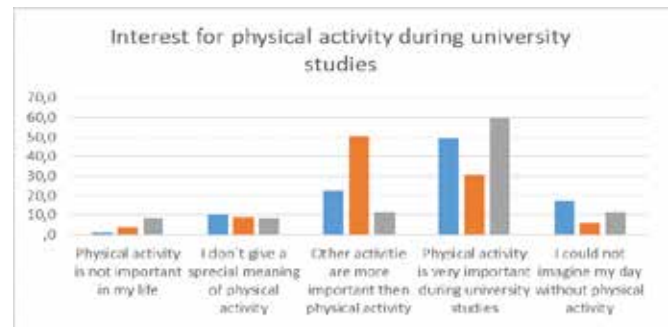
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study sample was conducted dominantly from female examiners. Particularly, from total 354 respondents, 271 respondents or

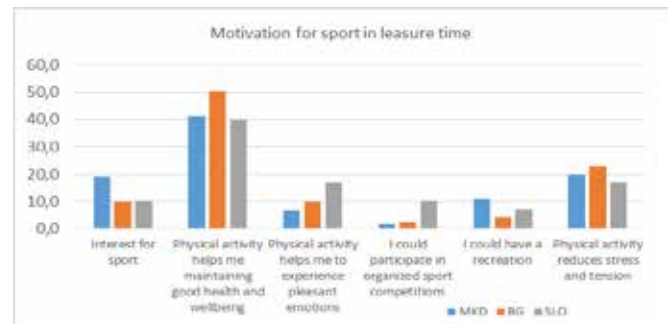
76,6% were females, while only 83 or 23,4% were males. This structure is expected considering that the students included in the sample are mainly future pre-school and primary school teachers, which according the unwritten tradition in these three countries, are mainly female students. From total number of participants, 18% were first year students, 29% were students in the second year of study, 28 % in in third and 25% in the fourth of study. The average age of participants in the study was 21 years old.

The first question in the questioner was about the meaning of sport and physical activity in everyday life and during leisure time. According the obtained results (Graphic 1), for most of Slovenian and Macedonian students, sport and physical activity are very important part of lifestyle during studies (60% of Slovenian students and 49% Macedonian students), while this choice is supported by 31% of Bulgarian students. For most of the interviewed students from Bulgaria (51%), the sport and physical activity are second row activity or other activities are considered as much more important during the studies. This is also an opinion of 12% of Slovenian students and 31 % of Macedonian students. Day without a physical activity is not an option for 6% of Bulgarian students, followed by 12% of Slovenian and 17% of Macedonian colleagues.

The next two questions are comparison between the level of physical activity in previous stages of education and as a students. More than half of the respondents within all three countries were



Graphic 1: Interest for physical activity



Graphic 2: Motivation for sport in leisure

Table 1. Differences in students' interests and participation in sport during leisure time across three countries.

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Importance of movement in student's life.	Between Groups	15,603	2	7,801	9,482	,000
	Within Groups	288,796	351	,823		
	Total	304,398	353			
Participation In physical activity before university studies	Between Groups	1,366	2	,683	2,667	,071
	Within Groups	89,888	351	,256		
	Total	91,254	353			
Level of physical activity at different level of education	Between Groups	26,019	2	13,009	8,289	,000
	Within Groups	547,751	349	1,569		
	Total	573,770	351			
Leisure time PA during university studies	Between Groups	12,441	2	6,221	7,617	,001
	Within Groups	285,033	349	,817		
	Total	297,474	351			
Frequency of participating in physical activity	Between Groups	33,482	2	16,741	7,684	,001
	Within Groups	756,015	347	2,179		
	Total	789,497	349			
Motives for participating in sport during leisure time	Between Groups	,230	2	,115	,035	,965
	Within Groups	1140,881	349	3,269		
	Total	1141,111	351			
Preferred sport activities during leisure time – outdoor/indoor	Between Groups	4,547	2	2,273	11,215	,000
	Within Groups	64,871	320	,203		
	Total	69,418	322			
Preferred sport activities during leisure time –individual activities/team activities	Between Groups	5,134	2	2,567	11,057	,000
	Within Groups	70,112	302	,232		
	Total	75,246	304			
Preferred sport activities during leisure time –competitive, noncompetitive	Between Groups	6,130	1	6,130	29,765	,000
	Within Groups	49,424	240	,206		
	Total	55,554	241			
Personal satisfaction from participation in sport during leisure time	Between Groups	27,649	2	13,824	9,308	,000
	Within Groups	516,836	348	1,485		
	Total	544,484	350			
Leisure time activates as factor for personal development	Between Groups	1,280	2	,640	,599	,550
	Within Groups	373,345	349	1,070		
	Total	374,625	351			
Importance of participation in sport activities during leisure time	Between Groups	2,492	2	1,246	,903	,406
	Within Groups	481,462	349	1,380		
	Total	483,955	351			

