

THE SLOVAK YOUTH OPINION TO SENIORS SPORTING OPPORTUNITIES

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ABSTRACT

During the individual development of a human organism age-related changes occur in all organs and organ systems. We suggested analyzing the Slovak youth opinions to seniors sport participation in the occasion of The European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations 2012 declared by European Commission. To obtain the students opinions we used a questionnaire method. The sample of 310 students of high schools and universities was represented by 226 men (73 %) and 83 women (27 %). The average age of the sample was 21.3 years. 61 % of our respondents were active sportsmen, 34 % are working as coaches, 15 % as a sports volunteer and 4 % were in the management positions. In the part of the questionnaire oriented to intergenerational solidarity, we asked our participants for their opinion to questions of discrimination. 44.5 % of respondents noticed the senior discrimination in job positions, 30.3 % intergenerational discrimination by young people, 40.6% in financial income, 19.4 % in social services and 21.9 % in the possibilities of exercises and physical activities. Most of the respondents considered as the most important step to optimize and reform the physical activity possibilities for seniors the interest of state authorities (60 %), organized regular exercises for seniors (58.7 %) and wider range of appropriate senior physical activities and sports. We appreciate the fact that 62.3 % respondents are willing to engage and participate in different intergenerational physical activity.

Keywords: senior physical activities, intergenerational solidarity, senior discrimination, sport between generations

INTRODUCTION

The ageing process is signified by irreversible changes, at most influenced by environment, individual's lifestyle and genetics. Many of these changes can be positively affected and minimized through the specifically applied proper exercises and physical activity. Active ageing is defined by the World Health Organization as the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age. It is important to identify and respect the risks associated with a given age and health status of an individual (Sedláček, 2007). The statistic prognosis up to year 2050, talks about increasing amount of European Union citizens over 65 years, up to 37% (Nemček, 2010). Older people are more interested in voluntary work (27% of Slovak citizens over 55 years, compared with 26% of European Union citizens in global) (Special Eurobarometer, 2012). According to statistics, the majority of European citizens consider that population over 55 years has a major role in key aspects of society, especially in the family 82 % of respondents believe that older people have an important role. Labudová and Bardiiovský (2011) describe the most common motives for older women physical activity is mental relaxation, the desire to move and social contacts. Last year was celebrated "Year for Active Ageing and International Solidarity". Integrational solidarity refers to the reciprocal support and cooperation between different age groups in order to achieve a society where people of all ages have a role to play in life with their special needs and abilities (www.age-platform.eu). European Union citizens were most likely to accept that young people and older people do not easily agree in questions of what is the best for society (69 %) and most likely to disagree that older people are a burden of society (85 %) (International Solidarity, 2012). More than 6 of 10 European Union citizens is the opinion, that government of their country does not realize necessary interventions in promoting better understanding between young and old people.

Many older people have limited activity caused by different health problems. In group of 55 to 64 years old citizens is this sample presented at level of 8.9 %, 17.7% in the group of 65-74 years old and in group of people elder then 74 years is the sample presented by 21.4% (EHIS, 2009). In question of young people behavior to elder people Bodnárová, Bútorová & Filadelfiová (2012) describe incidence of maltreatment of younger relatives in 29.6%. The fact that in group of 55-64 years old people have experience with home maltreatment (38 % frequently and 30.8 % sometimes) is worrisome. In connection with this problematic and according with research project VEGA 1/0915/13 we wanted to evaluate the attitude of young people on the discrimination and cooperation in sport with older people.

