

Leisure Time Spending Way by the Students of Bushehr Islamic Azad University with a Focus on Sport Activities

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Abstract: The purpose of present study was to determine the sport's position in the leisure time and to compare the leisure activities of students of Bushehr Islamic Azad University. 375 male and female students of Bushehr Islamic Azad University who were in the second semester of 2011-2012 education year, participated in the study. For gathering data, individual identification form and researcher-made questionnaire were used. The validity of the questionnaire was determined by the physical education experts' comments and its reliability was calculated and defined by using the Cronbach's alpha technique as 0.83. For analyzing the data, descriptive statistical methods and the deductive statistical tests like chi-squared and Mann-Whitney U tests were used. The results showed that the students' average leisure time was 4.5 hours a day and in case of the time spent, watching television, working with computer, listening to music, hanging out with friends and doing sport were the top to bottom of the list. The sport was the seventh favorite action for the girls and the second hobby for the boys' leisure time. 1.76 percent of girls and 3.31 percent of boys did not do sport at all. The boys' favorite sport was football and for the girls, it was swimming. Between the leisure time spending way of girls and boys in activities such as listening to music, visiting the kinsfolk, non-academic study and doing sports, there was a meaningful difference. Consequently, immobile activities have the main share of the leisure time and in this regard the role of sport is so naïve. Factors like sociocultural situations have caused the variety in leisure activities among the male and female students.

Key words: Leisure Time • Sport Activities

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, recreation and how to spend the leisure time are important means to nourish the people's intellectual, physical and moral strengths and they are regarded as factors preventing the social deviations. As Tondnevis believes "Leisure time is the most sensitive, valuable and productive part of human life. It is like a two-edged sword that one edge can provide the background for creativity and artistry and the other edge can be a factor to direct individuals toward delinquency and social problems" [1]. In classifying the leisure time, sport was considered as a recreation which includes the active production of leisure time experience in which the participants have control on the process to some extent [2]. In order to have a better use of this recreation, particularly the sport activities, having a reasonable plan

in which the needs and favorites of people is inevitable. Therefore, so many studies have been done in order to obtain comprehensive information in this case and also currently many research plans are being done.

According to the studies done in 2001, only 10 percent of Iranian students do sport. In the same year, less than 1 percent (0.9%) of all the female students participated in professional sports. Also, about 20000 female students were under "Sport for All" plan, which is just the 5 percent of all the student population of that year. The studies done by the experts of Sport Comprehensive Plan, shows that only 10 percent of Iranians have participated in Sport for All, that is a low rate compared to a country like Australia with 52 percent of participation [3]. Khosravizadeh [4], after investigating the leisure time of Arak University's students, concluded that 25.5 percent of subject did not do sport at all.

Darabi [5] claimed that the problems of women's sport development can be enumerated as the social and cultural limitations for taking part in the sport activities, women's indifference to their physical and spiritual activities, the effect of traditional and religious beliefs dominating the society, women's unawareness of the sport's advantages and the inadequate information broadcasting of the media. Mojtahedi and Delavar [6] came to this result that boys generally were more inclined to sport than the girls; half of their population did not have regular plan for doing sport and studying and 25 percent of managers and teachers also did not have positive attitude toward sport. The reasons for reluctance to sport was claimed as to be the facilities shortage, the conditions of parents, managers and teachers, the special strictness toward girls, shyness and not knowing how to play a particular sport [1]. Lack of plan, the failing of extracurricular PE managers and shortage of extracurricular time, were the other factors. Also, the spreading of modern technology has brought forth the reduction of physical activities in workplace, home and even in the leisure time, which has led to immobile lifestyle to be accepted as a law in modern countries [7]. In developed countries, the estimation of immobile lifestyle is normally done according to studies on population, in which the people are asked about the duration, repetition and the intensity of physical activities during leisure time [8]. Reviewing some of the studies done in the United States, shows that between 1960 and 1980, the physical activities in the leisure time increased [9], but during the 1990s, a very slow increase can be observed in the active people (from 24.3 % in 1990 to 25.5 % in 1998) [9]. Also, according to the studies done in recent years, it seems that the role of sport and physical activities, has faded in the teenagers and students' leisure time. Ayaz *et al.* [3], came to this result that participating in leisure time can be influenced by the social thoughts about the gender appropriateness of the activities and also the favorites and advantages. Cardenase [8], studies the Australian professional athletes and their theory was that sport is a method for developing the social sense. They concluded that the value of leisure time while focusing on the annual social and physical engagement and the competitive situations, leads to efficiency and happiness (8). Furthermore, Tsai [10] believed that recreation and leisure can enhance one's health as it acts as a shield against the stressful events of life.