practicing sports during primary and secondary school or particularly 67% of Slovenian students, 60% of Macedonian and 51% Bulgarian students were physically active before en-gaging University. Comparing the personal level of sport participation in primary and secondary school and as a university student, within each group the highest percent of interviewed students from Macedonia (44%) and Bulgaria (32%) were more physically active in secondary school (The highest percent of Slovenian students (37%) were more physically active in primary school and 30% of them selected secondary school as more active period. The same level of activity during university studies is main-tained for 17% of Macedonian students, 18% of Bulgarian students and 12% of Slovenian students, while 11% of respondents from Macedonia, 17,5% respondents from Bulgaria and 12% of Slovenian respondents have increased their level of activity compared with previous stages of education.

Four questions from the questioner refers to sport as a leisure time activity. From the total sample of students within all three countries, most of the interviewed students from Slovenia (57%) and less students from Macedonia (32%) and Bulgaria (22%) are actively involved in sports during leisure time. Sport is sometimes part from the leisure time activities for 60% of Macedonian respondents, 57% of Bulgarian and 42% of Slovenian respondents. Different choices within all three groups are noted upon the question of average frequency of weekly involvement in sport during leisure time. Most of the selected answers are from one to three times a week. For Macedonian students, the weekly frequency is once a week (25%), twice a week (24%) and three times a week (23%). Most of Bulgarian students practice sport in leisure twice a week (33%), 24% do sport once a week and 17 % do it three times a week. Most of the Slovenian students practice sport in leisure twice a week (28%), followed by 18% that do it once and 13 % that are engaged in sport four times a week. For the sample of Slovenian students, quite surprising is the number of students that are not involved in sport during the week (15 students), which is opposite from the answers in the previous question.

Analyzing the type of leisure sport activities, most students choose outdoor activities, selected by 92% of Slovenian students, 60% of Bulgarian students and 53% of Macedonian students. Regarding the type of the activity – individual or team sport, 77% of Slovenian students, 57% of Bulgarian students and 23% of their Macedonian colleagues prefer individual activities. When choosing between competitive or non – competitive activities, 78% of Bulgarian students and 24% of their Macedonian colleagues prefer activities without competitions during leisure. Unfortunately, this parameter is missing for the whole sample of Slovenian students. When speaking about the motivation to enrolled in physical activity during leisure time (Graphic 2), for most of the students within all three countries, the impact of sport on maintaining good health condition, well-being and positive influence on personality is the leading motive selected by 51% of Bulgarian students, 40% of Slovenian students and 41% of Macedonian students, followed by the impact of physical activity on decrease of stress and mental fatigue (23% BS, 20% MS and 17% SS).

The last group of questions is related with the role of physical activity in leisure and its impact on personal development. Asked about personal satisfaction of spending leisure time, student's answers from all three countries were mainly satisfied and really satisfied. For 54% of Macedonian students, 52% of Bulgarian students and 52% of Slovenian students, the manner that they spend their leisure time has a great impact toward their personal development and creation of their personality. Related with the place of sport in the context of

structured and organized leisure time activities, students' opinions are mainly divided between following options: matter of personal choice (27% of MS, 36% BS and 25% SS), investment in personal health and wellbeing (33% MS, 20% SS) and manner of quality and effective use of leisure time (36% BS, 25 % SS and 26% MS)

As previously noted, one of the main goals of the paper is to determine the differences between student's opinions across three different countries regarded their interests and participation in sport during leisure time. Results from the applied statistical analyses are presented in Table 1. Results obtained for analyses of variance (ANOVA) and F – test, suggest on statistically significant differences noted in 8 from 12 analyzed questions, determined on 0.01 ( $p < 0,01$ ) level of significance are. Differences at 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ) level of significance are noted only for one question related with the importance of participation in physical activities during leisure time.

