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Fitness Training As a Body-Centered Hobby: the Serious Leisure Perspective for Explaining Exercise Practice

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Abstract

Physical exercise is an activity whose health-related benefits have been promoted by health professionals and social institutions. However, given that the levels of practice are not ideal, the subjective variables – that give meaning, provide continuity and may increase exercise adherence – need to be studied in depth. In this sense, fitness training is analyzed as a form of serious leisure, a body-centered hobby – a way to practice and relate to the activity that leads its practitioners to adhere more to it, orienting them towards a career in acquiring and expressing skills, knowledge and experience. In total, 1,134 people (588 men, 546 women) doing fitness training, aged between 18 and 70 years old (M = 34.7, SD = 13.06), answered a questionnaire about time dedicated to exercise as serious leisure and its derived and complementary benefits. Student's t Coefficient and ANOVA were used to show the significance of the differences among the scores obtained for the rewards related to exercise and the other variables of the study. The results highlight that exercise as serious leisure is an activity whose weekly time investment makes it to acquire a central role when rewarded by sense of accomplishment, contact with others, improved health and being outdoors with the family. To conclude, this study enhances that characterizing fitness training as a body-centered hobby – which shares the principles of serious leisure – implies a new approach to the analysis of exercise while also suggesting new ways of promoting it.

Keywords: fitness training; exercise practice; leisure; serious leisure perspective; body-centered hobby.

The benefits of exercise for health (physical and mental) have been publicized by the health professionals and social institutions (public and private; local, national and international: King and Sallis, 2009; Rodgers, Hall, Duncan, Pearson and Milne, 2010). This physical exercise, which brings benefits, is a type of physical activity (PA) characterized by planned, structured and repetitive body movements that require frequent, regular physical effort over a period of time (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2008). Specifically, with regard to the recommended time needed to enjoy the potential health-related benefits of exercise, it is estimated as a general rule that 20 to 30 minutes of moderate activity is necessary, every day or five days per week (Cavill, Kahlmeier and Racioppi, 2007; Oja, Bull, Fogelholm and Martin, 2010). In other words – and by way of a recommendation to the public – between 2.0 and 3.5 hours per week should be dedicated to physical exercise.

However, despite exercise promotional policies, most people in advanced societies are not very physically active. According to international organizations, approximately 50% of adults in Europe and most of the industrialized countries do not do any exercise, and only one third of them reach the recommended practice levels needed to enjoy its benefits (Cerin, Baumen and Owen, 2005, European Commission, 2018). As far as Spain is concerned, the percentages are similar (European Commission, 2018; Ministerio de Sanidad, Servicios Sociales e Igualdad, 2014). There are also gender differences underlying these rather discouraging figures: lower levels of exercise among women compared to men have been observed repeatedly. For example, in the 15 to 65-year-old age group, approximately 30% of women play sport, compared to more than 45% of men, a percentage seven points lower than the European average for women (García-Ferrando and Llopis, 2011; Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2016; Moscoso and Moyano, 2009). Given this situation, it is worth analyzing how people who do exercise perceive the rewards, as these rewards can provide a source of motivation leading to exercise adherence.

As regard the factors that encourage exercise adherence, there are numerous works that show the reasons that favor the practice of exercise (Gunnell, Crocker, Mack, Wilson and Zumbo, 2014; Lindwall, Weman-Josefsson, Sebire and Standage, 2016; Markland and Ingledew, 1997; Roberts, Reeves and Ryrie, 2015; Sebire, Standage and Vansteenkiste,

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2008, 2009, 2011) and the profits derived from its practice (Codina, Pestana, Valenzuela and Giménez, 2020; Ingledew, Markland and Strömmer, 2014; Strömmer, Ingledew and Markland, 2015). In this way, it has been documented that the practice of exercise positively affects affiliations, physical appearance, approach and achievement of challenges, skills, competitive relationships, enjoyment, disease avoidance, positive health attitudes, revitalization, management of stress, social recognition, or weight control. Taking these findings as a whole, it follows that psychosocial interventions aimed at increasing exercise practice must address those aspects of the experience of exercise that practitioners value most. In this sense, the analysis of the experience linked to the practice of physical exercise can be expanded with the incorporation of the Serious Leisure Perspective (hereinafter, SLP), a theory whose foundations date back to 1973-1976 (https://www.seriousleisure.net) and are widely known in leisure studies (Kleiber, Walker and Mannel, 2011) but less in psychological research related to sports.

