40 - ELDERLY ENGAGEMENT TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAMS HEALTH PROMOTION ISSUE

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INTRODUCTION

The importance of regular physical activity practice to elderly has been highlighted in the last two decades through scientific researches which ensure its physical, functional and physiologic benefits (ELWARD et. al., 1992; MATSUDO et. al., 2003; STEWART et. al., 2001; ZAGO and GOBBI, 2003).

ACSM (2007) ; Capodaglio et. al. (2006); Kaczor et. Al. (2006); Matsudo et. al. (2004); Penedo and Dahn (2006); Struck and Ross (2006) show, in their studies, the importance of physical activity as a key resource in the process of diseases prevention, improvement in levels of physical fitness, decrease in the percentage of body fat and maintenance of functional abilities. Moreover, regular physical activity has been described in literature as an excellent mean of reducing the degeneration caused by the aging process in physical, psychological and social ways (ACSM, 2007).

However, even with scientific evidence of the regular physical activity role as one of the decisive elements in the process of diseases prevention, improvement of physical fitness and physical and mental well-being, the results do not seem to be enough to mobilize sedentary individuals to participate of physical activity programs and/or to maintain those who are already practicing (Cardoso et. al., 2008). It seems like there is no relation between need, information and participation of the practice, not even to those who have the physical activity as medical prescription to certain illness (OKUMA, 1997).

A survey conducted by the Ministry of Health in 2007 among the Brazilian capital cities, showed that the physical inactivity reaches 50.3% of women and 65.4% of men over 60 years old (BRASIL, 2007).

Based on the issues related, the following questions are inquired: *Which are the obstacles that the elderly face not to join a physical activity program? Why do the elderly give up practicing physical activity or programs*?

Thus, the main purpose of this study is to analyze and discuss, through literature review, the aspects of joining and abandonment of elderly related to physical activity programs, as well as, to present a possibility of participation and permanence in the physical activity programs through Health Promotion ideas.

THEORETICAL REFERENCE

The reasons of joining and abandonment of the physical activity programs by the elderly are constantly discussed among the Physical Education professionals. Okuma (1997) stated that if the professional does not know how to look what he/she prescribes or guide, with the eyes of the ones that will receive and experience the activity, there are few possibilities that they are significant enough to be integrated to the current experiences of the individual.

The higher the number of analyzed variables to verify the relation between population, culture, environment, history and others of individual nature, the better will be the view on the exercise joining phenomenon (FERREIRA e NAJAR, 2005). Thus, the empirical studies tend to effectively assist the process of characterization and evaluation of the programs.

Ferreira and Najar (2005) assume that the majority of physical activity programs do not have the purpose of expanding the level of knowledge in the population about the practice and the benefits of exercises. Although this is considered a justification for not participating of the programs, several studies, mainly the international ones, reported that despite the knowledge of the evidences of benefits in physical activity practice, those people prefer to be inactive, demonstrating and exercising autonomy in their choice (BULL e JAMROZIK, 1998; DISHMAN et. al., 1985; KING et. al., 1995).

Okuma (2002) shows that the difference is in the physical activity provided through an educational approach embracing many aspects, once that, learning about the physical activity goes beyond the practice. It means having the knowledge on personal care and possibilities that the person has to exercise his/her autonomy front the physical activity.

Ferreira and Najar (2005) based on several studies, about the joining in physical activity practice and physical activity programs, report that the main reasons which may be involved in the practice or not of physical activities are: previous experiences in sports practice and physical exercises; spouse and family support; medical advice; convenience of the activity place; biological/physiological aspects; gender; self-motivation in exercise practice; time availability; socio-economical aspect; knowledge about the physical exercise; access to suitable facilities and places for the practice of physical activity. The authors also report that the importance of each of these reasons in the joining of physical activity may vary according to location, population or the period of time studied.

The aspect of prevention and prophylaxis may be considered as a justifying reason for the joining of physical activity programs, usually because they are supported in determined relationships of cause and effect related to the risk factor (PALMA et. al., 2003). Therefore, physical activity as a preventive way can be considered as a stimulus for participating. However, according to Velardi (2003), the fact to join in a program intending to be free of diseases has not been considered enough reason for the elderly to keep in the program.

Andreotti and Okuma (2003) observed that, in Brazil, the physical activity programs for elderly, there is prevalence of women's frequency, showing in their study that these rates can reach from 70 to 80% of the program's population. The authors ensure that this event can be explained by the fact that the man with more than 60 years old finds outside home, more opportunities of meetings sociable acceptable for men without company (clubs, entertaining spaces, squares, bars, and others) than for women. Another reason that can clarify this noncompliance is that a lot of men tend to find the existent programs inadequate, for not requiring exhaustive physical efforts or including almost non advisable activities, giving an idea that all elderly is fragile.

