59 - THE ELDERLY INCLUSION IN THE SOCIAL DYNAMICS THROUGH SPORTS AND TOURISM

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Introduction

Brazil is not a young country any more.The development of science, the use of modern medication, the prospect of better quality of life, besides the change of habits have transformed the elderly profile in the 21st century.

One of the alternatives to socially participate in that reality is presented with both Masters Swimming and Tourism, present day phenomena representing the tendency to re-evaluate the elderly participation in the social dynamics, estimulating a healthy aging, besides participating in the process of the social economical development of the country.

This work has aimed to identify the possibility of having tourism where Masters Events are organized, which is a determining factor in the number of athletes in the events.

We have selected a deliberate sample of 60 athletes to take part in the research, belonging to the CRI Masters Team, situated in Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. That sample is 65% of the 92 (ninety-two) swimmers older than 50.

We intended to qualify the sample by identifying their origin, income level, habits and attitudes related to health, motivation to practise physical activities and tourist interests.

To understand the meaning of both Masters Swimming events and tourism we searched a line to aim our study and started from leisure, its kinds and functions, adopting as a focus Brazilians older than 50.

In the post modern world where personal qualifications are highly valued and the time spent in the search of those qualifications being about 10 (ten) years, employment starts later in life and retirement comes earlier, as people usually live longer today.

The problem is: what to to with all this free time?

The marked difference between the time dedicated to work and the free time, forced new conotations (Faria Júnior, 1997). As long as we manage to join "free" to "time", we will have problems to define what "free" means, unless we confirm work to be the only thing "not free" in modern world, and all the rest not related to it as free. (De Grazia, 1966)

Free time is considered to be the main factor related to leisure evolution, but not the only one. Free time does not only result only from less work due to fewer hours of work during weekends and also paid holidays, as a result of the working class claims. Longevity also contributes for having more free time, mainly in comparison to working time. People now live longer and are healthier in consequence of science progress and naturally, better quality of life.

Leisure Concepts

Leisure has been a phenomenon which has evolved from the growth of the working class, due to the economical and cultural changes forced by the Industrial Revolution in the XIXth century. In the XXth century it grew and increased its value, having become a mass phenomenon. Now, at the beginning of the XXIst century it is in full expansion.

According to Marcelino (2000), among the people interested in leisure, there has not been found yet an agreement as how to understand it; however, we can distinguish at least two tendencies: one based on the variable attitude that considers leisure as a lifestyle independent from a determined time, and the other which considers this time "free" from work or "free" time, not only from work, but also from other obligations as social, political, religious and familiar, giving emphasis to the quality of the developed activities. The dominanting tendency, among specialists, is to consider both variables - time and attitude - in the leisure concept.

For Dumazedier,

leisure is a series of occupational activities people can be freely dedicated to, either to rest, to be amused and even learn something new, in order to develop his or her creative abilities after having accomplished his or her professional, familiar or social obligations (Dumazedier apud Leite, 1995:16).

Sociologist Requixa defines leisure

as a person´s non-obligatory occupation, which has been freely chosen and whose values greatly help both psychosomatic recovery and personal social development."(Requixa apud Marcellino (2000:25).

In their definitions both Dumazedier and Requixa present at the same time what they understand as leisure: rest, both physical and mental; amusement, to overcome daily monotony exerted by obligatory duties, plus the development a new personality and also sociability. It is important to remark that both authors consider leisure as a kind of ocupation.

Por the professors Dumazedier (2001) and Marcellino (2000) all activities where movement or physical activites prevail, including several sports activities, among them Masters Swimming, constitute a kind of classification of physical leisure. Dumazedier also includes the trips in the physical leisure "as they require some physical effort", as he says.

Sports and the Elderly - Masters Swimming

The spreading of knowledge on physical activities and aging started in the thirties and forties (XXth century) with articles published in the magazine Physical Education and Brazilian Magazine on Physical Education (RBEF). The articles tried to establish the relationship between physical exercices, sports and longevity and raised worries, on children, young people and adults, besides early aging, retirement and nutrition (food) (Faria Júnior, 2004:13).

According to Okuma,

aging and physical activities are closely related. People over forty are encouraged by doctors, psychologists and teachers to practise constantby and moderately any kind of physical activity. The parks in the towns are getting crowded with middle aged people. In sports academies, clubs and swimming-pools where one could only see fit young people, now we also find middle aged people exercising (1998:9).

Consequently we can foresee some healthy change of habits related to the body, besides some kind of companionship among several generations. Society is showing a kind of worry conected to healty activities and the benefits resulting from them, besides a feeling of peace and happiness derived from them.

