

ACADEMICS WOMEN ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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Abstract

The aim of our research was to investigate the physical activity habits and opinions related to physical education and sports in a group of women academics. The questionnaire we applied had 10 questions and the respondents were a group of 42 academics women aged 35-52. Their attitudes and habits, as educators, may influence, indirectly or implicitly, student behaviour and lifestyle. The results revealed a favourable attitude towards physical activity in general, with a preference for a moderate physical activity once or twice a week. The respondents seem to be aware that a good physical condition creates a state of well-being and comfort at the mental level and over 83% expressed their intention to get actively involved in physical activities. Specialists in the field of physical education and sports can help with a sustained intervention to educate, provide individualized programs and support for academic women, and students as well, to practise a form of adequate physical activity, and to promote its beneficial effects.

Key words: Physical activity; women; academic staff; health

JEL classification: I20, I29, M31

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1. Introduction

The attitude reflects the way one thinks, feels or is inclined to react in certain circumstances. Attitudes refer to a positive or negative judgement about a certain situation or subject [1]. This paper intends to present the female academic staff attitudes towards physical activity in the circumstances of sedentary behaviour broaden.

The 21-st century technology progress have led to a somatic and even functional changes of the contemporary man. Physical inactivity is a growing phenomenon today and is growing with age, being higher in women than in men [2]. 9% of deaths in Romania are related to physical inactivity, equal with 9% worldwide, with a mean sitting time of 4.3h/day [3].

Women in the age range we questioned are also mothers and the effect of family life style choices is usually tracking more than one generation [4]. The

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personal example is also important because overweight and obesity tend to run in families. If family adopts a healthy food, a limited screen or sitting time, physical activities outdoors there are good chances to positive influence the children health. Studies suggest that healthy habits adopted in childhood track across the life span [5].

Health as a general concept encompasses several directions:

→ Physical health- morphology and functionality of organs and systems of the body;

→ Mental health - intellectual, emotional and spiritual;

→ Social health – career and the environment.

In this context, it is salient to approach an education through and for an active lifestyle addressed to the population and in particular, to the young generation, by training the habits and skills for a systematic practice of physical exercises [6].

2. Material and Methods

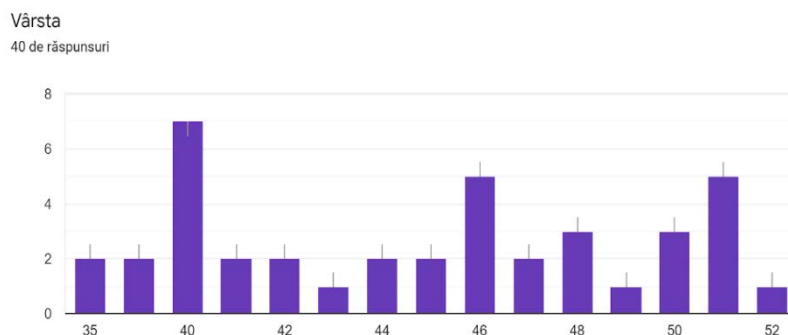
The aim of our research was to investigate the physical activity habits and opinions related to physical education and sports in a group of women academics. Their attitudes and habits, as educators, may influence, indirectly or implicitly, student behaviour and lifestyle. The questionnaire we applied had 10 questions as follow:

| Item no. | Question | Graph no. |
|----------|---|-----------|
| 1 | Are currently practicing physical exercise in an organized form? | 2 |
| 2 | To what extend do you think practicing a sport from childhood can positively influence preparation for life? | 3 |
| 3 | How important is for you to practice any kind of physical activity? | 4 |
| 4 | Do you consider useful in everyday life the theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of physical education accumulated during the school and college years? | 5 |
| 5 | Do you consider beneficial to alternate the mental effort during your work with physical exercises to increase the quality of your life? | 6 |
| 6 | Do you consider that the practice of sport has a positive influence on socio-professional integration? | 7 |
| 7 | Do you consider that physical exercises could influence your performance during professional activity? | 8 |
| 8 | Do you consider useful to arrange a space for physical exercises in the institution where you work? | 9 |
| 9 | Do you think that a good physical condition brings a good spirit, or mental well-being? | 10 |
| 10 | Do you intend to exercise in the future in an organized setting? | 11 |



We applied the questionnaires to a group of 42 women aged 35-52. Their age distribution can be seen in graph number 1.

