



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND NUTRITION IN ADULT LIFE IN ROMANIA

Ionela Cristina NAE¹

Abstract

The following research has been conducted through the means of questionnaire dispensing and is aimed at evaluating adult lifestyle in Romania, especially nutrition and exercise.

Research was done on 150 subjects (age varying from 20 to 45 years-old). The research instrument consists of 10 questions. All results were statistically processed and interpreted.

One of the most worrying tendencies the study revealed is an increasingly lower amount of time spent by adults exercising due to an increase in work time. Results have shown that only 22% of adults practice regular exercising, 11% only occasionally and the rest of 67% don't practice at all any kind of sport-like activity.

Keywords: *lifestyle, physical activity, nutrition*

JEL classification: *I1, I19*

Introduction

A lack of physical exertion and a rich diet in processed foods (low in fruits and vegetables) is a major problem for adult population worldwide, especially in developed countries, as people have less and less free time.

Field literature clearly demonstrates positive effects of physical activity and the negative ones of a non-exertion lifestyle.

In our country, people practice a small number of physical exercises over long periods of time. Many people have sedentary lifestyles. A great majority of them don't exercise due to lack of time and also due to their work nature (not containing any sort of physical requirements). It is usually stressing enough to deal with family life and a job.

Unfortunately, a sedentary lifestyle can trigger many health issues. When muscles are not sufficiently used and the blood flow is not intense enough a series of negative effects may occur, including:

- Posture and spine damage;
- Obesity;

¹ The Bucharest University Economic Studies, cristinuta_criss@yahoo.com



- Cardio-vascular diseases;
- Metabolic unbalance;
- Circulatory problems;
- Sleep disorders;
- Osteoporosis;
- Cancer risk increase;
- Accelerated aging;
- Higher risk of diabetes;
- Intense and chronic fatigue.

On the other side, the benefits of practicing physical exercises in adulthood are:

- An excellent physical tone and a more appealing body;
- An improvement in health;
- Positive mental states;
- Team spirit which can in turn lead to a better job performance;
- The sense of belonging to a team contributes to a better quality of work;
- Communication improvement (sports are stimuli for communication);
- Improves community life as a whole (enters new values and rules of human cooperation).

Along with systematic physical exertion, another factor for having a healthy life is **nutrition**.

Taking on a healthy lifestyle means culinary variety and moderate meals. The bases of a balanced food regime are fruits and vegetable which should be consumed in high quantities but also significantly lower quantities of foods that contain fats and sugar.

Research purpose. Starting from all aspects presented and by applying our research tool we aimed observing Romanian adult livelihood regarding physical activity and nutrition.

Hypothesis. A proper investigation will offer us clues regarding physical activity and nutrition practiced by adults.

Subjects. This study was conducted on 150 adults (80 female and 70 male) with ages ranging from 20 to 45 years-old.

Place and length of the research. This research took place between the 1st and 30th of May 2016.

Methods used. Over the duration of the researched we used the following techniques:



- The “bibliographic study” method;
- Questioning – “A questionnaire is a written confession which provides a scientist with otherwise inaccessible information.” (Epuran, 2005, p. 225);
- The “statistical and mathematical” method;
- The “graphical” method.

Results and interpretation

At the first question, people were asked to provide their height and weight. Extrapolating from their answers, 59% had normal weights, 27% above-normal weights and the rest of 14% were obese.

The second question referred to fruit intake: 51% said they eat fruits on a daily basis, 21% declared eating fruits 2 to 3 times a week and 28% claimed they rarely eat such foods.

Question number 3 was aimed at finding out how many vegetables people eat: 44% consume vegetables daily, 32% for 2 or 3 times a week and 25% eat very rarely such produce.

Moving on to question no. 4 - “What sort of bread do you usually eat?” Results were: 70% eat white, regular bread, 24% consume wheat intermediary bread and only 6% don’t include bread of any sort in their diet.

Question number 5 was about drinks. Analyzing answers revealed that 57% like or prefer fizzy drinks, 18% consume non-fizzy drinks, 15% said they like coffee and 10% are attracted to naturally obtained fruit juice.

“Do you wish to change your diet?” or the 6th question of the lot registered 66% of the subjects not wanting to make any changes and only 34% eagerly desiring switching the way they eat.

Question no. 7 was: “If YES was the answer to the previous question, why that choice?”

Here, 52% said losing weight was their main aim, 29% for preventing illness and 19% for improving their physique.

Moving on to physical exertion by use of question 8, only 22% of the participants are regular exercisers, 10% only occasionally practice such activities and the majority of 68% never concern themselves with any sport linked activity.

Second-to-last question was: “If NO was the answer to the previous question, why that choice?” – 71% said they don’t have free time anymore, 22% said they’d



rather spend time in front of the TV or a computer and 7 % don't actually enjoy exercising.

The final question referred to the influence diet and sport exert on general health. Here 97% of the people acknowledged the role of these two factors leaving only 3% dismissive of the hypothesis.

Conclusions

- 14% of those questioned are obese;
- Only 51% eat fruit on a daily basis and 44% vegetables;
- 70% eat white, regular bread;
- A very high percent of people like fizzy drinks – 57%;
- Most of those asked don't look forward to changing their diets;
- Most people never exercise;
- 71% of those who don't exercise have no free-time;
- Although most of the interrogated are fully aware of physical exertion benefits, they don't live a healthy living nor they desire to change their habits.

By far the most worrying conclusion of this study is the lack of physical activity, blamed on free-time reduction despite understanding how sport positively affects human physiology.

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