26 - ANALYSIS OF THE REASONS FOR THE PRACTICE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR THE SENIOR CITIZEN

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1 - INTRODUCTION

Firstly, it is necessary to question who the senior citizens in Brazil are. One can assume that it is an individual who survived until an age that goes beyond the maturity stage. Yet, there hasn't been set an exact chronological age. The Senior Statute (Law 10,741/2003) in its Art. 1º, establishes that a senior person is the one with equal or superior age of 60 years. However, the Global Health Organization (Organização Mundial de Saúde), or OMS apud Balestra (2002) states that a senior is a person of 65 years years of age or more and who lives in well developed countries. Yet, according to another author; Paula (1999) in Balestra (2002) assumes that senior in well developed countries, are the people of 60 years of age and over. On the other hand, senior citizens (terceira idade in Portuguese, coming from the French term troisième age), defines the group of persons who are over 60 years old according to the Senior Statute. To some, this age is a mark, to others, the right number would be 65, including the government, which only pays retirement and pension to those who are 65 and over. Therefore, there is no agreement, or exact number which defines the Brazilian senior citizen. For this study aged people had been considered those that possess 60 years more or, as praise the cited statute of the aged one and to M S, being that this is a segment that has shown the biggest growth in the world in the last decades of XX and in the beginning of the XXI era. In 30 years seniors could be representing 40% of the population of Germany, Japan and Italy (GEIS, 2003). The World-wide Organization of Health (OMS), for example, considers the classification of the aged ones in three categories: the pre-aged (55-64 years); Aged young (65-79 and 60-69, for who lives in Asia and the region of the Pacific and America of the Sul); Seniors of advanced age (+75 or 80 years, being that above 80 years, in its majority are of the feminine sex) (GEIS, 2003).

According to Christmas & Andersen (2000) apud ANDREOTTI & OKUMA (2003), the studies and research have pointed the relevance of the physical activity with respect to the acquisition and maintenance of the health, physical aptitude and of well-being. According to ROBERTSON & MUTRIE (1989) apud ANDREOTTI & OKUMA (2003), the conclusions of varied research still do not seem to be enough to take sedentary individuals to participate of programs of physical activity, nor so little to keep adhesion of that already they concomitantly participate for over six months. With the evolution of the human being race and of the technology, more sedentary habits appear, thus, generating some risks for the health and the quality of life (OKUMA, 1998).

Different reasons determine a greater or minor degree of compromise from the people to the programs of physical activity and can be categorized as personal factors, past and present, environmental factors or past situations, and relative factors to the program of physical activity (DISHMAN, 1993, apud ANDREOTTI & OKUMA, 2003). As Meirelles (1999) affirms; such aggregate factors of the increase of the life expectancy have motivated studies on the aging. An important point that takes people to initiate a regular program of physical activity is the conscience of the diverse benefits, physiological as well as psychological ones. Ahead of these cited factors, it is evidenced and if it stands out the necessity of the real knowledge of the reasons that the aged ones have for the practice of physical activity, on such form that its answers give sustentation for future strategies of action and lead the aged changes of behaviors and habits of the sedentary ones for a behavior of the practitioners (ANDREOTTI & OKUMA, 2003).

To identify the leading motives to the practice of physical activity during the adult age and senior age was the main objective of this study. Old age is still considered synonym of prejudice in many cultures; from the productive process as well as the social community and, in many cases, from the family, when, in reality, it should be a natural stage of the biological cycle. Actually, old age - which can also be defined as "maturity" - is the period when the decade of 50 begins, after the individual have reached and experienced basic personal achievements, proper of the maturity age (ANTONIO, 2005).

The inquiry on the conditions that allow a good quality of life in the oldness, as well as the variations that the age holds, are armed with great scientific and social importance. To try to answer to the apparent contradiction that exists between oldness and well-being, or even the contradictory association between oldness and illness, could contribute for the understanding of the aging and the limits and reaches of the human development. Moreover, it will make possible the creation of intervention alternatives beneficiating the well being of the senior citizens (FLECK, 2003).