## DISCUSSION

The analyses of numerical results and results from analyses of variance (ANOVA) and F-test (Table 1), suggest on statistically significant differences at level 0.01 ( $p < 0,01$ ) between students at the same Faculties from three different countries upon the questions related to importance of movements in students life, physical activity during leisure in period of university studies and previous stages of education, weekly frequency of physical activity, type of preferred sport activity in leisure and the personal level of satisfaction of using personal leisure time. For the questions related with the participation in sport during primary and secondary school, motivation for participation in sport in leisure, physical activity as a content of leisure time and its impact on personal development, no statistically significant differences were obtained.

On the question related with the importance of physical activity, differences are noted for the sample of Bulgarian students for whom there are other activities with greater priority in students' life than sport, compared with their Slovenian and Macedonian colleagues for whom sport activities are significant during the period of studies. The study of Cigrovski, Matković, B., Matković, R & Jurakić (2005) confirm the awareness for benefits from physical activity during university education. Particularly, 86% students considered physical activity as extremely important during the studies. Awareness for benefits from regular movement is also confirmed in the surveys conducted by Andrijašević, M., Ciliga, D., & Jurakić, 2009; Pišot & Fras, 2005, Popeska, Janevik Ivanovska, Barbareev, & Jovanova – Mitkovska, 2014; Popeska & Jovanova – Mitkovska, 2014; Kvesic et al, 2019. According to our opinion, the question of priority is a question of personal identification, and we cannot look for any consequent relation within three countries. Comparing the level of physical activity and participation in sport in previous stages of education and currently as university students, more than a half of the interviewed students within all three countries: 67% of Slovenian students, 60% of Macedonian and 51% of Bulgarian students declare positive. According to the personal reported evaluation of the level of physical activity in primary, secondary school and during the university, statistical differences were determined within three groups. According to the obtained results, Slovenian students were more physically active during primary school, students from Macedonia were more active in secondary school, while students from Bulgaria declared to be more physical active during university studies. The increased level of physical activity during university studies on the sample of Bulgarian students is also noted in research of Popeska, Ignatov & Sivevska (2015). Higher participation in sport during secondary schooling is noted in the studies conducted on a

sample of Croatian students, done by Markuš, Andrijašević & Prskalo, 2008; Andrijašević et al, 2005. The drop of participation in physical activity and decrease of sport engagement noted in Slovenian and Macedonian college students is also confirmed on sample of university students from other countries (Buckworth, & Nigg, 2004; Nuivala et al, 2011; Gošnik, et al, 2011). The higher level of physical activity during primary and secondary school could be explained with establishment of compulsory physical education in these stages of educational process as well as the developed system of school competitions during this period. In all three countries, in primary school, PE is maintained with 3 hours per week, while in the secondary school PE is realized with two or three hour per week depending from the type of the school and year of study. On the other hand, at universities, sport has different organization. Based on different legislatives it is organized in different forms – compulsory minimum 60 hours of sport per year in Bulgaria and organized by the regulations of the Universities in Slovenia and in Macedonia (Popeska, Jovanova – Mitkovska, Dimkov & Smilkov, 2016). At the universities included in our sample, sport as obligatory subject is maintained at the University in Stip only in one semester and at the University in Sofia with different number of hours per semester and per years, starting from minimum two semester up to maximum 4 years participating in sport. At the University in Ljubljana, sport is not obligatory subject, but it offers a great variety of sport subjects as selective, non-obligatory subjects, sport competitions and leisure time sport activities. These organization of sport in the frames of the universities included in our studies could be the answer of the increased level of physical activity and participation in sport reported from the Bulgarian students included in the study. On the other side, decrease of level of physical activity in university student could be located in increased academic obligations, learning process as main priority for the students, increased responsibilities, sedentary way of life etc. Lack of time for leisure, academic obligation and priority of academic results, social and family responsibilities (Daskapan, Tuzun & Eker, 2006; Lu & Hu, 2002), lack of financial resources (Huzijan, 2010) were most reported barriers for not participating in sport in leisure.

