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The role of sports and physical education in filling higher education students' leisure time

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Abstract

In the present study researcher considers the sport role in filling student's leisure time at Kumaon University. The descriptive research method was applied as field study. The selected population in the research was the students of Kumaon University in academic year (2017-18). The statistical sample was 170 male students at the university. The researcher administered questionnaire used to get the required data. The validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by the related professors and its reliability was, also, confirmed using Cronbakh alpha test Coefficient ($\alpha=0.92$). The results showed that 20.49% took exercise in their leisure time which ranked second 27.61% after reading in the leisure time. 42.66% of the individuals took exercise for the sake of their physical and psychological health. The findings, also, show that the individuals wouldn't take part at the higher education physical education programs due to lake of sport facilities, the authority's inconsideration toward sport and lack of respective faculty at the higher education.

Keywords: Sport and physical education, leisure time, students

Introduction

Leisure time is the base which is responsible for the development of technology and culture. Nowadays great attention is being paid to leisure time activities. Other than its cultural aspects, leisure time can increase the efficiency of work also. There is a close relationship between work and leisure; thus it not mere a social issue but it enters the economic affairs. The developing economies should take long steps by taking measures and policy making in the area of leisure time and suggests the slogan of "leisure civilization" by increasing leisure time and decreasing working hours. Leisure time is defined as the time free from any work and the time a person is free to take any type of activity according to their will and without any obligation [1]. Annie *et al.* (2008) showed in his research that there is a relationship between the levels of participation of individuals in athletic activities and their understanding of their degree of freedom during leisure time [2]. Now a days in our society sports are regarded as a human strengthening activity and is developing and extending among all social classes especially higher education students. Sociologists believe that the life is being mechanized and leisure time is extended, sports can be regarded as an appropriate means for providing proper recreational activities and helps the individuals refreshing and preserving their mental and physical welfare. The goal of planning sports programs and taking part in athletic activities in higher education and higher education institutions is the optimization of a part of university students' leisure time for the growth and development of their ethical, intellectual and physical health aspects along with the acquisition of science and technology. Physical education and sports have a special place in the young people's leisure time and considering the role of young higher education students in the social, cultural and economic structure of the society and the fact that they will participate in social activities in their future life, to attain this, it is essential that they enjoy full physical and mental health. This important issue can become possible through the development and provision of efficient physical programs in higher education students' leisure time. In the present 20th century, officials have realized the importance of leisure time sports activity, as there is great dangers threatening the society especially from the youth in the absence of systematic measures for the improvement of leisure time.

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Educationists have warned that if enough attention is not paid to how leisure time is spent, irreversible abnormalities will appear in the behaviors and actions and consequently personalities of individuals. These can result in distortions and social deviance and upliftment of various crimes in the society. Leisure time is an effective means for the construction of mental, physical and moral stamina of individuals and is considered as a factor in the prevention of social distortions and crimes provided that enough attention is paid to it from families, institution and governments. Otherwise with the exploitation of leisure time and conscious or subconscious adverse policies from the family and authorities can result in social damages [3]. Many researchers have showed the benefits of exercising in leisure time. Mariani *et al.* (2009) showed that there is an inverse relationship between physical activities in leisure time and the level of depression in individuals in a way that the level of depression is decreased with increase in physical activity [4]. The research conducted in Canada showed that participating in athletic activities can increase women's self confidence. Also female athlete students turn to drugs 92% less than non-athletic students and graduate three times more than them [5]. Karim and Alfred (2008) revealed in their research that there is a significant relationship between physical activities in leisure time and health indicators [6]. Las (1987) showed that public and recreational sports improve the quality of life of university students [7]. Lampkin (1991) after doing a research on university students declared that the participation of university students in recreational and public activities helps them achieve the required balance between physical, mental and social potentials [8]. Smith (1991) after his research concluded that public exercise helps improve students' level of learning in their academic work [9]. The researches about leisure time suggest that there are several factors affecting participation in athletic activities in leisure time. The studies carried out in Canada indicated that athletic and sports activities in leisure time are affected by age, gender,

education and the income of individuals [10]. Chia Chen (2007) in his research conducted on school and higher education students in Hong Kong indicated that participation in physical and athletic activities is affected by the interaction between motivational, situational and intrapersonal factors [11]. Lamb and Morris (2004) after studying 20 female and 20 male students in University of Liverpool in UK stated that there is a significant relationship between athletic activities in leisure time and the students' feeling of being physically fit. Also Toni (2006) believed that male university students, younger higher education students and the students living in hostels participate in extracurricular activities (especially athletic and sports activities) more than others [13]. Lachezar (2007) concluded that personal, social and interpersonal factors are the most important factors affecting participation in leisure time activities [14]. Dike Roeger (1992) in an article entitled "what has happened to higher education' extracurricular programs?" suggested that extracurricular programs in student dormitories and higher education be changed and developed according to the interests and needs of higher education students [15]. According to the above cases and the role and importance of sports in spending leisure time, the aim of this research is to study the place of sports and physical education in leisure time expenditure of Kumaon university students and analysis the factors affecting them.