According to Hall (2005, p 88):

"People tend to become less flexible with the old age, though this phenomenon seems to be more related to the reduction of physical activity than to the changes due to the process of aging. Whatever the age of the individual is, if the cartilage tissues and muscles that cross a joint are not worked out, they will end up suffering a shortening. On the contrary, when those tissues are regularly exercised, their length and flexibility increase. The results of a variety of studies indicate that flexibility can be improved in a significant way among the senior citizens who participate in a program of stretching and regular exercise."

Nowadays, it is well known that the whole organism can obtain benefits with a program of regular physical activity. NÓBREGA (1999) apud ANTÔNIO (2005) reassures that the maintenance of the lean mass makes it easier for a senior to conclude tasks of bigger strength requirement, such as: to go up the stairs, to carry objects, to sit down, to get up, to jump, etc…

When keeping a higher basal metabolism, the aged one prevents the obesity and its consequences; aid in the prevention of chronic degenerative illnesses such as: osteoporosis and osteoarthritis, diabetes, arterial hypertension, among others; it increases the resistance the illnesses; it improves the quality of sleep; with the psychological benefits it gets the reduction of the stress level, raises self-esteem and the vanity, as well as the will of living.

2 - METHODS

2.1 - Sample

30 women of ages varying from 60 to 75 participated in this study - being the average 67, 5 years of age, belonging to the nucleus relations which functions in the Region the Northwest (more specifically in CAC-Serrano) and is part of the groups taken care from the social program called "Active Life", inserted in the Management of promotions and events of the Associate City department of Sports of the Municipal City hall of Belo Horizonte.

2.2 - Instrument

A questionnaire developed by Mickier and Moser (1998) and adapted and validated by Samulski and Chagas (1992) was applied. It analyzes the level of importance of the reasons for the practice of physical activity, as instrument of collection of

data. The age and gender of the individuals were written down first and after was applied the questionnaire with 26 questions and its options (reasons) related with the practice of physical activity that would have to be answered making a numerical relation with the degree of importance of each reason, that varied of the following form: 0 - it is not important; 1 - little important; 2 - important; and 3 - very important.

2.3 - Procedures

There has been made the contact with the Sports Management of the Northwest Region of Belo Horizonte to request the authorization for the appliance of the questionnaire to the group involved. Where the activity was taken place, there has been explained to the participants how the research would be and what its objective was. Then the questionnaire was applied to the volunteers, who had sufficient free time to fill in the options of answers according to their personal perception of the motive being discussed. The collection was carried through in the interval between the lessons in an only day and turn.

2.4 - Ethical Cares

The participant volunteers of the activities of the place had been enclosed all, that had signed a term of clarified free assent, where had allowed the application of the questionnaire and were guaranteed the anonymity and the confidentiality. The objective of the work was highlighted, that was only the survey of the reasons for the practice of physical activity. This research had the thoughtfulness to inform previously with the Regional Coordination if there were any illiterate in the group, so the person would not feel excluded due to his or her illiteracy.

3 - Presentation and discussion of results

After the collection, the data had been tabulated and analyzed and the results had been presented in percentile values for numerical relation 3 (very important) of each reason.

Table 1 - Description of the sample

N	Average Age	Gender
31	67,5 (±7,5)	30 female

In table 01 the profile of the sample is shown, 30 participants with age between 60 and 75 years are presented, being the average of 67, 5 years.

Table 2 - Reasons that the aged ones have for the practice of the physical activity

Reasons	**%**	**Order**
Reduce depression level	**93,34**	**1º**
Improve physical conditioning and appearance	**90,01**	**2º**
Improve quality of life and health	**86,68**	**3º**
Reduce anxiety	**86,68**	**4º**
Improve mood	**83,35**	**5º**
Reduce daily stress	**80,02**	**6º**
To feel pleasure in the activity	**76,69**	**7º**
Improve emotional equilibrium	**73,36**	**8º**
Develop self-trust	**70,03**	**9º**
Delay the aging	**66,70**	**10º**
Compensation of monotonous activities	**63,37**	**11º**
Increase social status	**60,04**	**12º**
Learn new sports	**56,71**	**13º**
Availability of time	**53,38**	**14º**

Table 2 provides us with a general view about the motives which seniors have to practice physical activities. It shows us the quantity of answers that it obtained in the study for each level of importance, from 14 of the 26 reasons stated in the questionnaire. Besides the analysis, regarding table 2, the item which obtained smallest marks as "very important" was availability of time, having only 16 individuals considering it.