There is no doubt that active lifestyle habits created in primary and secondary education are transmitted in later life and especially during leisure time. Many authors co-related the decrees of PA level with the previously life habits (Buckworth, & Nigg, 2004; Nuivala et al, 2011). In this regard, one of the main questions of our interest is sport activity during leisure time and the role of the universities in it. On the question: Do you participate in sport activities during leisure time in a period of university studies, statistically significant differences are obtained between Slovenian students that declared that participate on regular bases in PA during leisure time (57%) compared with Macedonian and Bulgarian students that declare that sometimes participate in PA during leisure (60% of MS and 57% of BS). Higher level of participation in sport activities in leisure time is related with overall benefits for the health and wellbeing. Other studies reports confirmed that students that are more physically active and are involved in sport programs during leisure time reported fewer health related discomforts (Andrijasevic et al, 2005) as well as greater satisfaction with life appeared at the students who are participating in sport compared with the highest dissatisfaction with life appeared in students with sedentary life style (Nemček & Wittm Annova, 2013). Statistically significant differences ( $p < 0,01$ ) between students from the three countries are also determined to question related to number of physical activity during the week. Differences are obtained between Macedonian and Slovenian students, where Mace-

donian students declare that are physically active three times a week and Slovenian and Bulgarian students that declare active average two times per week. Frequency of two to three times per week is noted in research of Cigrovski, et al, 2005); Colov & Dasheva, (1998); Kolárikova et al, (2013); Vrbanc, (2013). Based on the results from other studies this is related with increased satisfaction with quality of livy of students (Broáni et al, 2013) and sedentary students have the lowest level of their quality of life (Nemček & Wittm Annova, 2013). These findings point out that students should be encouraged to participate more in sport on weekly bases. These could be done both by suggesting more extracurricular sport activities and leisure time activities organized and supported by the university.

Statistically significant differences between students also were determined for the type of the physical activity selected and practiced during leisure time. Activities were grouped as: outdoor/indoor, individual/team activities and competitive/non-competitive activities. Based on the frequencies of obtained answers within each group, students from all three countries selected individual outdoor activities. Interest for participation in non - competitive and individual activities is confirmed in studies of Esculcas & Mota (2000), Cigovski et al (2005), Vrbanc, D. (2013), Kvesic et al (2019) Andrijašević et al (2005) support the finding for different choices for male and females, where males participated more in team indoor sport while females were more involved in individual sport activities. Considering the fact that our sample is consisted more from female representatives, we can consider our results as a confirmation of this findings. Between three groups, differences were obtained between the samples of Slovenian students that preferred outdoor activities and Bulgarian students that choose indoor sports. Statistical significant differences between the groups are also determined between Macedonian students that prefer team activities and Slovenian students that prefer individual activities. Preferences of Slovenian university students for individual sports are also confirmed in similar study conducted by Kondric, Sindik, Furjan – Mandic & Schiefler (2013) realized across other three countries including Slovenia. The preferences of Slovenian students for individual sports the authors had explained with the greater individualism of Slovenian students and “specific set of values in Slovenia which intensifies the distinction between the collectivist culture of former socialist countries and the individualism of Western countries”. In this context, according the authors “Slovenians could find physical activity (sport) important for their health, but not as means for socializing” Kondric et al, (2013, pp.16).