The concept of serious leisure is defined as "the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist or volunteer core activity that is highly substantial, interesting and fulfilling, and where, in the typical case, participants find a career in acquiring and expressing a combination of its special skills, knowledge, and experience" (Stebbins, 1992, p. 3). The adjective "serious" – considered as a key behavioral tendency associated with the changes experienced by advanced industrial societies (Codina, 1999; Stebbins, 2007/2015) – refers to qualities such as earnestness, sincerity, importance, and carefulness. In other words, "serious" lays the stress on specific rewards (special skills, knowledge and experience), different from those traditionally studied with respect to physical activity but which are precisely those that encourage time dedication, commitment, continuity and regular practice.

Physical exercise can present itself as serious leisure (Kerr, Fujiyama and Campano, 2002). This would be the case of those who, without being federated athletes, have incorporated PA into their daily lives to the point that their performance can be compared, in some aspects, to that of some professionals (Liu, Caneday and Tapps, 2013). However, and according to the data on PA of the aforementioned population of Spain, the practice of PA as serious leisure does not seem to be the most frequent. In this sense, PA can also be practiced more or less regularly and not satisfy the characteristics of serious leisure, which brings to mind its counterpart: casual leisure (e.g., Stebbins, 2004). In the case of exercise, an example of casual leisure would be meeting up occasionally to play football with friends, while a case of serious leisure would be systematic competition (outside the professional circuit) in different sports. Other examples are the pleasurable aerobic activities and body-centered casual leisure requiring sufficient effort to cause marked increase in respiration and heart rate, as in the "exergames" described by Kooiman and Sheehan (2015).

Between the extremes of serious and casual leisures (an example in MacCosham, Patry, Beswick and Gravelle, 2015), the SLP has contemplated a modality of dedication that, in the case of exercise in gyms or sports centers - specifically, fitness training - is viewed as a hobby of the type known as "activity participation". It involves active participants whose leisure activity requires "systematic physical movement that has intrinsic appeal and is conducted within a set of rules… [posing] a challenge" (Stebbins, 1992, p. 12). To be more precise, the SLP conceives of fitness training as a body-centered (activity participation) hobby, since it "involves skill and knowledge and is considered fulfilling" (Elkington and Stebbins, 2014, p. 76) from the moment when a sense of accomplishment emerges. The body-centered hobbies draw the participant's attention directly to that person's body. This is in contrast to, say, the nature activities where one's attention is fixed on an aspect of nature. In the nature activities, the body is a vehicle with which to appreciate or exploit nature or meet one of its many challenges. By contrast, routine exercise is a body-centered hobby, though only to the extent it involves skill and knowledge and is considered fulfilling. Swimming, body-building, ice skating, roller skating, and the martial arts when used for conditioning number among the exercise activities qualifying as serious leisure. This theoretical distinction, however, needs to be analyzed empirically, since it may be the case of activities whose context of realization and focus of attention are different from that provided in the SLP. In fact, some gyms or sports centers have spaces not built to complete outdoor activities; even, some centers, within their program of activities, propose sessions outside the sports center (for example, hiking, running, or marathon training). In any case, these facilities, are the most used for exercise in Spain, being venues frequented by more than 60% of men and 80% of women who do sport in Spain (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2015).

In summary, this research addresses the rewards offered by serious leisure as an experience that can expand the explanatory potential of PA practice studies; in particular, to that of previous contributions on the motives, objectives and gains linked to the practice of physical exercise – such as those studied, among others, by Cairney, McGannon and Atkinson (2018); Sicilia, Alcaraz-Ibáñez, Lirola and Burgueño (2017). The incorporation of the SLP can be a breakthrough in this subject, being a theory that integrates the psychological and (micro, macro) social aspects that an activity involves for individuals, groups and communities (Lamont & Kennelly, 2018) – on this occasion, focusing on fitness training as a body-centered hobby. Based on this, the objective of the present study is to analyze the rewards derived from a body-centered hobby such as fitness training in relation to the amount of time devoted to this activity – indicator used very frequently in the organisms dedicated to formalize the standards of sports practice, which further guarantee health and well-being.