The reasons that had occupied the six first positions (the most indicated for the aged ones) had been: 1º - To reduce the depression level (93,34 %); 2º - To improve the physical conditioning and physical appearence (90.01 %); 3º - To improve the quality of life and health (86,68 %); 4º - Reduce anxiety (86,68 %); 5º - To improve the mood (83,35 %); 6º - Reduce daily stress (80,02 %). Thus, it had been evidenced that the physical activity is presented important for the aged one, in the psychological aspect as well as in the physic-physiological aspect, since reasons associated to the physicist-physiological and to the psychological questions had been pointed by the placed interviewed ones and presented amongst the six first ones.

On the other hand, it is noticeable that the five less mentioned items in the questionnaire by the seniors were: 1º - Availability of time (53,38 %); 2º - To learn new sports (56,71%); 3º - To increase the social status (60,04%); 4º - Compensation of monotonous activities (63,37 %); 5º - To delay the aging (66,70 %). Hence, one can assume that the aged one of the searched group does not present high pretensions or concerns with the practice of new features, with the use of its time, its "same status-quo" or the retardation of the aging process, that is, these factors are less important that other psychological and physicist-physiological aspects.

4 - Final considerations

Comparing the data found in this research, with the reasons most significant pointed by DANTAS (1994) and Ramilo (1994), cited for ANDREOTTI & OKUMA (2003), it is verified that there is not a consensus among the authors concerning the reasons for the practice of the physical activities by the aged one, but it seems to have a coincidence in some cases (shadings, in the table to follow - griffon ours)

Table 3 - Comparison of the most significant reasons

Actual Research	**Dantas (1994)**	**Ramilo (1994)**
Reduce depression level	Filling spare time with healthy activities	Regular and organized occupation of time
Improve physical conditioning and appearence	Possibility of socializing	Necessity of escape and isolation
Improve quality of life and health	Search for better body appearence	Maintenance of autonomy
Reduce anxiety and mood	To feel productive and a participant	Medical indication
Reduce diary stress	Delay aging	Costs within the partner-economic conditions
Interest for the activity being practiced	To prevent pathologies and maintain health	Easy access to the place where the program happens

Interest for the activity being practiced To prevent pathologies and maintain health Easy access to the place where the program happens

It is yet noticeable that that the motive "to delay aging" has scored ninth place in this research, although it was one of the most mentioned in the research of DANTAS (1994), cited by ANDREOTTI & OKUMA (2003). It could be that in that program, the participants were influenced to think more about the issue of aging, while in the "Vida Ativa", the focus is different and the people who participate probably look for activities to reduce depression, to boost other factors related to the psychosocial benefits of the physical activity and the improvement of the physical aptitude.

It had been ratified the importance of the physical activity to the senior citizens and reassured how important it is to search for more knowledge about the aged public, so that when directing to the physical activity, their necessities and interests are taken care of. Seniors can, therefore, keep up with the program of physical activities and constantly enjoy a healthy and active life style!

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ANALYSIS OF THE REASONS FOR THE PRACTICE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR THE SENIOR CITIZEN

SUMMARY

In this project, we analyzed the reasons that take a senior citizen to practice exercise regularly. For its concretion a composed sample of 30 participants of the CAC Serrano answered to a questionnaire that selected a series of reasons. Its lessons happened twice a week and each session had duration of 90 minutes. The aimed objectives were the improvement of flexibility, of the motor coordination, the balance and the cardio-respiratory capacity. The results had shown that the considered reasons more important are: to reduce the depression level of the participants for 93, 34%, to improve the physical conditioning and appearence (90, 01%), to improve the quality of life and health (86, 68%), Reduce anxiety (86, 68 %), to improve the mood (83, 35%) and reduce daily stress (80, 02 %). To sum up, the importance of the practice of physical exercises for seniors has been ratified once more, and it shows it is also important to search for bigger knowledge about the aged public and their reasons for practicing physical activity.

Key-words: Aged, reasons for the practical one; physical activity.