Personal satisfaction of students with the use of their leisure time, was also one of the questions where statistically significant differences between the three groups were noted. Particularly, differences were obtained between Bulgarian students that stated neither satisfied/neither unsatisfied with their use of leisure time and between Slovenia students that declare as lot of satisfied from the manner they spend their leisure time. Moderate satisfaction of the personal use of leisure time for the sample of Bulgarian students is reported by Brkljačić et al, 2012. The personal satisfaction although is an issue of personal determination yet is not always relayed with the person itself. Namely, the use of leisure time in many cases could not be the way that the persons strive for, because of lack of time, finances and opportunities to participate in something that is interesting for etc. In this regard, the organization of students' life is not directed only by students' personal choices but is also related with the internal organization of the Faculties and Universities and their participation in students' leisure time. In these relations, differences between the three countries could be results in differences in the concepts of the universes regarded the student's leisure time, as well as

the offers of contents that they have for the students. The economic power of the country and the university, the facilities that they have for sport and their availability for students is also an important aspect that should be considered when speaking about leisure sport activity and its presence in students' life. In this relation there are big differences and diversity between the three universities included in the sample which indicates and explains the obtained differences in students as a final user.

For the questions of motivation for movement during spare time, the role of physical activity in leisure time as well as its impact on personal development, no statistical differences between the groups of students from three countries were determined. This could be explained with the fact that all these questions are mainly determined by students' personality, their opinion and perception and barely or not at all are influenced by the external factors. For most of interviewed students in the survey, the leading motives for participation in sport in leisure was the positive effects of physical activity on maintaining good health condition, wellbeing personal development, followed by the impact of sport on psychological aspect including stress relief, decrease of mental fatigue and experiencing positive emotions. The studies of (Colov & Dasheva, 1998; Popeska & Jovanova – Mitkovska, 2014 confirm this finding. Regarded the role of physical activity in leisure time and its impact on personal development, from the total sample of 352 examiners included in the study, participation in organized and structured leisure time sport activities for students is: manner of quality and effective use of leisure time (31%), question of personal choice (30%) and investment in personal health (16%). These answers emphasize the relation between physical activity and wellbeing, including the question of personal development. In this relation, the positive attitude of students regarded the impact of leisure time activities toward the personal growth and development is expected. According to the results, more than a half of the examiners from the total sample (53%), or by countries (54% MS, 52% BS and 52% SS) consider that the manner they spend their leisure time has a great impact toward their personal development and defining their personality. These results confirm the opinion of Mlinarević, Miliša & Proroković, (2007) that only activities that support young people's freedom, satisfaction and recognition can contribute toward their personal development. Summarizing the last three points it could be concluded that students – future teachers included in our study, recognize the importance of physical activity in their lives and the impact that it has on the health, emotional and social wellbeing as well as a tool for personal development and improvement.

## CONCLUSION

The results from this study evidenced for differences between students – future teachers from attending teaching Faculties in Macedonia, Bulgaria and Slovenia. Differences were noted in attitudes toward importance of physical activity in student's life, leisure time physical activity during university studies compared with previous stages of education, weekly frequency of physical activity, type of preferred sport activity in leisure and personal level of satisfaction of using leisure time. Differences in students' priorities in life across three countries relating physical activity are expected considering that they are highly determined by personal factors. Yet, factors related with the organization of the educational system, the position of physical activity and physical education within, as well as its orientation toward greater involvement in sport and creating habits for physical activity and active lifestyle could influence the attitudes that university students will bring with them during college

education and will keep them, upgrade or lose, during the future life. The organization of sport life at universities as well as the offer of physical activity in leisure time could also have impact on development of movement habits among students. Considering the nature of the sample of participants in our study, our analyses should not be focus only on personal aspect in a sense of their opinion and habits for physical activity but also should be analyzed from the point of future teachers that are the creators of the habits of young people in future. Based on this, the modern curricula at the Teaching faculties should integrate subjects that will impact on personal development of the students in a sense of creating a positive attitude and habits for lifelong physical activity and should conduct subjects that will erase this in a sense of transferring these knowledges to children. Possibility to impact on personal development of future teachers, indicates to important role of the universities in terms to suggest and organize various types of physical activities that will be a part of student's leisure time. This way, leisure time activities could be associated factor for personal growth. The autonomy of the Universities gives possibility to organize sports activities, sport education and to support organization of sports activities during leisure that will be in accordance with students' preferences, qualifications, and all these in line with available facilities and resources (Tomova, 2012). Existing national strategies for education and sport in Slovenia, Macedonia and Bulgaria support this idea of Universities as promoters of sport and physical activity during lifespan.

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