

SPORTS ACTIVITIES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ZVOLEN DURING THEIR FREE TIME

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Abstract: *The article is about sports activities of secondary school students in Zvolen during their free time. 412 students (227 boys and 185 girls) were asked how they spend their free time. The survey shows that they prefer using a computer, secondly to watch TV or practice sports or games. The boys prefer team sports while the girls prefer body-building.*

Key words: *sports activities, free time, secondary school students.*

1 Introduction

The modern way of life is gradually lowering the initiations that people need for their physical activities. Limited physical activity has a negative impact on the organism functioning that causes various illnesses. Ludviková (2012) presents that current lifestyle of the whole society has changed, and particularly the body movement activity has decreased. A number of research works present the fact that comfortable life is generally reducing physical and mental fitness.

As Junger (1996) reports - physical activity is a any physical action that is sufficiently increasing the functional requirements of the body, requiring higher energy expenditure than is in still state. We speak about all work activities, including housework, hobbies - gardening, fishing, hunting, beekeeping, wood carving, collecting wild fruits and herbs, as well as controlled PE and sport activities.

As Nemec - Michal (2011) present - physical activity is a vital function of each of us, whether it is performed in a large or limited form. Yes, the physical activity is a part of the healthy lifestyle of human that improves the immunity system and has positive effects on the quality of life.

According to Michal (2009) adequate movement in connection with the environment, nutrition, social interaction and cultural aspects is one of the most important aspects of life. Physical activity is one of the ways how to spend an active leisure time (Nemec, 2008).

Hofbauer (2004) sees leisure time as the time when a person does not do activities under pressure of obligations of his/her social roles, particularly from labor division and need to preserve and develop own life.

It is the time for the rest, recovery of mental and physical strength, relaxation after finishing all duties, gratification of needs and interests, place for entertainment, recreation, self-fulfillment and education - as Krystoň (2003) presents the leisure time.

Kratochvílová (2001) defines leisure time as a specific and important part of the lives of children, youth and adults - a man at any age. It is the time for rest, recreation, regeneration of physical and mental strength, relaxation after work, study, social meetings, learning about the world, life, self-realization in activities, activities according own needs and interests, wishes, desires, aspirations and values.

For optimal use of leisure time are established facilities creating conditions for educational activities in the form of leisure, recreation, amusement, entertainment, sports, education, leisure and social activities (Babiaková - Brindza - Ďurošová,, 2007).

These facilities include:

- children's school clubs;
- leisure centers;
- cultural facilities;
- civic associations;
- schools in nature;
- elementary art schools (Kratochvílová, 2004).

2 Goal

The goal of this paper is to present results of research to determine the physical and sports activities of secondary school students in Zvolen in their free time.

3 Methodic

The research was accomplished in May 2013 at five secondary schools in Zvolen. The research sample consisted of a total of 412 students including 227 boys and 185 girls. Percentage of both sexes included in the survey sample is provided in Fig1. To find out the physical and sport activities of secondary school students in their free time we have used our own questionnaire that was anonymous.