Swimming is a most beneficial kind of exercise as it offers no risk at all and it is also useful to the well being of all who are beginning to think about a new and better kind of life.

As for the elderly people, Masters Swimming started in Brazil in the XXth century, at the beginning of the eighties, as a

new category which joined the institutional bodies governing swimming, both in Brazil and in the world (Lenk, 2000). The challenge coming from sports practice and the building of a personal image, besides the relation among the several age groups, where it inevitably occurs some kind of interchange of life experiences and affection, are some of Masters Swimming aspects, which was recognized by the Sports National Council with the Resolution nº 7/1987 - It also recognizes Brazilian Masters Swimming Association (ABMN) authorized to promote swimming activities for people older than 25 years old (Tubino, 1996:74).

Masters Swimming activities offer a happy atmosfere, with the elimination of all kinds of prejudice by meeting and getting to know new people and making new friends and groups which lead to excellent results for the elderly. These occurrences include a decrease of anxiety and tension, leading to high self-confidence and self-esteem and as a result, they can feel some sense of well-being and better quality of life. When an elderly swims, he feels extremely well and much better than if he or she were walking or running, as water helps him or her to move more easily. Swimming means to overcome challenges. The exciting sensation due to the participation in the races is usually overcome and whatever the result, the elderly feels victoriours with himself (Pável, 1992:132).

Tourism and the Elderly

Leisure time added to the technological progress in transport and communication gave origin to what was called mass tourism. Traveling is not restricted to the wealthy any more and more people now are having access to it.

But what is the motivation for travelling?

Of course there is not only one reason for it, as there are several factors involved. However, there is one reason which motivates people - leave daily routine, visit new places, meet new people, make new friends, learn new habits.

We can assure that tourism is a leisure activity. However, there certainly exist other reasons besides leisure. According to Beni (2000), tourism presents its own specificities according to the needs and interests of the tourists. That is why several kinds of tourism cropped up, such as cultural, health, business and management, [...] all of them alternative and related to sports.

For Andrade (2000), sports tourism as it is thought of at present time, originated in Old Greece, in the year 776 B.C, with the first Olympic Games. Although it presented a religious nature in honor of Jupiter, its highlights were the various kinds of athletic contests. They were organized every four years, in the same format as we still do in our time.

Athletes, cheerers and organizers' trips have become more frequent in regional, national and international levels in all types of sports. Athletes and members of teams who travel, but do not compete professionally are considered to be tourists as well as all those athletes who travel to other countries and cities to improve their athletic abilities (idem, 75).

Elderly athletes present the ideal profile for the third age tourist mentioned by Beni, as they can travel all over the year, helping to develop the uniformity in the touristic stream all over the year.

Clube de Regatas Icaraí Masters Swimming Team - Niterói - Rio de Janeiro - Brazil

Elderly people who take part in physical and touristic leisure activities, leading an active life style present healthier aging, besides going in the search of better life quality, which is the opposite of the sickly old age people.

These elderly athletes face each new challenge in the form of Swimming Championships both bravely and happily, traveling everywhere in the world, meeting new people, making new friends and visiting new countries all over the world. Wherever they go, they are helped by Touristic Agencies and Receptive.

From the sixty (60) athletes researched 53,33% were women and 46,67% were men; 43,33% were between 60 and 69 age groups. We managed to identify an active participation of elderly people over 70, equivalent to the smallest age group between 50 and 59.

From the researched athletes, 68,33% lived in Niterói, Rio de Janeiro State, 50% had already retired and 41,67% presented their family income above R$4.500,00 (four thousand and five hundred reais). We observed here one of the topics mentioned by Dumazedier related to the active attitudes, which contribute to shape a new life style of each person. Elderly athletes, both sexes, form teams accordind to their own identities which helps to reorganize their lives, and as a consequence they are estimulated to lead a healthy life, both psysically and psychically, making new friends and meeting new people at every sports event they participate.

Masters Swimming Teams are formed by athletes affiliated to a Club or Association equal or more than 25 years old. They are put together in age groups lasting five years - from 25 to 29, from 30 to 34, from 35 to 39 and so on for both sexes. The age groups limit is the athletes' longevity. The oldest age group for men was 90 to 95 where we had the oldest Brasilian Masters Swimmer Mr. Gastão Mariz de Figueiredo - 93 years old - whose birthday was on March, 11th, and in the women's groups 85-89´, we had the oldest woman in the Brazilian Masters Swimming: Luzia de Freitas Caracciolo - 89 years old - whose birthday was on June, 08th.