Therefore, it seems that sport-for-all development in leisure time requires raising the consciousness by means of education and also via correct and proper planning, management and facilities. Also, school and university as the two main cornerstones of any society in case of

spreading and educating the sport culture, have ever been important and any cultural act in the society ignoring their role, seems almost impossible. Consequently, as the first step in the way to overcome the problems, one should know the current limitations and issues. The studies done on the students' sport have shed light on some of the problems and due to the wide span of the issue, doing similar studies on various groups seems necessary [11]. Hence, this study with the aim of investigating and comparing the leisure time spending way by the students of Bushehr Islamic Azad University and with the goal of gaining information about the current condition of leisure time and extracurricular plan of physical education, was planned and administered.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is of descriptive type and is done as a field research. The population of the study included the male and female students of Bushehr Islamic Azad University, who were in the second semester of 2011-2012 education year. Sampling was done randomly and by using Morgan's table, 375 students were chosen. Gathering the data was done by means of a research-made questionnaire in areas such as individual information, university's extracurricular activities, leisure time, sport, facilities and limitations. For questionnaires' reliability determination, Cronbach's alpha test was used. The calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficient by the SPSS V16 was 0.83 for the questionnaire which shows the high reliability of the questionnaire.

In this study, for gaining the mean, standard deviation and the relations among the variables, descriptive and deductive statistical methods like Mann-Whitney test were used. In some of the questions, the subject had to number the answers in order of priority. For determining the priority in all the activities, the first choice had five points and the second, third, fourth and fifth choices gained in order four, three, two and one points. Then for determining the position of each choice, the average gained points were calculated. The leisure activities are scored according to the five-value scale ($M=5$, $Min=1$) and the average score in each activity is gained by dividing all the score by the number of the subjects.

RESULTS

52.2 percent of boys and 47.8 percent of girls participated in the study by the average age of 19. The average leisure time was 4.5 hours a day. Also the

Table 1: Students' Leisure Activities

Priority	Girls		Boys	
	Activity	Average Score	Activity	Average Score
1	Watching Television	$\bar{x} = 2.61$	Watching Television	$\bar{x} = 2.50$
2	Listening to Music	$\bar{x} = 2.04$	Doing Sport	$\bar{x} = 1.72$
3	Working with Computer	$\bar{x} = 1.84$	Working with Computer	$\bar{x} = 1.66$
4	Hanging out with Friends	$\bar{x} = 1.70$	Hanging out with Friends	$\bar{x} = 1.30$
5	Visiting the Kinsfolk	$\bar{x} = 0.95$	Walking & Going on a Picnic	$\bar{x} = 1.27$
6	Walking & Going on a Picnic	$\bar{x} = 0.94$	Non-academic Studying	$\bar{x} = 1.19$
7	Doing Sport	$\bar{x} = 0.91$	Listening to Music	$\bar{x} = 0.96$
8	Visiting the Kinsfolk	$\bar{x} = 0.74$	Non-academic Studying	$\bar{x} = 0.56$
9	Artistic Activities	$\bar{x} = 0.64$	Artistic Activities	$\bar{x} = 0.48$
10	Religious Activities	$\bar{x} = 0.58$	Religious Activities	$\bar{x} = 0.39$

Table 2: The Students' Favorite Sports

Priority	Girls		Boys	
	Sport	Average Score	Sport	Average Score
First	Swimming	$\bar{x} = 2.56$	Football	$\bar{x} = 2.74$
Second	Walking	$\bar{x} = 2.35$	Swimming	$\bar{x} = 2.68$
Third	Volleyball	$\bar{x} = 1.14$	Bodybuilding	$\bar{x} = 2.32$
Fourth	Running	$\bar{x} = 0.98$	Walking	$\bar{x} = 1.73$
Fifth	Cycling	$\bar{x} = 0.84$	Running	$\bar{x} = 1.06$
Sixth	Basketball	$\bar{x} = 0.42$	Martial Arts	$\bar{x} = 0.83$
Seventh	Bodybuilding	$\bar{x} = 0.31$	Volleyball	$\bar{x} = 0.41$

leisure time of 74.7 percent of the students, was the afternoon and the evening; the place of having this time for 63.6 percent was the home, for 16.8 percent was the university, for 8.9 percent the dormitory and for the rest 10.7 percent, it was the sport halls. 23.2 percent of the students, had the monthly income less than 500,000 Rials and 64.8 had higher than 1,000,000 Rials income.