METHODS

We suggested analyzing the Slovak youth opinions to seniors sport participation in the occasion of The European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations 2012 declared by European Commission. The sample of 310 students of high schools and universities was represented by 226 men (73%) and 83 women (27%). The average age of the sample was 21.3 years. 61 % of our respondents were active athletes, 34 % are working as coaches, 15 % as a sports volunteer for occasionally events and 4 % were in the management positions. To obtain the students opinions we used a questionnaire method with multiple choices (different in each question) in following issues:

1. Have you noticed senior discrimination in our society in area of
 - a) Job positions offers
 - b) Financial income
 - c) Social services
 - d) Physical activity
 - e) Intergenerational discrimination?
 (For each area possible answer Yes/ Occasionally/ No/ I don't know)
2. What are the biggest problems of senior sport in Slovakia (mark maximum 3 answers)
 - a) Available sport facilities
 - b) Lack of intergenerational sport groups
 - c) Sports offer
 - d) Interest of state authorities
 - e) Qualified trainers
3. Would you like to join the sports activities in your senior age? (mark each possibility you are interested in)
 - a) With children
 - b) With grandchildren
 - c) With friend
 - d) In a sport group
 - e) Others

4. Would you like to join intergenerational sport group if there is any?
 a) Yes
 b) No
 c) I don't know/ I didn't think about that

RESULTS

Young people show their interest for seniors and aspects of intergenerational discrimination of seniors in smaller or bigger extent. In the part of the questionnaire oriented to intergenerational solidarity, we asked our participants for their opinion to questions of discrimination. As we can see (Figure 1) 27.3 % of men and 31% of women respondents noticed the senior discrimination in job positions. Young men expressed in greater numbers than women intergenerational discrimination (20.2% of men, 17.2% of women) and discrimination in physical activity opportunities (14.7 % of men, 12.4 % of women). From other point of view we know, that the institutions believe to have the most positive role in tackling the challenges of the ageing population with older people's organizations, but there is lack of sport organizations. Global in all answers to the first question we did not find statistical significant differences between young men and young women.

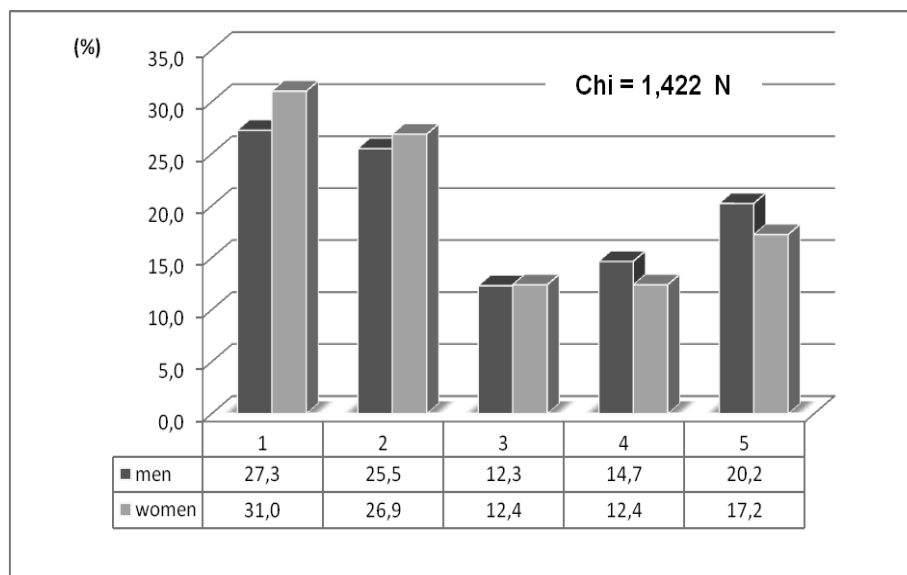


Figure1
 Senior discrimination by Slovak youth opinion
 (1- job position, 2- financial income, 3- social services, 4- physical activity, 5- intergenerational discrimination)

Most of the respondents considered as the most important step to optimize and reform the physical activity possibilities for seniors in increasing interest of state authorities. Low interest of state authorities consider as a problem 61.5% of men respondents and 56% of women respondents. 58.8% of men and 58.3% of women consider as a problem lack of organized regular structured exercises for seniors. From analysis of women answers, we acquire noticeable recommendation. Young women (Figure 2) see the possibility of increasing of old people physical activity in bigger offer of exercises, young men in bigger interest of state authorities.