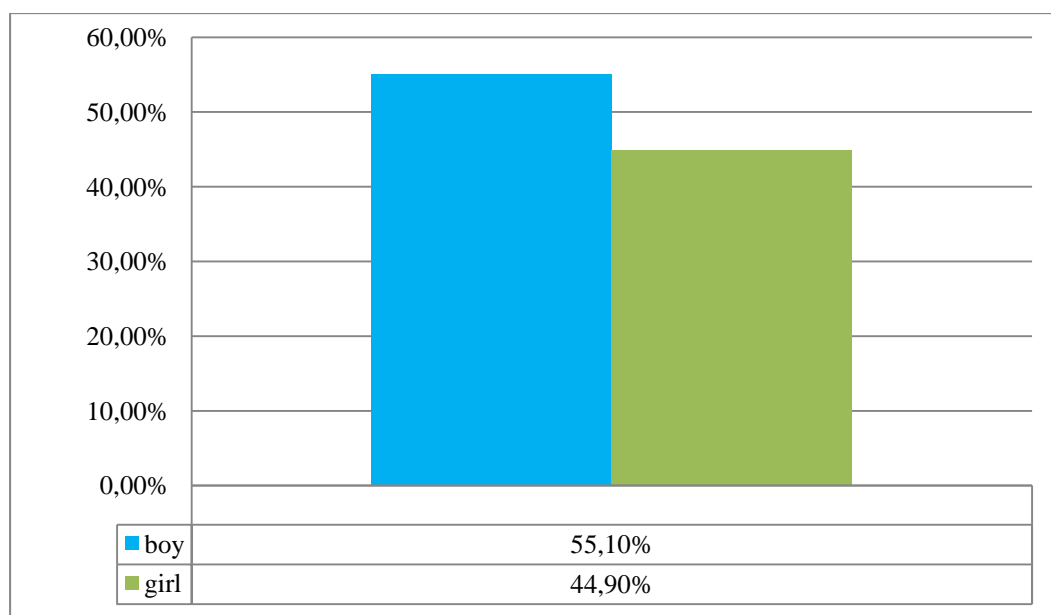


Figure 1 *Percentage of gender representation in the survey sample*

4 Results and discussion

Pupils from primary and secondary schools have enough free time after school. The way pupils fill their leisure time clearly indicates what they do like. In their free time they have time for rest, physical as well as mental recovery. It is the time to rest from everyday 'school duties. This time they can devote to their own interests, needs, can meet with friends, rest, relax, have fun or spend their free time other way.

Therefore, we were interested in activities that secondary school students in Zvolen prefer to do in their free time. Students had a choice of 6 specific options and possibility 'other', to choose activity that was not included in the offer.

Based on the results presented in Fig2, we state that for both sexes is the use of computers and the Internet as the most preferred leisure activity. This option has chosen up to 33.48% of boys and 24.32% of girls. Similar results were also presented by Michal (2010) who found that 27.8% of secondary school students prefer the Internet. Nevolná (2013) have similar results for primary schools. The author found that 33.33% of boys, 29.88% of girls prefer computers. These results confirm the superiority of sedentary lifestyle of youth against physical and sport activities in their free time. This fact is stressed by number of pupils who usually spend their free time by watching television. This option registered 22.03% of boys and 21.08% of girls

Reported 27.75% of boys and 18.92% of girls prefer sports. We do not consider surprising the fact that boys do sport in their free more than girls. Nemec - Nemcová (2012)

state lower percentage of interest in sport activities for girls that refers to traditional gender disparity in access to sport and sporting which can be considered as a consequence of persistent generation-stereotype trend in the family education in the process of socialization of a man.

We shall mention the fact that the "other" option registered 6.61% of boys and up to 15.14% of girls. Both sexes mostly reported this option as spending the time outdoor with friends. At this point we had statistically significant differences in the responses of boys and girls at the significance level of $p < 0.01$.