From this objective – and with respect to what concerns the current research -it is hypothesized that the temporary dedication to the practice of fitness training as a body-centered hobby, will be differentially related to the rewards of said practice. Put differently, according to the investment of time in fitness training, one or the other rewards will predominate when carrying out the activity.

Method

Participants

The participants in this study were 1,134 people (588 men and 546 women) aged between 18 and 70 years old (*M* = 34.37, *SD* = 13.06) who were doing fitness training at sports facilities in the Barcelona metropolitan area. Using a non-proportionate quota sampling method, participants were selected by sex, sports facility where fitness training took place, and the PA time period (mid-morning, late morning, mid-afternoon and late afternoon). Following the collection of data from an initial 1,200 participants, 66 contestants were ruled out because the information they provided was either incomplete or they were professionally engaged in an activity linked to sport. Participation in the study was voluntary.

The sample used and its selection criteria responded to previous findings on the subject obtained from research done in Spain. Thus, the decision to choose users of sports centers obeyed the need to identify, among those who have assimilated this habit, the rewards derived from exercise – since this knowledge is fundamental for promoting exercise among people who do not practice it (e.g. Codina, Pestana and Armadans, 2013; Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2015).

Measures

A previously developed questionnaire entitled *Self-evaluation of physical activities for fitness centers users* was used to analyze the rewards derived from exercise practice as a leisure activity in Spain (Codina and Pestana, 2010; Codina, Pestana and Armadans, 2013), an instrument that has shown an adequate Cronbach's alpha in this study (0.799). This questionnaire contains 15 questions (using a 4-point response scale ranging from '*never*' to 'very *frequently*'), whose items were based on existing literature about serious pursuits linked to PA (Heo, Lee, McCormick and Pedersen, 2010; Kim, Yamada, He and Han, 2014, Stebbins, 1992, 2001), as well as studies more closely related to the situation in Spain (García-Ferrando and Llopis, 2011; Molina-Garcia, Castillo and Queralt, 2011).

Specifically, the questionnaire specifies three types of rewards derived from exercise practice ("Please indicate to what extent you practice physical activity by the following aspects"): contact with others (basically, meeting up, talking or getting in touch, and having fun in friendly surroundings, i.e.: "Getting in touch with others" or "Meeting new people"), outdoors and family (activities in the open air and activities shared with the family, i.e.: "Doing an outdoor activity" or "Doing an activity with the family"); and health and self-care (related to improved health, fitness and appearance, i.e.: "Improving physical appearance" or "Beliefs about PA health benefits"). These types of rewards come from an exploratory factor analysis described in previous studies (Codina and Pestana, 2010; Codina et al., 2013), being related to the experience that accompanies a serious leisure activity – as mentioned above. Thus, using this questionnaire, in the context of the present research, endows a measuring instrument for Body-Centered Hobbies, expanding at the same time the explanatory potential of the questionnaire. In addition, the questionnaire also included data such as sex, age and time devoted to practice PA during the week.

Procedure

Ten first-year psychology students were trained to collect data in the ten targeted sports facilities. They participated voluntarily; that is, no credits or other benefits from the interviews were offered as an incentive. These volunteers were prepared in two training sessions with the researchers, who also supervised the entire data collection process. The information obtained did not display any disparities that might be linked to the various interviewers' personal profiles or styles of work.

The ten sports facilities targeted to complete the questionnaires were obtained at random from a list of sports facilities serving the Barcelona region and compiled by the Government of Catalonia (specifically, the facilities included in the category of standard sports centers, managed by the municipal government: http://www15.gencat.cat/ceeree/AppJava/cercaEquipamentsAction.do). The choice of facilities met three criteria: first, they had to count among the type of center with the greatest presence in the whole region (27.79% of all facilities); second, they had to offer fitness training activities; and third, they had to charge similar prices – thus minimizing any bias associated with the financial outlay required to do exercise.

All subjects gave written informed consent prior to the collection of the research data. The ethical requirements of the Ethics Committee of the University of Barcelona (University of Barcelona's Bioethics Commission, CBUB) were applied to the current study, which meant that additional approval for the research was not required because the data obtained did not involve animal or clinical experimentation. Additionally, this study complies with the recommendations of the General Council of Spanish Psychological Associations (Consejo General de Colegios de Psicólogos), the Spanish Organic Law on Data Protection (15/1999: Jefatura del Estado, 1999) and the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association, 2013).