Materials and methods

This is a descriptive survey-based field study. The population of this research includes all students of Kumaon University and higher education students in the class year of 2017-18. The sample of this research includes 170 male students from above mentioned higher education who were selected by random sampling method. A questionnaire prepared by the researcher was used to collect the data and its validity was confirmed by related teachers and professionals. Its stability was also confirmed using Cronbach's alpha test with the ratio of 0.92.

Table 1: Average of Research populations' leisure times

| Options Frequency | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | total |
|-------------------|------------------|----------|----------|------------------|-------------|------------|-------|
| | Less than 1 hour | 1-2 hour | 3-5 hour | More than 5 hour | Non any one | Non answer | |
| Sample | 15 | 24 | 66 | 16 | 11 | 8 | 170 |
| Percentage | 8.8 | 14.11 | 39 | 9 | 6 | 5 | |

Table 2: Leisure time of the Students

| Options Frequency | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | total |
|-------------------|----------|---------------|----------------|---------|----|------|-------------|------------|-------|
| | Exercise | Artistic work | Meet to friend | Reading | TV | Rest | Other thing | Non answer | |
| Sample | 57 | 12 | 26 | 15 | 38 | 13 | 7 | 2 | 170 |
| Percentage | 33.5 | 7 | 15 | 9 | 22 | 7.6 | 4 | 1 | |

Table 3: Willingness of students to participate in sports activities in leisure time

| Options Frequency | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Total |
|-------------------|-----------|------|---------|------|----------|------------|-------|
| | Very high | high | Average | Low | Very low | Non answer | |
| Sample | 27 | 49 | 50 | 23 | 18 | 3 | 170 |
| Percentage | 15 | 29 | 29 | 13.5 | 10.5 | 1.7 | |

Table 4: Targets of students to engage in sports activities during the leisure time

| Options Frequency | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Total |
|-------------------|---|-----------|--|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|-------|
| | Refreshment of Spiritual and Mental Fatigue | Refection | Reinforcement Physical and mental powers | Just spend leisure time | Promotions and championship success | Other things | |
| Sample | 34 | 30 | 77 | 18 | 7 | 4 | 170 |
| Percentage | 20 | 17.6 | 45 | 10.5 | 4 | 1.8 | |

Table 5: The reasons for the failure of the exercise planning in university

| Options Frequency | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | total |
|-------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|-------|
| | time sports programs | Non-professional programmers | Lack of appropriate facilities | Other things | |
| Sample | 24 | 59 | 77 | 10 | 170 |
| Percentage | 14.11 | 35 | 45 | 6.8 | |

Table 6: The problems of students in sports activities during leisure time

| Options Frequency | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total |
|-------------------|--|---|-----------------|--------|------------|-------|
| | The ratio of students to resources available | Little attention to the matter of physical training | Budget Problems | Others | Non answer | |
| Sample | 44 | 67 | 55 | 2 | 2 | 170 |
| Percentage | 26 | 40 | 34.6 | 1 | 1 | |

Table 7: Causes of failure in sports and physical education at the university level

| Options Frequency | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|------------|-------|
| | Lack of equipment and facilities | Lack of qualified instructors | Not having enough time | Other things | Non answer | |
| Sample | 76 | 41 | 36 | 15 | 2 | 344 |
| Percentage | 44.7 | 24 | 21 | 9 | 1 | |

Results

The findings revealed that 39% of the research populations have 3 to 5 hours, 14% have 1 to 2 hours, 9% have more than 5 hours and 8.8% have less than 1 hours of leisure time per day (table 1). Exercising was the second most popular leisure activity after watching TV (Table 2). Also about 74% of the students stated that they have average and upper-average tendency to participate in athletic activities and only 24% had lower-average tendency to participate in athletic activities (table 3). In terms of goal 45% of the participants said that they participate in athletic activities for strengthening their physical and mental stamina, 20% for mental and physical refreshment, 10.5% spending leisure time (table 4). Among the most important reasons for exercise planning failure in higher education from the point of view of students' inappropriate time of sports programs, non-professional programmers and lack of appropriate facilities can be named and the most important factor is sports programming failure in higher education with 45% (table 5). Also 40%, 34.6% and 26% of the university students considered little attention of the authorities to the matter of physical training, budget problems and compression ratio of students to existing facilities respectively the reason for the failure of sports and physical education in higher education (table 6). In terms of the problems in doing athletic activities during leisure time 45% considered lack of equipments and facilities and 21.1% not having enough time their problem for doing athletic activities during leisure time (table 7). In the peripheral findings of the research, it was specified that the majority of research community rated about 80% of their university's athletic programs poor in quality.