Graph no 1



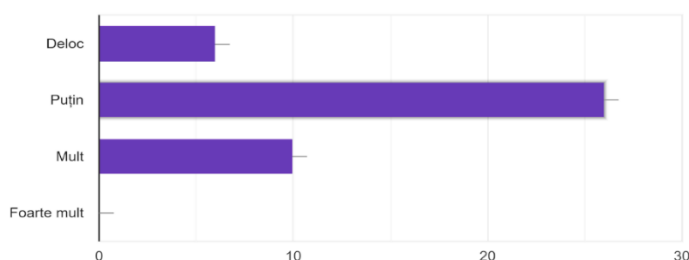
We offer our respondents a four-points Likert scale aiming to obtain an opinion and not neutral answers. At almost all questions the possible answers are: Not at all; Only a little; Rather much; and Very much.

3. Results and discussion

Following the answers received and their centralization, we can observe by studying graph no. 2 that the subjects in a fairly large proportion, at the time of applying the questionnaire did not practice at all or only a little physical exercise individually or in an organized setting.

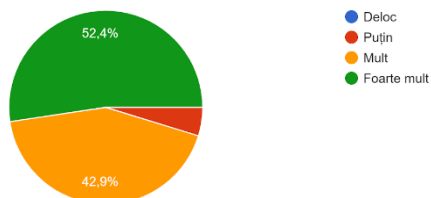
Graph no 2

1. În prezent practicați exercițiile fizice într-o formă organizată? (0/deloc, 1-2/sapt, 3/sapt, zilnic/sapt)
42 de răspunsuri

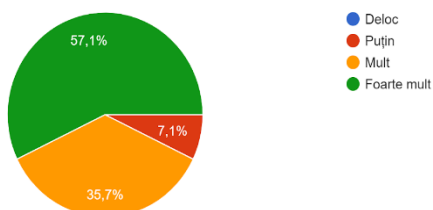


**Graph no 3**

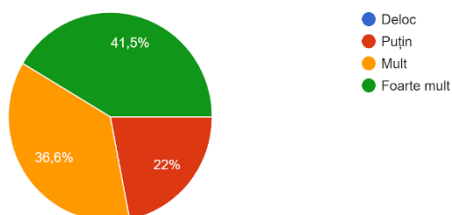
2. În ce măsură credeți că practicarea unui sport încă din copilărie poate influența pozitiv pregătirea pentru viață?
42 de răspunsuri

**Graph no 4**

3. Cât de importantă este pentru dumneavoastră practicarea exercițiilor fizice sub orice formă?
42 de răspunsuri

**Graph no 5**

4. Considerați folositoare în viața cotidiană cunoștințele teoretico-practice din domeniul educației fizice acumulate în anii de școală și facultate?
41 de răspunsuri



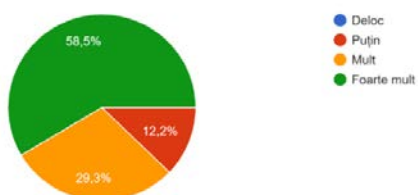


Summarizing the answers to questions one, two, three and four that refer to the past on sports activity in school and beyond, we note that the participants overwhelmingly consider that physical education and sport have a significant importance in the development of children and young people and also a great influence in training for life with all that entails. They also considered it very important in addition to the effective practice of PA in any form during growth and development and the accumulation of theoretical knowledge, aware that they may be necessary in everyday life. Only 22% of respondents considered that theoretical knowledge in the field of physical education and sports is not useful in everyday life (chart no. 2, 3, 4, 5)

Commenting to the question about the importance of physical education in everyday life, but also in professional life, we notice that the answers are also in a very large proportion (over 70%) positive: in the sense that exercise has a very important role: to increase the quality of life and as an alternative means of giving better performance both during and outside business hours. In addition to this, about 70% of respondents considered that sport can also help socio-professional integration; only 9.8% considered that sport does not help at all. (Chart no. 6, 7, 8)

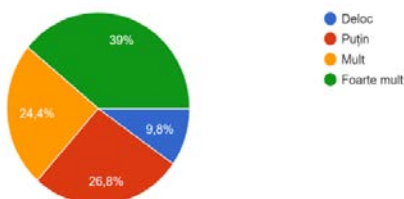
Graph no 6

5. Considerați benefică alternarea efortului psihic din timpul serviciului cu exerciții fizice în vederea creșterii calității vieții?
41 de răspunsuri