The interviewers rotated the use of the questionnaires, i.e. by alternating the ten sports facilities, the four selected times of day (mid-morning, late morning, mid-afternoon

and late afternoon), and the five days allocated for data collection (Monday through Friday). The interviews, which lasted from six to eight minutes, took place after doing fitness training activities in the sports center. The data collection process was completed in two weeks. No significant differences attributable to the selected sports facilities or the time of day (or day of the week) were observed in the information gathered. Considering the number of people who were asked to participate and who finally did, a response rate of 63% was obtained.

Analysis

Three procedures were employed to analyze the research data (using the SPSS program, version 24.0). Descriptive statistics show percentages of weekly time devoted to exercise (in hours) and means and standard deviations for the benefits associated with this activity were obtained. The scores for the three rewards related to exercise (contact with others, outdoors and family, and health and self-care) were calculated from previous research exploratory factor analysis based on the questionnaire. The associations between weekly time devoted to exercise and gender and age were analyzed using Pearson's chi square test. The choice of variables such as gender and age responds – as has been pointed out previously – to their importance in the analysis of the practice of exercise in Spain. Finally, Student's *t* Coefficient and ANOVA were used to show the significance of the differences between the scores obtained for the three rewards related to exercise, according to time devoted to fitness training.

Results

Dedication to exercise and its association with gender and age

To differentiate the participants with respect to the hours dedicated to the exercise, the information was categorized considering the recommended parameters common to different sources (Cavill et al., 2007; European Commission, 2018; Ministerio de Sanidad, Servicios Sociales e Igualdad, 2014); specifically, dedications of 1-2 hours, 3-4, 5-6 and 7 and more were distinguished. A majority of users, over 58.6%, spent between 3 and 6 hours a week doing exercise (Table 1). Specifically, about 30% spent between 3 and 4 hours (n = 338, 29.8%), a similar number spent more than 7 hours (n = 332, 29.3%), and just over 28%, between 5 and 6 hours (n = 327, 28.8%). Just over a tenth of the participants spent 1-2 hours (n = 137, 12.1%) a week to exercise. In sum, nearly 90% of people doing exercise devoted more than 3 hours a week to this leisure activity.

Table 1
Weekly time doing exercise according to age

Time devoted to PA	*N*	%	Age			χ^2	*p*
			18-34 (*n* = 683)	35-54 (*n* = 335)	55 and more (*n* = 116)		
1-2 hours	137	12.1	10.5	14.9	12.9		
3-4 hours	338	29.8	28.1	30.4	37.9		
5-6 hours	327	28.8	28.6	29.9	27.6		
7 or more	332	29.3	32.8	24.8	21.6	14.70	.023

Note. PA = Physical Activity.

This weekly dedication to exercise displays significant differences depending on gender (χ^2 = 34.20, p < .000 – data not tabulated). In this respect, women doing exercise 1-2 hours per week made up 61.3%, and men, 38.7%. Women were also in the majority among those doing exercise 3-4 h per week (55.0% as compared to 45.0% of men). On the other hand, men predominated at higher levels of weekly dedication to exercise; specifically, they made up 52.6% of those doing 5-6 h, and 63.6% of those devoting 7 or more hours (the figures for women are 47.4% and 36.4% respectively). To sum up, women were in the majority at lower levels of dedication to exercise, and consequently in the minority at levels of 5 or more hours per week. Even so, 84.6%, of women equaled or exceeded the recommended minimum amount of dedication to exercise (2-3.5 h per week), while in the case of men the figure was 91.0% (findings that come as no surprise given that the data was collected in sports centers).

As regards associations between age and weekly dedication to exercise (Table 2), significant differences are observable (χ^2 = 14.70, p < .023). Among 18-35 year old, a third did exercise 7 or more hours per week, and 56.7%, between 3-6 h. Among 35-54 year old, 60.3% devoted 3-6 h per week to fitness training, while in the over-55 age group, 37.9% did exercise between 3-4 h per week. Therefore, by age groups 89.5% of participants between 18-34 years

old, 85.1% between 35-54, and 87.1% over 55 equaled or exceeded the recommended minimum amount of exercise.