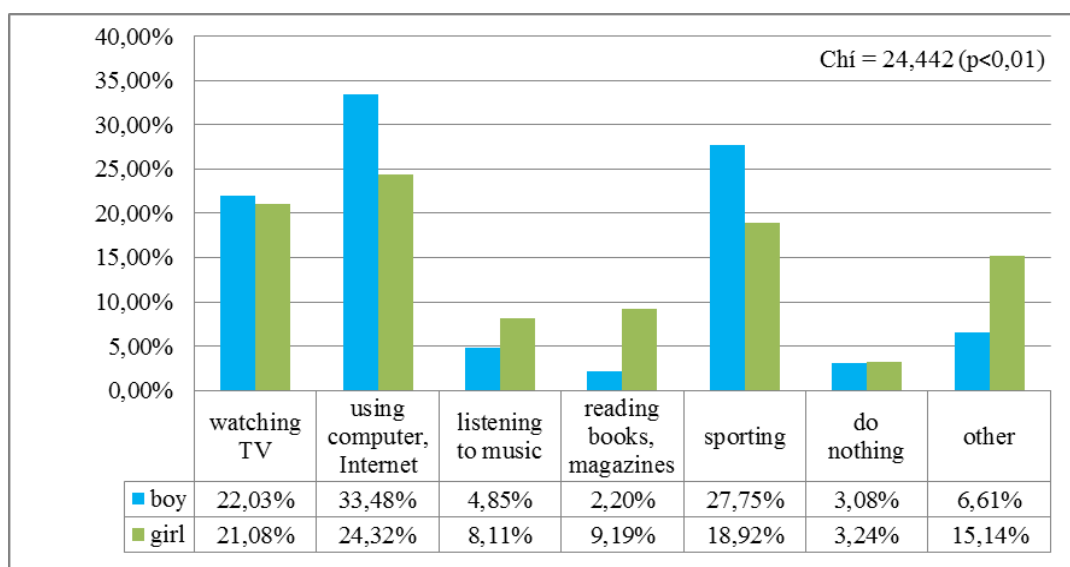


Figure 2 *Activities preferred in the free time of students*

In the preferred activities of secondary school students in their free time we do not have the most favorable results for sports. It does not mean though that pupils who do not prefer sports in their spare time, do not do sports all. Therefore, we were interested in how many times a week the students do physical and sport activities. Results are presented in Fig3.

The results show that pupils do physical and sports activities in their free time. Boys perform physical activities and sporting activities in their free time mostly 3-4 times a week (27.75%) and 1-2 times a week (25.55%), while occasionally do sport 17.62% of boys. Girls have had completely different results as they highly prefer occasional sporting, which reported 34.59% of girls and 21.62% of girls reported doing sports 1-2 times a week. Similar results for both sexes found Ludviková (2012) in her research.

It was positive for us to find that 8.37% of boys and 17.30% of girls are not interested in physical activities and sports in their free time at all. Based on the results of other authors,

as Michael - Nevolná (2012) who found 24% of secondary school students who do not do sport, we assumed worse results in our research. Even at this point we had statistically significant differences in the responses of boys and girls at the significance level of $p < 0.01$.

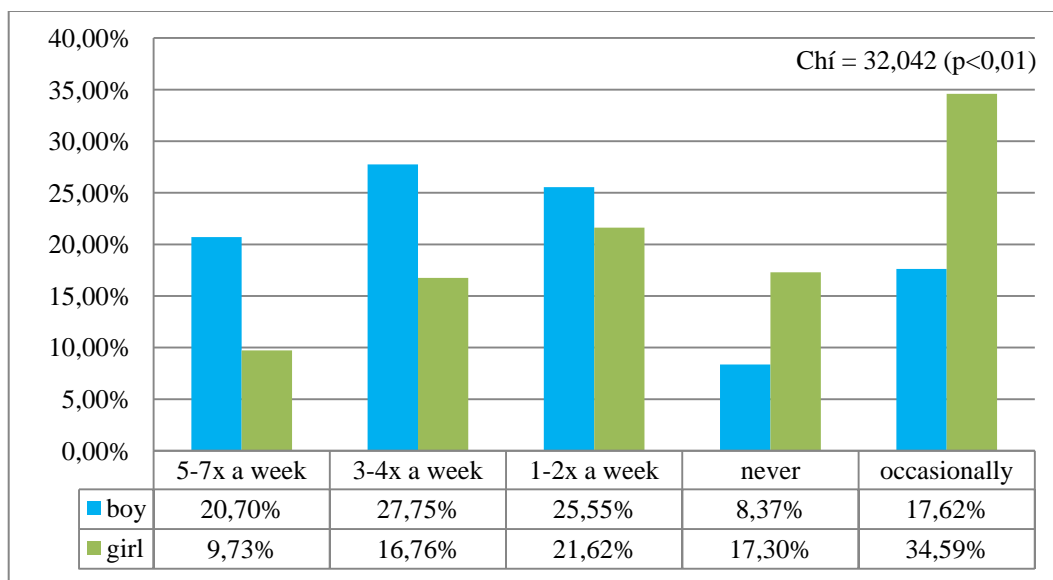


Figure 3 Periodicity of physical and sport activities of students in their free time

