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Reasons for Physical Inactivity of Disengaged Students at Klaipeda University

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Abstract. The present article analyses reasons for physical inactivity of disengaged students at Klaipeda University. A questionnaire was comprised with reference to an *International Physical Activity Questionnaire*. The sample chosen for the research comprised a number of 203 students being not engaged in sports. It has been observed that students of Klaipeda University dedicate a very slight portion of time for their individual sport related activities: the greatest majority of students (28,6 % of females and 25,2 % of males) spend only 1-2 hours per week for exercising and sports. Results reveal that the main causes for students' physical inactivity are the following: insufficient variety of sport clubs, lack of time and unwillingness to engage in exercising and sports.

Keywords: physical activity; physical inactivity; students; universities.

Relevance of the subject. Conducted research literature has proven a positive effect of physical activity on health (1, 6). Research results reveal that physical activity can help prevent coronary and vein-related diseases, diabetes, obesity and a tendency for depression (4). It has been observed that a physically more active person has a higher self-esteem, a positive health-related behavior and proper nutrition, absence of addictions and harmful habits. Researchers (5, 6, 11, 12) have established that physical activity has a positive influence on health, it is essential not only for a normal growth and a cognitive development which is a very important criterion of physical state and a health, but also very significant for the maturity of the body's functional systems. Moreover, physical activity is also beneficial for prevention of health issues as well as a physical potential.

Subject to an opinion of a number of scientists, a health of students at Lithuanian higher education institutions is poor, and such is related to a low physical activity and insufficiently motivated attitude towards physical activities (10). Students' lifestyle and schedule change at the moment of entering higher educational institutions, a load for mental activity increases, whereas physical activity decreases. It becomes complicated to maintain a proper health, necessary level of physical development, fitness and functional potential (3).

Having analyzed research results, conducted by the Lithuanian scientists and researchers (3, 9) on physical activity of students at Lithuanian universities, it was identified that motivation to engage in sports and be active has dropped. Around 40 % of university students have no basis for a physical self-education and almost do not spend time exercising (10). Precise such attitude of students was revealed among students of Vilnius universities. Results of the conducted research where 92 % of females and 91% of males state they do not approve obligatory physical activities show that students have no interest in a rational exercising (3).

Lifestyle of the academic youth alarms the society. American scientists (2) claim that a number of insufficiently active students (age of 19-21) has more than doubled over the last 30 years. The scientific relevance of the present matter is that there is a lack of information on physical activity of students at Lithuanian universities (in our case – Klaipeda University).

Research aim – to identify reasons for physical inactivity of disengaged students at Klaipeda University.

Research structure and methodology. The research was conducted during October of 2012 when inactive full-time freshmen students at Klaipeda University from 7 faculties (Pedagogy, Social Sciences, Marine Engineering, Art, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Maritime institute,

Humanities) were researched. The research used a questionnaire designed based on an *International Physical Activity Questionnaire*, which currently is acknowledged as one of the best questionnaires designed, rating physical activity of people at the age of 15 – 69 years. The questionnaire is composed of 17 closed-ended questions, which allowed to reveal the main reasons of physical inactivity of students being not engaged in sports. A total number of 203 inactive students were surveyed, i.e. in respect to a gender the sample was comprised of a similar number of males 51,2 % (n (number of students)= 104) and females 48,8 % (n= 99), the age of the majority (97,5 %) varies between 19–21 years. Obtained research results were processed using a *Statistical Program for Social Sciences SPSS 17.0*. For interpretation of a reliability level on obtained statistical data a Chi–square (χ^2) test was applied (used to test hypotheses of non-parametric criteria in respect to distribution of variable in population, i.e. whether difference of an empirical and theoretical distribution is significant based on Pearson's formula), while differences of responses for females and males were rated using Mann–Whitney U test (significance of differences between two independent samples based on rank choices of responses).

Research results. Results of the quantitative research established that almost 15 % of disengaged students (7,1 % of females and 7,8 % of males) do not dedicate their time for active lifestyle at all. Results reveal that a majority of students (28,6 % of females and 25,2 % of males) spend only 1-2 hours per week exercising and engaging in sports. When analyzing duration of time dedicated for exercising and sports (5 hours and more), statistically significant differences in respect to a gender were mostly evident, therefore it is possible to conclude that males more often than females engage in sport related activities and exercising, which is 5 – 6 hours. ($\chi^2(2)=7,353$; $p=0,007$) (Fig. 1.).