Factors for practicing exercise according to gender, age, and weekly time doing fitness training

As regards factors for practicing exercise, the highest value corresponded to health and self-care, (M = 3.27, DT = .54), followed by contact with others (M = 2.82, DT = .65), and outdoors and family (M = 1.96, DT = .78) (data not tabulated). When analyzing the means of the factor scores obtained according to gender and age variables, significant differences were observed (Table 2). In the case of gender, it was observed that it was women who gave more importance to contact with others (p < .014). This same factor was significantly more highly valued by participants over 55 years old (p < .049). Another significant difference, depending on the age of the participants, emerged in the factor related to outdoors and family, which was more important among people aged 35-54 (p < .001).

Table 2

Means, standard deviations, and analyses for gender, age and weekly time doing exercise on factors for its practice

Gender	*n*	%	Factor 1: Contact with others				Factor 2: Outdoors and family				Factor 3: Health and self-care			
			M	*SD*	*F*	*p*	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*p*	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*p*
Men	588	51.9	2.77	.63	-2.45	.014	1.99	.78	1.01	.312	3.26	.52	-1,10	.272
Women	546	48.1	2.87	.67			1.94	.79			3.29	.57		
Age														
18-34	683	60.2	2.79	.64	3.01	.049	1.96	.76	6.87	.001	3.29	.52	1.78	.169
35-54	335	29.5	2.81	.67			2.05	.81			3.27	.54		
55 and more	116	10.2	2.95	.64			1.74	.80			3.19	.66		
Time devoted to PA														
1-2 hours	137	12.1	2.78	.70	4.24	.005	1.81	,61	3.02	.029	3,17	,61	6.84	.000
3-4 hours	338	29.8	2.75	.61			1.93	,53			3,23	,53		
5-6 hours	327	28.8	2.79	.64			1.99	,53			3,26	,53		
7 or more	332	29.3	2.92	.67			2.03	,52			3,38	,52		

Note. PA = Physical Activity. The coefficient used in the analysis of gender is Student's t.

On comparing the hours per week spent doing exercise with the scores of the three factors that synthesize the rewards derived from or complementary to the aforesaid activities (Table 2), significant links to each factor were observed. In the case of contact with others (p < .005), this factor turned out to be more important at the highest dedication: 7 or more hours. As regards the factors referred to as outdoors/family (p < .029) and health/self-care (p < .000), both display similar behavior when associated with weekly dedication to exercise, i.e. the greater the dedication to fitness training, the higher the factor scores for these rewards.

Discussion

Given that the practice of physical exercise is far from having the recommended levels for this activity in the general population, the subjective variables that give meaning, provide continuity and generate exercise adherence need to be analyzed. These subjective variables have a body of knowledge that can be complemented by the experience of PA practice as a leisure activity – specifically, as a body-centered hobby, as proposed by the SLP. Thus, the objective of this research has been to analyze the rewards derived from a body-centered hobby such as fitness training in relation to the amount of time devoted to this activity, hypothesizing that according to the investment of time in fitness training, one or the other rewards will predominate. Our study built on SLP to highlight that conceiving exercise as a body-centered hobby can be of importance for promoting this activity and, in a broader sense, coping with sedentarism – to apply, in future studies, our findings in people who do not practice PA. The characterization of fitness training as a body-centered hobby, which shares the principles of serious leisure, implies a new approach to the analysis of exercise while also suggesting new ways of promoting it. This promotion has to do with the fact of assuming a given

activity as leisure, a concept that broadens the spectrum of those interventions aimed at increasing the levels of practice centered on the argument of health improvement. The three factors – contact with others, doing exercise outdoors / with the family, and health / self-care – previously studied as rewards of the practice of PA as a leisure activity, have demonstrated their variability according to the amount of time dedicated to this body-centered hobby.

As a matter of fact, the results corroborate previous findings and support the conclusions of the SLP concerning the importance of other people, health and self-care (Major, 2001; Kim, Kim, Henderson and Park, 2016; Kim et al., 2014; Stebbins, 2007/2015). In relation to the rewards of serious leisure described above, the incidence of the presence of other people is important (Coghill and Cooper, 2009; McNeill, Kreuter and Subramanian, 2006; Ståhl, et al., 2001; Trembath, Attila Szabo and Baxter, 2002), with interpersonal relations being the part of the factors with the greatest explanatory potential overall. In addition, this study has identified the relevance of another reward, being outdoors with the family – a finding whose psychological dimension needs to be studied in more detail on being included in the set of rewards obtained from exercise as serious leisure, i.e., in the category of the body-centered hobby.