ANALYSE DES RAISONS POUR LA PRATIQUE DE L'ACTIVITÉ PHYSIQUE RÉCRÉATIVE PAR LE SUJET ÂGÉ

RÉSUMÉ

Dans ce travail ont été analysées les raisons qui prennent la personne âgée à la pratique régulière d'activités physiques. Pour sa concrétisation un échantillon composé par 30 participants de CAC Serrano a répondu à un questionnaire qui sélectionnait une série de raisons. Leurs leçons arrivaient deux fois par semaine et chaque session avait durée de 90 minutes, les objectifs visés étaient l'amélioration de la flexibilité, de la coordination motrice, de l'équilibre et de la capacité cárdio-respiratória. Les résultats ont montré que les raisons considérées plus importantes sain : 1º - Réduire le niveau de dépression (93.34%) ; 2º - Améliorer le conditionnement physique et l'apparence (90.01%) ; 3º - Améliorer la qualité de vie la santé (86.68%) ; 4º - Améliorer l'humeur (83.35%) ; 5º Reduzir le stress quotidien (80.02%) ; 6º - Intérêt par l'activité physique qui pratique. Enfin, il s'est ratifié, encore une fois, l'importance de l'activité physique pour les personnes âgées et se rejaillit la quão est important est la recherche de l'élargissement de la connaissance sur le public âgé et leurs raisons pour la pratique de l'activité physique.

Mots clés : Personnes âgées, raisons pour la pratique ; activité physique

ANÁLISIS DE LAS RAZONES LA PRÁCTICA DE LA ACTIVIDAD FÍSICA RECREATIVA PARA EL CIUDADANO ENVEJECIDO

RESUMEN

En este trabajo las razones habían sido analizadas que llevan al envejecida práctico el regular de actividades físicas. Para su concretion una muestra compuesta para 30 participantes del CAC Serrano contestado a un cuestionario que seleccionó una serie de razones. Sus lecciones sucedieron dos veces por semana y cada sesión tenía duración de 90 minutos, los objetivos dirigidos era la mejora de la flexibilidad, de la coordinación del motor, del equilibrio y de la capacidad cárdio-respiratoria. Los resultados habían demostrado que son las razones consideradas más importantes: 1º - Para reducir el nivel de la depresión (93.34%); 2º - Para mejorar el condicionamiento y el aspecto (90.01%) de la comprobación; 3º - Para mejorar la calidad de la vida la salud (86.68%); 4º - Para mejorar el humor (83.35%); tensión de 5º Reduzir diaria (80.02%); 6º - Interés para la actividad física que practica. En el último, fue ratificado, una más vez, la importancia de la actividad física para envejecidas y standed hacia fuera el quão es importante es la búsqueda de magnificar del conocimiento en el público envejecido y de sus razones el práctico de la actividad física.

Palabras-llave: Envejecido, razones la práctica; actividad física.

ANÁLISE DOS MOTIVOS PARA A PRÁTICA DA ATIVIDADE FÍSICA RECREATIVA PELO SUJEITO IDOSO

RESUMO

Neste trabalho foram analisados os motivos que levam o idoso à prática regular de atividades físicas. Para sua concretização uma amostra composta por 30 participantes do CAC Serrano respondeu a um questionário que apurava uma série de motivos. Suas aulas aconteciam duas vezes por semana e cada sessão tinha duração de 90 minutos, os objetivos visados eram a melhoria da flexibilidade, da coordenação motora, do equilíbrio e da capacidade cárdio-respiratória. Os resultados mostraram que os motivos considerados mais importantes são: 1º - Reduzir o nível de depressão (93,34%); 2º - Melhorar o condicionamento físico e a aparência (90,01%); 3º - Melhorar a qualidade de vida a saúde (86,68%); 4º - Melhorar o humor (83,35%); 5º Reduzir o stress diário (80,02%); 6º - Interesse pela atividade física que pratica. Enfim, ratificou-se, mais uma vez, a importância da atividade física para os idosos e ressaltou-se o quão é importante é a busca da ampliação do conhecimento sobre o público idoso e seus motivos para a prática da atividade física.

Palavras-chave: Idosos, motivos para a prática; atividade física.