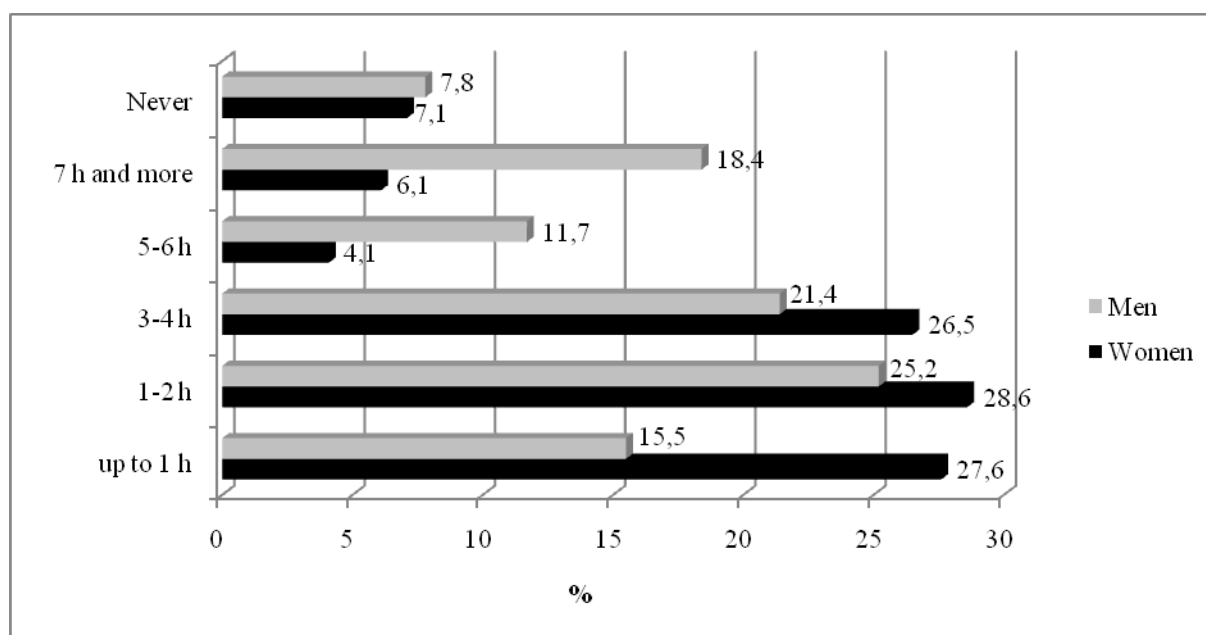


Fig. 1. Time (hours per week) spent for individual exercising and sports

Research results assisted in disclosing a number of days students averagely engage in intensive sports (Fig. 2.).