After analyzing several studies about the relationship between the practice of physical activities and the elderly, Andreotti (2001) said about the noncompliance of physical activity practice that there is a need in reviewing not only the goals, but also to create effective interventions that reach this target population, which requires beginning special physical education programs that meet the needs of this age group.

An important factor to be considered by the demand of elderly into a program designed to this population, is to “escape from loneliness”, once that with the engagement of the elderly in a program, the possibility of expanding the friendship circle with a specific group of people, especially those interested, from a certain age, in expanding their instruction and illustration, is

increased (DEBERT, 1999).

Cress et. al. (2005) carried out a research with North-American elderly, with the central goal of identifying which are the main aspects that determine the program's organization aimed to elderly with some kind of disease or with low physical fitness, intending to increase the engagement and improving the organization and the physical activity programs related to the elderly quoted. The main results identified were: proposal based on the improvement of physical capacity to have functional benefits; the principles of changing the behavior, includes social support with more active choices and highlights the engagement; the control of the risk of diseases through moderate physical activities; emerging procedures plans for communities; and monitoring the aerobic intensity.

Cardoso et. al. (2008) conducted a study aiming to investigate the influence factors on withdraw of elderly in a physical activity program carried out in the Local Health Units of Florianopolis in Santa Catarina state. The results showed that the main reasons for joining the programs were aspects related to social relationships, as the invitation of friends and/or family for example, being this one more effective than medical prescription itself, besides also being a key factor for the engagement of elderly to physical activity programs. Among the reasons of withdraw, the main causes observed were related to personal reasons, such as health problems and/or the death of spouse or other relative. Other causes that led the elderly to abandon the program were health issues and the inadequacy of physical activity with their limitations and potential.

After the reasons of engagement and withdrawn of elderly from the physical activity programs being highlighted through literature, a new path will be presented that may be appropriate in this process: the Health Promotion.

THE ISSUE OF HEALTH PROMOTION

In a view based on the ideals of Health Promotion, the issue of joining is influenced by interventions that should come from a democratic perspective, with the participative intervention of population model, believing that with a more effective participation of the elderly, the practices are connected to their tastes and needs.

For Pereira Lima et. al. (2004), Health Promotion is guided by values, principles, methods and techniques which promote actions aiming the improvement of people's health and community, once that a specific educational methodology should be adapted through the diagnose about and with the population, their history and life conditions and needs.

According to Buss (2003); Czeresnia (2003), it is essential to provide conditions to access information for these people, so that they can have consistent choices. Therefore, the perspective of Health promotion is an elementary alternative to carry out the assessment that occurs in a participative way, and not in an imposed or "verticalized" way.

Regarding the successes reached in Health Promotion programs, Moysés et. al. (2004) reported that when there is a higher social participation and the intersectoral coordination provided by the public power, it is easier the engagement of a proposal by the population. So, the key issue still remains as the ability to motivate enough all the authors involved, providing conceptual clearness, knowledge resources, information transparency and power sharing. In relation to physical activities, the same ideal should be shared and the individual should participate effectively of this process.

It is necessary that the juncture of the proposed activity, according to Velardi (2003), to be consistent to the nature of the people and the place. In this sense, it is necessary to establish a relationship between the life of the people, historic context and the cultural and social relations, and just then, thinking about a coherent proposal for this population. Therefore, it is believed that the physical activity programs are more related to the needs and wills of the elderly, favoring the issue of joining and engagement to the respective physical activity program.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The literature suggested in this study presented several reasons that influence in the joining and withdraw of the elderly in a physical activity program. It is a discussion that is not concluded with this study, once that it depends on personal, political, financial, cultural and other aspects.

However, it is believed that in a perspective through Health Promotion, in which the elderly participation in the choice process, relating the practices to their tastes and needs is essential to the engagement and attachment of these physical activity programs. With this, the need to enable individuals through information access is considered a crucial aspect for them, in which they can show their autonomy and think about the practice of physical activity in a way of establishing knowledge that answers such questions as: *why do I have to do? what for? how to do? where do I have to do?*

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ABSTRACT

The practice of regular physical activity is scientifically recognized by its several benefits, mainly in its preventive character. Even so, it has not been effective in the process of engagement and practice of physical activity in programs designed for elderly. Thus, the goal of this research is to analyze and discuss through a literature review, the aspects of engagement and withdraw of the elderly regarding the physical activity programs and in addition, to present a possibility of joining and attachment to the physical activity programs through the ideals of Health Promotion. Several reasons that influenced in the engagement and abandonment of the physical activity programs by the elderly were verified, such as personal, political, financial, cultural and others. However, it is believed that in a perspective of Health Promotion, in which the elderly can participate effectively in the process of choice, relating the practices with their wishes and needs is crucial for the engagement and attachment in physical activity programs.

