24 - QUALITY OF LIFE: A STUDY BASED ON THE PROGRAM UTFPR IN ACTION.

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Quality of life has become a worldwide concern, and this concern has caused its study to become more dynamic and, consequently, resulted in the formulation of concepts. Some of these concepts point to what can be considered a way for the development of an appropriate lifestyle, in other words, a healthier lifestyle.

The frequent practice of physical activities, invariably, is pointed as one of those ways. Quality physical activity, with no distinction of any human condition and taking people's whole formation into account, is considered the cornerstone of a better quality of life.

Some references have been constituted over the role of physical activity in the contribution for bettering quality of life of society and over the right to have quality of life. Many of these references have been formulated by organizations, segments and international congresses, which offer deep reflections and even ways of interfering in the questions raised in these documents. The documents, which are effective given the broad reach they have, constitute, for instance, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948), the Agenda 21 (Earth Summit, Rio de Janeiro, 1992), The 2000 Manifest for Peace, Culture and Non Violence (Group of Nobel Prize, 1998), The International Letter of Physical Education and Sport (Unesco, Paris, 1978), The Letter of Children's Right to Sports (Panathlon, Avignone, 1995) and several others that nowadays are a reference for the international society.

Based on these documents and in the affirmation of citizens rights to formal and informal sports practice, expressed in the Article 217 of the Federal Constitution and in the law 9.615/98 - which is about the general organization of sport - it is possible to establish some parameters:

·Physical activity must be understood as a fundamental right and not as an obligation and must be provided to all population;

·It must provide its beneficiaries with the development of motor abilities, attitudes, values and sports and physical activities along their lives;

·Furnish ways of life and experiences of solidarity, cooperation and overcoming;

·Value sports practice that represent the tradition and plurality of the cultural and patrimony of the country and its regions;

·Help the beneficiaries develop respect to their own and the others' bodies through the perception and understanding of the role of physical activity in the promotion of health;

·To be a way for developing citizenship and social insertion.

This conceptual base is the cornerstone over which the venue of UTFPR in Ponta Grossa developed the program "UTFPR in action".

The goal of this study consists in the verification of the effectiveness and the reach of the aforementioned program. Data regarding the program and conceptual parameters over quality of life have been exposed here as a support for that verification.

Parameters for the interpretation of quality of life

Before establishing a concept for quality of life, it is necessary to search the origins of the etymology of this term, as well as its evolution along the years. As opposed to what it might seem, the idea of quality of life is very ancient. According to ANDUJAR (2006, p.68), the idea of quality of life was conceived by Socrates between the years of 469 - 399 b.C. The belief was that happiness was a result of leading a good life. Other philosophers after Socrates also had the concern of living with quality.

According to these writings, it is possible to notice that this concern ages over two thousand years. It is also possible to observe that the conception of the term has not had significant changes that would compromise its meaning along the centuries.

These long years of study - despite not being able to promote a common sense regarding the issue - have been responsible for the development of some fundamental parameters for its comprehension. According to MION et. Al. (2005, p.04):

Although a definite common sense related to the issue has not been defined, the authors are unanimous about three fundamental aspects: quality of life is subjective, multidimensional and has positive dimensions, such as mobility, and negative ones, such as pain. It is subjective because it comprehends individual and multidimensional perspectives for reaching a great number of aspects or dimensions of one's life.

With the appropriate conceptual support, some definitions about quality of life have been formulated. According to GASPAR (2001, p.47) quality of life may be defined as "a subjective collection of impressions that each human being has, which is simultaneously a product of several factors that affect it in a process of experiments each moment". For SANTOS (2002, p.01):

Good or excellent quality of life is the one that offers the least conditions so that people can develop the most of their potentials by living, feeling or loving, working, producing goods or services, making science or arts […]. It results from the conditions of biological, social and cultural life and, particularly, from relationships that men establish with themselves and nature through working.