In a more general sense, these benefits suggest three types of influence that boost the continuity and regularity of exercise as serious leisure. Thus, as a theoretical aspect within the framework of the SLP, to be tested in future studies, the personal benefits might be investigated as *derived* benefits, i.e. consequences of the activity that go beyond the original purpose of the activity itself; and that the social benefits are *complementary* benefits, given that they emerge as a bonus to exercise. Regarding the sense of accomplishment, which refers to those benefits needed for exercise to become serious leisure, these emerge and increase in line with the availability of certain *consubstantial* requirements: the investment of time. Indeed, precisely the demand on time, used as an excuse among those who do not do exercise regularly, is the key to making it a serious leisure activity.

The distinction between *derived*, *complementary* and *consubstantial* benefits – drawn from the results obtained – would show that when promoting exercise adherence there is a message that should clearly reach the population (both sedentary and those who do not practice PA regularly), which is that activities such as fitness training, besides promoting better health, increase the amount and quality of interpersonal relationships (with family and friends). In the case of the context under study – publicly owned sport facilities in Spain – the different benefits can form part of strategies to promote fitness training as a serious leisure activity of the body-centered hobby type.

If exercise – like fitness training – is promoted as a hobby, this expands the conception of exercise beyond the mere struggle against physical inactivity and in favor of better health, posing a scenario and framework for promotion more focused on psychosocial aspects – without neglecting the health aspect, which, although important, is not usually the greatest potential explanatory factor in those who do physical exercise regularly (even above the minimum recommended levels). Specifically, as regards exercise promotional strategies – from infrastructures to incentivizing campaigns – our findings suggest a need to underscore the bonus value of contact with other people during this healthy, self-focused activity. For example, the promotion of this interpersonal component would also be useful for encouraging exercise as a body-centered-hobby among those who allege family circumstances to justify a lack of practice. According to the results obtained in this study, it is a case of promoting exercise as a challenging context in which participants experience the pleasure of social support from family and friends, the acquisition of knowledge and skills and, ultimately, better health and wellbeing.

As for the sense of accomplishment, it emerges that the levels of time dedicated – a consubstantial requirement of fitness training as a body-centered hobby – are significantly associated with a higher valuation of the factors identified in the questionnaire, which suggests the central role of seriousness in exercise. In this sense, it is interesting to note that this variable is the key to increasing the different benefits of exercise.

This discussion does not overlook the significant differences in levels of exercise observed according to gender and age. In the case of gender, future research will need to consider the inequalities between women and men when carrying out body-centered hobbies (for reviews of exercise in Spanish adolescents, see Castillo, Balaguer and García-Merita, 2007; Codina, Pestana, Castillo and Balaguer, 2016). As regards age, the findings of this study may offer new contributions to the promotion of serious leisure during the life cycle (Kleiber and Nimrod, 2009; Stebbins, 1999). Specifically, interventions aimed at promoting better levels of PA practice would have to take into account that, depending on the age of the practitioners, the perceived rewards may be different, and it is in response to these differences the way in which – at least potentially – the SLP can complement interventions made from other perspectives.

The results obtained from this research do display some limitations, which are explained by the size of the sample and non-causal analysis of links between leisure time spent doing exercise and rewards associated with this activity. These limitations need to be circumvented in future research. For example, by adding other variables to hours devoted such as dedication to other leisure activities, degrees of involvement or level of execution – where appropriate. Nevertheless, our research shows that contact with others, the physical environment (outdoors) and family involvement in the activity are important, and that the importance given by adults to health and self-care plays a central role as regards the amount of leisure time spent doing exercise as a body-centered hobby.

In future studies, these rewards – as well as the instrument used for their measurement – will have to be

conjointly tested with other variables and instruments that have worked, from other theoretical perspectives, themes related to those of this research. Specifically, as regards the questionnaire used, its future agenda includes the realization of a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) that would account for the strength of its structure – which has to include more precision of concepts that, in some cases, the SLP itself requires (for example, defining the focus on the body and nature as characteristics of body-centered hobbies).