Conclusion

In the present research the place of physical education is investigated in leisure time expenditure of male students of Kumaon University and analyzes the factors affecting it. Despite the interest of a large percentage of research population in sports and physical education (about 85% of the research population had average and upper-average interest to participate in athletic activities), they have no appropriate place in the above mentioned higher education. The major reasons why the students are not participating in athletic activities in leisure time involve the poor quality of the athletic programs of higher education in leisure time with more than 80% of the participants, inadequacy of sports

facilities of higher education in leisure time expenditure (based on the findings 30% of the population were satisfied about the facilities while 70% of them reported lack of sports facilities), little attention of the authorities to physical education and sports in higher education with 40% of the research population, financial difficulties of university in sports section with 34.6%, compression ratio of students to facilities with 26% of students and finally lack of skilled personnel in sports and physical education with 24% of participants. The results of the above research are in accordance with those of Seyed Zadeh (2008) which stated poor extracurricular sports programs in dormitories and lack of sports facilities as the reasons for the lack of student participation in athletic programs [16]. The results of this research about the maximum daily leisure time (3 to 5 hours) is relevant with those of Zarei (2003) who stated that the average leisure time of Azad University students is 275 minutes, that of Medical Sciences students is 246 minutes and that of State University students is 240 minutes [17]. The above research is inconsistent with that of Ehsani (2003) about the reasons for the lack of participation in athletic activities [18]. It is also related with the research by Azarnia (2005) which stated that lack of sports facilities and the little attention of authorities to sports the reasons for the lack of participation in athletic activities, the [19]. The present research is consistent with that of King (2000) [20] which considers the lack of appropriate exercise environments for girls as one of the most important factors preventing women and girls from participating in athletic activities in their leisure time. The results are also related with those of Line *et al.* (2004) which states that the main obstacle to participating in athletic activities is unavailability of facilities to encourage participation in physical activity [21].

As it was pointed out, several researches have been revealed about the advantages and benefits of exercising on the human being among which the research by Christine *et al.* (2009) can be mentioned which states that exercising increases self confidence and reduces smoking [22]. Marcus and Eve (2008) showed in their article that there is a significant relationship between physical activity during leisure time and stress and psychoanalysis [23]. Lampkin (1991) concluded in his research that the participation of university students in recreational and public activities helps them to achieve the required balance between physical, intellectual and social potentials [8]. Smith (1991) believes that public exercise helps improve students'

level of learning in their academic work ^[9]. Catherine *et al.* (2007) believed that stress and anxiety can be reduced by exercising and physical activities ^[24]. With respect to the aforementioned cases and the importance and role of athletic activities in leisure time expenditure and their advantages in providing physical and mental health of human, it is more than ever important to pay attention to this important issue and university authorities should provide the needed facilities for exercising and implement a proper program in this area so that students will exercise which is undoubtedly one of the best ways of leisure time expenditure.

According to the findings of the present research it can be concluded that the reason for recession and lack of progress of sports in higher education and also Students' unwillingness to participate in athletic activities during leisure time is due to adverse management of sports planning in higher education and also the lack of attention of authorities to physical education in higher education and also shortage and insufficiency in funding for the development, planning and also providing sports facilities and equipment in higher education. Student sports which is a factor preventing social deviance, crime and corruption and if appropriate action is taken in this regard, we can witness the prosperity. In order to reduce the inefficiencies and problems and the allocation of proper conditions for the active participation of students in sports activities and physical education during their leisure time and also optimization of the existing facilities and plans, it is recommended that efficient and specialized trainers be used for physical education to improve sports programs of higher education. Moreover, the planning should follow the timetable in accordance with the leisure time of the students so that maximum of the students would be able to participate in athletic activities and can use sports facilities. Also the shortcomings caused by the lack of facilities should be resolved and all exercise equipments needed by the students should be provided and the limitations of programming should be removed with the increased participation of students. Also university authorities should take the required action to extend, expand and create conducive situations for the growth and flourishing of the talents of young generations in the area of sports in higher education.

This research was designed as an approach for paying more attention to the role of physical education and sports in higher education, and the results of this research and previous findings shows that the role of physical education and sports in making a part of leisure time in societies more healthy and optimized.

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