Key words: elderly; engagement; physical activity programs.

L'ENGAGEMENT DES PERSONNES ÂGÉES À L'ACTIVITÉ PHYSIQUE PROGRAMS - LA PROMOTION DE LA SANTÉ QUESTION

RÉSUMÉ

La pratique de l'activité physique régulière est scientifiquement reconnue par ses nombreux avantages, principalement dans son caractère préventif. Même ainsi, il n'a pas été efficace dans le processus d'engagement et de la pratique de l'activité physique dans les programs conçu pour les personnes âgées. Ainsi, l'objectif de cette recherche est d'étudier et de discuter par le biais d'une revue de la littérature, les aspects de l'engagement et de retirer des personnes âgées en ce qui concerne les programs d'activité physique et, en outre, de présenter une possibilité de joindre et d'attachement à l'activité physique par l'intermédiaire du programs idéaux de promotion de la santé. Plusieurs raisons qui ont influencé dans l'engagement et de l'abandon de l'activité physique programs par les personnes âgées ont été vérifiées, comme les données personnelles, politiques, financières, culturelles et autres. Toutefois, on estime que dans une perspective de la promotion de la santé, dans laquelle les personnes âgées peuvent participer efficacement au processus de choix, les pratiques relatives aux souhaits et aux besoins est cruciale pour l'engagement et l'attachement de l'activité physique programs.

Mots-clés: personnes âgées; engagement; programs d'activité physique.

LA ADHESIÓN DE PERSONAS MAYORES A LOS PROGRAMAS DE ACTIVIDADES FÍSICAS - LA CUESTIÓN DE LA PROMOCIÓN DE LA SALUD

RESÚMEN

La práctica de actividad física regular es científicamente reconocida por sus muchos beneficios, especialmente para la prevención. Aun así, no ha sido eficaz en el proceso de adhesión a la práctica de actividad física en los programas dirigidos a las personas mayores. Por lo tanto, el objetivo de este estudio es analizar y discutir a través de una revisión de la literatura los aspectos de la adhesión y el abandono de las personas de edad avanzada en relación a los programas de actividades físicas. Además, presentar una posibilidad de la adhesión y la adherencia a los programas de actividades físicas a través de los ideales de Promoción de la Salud. Hubo varios factores que influyen en la entrada y en el abandono de los ancianos en un programa de actividades físicas, tales como los problemas personales, políticos, financieros, culturales, entre otros. Sin embargo, se cree que en una forma de Promoción de la Salud, en la que los mayores participen de manera efectiva en el proceso de elecciones, relacionando las prácticas con sus gustos y necesidades es crucial para la adhesión y la adherencia a los programas de actividades físicas.

Palabras clave: personas mayores, la adhesión, programas de actividades físicas.

ADESÃO DE IDOSOS A PROGRAMAS DE ATIVIDADES FÍSICAS A QUESTÀO DA PROMOÇÃO DA SAÚDE

RESUMO

A prática da atividade física regular é reconhecida cientificamente pelos seus inúmeros benefícios, principalmente aos de caráter preventivo. Mesmo assim, não tem se mostrado eficaz no processo de adesão a prática da atividade física em programas direcionados a idosos. Desta forma, o objetivo deste estudo é analisar e discutir através de uma revisão de literatura os aspectos de adesão e desistência dos idosos em relação aos programas de atividades físicas. Além disso, apresentar uma possibilidade de adesão e aderência a programas de atividades físicas através do ideário da Promoção da Saúde. Verificaram-se diversos fatores que influenciam no ingresso e na desistência do idoso em um programa de atividades físicas, como os de ordem pessoais, políticos, financeiros, culturais, dentre outros. Entretanto, acredita-se que numa perspectiva via Promoção da Saúde, em que os idosos participem efetivamente no processo de escolhas, relacionando as práticas com os seus gostos e necessidades seja crucial para a adesão e aderência a programas de atividades físicas.

Palavras-chave: idosos, adesão, programas de atividades físicas.