A large majority (78%) of European Union citizens agreed that elder people make a major contribution to society via voluntary work in charitable and community organizations in their country (Intergenerational solidarity, Analytic report)

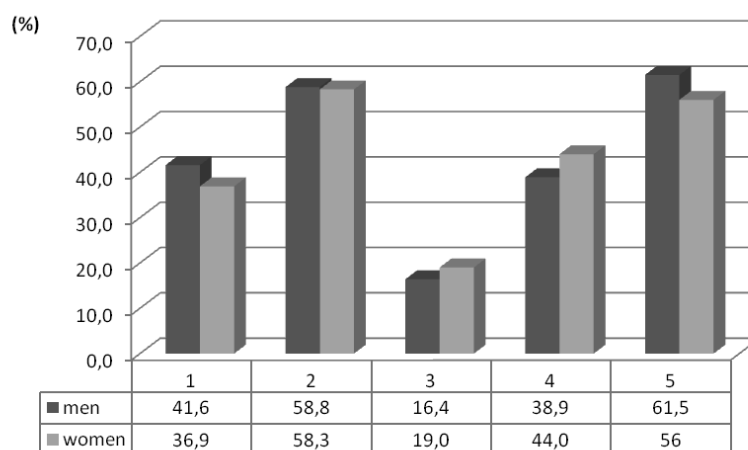


Figure 2
 Senior sport problems
 (1- appropriate physical activities, 2- organized structured exercises, 3- organized mixed group, 4- non qualified trainers, 5- ISA- interest of state authorities)

In the question of joining the senior sports activities of our youth respondents in their retirement 62.2% of men and 53.6% of women respondents would like to join the physical activities with their children (Figure 3). Based on the results analysis we can make a statement, that our men respondents are more physically active than young women, based on fact, their willing to enjoy the sport

activity with their children (62.2), grandchildren (44.7) and friends (61.9) visibly more than our women respondents. The fact that women respondents prefer group exercises more than men we substantiate their desire to connect with each other, they like the contact and chance for communication and socialization.

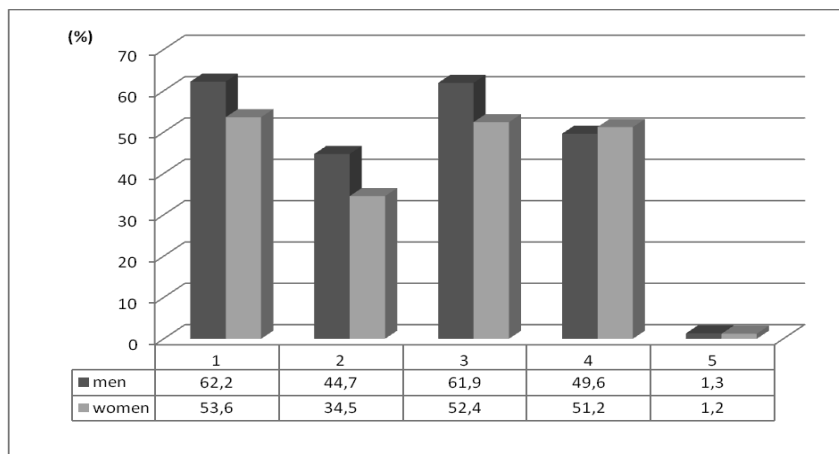


Figure 3
Senior sport plans
(1-with children, 2- with grandchildren, 3- with friend, 4- in a group, 5- others)

CONCLUSIONS

Each of our respondents noticed in his surroundings senior discrimination, most of them in job positions. Major problem of senior sport is in the opinion of our youth respondents low interest of state authorities. We appreciate the fact that 62% of our sample would like to engage and participate in different intergenerational physical activity in their free time and also the fact that each of our respondents would like to join the senior sport activities in their senior age.

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