What may be learned from this context is that quality of life is connected to personal pleasure by doing what one likes and that it has variation of quotidian life as factors of influence. Therefore, it is noticeable that MION et. al. (2005, p.04) was right by pointing the convergence regarding the fundamental aspects of quality of life, especially regarding the fact that it depends directly on one's satisfaction, as well as on the environment where this individual lives.

It is also necessary to consider that several sciences have focused studies on quality of life and that, therefore, according to the field of study, the main factor is related to different aspects, such as economical stability, success or the cultural development and ethical values. Some authors also apply the term to communities, whereas others apply it to individuals. However, in a general way, all theories concern with the level of health and human development (MARINS, 2005, apud ANDUJAR, 2006, p. 32).

This concern, which is main or not, but present in all sciences that have an interest for quality of life, is added to the neuralgic point of this study, that is also a fundament in the interest for quality of life. After all, if health and human development are, collectively, pre determinant factors for establishing quality of life and if these two factors are intensively found in physical activities, the interpretation that physical activity is directly connected to quality of life is true and real.

It is necessary to recall that the concept of health, before any amplification to the social context, is related - in its essence - to the absence of diseases. And, according to the references brought by the field of health, the consequences of physical idleness and, consequently, overweight, have been continually demonstrated. Obesity is a risk factor for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, cardiovascular illnesses and some types of cancer. Physical inactivity is a state that predisposes to obesity and other disturbs. Thus, considering that lifestyles with access to technology, comfort and several levels of commodities are a link for being sedentary. There is the theoretical and conceptual support for the programs that offer physical activity as a way of bettering quality of life - such as the "UTFPR in action" program -, as well as for the theoretical alignment of this study.

In an attempt of clarifying this context, ISTOÉ Magazine's March 2006 issue, in an article entitled "The boom of children's obesity", featured the warn brought by the report publicized by the International Obesity Task Force (IOTF), as task force composed by

experts from different nations in order to study ways of preventing obesity. The entity informs that the number of obese children worldwide - nowadays around 155 million - will dramatically increase until 2010. According to the organization, the percentage of overweight youngsters will practically double within four years.

According to endocrinologist Alfredo Halpern, from São Paulo, "this represents a generation doomed to having cardiovascular problems and diabetes" (ISTOÉ, 2006). It is evident that obese people having health trouble have a compromised quality of life. It is also clear that regular physical activities are a way to fight these problems. And it also seems evident that there is a direct connection between physical activity and quality of life.

Santos (2001, p.01) also warns to the fact that due to stress on the job and daily sedentary habits, people have become more idle and sedentary. He also reports the well-known fact that physical activity is a positive indicator for quality of life, but that few people put this in practice. Some for lack of time others for lack of knowledge and still others for lack of information.

This is the context that supports this study, and based on this context it is intended to verify the reach of the program "UTFPR in action" as an agent in this process of generation and spread of activities compromised with quality of life.

The case studied

The program "UTFPR in action" was originated in the beginning of 2005 named "CEFET in action". With the change of CEFET-PR - which became the first technological university in Brazil, on October 10th, 2005 - the project was then named after the new institution creation.

The project was a collective idea between the coordination and Physical Activity Center (CAFIS) from the Ponta Grossa campus. The initial idea was to provide internal community, employees and students with the opportunity of conducting oriented activities that promoted quality of life. The idea enabled, at the same time, the occupation of the privileged space in the institution - two soccer fields, covered semi olympic heated pool, multi sports court, gymnasium, health club, multi use rooms, as well as spaces suitable for walking -, which is public and was not potentially used in several moments.

The project is active from Monday through Thursday and attends around 150 members of the internal community. Out of this number, around 80% is formed by students. Among the most practiced activities are the gym exercises, swimming, soccer, court sports (basketball, volleyball and soccer), chess and table tennis (GUIMARAES et. al., 2005).

The objectives of the project are:

·Promoting sports, leisure and physical activities for the community of the Federal Technology University from Paraná, Ponta Grossa campus;

·Promoting the formation of habits for the practice of activities aiming the improvement of quality of life permanently;

·Sensitizing the community, through sport and leisure, to having citizenship practice;

·Conducting campaigns in order to create healthful habits of sports and leisure.