We were also interested in the most favorite physical and sports activities of secondary school students in Zvolen in their spare time. Students had a choice of 7 specific options and possibility 'other' to choose activity that was not included in the offer.

The results presented in Fig 4. show that boys most likely play sports games in their free time. 34.36% of boys reported this option. Sports games dominant position for boys is also mentioned in work of Nemec - Nemcova (2012). Girls ranked sports games on the fourth place. We believe that the leadership of sports games for boys is still connected with great popularity, easy and inexpensive availability of football.

The most favorite physical activity or sport for girls in their leisure time is the gym and fitness. 22.16% of girls reported this option. We believe that this percentage is related to aerobics and Zumba escalating popularity, while significant issue for girls is definitely the interest in their health and appearance, whereas appearance in adolescence plays an important role. High interest in Zumba and aerobics in leisure time of girls reported Michal - Nevolná (2012). Interest in health and appearance also reported 17.62% of boys who mentioned body building and fitness as the second most popular physical and sport activity of their free time. High interest in bodybuilding and fitness is also mentioned in research of Ludviková (2012) and Michal – Nevolná (2012).

The third place for both sexes are winter sports that in free time prefer 14.98% of boys and 16.22% of girls. Similar results for winter sports found also Michal (2010). About the attractiveness and popularity of winter sports for secondary school student speaks Beťák (2012, 2013), where attention is paid to the increasing popularity of snowboarding which is an excellent alternative in addition to the downhill skiing on the ski resort slopes.

The option ‘other‘ have chosen 7.49% of boys and 13.51% of girls where the most frequently reported physical and sport activities for boys were tennis and cycling and for girls dancing and roller skating. Dancing and roller skating was identified as a favorite leisure physical activity among girls in the research of Nevolná (2013). Michal (2010) presents a high interest in cycling in the leisure time of pupils. Even at this point we had statistically significant differences in the responses of boys and girls at the significance level of $p < 0.01$.

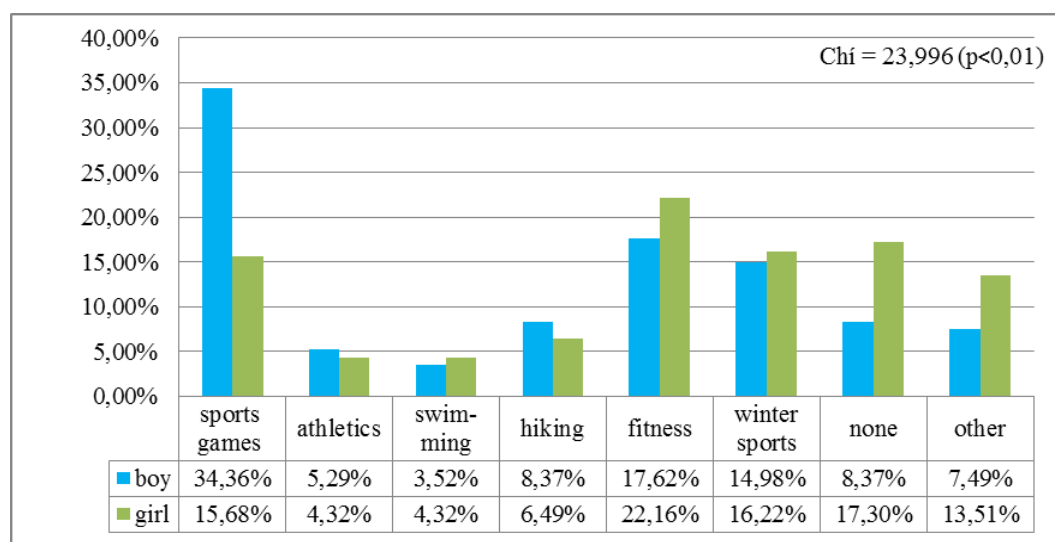


Figure 4 *The most favorite physical and sport activities of students in their free time*