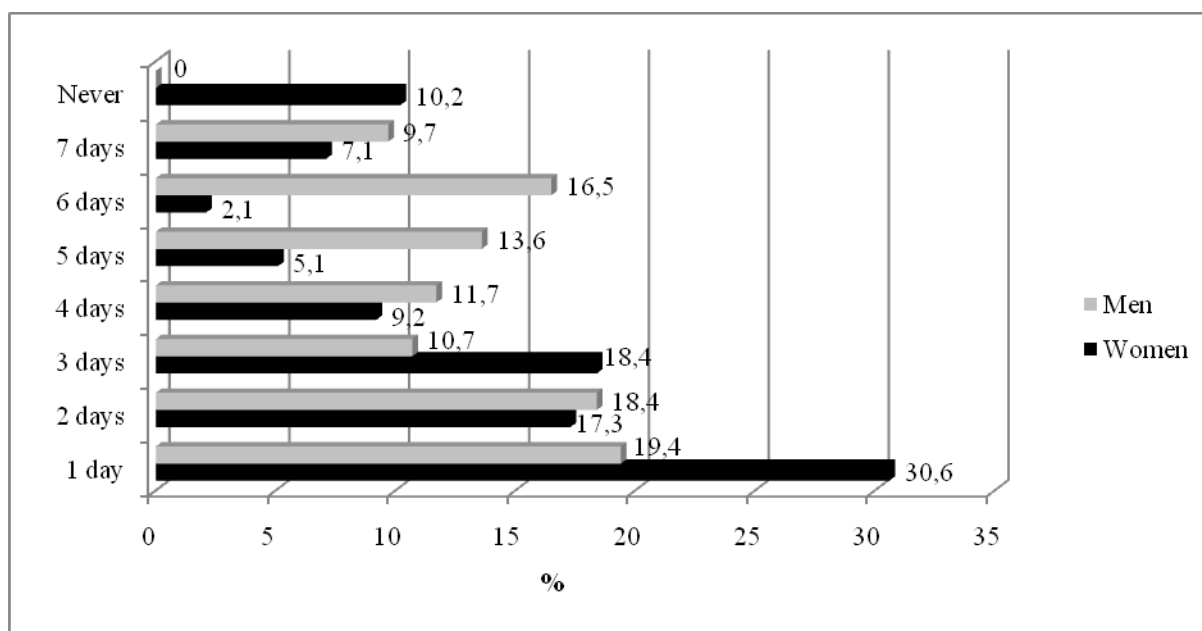


Fig. 2. Sport related activities of an average intensity over the last 7 days

In the process of the research data analysis it was determined that a very low percentage of females (7,1 %) and males (9,7 %) experience a benefit of physical activities of an average intensity on health. 30,6% of females and 19,4 % of males most often engage in sport activities once per week. The present indicators using a non-parametric Chi-square (χ^2) criterion revealed that males are more physically active compared to females ($\chi^2(6)=28,544$; $p=0,000$).

During the present research the main reasons for student inactivity were identified. Such reasons are specified in Fig. 3.

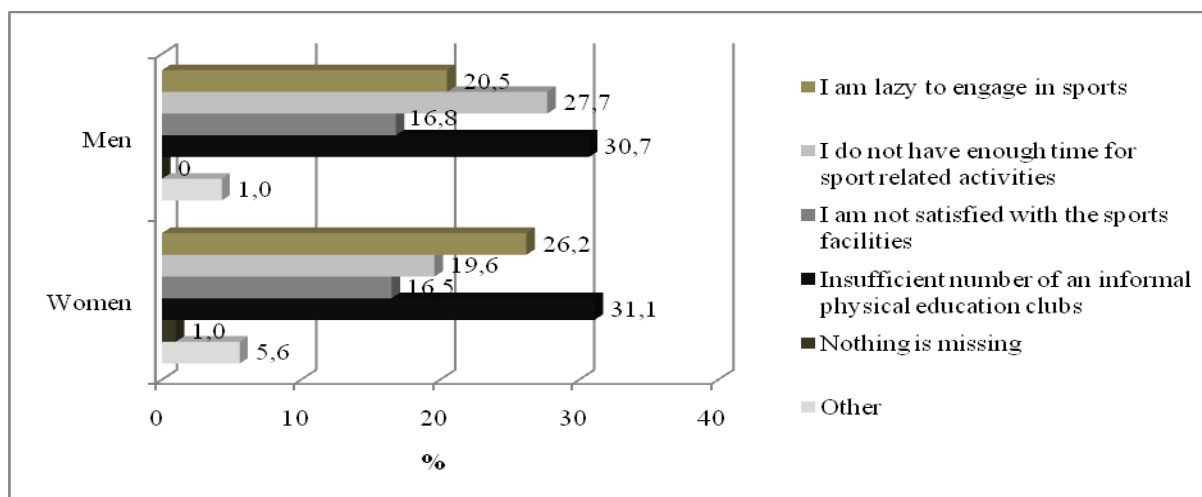


Fig.3. Main reasons for student inactivity

A slightly more than one third (31,1 % of females and 30,7 % of males) of students claimed that they have a very poor choice of various clubs for informal physical education. 26,2 % of females and 20,5 % of males are not engaged in sports as they feel lazy and a number of students (19,6 % of females and 27,7 % of males) specified that they do not have time to engage in sports. No significant differences among males and females were identified in respect to reasons for inactivity.

Discussion. The present conducted research conforms to results of previously conducted research of other scientists (3, 9) stating that physical activeness of Lithuanian university students is not sufficient. Results show that students most often engage in sports and exercising up to 2 hours per week. Such is substantiated with the results obtained from the present research, which state that a majority of inactive students at Klaipeda University dedicate 1-2 hours or one time per

week for individual exercising and sports even though WHO (2010) recommends 5 times per week with 60 minutes of activities of an average intensity and 3 times per week with 20 minutes of activities of a high intensity load on a body.

Conclusions. Research results reveal that females tend to be more inactive compared to males. It has been revealed that the main reasons for students' physical inactivity are the following: insufficient choice of sport clubs, lack of time and unwillingness to be active.

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Причины физической пассивности студентов Клайпедского университета

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Аннотация. В данной статье рассмотрены вопросы причин физической пассивности студентов Клайпедского университета. Для решения поставленной задачи был использован Международный опросник оценки физической активности. Выборка не занимающихся спортом студентов включала 203 респондента. Результаты показали, что студенты Клайпедского университета занимаются спортом недостаточно: 28,6 процента женщин и 25,2 процента мужчин занимаются спортом и физической культурой только 1-2 часа в неделю. Было установлено, что основными причинами физической пассивности студентов Клайпедского университета являются: отсутствие спортивных клубов, нехватка времени и нежелание заниматься спортом.

Ключевые слова: физическая активность; физическая пассивность; студенты; вузы.