Methodology

The current study was based on a triangular perspective between the quantitative and qualitative analysis. In order to accomplish so, direct questioning towards individuals whose behavior was intended to be known was applied. Basically, solicitation of information regarding the issue was directed to a significant group of people. Then, by using quantitative analysis, some correspondent considerations of the collected data were conducted.

In order to collect data, a form composed by two procedures - one based on the Likert scale and another composed by direct and free questions - was used. This form was applied by the researcher.

The field of study is made out of practices developed in the project "UTFPR in action". For the composition of the sample, the procedure of simple random sampling was conducted. The approach to the participants of the program occurred during a week. Out of an amount of 138 individuals enrolled in the program, 77 composed the sample - what guarantees a sample of 55% of the whole population.

The answers were tabled and then analyzed based on the theoretical reference and on the goal proposed by this study.

Presentation and discussion of the results

According to the collected data, the sample presents the following results: 69% age between 14 and 19 years old, 18% between 18 and 25 years old, 8% between 26 and 30 years old and 5% over 30 years old. Out of these, 61% are male and 39% are female; 28% have total family income composed by 5 to 7 wages, 25% earn over 7 wages, 23% between 3 and 5 wages, 21% between 1 and 3 wages and 2 people earn up to 1 wage. Concerning education, 47% are enrolled in the technical high school, 41% are undergraduate students, 9% are employees of the institution and 2 people are graduate students. Concerning marital status, 96% are single, only 2 people are married and 1 is divorced.

Regarding questions related to quality of life, leisure and to the project, the result was that 57% consider their quality of life satisfactory, 29% consider it average, 12% consider it very satisfactory and 2 people say it is unsatisfactory.

The relationship with leisure and the perception of quality of life of the interviewees are facts that were highly evidenced: 53% consider the influence of leisure in their quality of life as a significant factor, 44% as a very significant factor and only 2 people consider it neutral. Nevertheless, 67% assure that the program "UTFPR in action" has significantly influenced their quality of life, 18% say it has very significantly influenced their lives, 13% in a neutral way and 1 person said it was not significant. Such data reveal the effectiveness - based on the perception of the involved ones - of the project.

The participation of those who adhered to the project is presented in the following way: gym practice (workout) (59), basketball (15), court soccer (13), volleyball (11), table tennis (10) and soccer (6), given the fact that the same person might practice more than one activity. It was also revealed that 45% of the participants did not practice any physical activity other than the ones offered by the institution - among the ones that did not practiced other activities, 85% claimed not to have spare time for so, 1 person said that the activities provided by the program were enough - whereas 55% did other activities.

The activities practiced by those who joined other programs are mainly: soccer (19), court soccer (7), walking (5), working out (4), basketball (4), handball (3), running (2), cycling (4), swimming (1), judo (1), karate (1) and tae-kwon-do (1).

Finally, concerning the reasons that lead the participants to join the project - they could point more than one reason - the answers were the ones that follow: bettering quality of life (28), search for leisure (20), the commodity of being able to practice an activity at the institution (11), keeping good physical condition (10), aesthetical matters (7), absence of costs (5), good structure of the project (3), personal relationships (3) and 4 people did not express an answer.

Final asserts

The results of the investigation allow concluding that the significance of leisure as a primal fact in order to obtain quality of life - according to the participants of the program - is crucial. Such fact is noticed when verifying that these - satisfied or not with their lifestyles - search for a physical activity as a way of keeping quality of life.

Nevertheless, it was also noticed that the activities developed along the program have a significant influence in the quality of life of the respective participants - this is the feeling exposed by the participants through their answers.

Another question that must stand out is the unavailability of practicing activities other than the ones provided by the

institution. The program, in this aspect, eased the access to such activities, enabling these to be practiced by the referred population at the own educational institution.

Therefore, based on the data obtained, it is possible to interpret that the proposition of the program was efficient and also appealing for the respective participants. And, based on these aspects and on the context presented, it is possible to draw the conclusion that the goals of the program have been accomplished.