In 2005 we noticed a change as to the athletes` longevity. The oldest age group for men was now 85-89, where we had athletes from C.R.Icaraí team as Mr. Antonio Rezende Silva (86) and Alberto Mibielli de Carvalho (85). In the female group, the participation of the athlete Luzia de Freitas Caracciolo (91), whose age group now is 90 to 94.

The CRI athletes, Gastão Mariz de Figueiredo and Luzia de Freitas Caracciolo who always took part in the regional, national and international events, full conscious of their actions and attitudes, left an unforgettable example that elderly life can be both healthy and active and that citizenship can be fully accomplished till the end.

In our research we have identified that these people, in the search of a better quality of life (91,67%), of a better physical capacity (56,67%), having the possibility to take part in groups (55,00%), socially participating in real life, breaking the vicious circle of both physical and psychic isolation to which they are many times submitted after retirement, have found the possibility to feel and live new experiences to fill in their free time (30,00%). They clearly show that age is not a relevant factor in the practice of their life style. They are living examples of persistency, determination and fight. They have shown that old age does not mean illness and unhappiness, as they have transformed medical advice (21,67%) and the battle to overcome the loss of loved relatives, lack of affection (1,67%), which are frequent at that period of life, into motivation to go on living in a pleasant, happy and sportive way.

Swimming, when practised regularly, five days a week for one hour a day provides healthy, strong, productive and creative people, making them effective and capable of facing the challenges in the search of more control, more satisfaction and envolvement, demonstrating that old age can be both healthy and happy. Old age must be faced as one part of life to be lived, physically prepared, with a reasonable monthly income, athletes are able to take part in the national events. From the groups studied, 86,67% took part in the National Championships and 36,54% with a yearly participation of twice a year or more.

The elderly motivation and aim to take part in national sports events is not the same as the younger athletes. For 44,23% of the masters athletes who belonged to the researched group, the main motivation was to visit new places. That does not

mean that the perfomance does noy count; it is the wish to visit new places added to the chance of travelling and leave routine behind by having fun, meeting new people, making new frieds, getting to know new cities, which encourage them to travel wherever the Masters Swimming Championshis are organized.

The aim to stimulate the people who can travel in any month of year is beneficial for both the touristic places and the travel agents. That image that many people have in mind of elderly people playing cards in the public squares is part of the past. The new order of the XXIST century is the elderly people, who have decided to benefit from their pensions by travelling all over the world, leaving behind the pajamas and the slippers by starting to practice sports (mainly swimming).

The participation of the CRI Team in the Brazilian Swimming Championships requires touristic services, such as, transport, lodging, specialized guides among others. These services are hired through Travel Agencies established where the events are carried out, offering the athletes and their relatives good quality service at a good price.

100% of these athletes are interested in the local touristic places where The Swimming Championships are carried out and this interest contributes effectively for minimizing tourist seasonal variation. 84,62% of the athletes participate actively in the social life of the receptive cities, besides their interest in the local history and culture through visiting the historical and cultural monuments (86,54%), museums (57,69%), churches (51,92%) and libraries (1,92%), reveal the group cultural profile.

According to Andrade (2000:20), the trips are important factors for any local, regional and national economy, as the constant stream of people increases the services, the number of jobs and consequently more profit, which lead to an increase of local production. Still according to Andrade (2000) every trip, even if it is short, implies financial expenses (as food, lodging and several other services), besides the contact with different cultures. The person who travels tells his friends and relatives about his or her personal experiences and also learns interesting things from other people.

Besides competing and looking after their mental and physical health, 92,31% of the CRI Masters Team also explore touristically the places they visit and organize their trips to remain at the places for a few more days and participate in the post event options.

We should also mention the participation of some swimmers who took part in the 29th Swimming Brazilian Masters Championship, in Salvador (BA), from the 29th of April to the 1st of May, 2000. Sixty-five (65) Clubs and Associations entered it and there were 788 athletes and 56 (fifty-six) belonged to the CRI Team (0,7%). When the Meeting was over, 30 swimmers (55%) of the whole team travelled to Chapada Diamantina, where they stayed for 5 days and 4 nights at t "Canto das Águas Hotel", in Lençóis city.