In sum, the SLP broadens the spectrum of possible analyses of the factors that facilitate and inhibit physical activity, given that the SLP involves analyzing exercise adherence with an eye to the central role and seriousness that it acquires for its participants. In this respect, intervention geared to the promotion of regular exercise should encourage the agents promoting exercise to contemplate, value and transmit the various benefits of any activity accomplished as a serious leisure one.

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El entrenamiento físico como un *hobby* centrado en el cuerpo: la perspectiva del ocio serio para explicar la práctica del ejercicio

Resumen

El ejercicio físico es una actividad cuyos beneficios para la salud han sido promovidos por los correspondientes profesionales de la salud e instituciones sociales. Sin embargo, dado que los niveles de práctica no son los ideales, las variables subjetivas —que dan sentido, proporcionan continuidad y pueden incrementar la adherencia al ejercicio— necesitan ser estudiadas en profundidad. En este sentido, se analiza el entrenamiento físico como una forma de ocio serio, el *hobby* centrado en el cuerpo —una manera de practicar y relacionarse con la actividad que lleva a sus practicantes a adherirse más a la misma orientándoles hacia una carrera en la adquisición y expresión de destrezas, conocimientos y experiencias. Un total de 1.134 personas (588 hombres, 546 mujeres) que realizaron entrenamiento físico, de edades comprendidas entre 18 y 70 años (M = 34.7, DT = 13.06) respondieron a un cuestionario sobre el tiempo dedicado al ejercicio como ocio serio, así como a sus beneficios derivados y complementarios. El coeficiente t de Student y el ANOVA permitieron mostrar las diferencias entre las puntuaciones de los diferentes beneficios del ejercicio según las variables contempladas en el estudio. Los resultados destacan que el ejercicio físico como ocio serio es una actividad cuya inversión de tiempo semanal le hace adquirir un papel central cuando es recompensada por el sentido de logro, el contacto con los demás, la mejora de la salud y el estar al aire libre con la familia. Para concluir, este estudio pone de manifiesto que concebir el entrenamiento físico como un *hobby* centrado en el cuerpo —compartiendo los principios del ocio serio—, implica un nuevo enfoque para el análisis del ejercicio físico y también sugiere nuevas formas de promoverlo.

Palabras clave: entrenamiento físico; práctica de actividad física; ocio; perspectiva del ocio serio; hobby centrado en el cuerpo.

O treinamento físico como um hobby centrado no corpo: a perspetiva do lazer sério para explicar a prática do exercício

Resumo

O exercício físico é uma atividade cujos benefícios à saúde foram promovidos pelos correspondentes profissionais de saúde e instituições sociais. No entanto, como os níveis de prática não são ideais, variáveis subjetivas —que fazem sentido, fornecem continuidade e podem aumentar a adesão ao exercício— precisam ser estudadas em profundidade. Nesse sentido, o treinamento físico é analisado como uma forma de lazer sério, o hobby centrado no corpo - uma maneira de praticar e se relacionar com a atividade que leva seus praticantes a aderir mais a ele, orientando-os para uma carreira em aquisições e expressão de habilidades, conhecimentos e experiências. Um total de 1.134 pessoas (588 homens, 546 mulheres) que fizeram treinamento físico, com idades entre 18 e 70 anos (M = 34,7, DT = 13,06) responderam a um questionário sobre o tempo de exercício como lazer sério, bem como seus benefícios derivados e complementares. O coeficiente t de Student e a ANOVA permitiram mostrar as diferenças entre os escores dos diferentes benefícios do exercício de acordo com as variáveis contempladas no estudo. Os resultados destacam que o exercício físico como lazer sério é uma atividade cujo investimento no tempo semanal faz com que ele adquira um papel central quando é recompensado pela sensação de conquista, contato com os outros, melhoria da saúde e estar ao ar livre com a família. Para concluir, este estudo mostra que conceber o treinamento físico como um hobby centrado no corpo —compartilhando os princípios do lazer sério— implica uma nova abordagem para a análise do exercício físico e também sugere novas maneiras de promovê-lo.

Palavras chave: treinamento físico; prática de atividade física; lazer; perspetiva do lazer sério; passatempo centrado no corpo.

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