Graph no 7

6. Considerați că practicarea sportului influențează pozitiv integrarea socio-profesională?
41 de răspunsuri

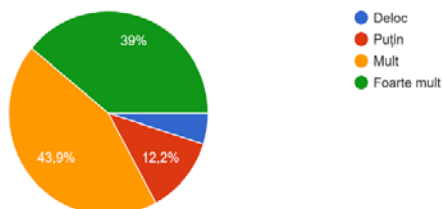




Graph no 8

7. Considerați că practicarea exercițiilor fizice influențează randamentul din timpul activității profesionale?

41 de răspunsuri



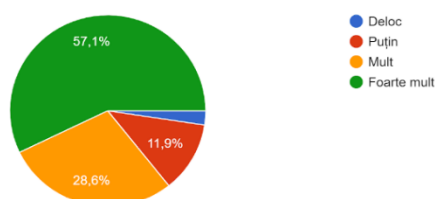
As a deductive conclusion of the high percentage of answers in favour of the very important role that the movement has on many levels of modern human activity, we further observe that the respondents also considered very useful and helpful the existence or arrangement of a dedicated and equipped space to perform exercises in various forms. This shows an intention to exercise, but the time that flows very quickly often prevents them from structuring an exercises program.

In large urban agglomerations there are many factors that prevent people from spending time exercising and we refer to the fact that in addition to the time spent at work, there may be time to cover the distance between work and home where urban traffic is time consuming. Therefore, the gym should be close to the home or work place. Another limiting factor are the family and house chores. Especially in families with children, it is difficult for a mother to find time just for herself and to break the time dedicated to their children. (Chart no. 9) g variety to workouts, and by ensuring

Graph no 9

8. Considerați o acțiune utilă amenajarea unui spațiu pentru practicarea exercițiilor fizice în instituția în care lucrați?

42 de răspunsuri

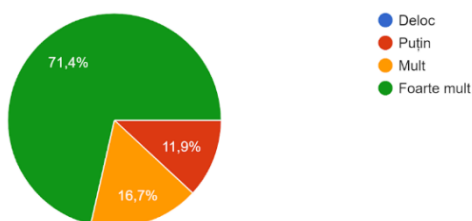




From the answers recorded to question number 9, we notice that the responders realize and are perfectly aware that a good physical condition also creates a state of well-being and comfort at the mental level. It stimulates intellectual activity which is responsible for acquiring critical thinking and on the affective influences of physical exercise are mirrored on attitudes, motivation, interest and values [7]. We did not register any negative answer to this question and approximately 88% answered “Much” or “Very much”. (Chart no. 10)

Graph no 10

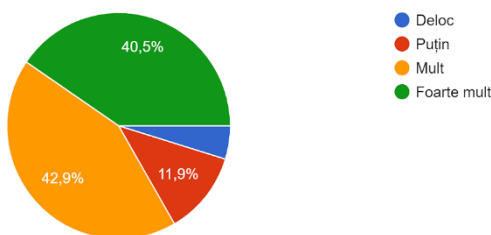
9. Credeți că o bună condiție fizică aduce cu sine și o stare de bine la nivel psihic?
42 de răspunsuri



Regarding the last question concern the future related to the desire to exercise in one form or another that the participants see in the questionnaire, we notice that over 83% want to get actively involved and about 12% think that they will get involved, and a small percentage (4.7%) are sedentary. (Chart no. 11)

Chart no 11

10. În ce măsură vă propuneți în viitor să practicați exerciții fizice într-un cadru organizat?
42 de răspunsuri





4. Conclusions

The results revealed a favourable attitude towards physical activity in general, with a preference for a moderate physical activity once or twice a week. Awareness that an attitude and behaviour in favour of physical effort in its simplest form or in a more elaborate form will produce important beneficial effects in the short and long term, constituting a gain for an active life, preventing the degenerative diseases installation and increased longevity.

There is a lot of emphasis on the involvement of the general population but especially for women in a form of physical activity, because we are referring to an age segment that is at a time when careers are on the rise, family life is also demanding, both being priority and consuming most of time every day.

We, as specialists in the field, must attract and find the best and most pleasant way of exercising for each person to be aware of the need for movement and to grow each desire to create their own healthy lifestyle where the physical activity should occupy an establish place.

Taking as a habit of practicing sports and recognise its positive effects, would transform in a lifestyle, bringing the will to practice independently any form of movement, because it is known that it is difficult to start something new but that is even harder to maintain.

Specialists in the field of physical education and sports can help with a sustained intervention to educate, provide individualized programs and support for academic women, and students as well, to practise a form of adequate physical activity, and to promote its beneficial effects.

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