Just like tourists, the elderly athletes climbed "Morro do Pai Inácio", which is the postcard of Chapada Diamantina. They enjoyed sliding down the natural tobogã formed by the waters of "Ribeirão do Meio", which falls heavily over rocky formations, forming a natural lake among the rapids. They also went down to "Poço Encantado", a cave where there is a natural lake with crystal clear waters 60 (sixty) meters deep, and they witnessed one of the most bealtiful natural shows in the world, that is, the sunshine arrival which can be seen from April to June. "Gruta Azul" and "Gruta da Pratinha" were also visited, where the swimmers could dive into shallow crystal waters and observe lots of small colored fish. They also ate "buchada de bode" and lamb meat, danced "forró", had a lot of fun, besides talking to the local community.

The group returned to Rio de Janeiro keeping unforgettable images in their minds, as the estalactites and the estalagmites found in the "Gruta da Lapa Doce", which is 24km long. The visitors then traveled to Iraquara, 70km away from Lencóis.

The tourist programs described in this work were specifically organized for the CRI Masters Swimmers, who are in search of a healthy way to live old age, leading a happy and sportive life, swimming, travelling, besides keeping their physical autonomy and funtional capacity.

Conclusion

It is easy to get to the fifties, and the problem is how to get there. A Brazilian that age can either be very old or surprisingly young. Eating healthy and light food, leading an active life and having his or her free time filled with pleasant activities, a 50 year old man or woman is a long way from old age. That fact is, that on old man is still an old man, being 50, 60 or 90 and keeping his physical, psychic or social health is an invaluable treasure.

A truly old man has no project for his life. We should never forget our joy to be alive and remember that a beautiful old age is the reflex of a whole life. To get old in a pleasant way will depend on a delicate balance between his or her limitations and capacities and how he or she will deal with them.

We have got to the conclusion that, through the yearly organization of sports events, scheduled for the low touristic season, Masters Swimming Associations at regional, national and international levels can effectivelly become partners and work together with both the Travel Agencies and the Receptive cities, minimizing the local seasonal variation through the organization of competitive events meant fot the retired elderly who are growing steadily at world level.

Key words: Elderly, Sports, Tourism.

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THE ELDERLY INCLUSION IN THE SOCIAL DYNAMICS THROUGH SPORT ANDTOURISM

Abstract

The aim of this study, is to show the elderly participation both in sports and touristic events, aging in a healthy way in search of a better quality of life. The elderly participation in nationalsports events scheduledall year round, added to their touristic interest voherever the eventsare organized, can be very significant and it can contribute effectivily for minimizing the touristc seasonal variation.

Key words: Elderly, Sports, Tourism.

L' INCLUSION DES PERSONNES ÂGÉES DANS LA DYNAMIQUE SOCIALE À TRAVERS LE SPORT ET LE TOURISME

Résumé

Cette étude presente la participation, dans lês loisins phisiques et touristiques, dês personnes âgées brésiliennes qui mènent um style de vide active, em témoignant um vieillessement sain, à la recherche d'une meilleune qualité de vie. La participation dês athlètes ages dans dês évènements sportifs nationaux programmés annnuellement et l'intérêt de ce segment lá par rapport au tourisme fait à l'endroit ou ces évènements ont lieu est significatif et peut être développé envisageant as contribution effective afin de minimiser la saisonnalité.

Mots réserve: Les personnes âgées, le Sport, le Tourisme.

LA INCLUCIÓN DEL ANCIANO EN LA DINAMICA SOCIAL POR EL DEPORTE Y TURISMO

Resumen

Este estudio presenta la participación en los ocios físicos e turísticos, de los ancianos brasileños que practican un estilo de vida activo, mostrando un envejecimiento saludable, en busca de mejor calidad de vida. La participación de atletas ancianos, en eventos deportivos nacionales, anualmente programados, y lo interés de este segmento por el turismo en lo local de realización de los eventos, es significativo, y puede ser trabajado visando la contribución efectiva para la minimización de la sazionalidad turística.

Palabras clave: Personas mayores, el Deporte, el Turismo.

INCLUSÃO DO IDOSO NA DINÂMICA SOCIAL ATRAVÉS DO ESPORTE E DO TURISMO

Resumo

Este estudo apresenta a participação nos lazeres físicos e turísticos, dos idosos brasileiros que praticam um estilo de vida ativo, mostrando um envelhecimento saudável, em busca de melhor qualidade de vida. A participação de atletas idosos, em eventos desportivos nacionais, anualmente programados, e o interesse deste segmento pelo turismo no local de realização dos eventos, é significativo, e pode vir a ser trabalhado visando a sua contribuição efetiva para a minimização da sazonalidade turística.

Palavras-Chaves: Idosos, Esporte, Turismo.