In further research, we were interested in the level of leisure time physical and sports activities of secondary school students in Zvolen. Students had a choice of three options and organized (competitive), non-organized (recreational) and the option no sports. As the organized (competitive) option we consider registration in any of the sport clubs. Based on the results, which we present in Fig 5, we state that almost half of the boys and half of the girls devote their free time to physical and sport activities on the non-organized level. Similar results also reports Michal (2010).

The fact is that organized (competitive) sports do more boys (41.85%) than girls (32.97%), what we had expected. We believe that boys more likely associate sport with the effort of achieving self-fulfillment and success, not just an informal filling free time as girls.

No sport option has reported the same percentage of students as in Fig 3, by which we confirmed the seriousness of filling the questionnaire. Azor - Beťák (2012) have found in the research conducted at grammar schools in Martin and Zvolen that up to 43.70% of the students (of gymnasium) do not perform any physical activities out of school. The authors believe that these conditions might be related to the fact that students who attend high school mostly focus more on the cognitive aspects of their personality than psychomotor. The condition might be related to the possible demands of the curriculum content and general knowledge at grammar schools, which may cause difficulties to students to perform leisure-time physical activity. At this point we had statistically significant differences in the responses of boys and girls at the significance level of $p < 0.05$

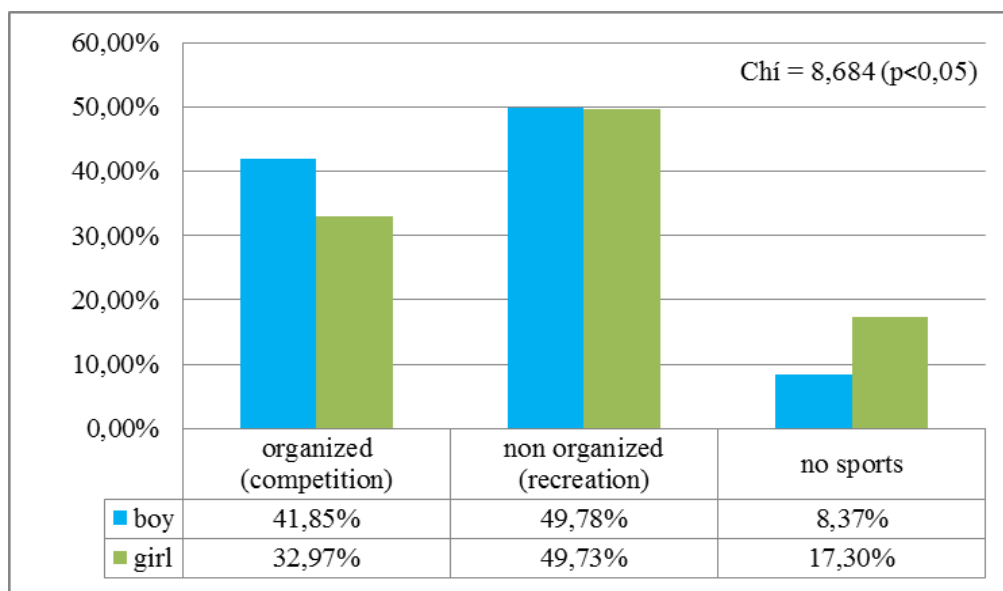


Figure 5 *Level of physical and sporting activities of students in their free time*