The leisure activities are scored according to the five-value scale (M=5, Min =1) and the average score in each activity is gained by dividing all the score by the number of the subjects.

For the girls, watching television ($\bar{x} = 2.61$), listening to music ($\bar{x} = 2.04$), hanging out with friends ($\bar{x} = 1.84$), working with computer ($\bar{x} = 1.70$) and visiting the kinsfolk ($\bar{x} = 0.95$) and for the boys, watching television ($\bar{x} = 2.50$), doing sport ($\bar{x} = 1.72$), working with computer ($\bar{x} = 1.66$), hanging out with friends ($\bar{x} = 1.30$) and walking/going on a picnic ($\bar{x} = 1.27$), were top to bottom of the list of favorite activities. The students' favorite sports are in order: football, swimming, walking, bodybuilding and volleyball. The results also showed that 68.51 % of students do not use the extracurricular activities of the university at all. In addition, social problems, not having a plan in life, lack of any recreational thought and being too busy, are the most important reasons of not properly

spending the leisure time by the students. Investigating the relation among the variables showed that there is a meaningful difference between the way of leisure time spending of male students and female ones in activities such as listening to music, visiting the kinsfolk, non-academic studying and doing sport ($p < 0.05$). In other leisure activities, there was no meaningful difference.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The average students' leisure time in this study was 4.5 hours a day, which is compatible with the results of many studies done in the country (1, 3, 12). This time is very significant. Iarca *et al.* [13] declared that since 1965 until 1995, the average leisure time in the United States has increased. Honari [9] declared that the leisure hours between 1965 and 2003, was 6.4 hours a week for men and 3.8 hours a week for women. The studies show that the main part of leisure time is spent for immobile activities. In this study, watching television, listening to music and hanging out with friends, were in order the three important leisure activities of the students. This result is in line with the findings of Lyons and Mozaffari [7, 12]. Other studies show that in the late 90s, watching television in European countries had the average of 2 hours and 45 minutes a day

or 14-19 hours a week [14-16]. The increase in inclination toward the static activities is worrying. Particularly, because the life satisfaction rate in the people watching television is low [13]. However, some other results show that, despite the fact that the sedentary activities have the largest share of the leisure time, the tendency for action and sport exists in the people and doing sport is second to working with computer in case of the most important leisure favorites. This conclusion is compatible with the results of Tondnevis and Mozaffari, who have named sport as the most important leisure activity [1, 12]. Therefore, the tendency toward speed exists in the individuals. In this study, being too busy, laziness, not being accustomed and lack of facilities are the obstacles in the way of doing sport. Other studies have named weak planning, extracurricular planners' failure and the lack of places and facilities as the barriers of tendency toward sport [3, 15, 17-19].

In this study, the students' motivations in doing the sport were in order: gaining vivacity and being pleased, fitness, keeping one's health, having a sense of power and reducing the stress. Tondnevis [1], reached to a similar result. Also, Thompson in his doctorate dissertation declared that the students, by keeping their physical fitness and mental balance and social esteem, participate in sport. In addition, Suarez *et al.* [20], declared that the motivation of individuals participating in martial arts includes: self-esteem, friendship, fitness, reward, social status, competition and skill development. Therefore, increasing the motivation through culture-building practices and raising the public awareness toward the advantages of physical activity can be a choice in spreading the student sport; an issue which has not been seriously paid attention to.

Furthermore, between the leisure time spending way of male and female students in some activities, a meaningful difference was observed. The results of other studies are in line with this finding. Studies show that in the developing countries, girls tend to spend more time for daily house activities [4, 11, 18, 21]. As a result, it seems that the leisure time of girls is more bound to the activities, done at home or indoors. Also, the difference in doing sport can be related to the physical appropriateness and nature of the activities, context, favorites and the cultural values as well. Van Dyck *et al.* [14], declared that having less time or avoiding intense activities, are the factors underlying why young girls are less active than the boys. Other studies show that participation in leisure activities may be affected by the social thoughts about

the gender appropriateness of the activities and also the favorites and the advantages [3, 8, 12, 17, 18]. The cultural values and the social, physical and leisure context can also limit the cognitive processes underlying the active participation in recreation [3, 8, 12, 17, 18].

Therefore, according to the current study's results and other studies, one can claim that for developing sport, motivating people by improving the public awareness about the sport's advantages, creating and developing open sport spaces like the fitness trail in universities, expanding green areas and parks while considering the necessary areas for the sport activities and health station plans, can be useful. Also, considering the favorite activities of the students, creating music rooms in the dormitory and playing music in the sport halls can be very effective in optimizing the leisure time.

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