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QUALITY OF LIFE: A STUDY BASED ON THE PROGRAM UTFPR IN ACTION.

Abstract:

The present work is based on a reflection about physical activity as a leisure alternative and a way to enhance quality of life. Firstly, the theoretical underpinnings of quality of life were discussed, focusing on the importance of a physically active life with quality. Secondly, the program "UTFPR in action" was presented together with its objectives concerning quality of life and leisure. This study focuses on the fallowing aspects: self-evaluation of the quality of life of the participants, the importance of leisure activities as a way to promote quality of life, and the influence of the program on the participants' lives. The survey was based on a sample of 77 participants (55% of the population). They answered a set of questions which provided the basis for a discussion of the overall results obtained as well as a critical assessment of the program, which proved to be effective. Key-words: quality of life, leisure, physical activity.

QUALITé DE VIE: UNE éTUDE à PARTIR DU PROGRAMME UTFPR EN ACTION.

Résumé:

Cette étude à pour base investigative une réflexion sur l´activité physique comme alternative de loisir et accroissement de la qualité de vie. Dans un premier temps nous avons abordé l´état de l´art en soulignant l´importance d´une vie active physiquement et ensuite nous avons présenté le programme "UTFPR en action" et son influence dans le contexte de la qualité de vie et de loisir. Certains aspects focalisés dans cette étude ont été l´auto-évaluation de la qualité de vie des participants et l´importance du loisir et du programme dans cette évaluation. Nous avons utilisé un échantillon de soixante-dix sept participants (cinquante-cinq pourcent). Ces participants ont répondu a un questionnaire ce qui nous a permis prouver que ce programme est efficient.

Mots-clés: qualité de vie, loisir, activité physique.

CALIDAD DE VIDA: UN ESTUDIO DESDE EL PROGRAMA UTFPR EN ACCIÓN.

Resumen:

El presente estudio tiene su base investigativa pautada en la ponderación a respeto de la actividad física como alternativa de ocio e incremento de la calidad de vida. Fue abordado en un primer momento el referencial teorético a respeto de la calidad de vida, resaltando la importancia de una vida activa físicamente y con calidad, y, en un según momento, fue presentado el programa "UTFPR en acción", y su objetivo en el contexto de la calidad de vida y de ocio. Algunos de los aspectos enfocados en este estudio fueron: a auto-evaluación de la calidad de vida de los participantes, la importancia del ocio como forma de calidad de vida adentro de sus perspectivas, y la influencia del programa en la calidad de vida de éstos. Para tanto, fue utilizada una muestra de 77 participantes (55% de la población). Esos participantes respondieran a un conjunto de cuestiones y, con eso, - lanzando un mirar crítico sobre la eficiencia del proyecto en cuestión - se efectivo una discusión del resultado logrado, comprobando la eficacia del programa.

Palabras-llave: calidad de vida, ocio, actividad física.

QUALIDADE DE VIDA: UM ESTUDO A PARTIR DO PROGRAMA UTFPR EM AÇÃO.

Resumo:

O presente estudo tem a sua base investigativa pautada na reflexão a respeito da atividade física como alternativa de lazer e incremento da qualidade de vida. Foi abordado num primeiro momento o referencial teórico a respeito da qualidade de vida, ressaltando a importância de uma vida ativa fisicamente e com qualidade, e, num segundo momento, foi apresentado o programa "UTFPR em ação", e o seu objetivo no contexto da qualidade de vida e de lazer. Alguns dos aspectos focados neste estudo foram: a auto-avaliação da qualidade de vida dos participantes, a importância do lazer como forma de qualidade de vida dentro das suas perspectivas, e a influência do programa na qualidade de vida destes. Para tanto, foi utilizado uma amostra de 77 participantes (55% da população). Esses participantes responderam a um conjunto de questões e, com isso - lançando um olhar crítico sobre a eficiência do projeto em questão -, efetivou-se uma discussão do resultado obtido, comprovando a eficácia do programa.

Palavras-chave: qualidade de vida, lazer, atividade física.