In the research conclusion we were interested in which period of free time is the most appropriate for the students to perform physical activities and sporting activities. Students had choice of 6 options. As the best time was indicated summer for 38.33% of boys. 25.99% of boys like to do sports throughout the whole year on the second place. Girls have indicated frequently the same option. 31.89% of girls gave priority to this option not to summer. In terms of statistical significance, we observed statistically significant differences in the responses of boys and girls at the significance level of $p < 0.01$

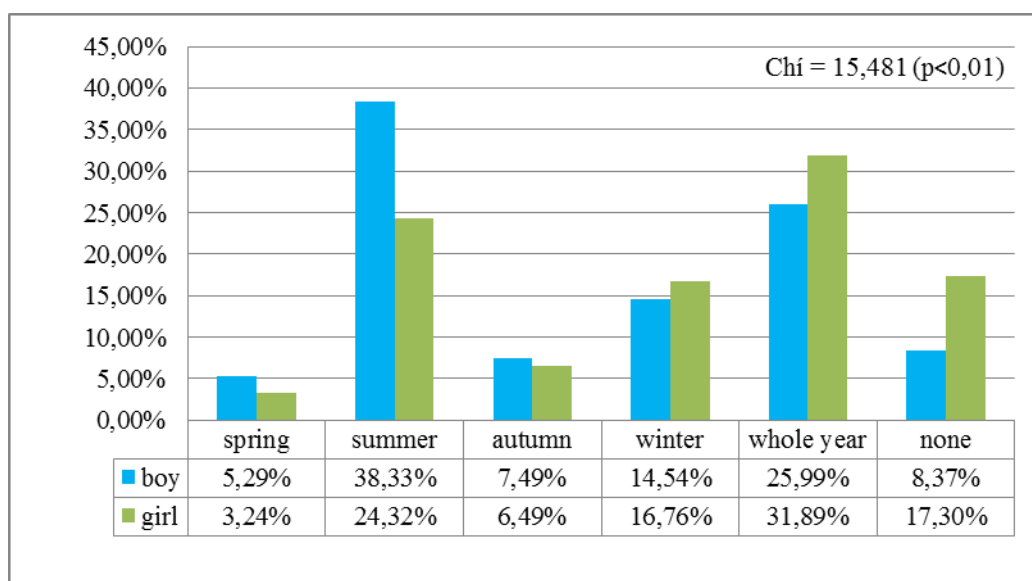


Figure 6 *The most appropriate period for physical and sports activities of students in their free time*

5 Conclusion

Youngster's interest in sports and physical activities is variable. The Internet, computers or television are often in the hierarchy of school activities of students on higher positions than physical and sports activities. On the other hand, we can monitor increasing popularity of sports activities such as Zumba, floorball or snowboarding. It's up to every one of us how we spend our leisure time.

Our research of secondary school students in Zvolen found preferences in using the Internet and computer than doing sports, what we could expect in this super technical age. The positive outcome, however, we consider the fact that even sport is not the top leisure activity for students, but the vast majority of students (74% of boys and 48.11% of girls) do sports at least 1-2 times a week and 17.62% of boys and 34.59% of girls do sports at least occasionally.

The most popular physical and sports activity among boys are sport games that are favorite for up to 34.36% of boys. The most interesting for 22.16% of girls is bodybuilding and fitness that is popular for leisure time of boys as well. In terms of popularity of free time physical activity and sport are often chosen winter sports.

Almost half of the boys and girls perform non-organized physical activities and sports (at the recreation level), as the best time for their free time sport activities students consider summer or all year-round sporting.

We believe that this type of research can help us to determine the orientation value of the free time activities of secondary school students. These results can also be used in

physical education practice, because we found that students devote their free time to physical and sport activities. Based on our experience of physical education practice we suggest introducing non-traditional and less typical physical and sport activities to develop the student's need for physical activity, which could contribute in improving their physical condition and physical performance as to a positive impact on the student's health.

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