

Investigating Male and Female Teachers' and Employees' Leisure Time Focusing on Physical Activities and Its Relationship with their Self-efficacy: The Case of Educational Organization in Qazvin

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Received: November 8 2013

Accepted: January 3 2014

ABSTRACT

Leisure time provides an opportunity for refreshment, personal development, increasing the range of interests, self-efficacy, family cohesion and job motivation. Accurate planning for leisure time and regular physical activities are considered as behaviors which enhance the mental health and self-efficacy. The current study aimed to investigate both male and female teachers' and employees' leisure time and its relationship with self-efficacy in educational organization of Qazvin province.

Materials and methodology: The current field study is a descriptive, correlational one. The statistical population consisted of all the teachers and employees of the educational organization in Qazvin province in the academic year 2012-2013. A total number of 375 people were included in the sample.

Instrument: Sherer's self-efficacy scale and leisure-time questionnaire were used. Its validity was confirmed by the expert judgment and its reliability was calculated through Cronbach alpha as 0.80.

Data analysis procedures: Both descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Pearson product-moment correlation, t-test, Chi-square) were run through SPSS 18.00.

Findings: The results revealed a significant difference among teachers and employees in terms of the way they spend their leisure time. However, teachers had more physical activities than employees. A significant difference among teachers' and employees' physical activities was found in terms of gender in favor of males. The results were quite the same for self-efficacy.

Conclusion: It seems necessary to raise the consciousness of different strata of the society considering the positive impacts of leisure time and doing physical activities in it through precise planning in order to persuade individuals to take more part in these activities.

KEY WORDS: Leisure time, Physical activity, Self-efficacy

INTRODUCTION

The growing access of human being to new technologies and finding more simple solutions have led to a double increase in leisure time people might have in a week and consequently a decrease in their activity. On the other hand, pollution, complexity of social communities, an increase in the occupational pressing factors and economic crises of modern life made the human's physical and mental health vulnerable. One of the innovative concepts, which achieved its real sense through the emergence of several kinds of technology and industrialization of the societies, is "leisure time" and the way it is spent. Briefly, leisure time has been defined as entertainments and activities which are done willingly in the time you don't have to work and its main functions entail refreshment, entertainment, and development of human's personality. Larson et al. (2002) states that leisure time is the remnant of daily duties when an individual willingly do some activities and develop his awareness in order to refresh and get rid of daily frustrating events and develop his/her personality. Nippold and Dutlie (2005) believe that leisure time is the only organization that its role is comparable to that of the school and family (34). According to Camp and Bray (2011), leisure time provides an appropriate opportunity for the growing development of one's personality and set the scene to remove the behavioral disorders, moral deviations, and social crimes (23). Studying leisure time not only allows for social and cultural planning, which is of utmost significance in such a young society as Iran, but also sets the stage for presenting an appropriate theoretical pattern in light of various theories and investigating its relation to other social variables. Nowadays, nobody can deny the significance of education, as our current and future capital. Taking their various characteristics and conditions into account, teachers and employees in the

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educational organization are considered as significant. Education is clearly one of the most crucial centers in the society. If it fulfills its duties well, it can play a pivotal role in economic, cultural, and social development. Sport and physical activities can fill a large proportion of leisure time of this stratum of the society. Within the last few years, interest in several aspects of practicing and physical cooperation has developed in order to enhance individuals' mental health, and thereby the application of psychology in sport has been highlighted. Evidence indicates that regular physical activity would enhance mental health, decrease depression and tension symptoms and life satisfaction and quality (24, 28, 33). The results of a study by Salminen and Iuthanen (2007) revealed that those participating in physical activities enjoy higher degrees of mental health and more consistent traits compared to those non-athlete ones. Physical activities not only improve individuals' performance and health, it also promotes the cooperation spirit, communication and job satisfaction (37). Ehsani (1996) maintains that being adventurous occurs within the realm of physical activity and provides an individual with an opportunity to get rid of the limitations and obligations of social order. It brings about excitement, innovation, and self-development (25). In this regard, a host of scholars have referred to the relationship between self-efficacy and doing physical activities.

Self-efficacy is the latest and most important theoretical construct of socio-cognitive approach which has nowadays turned into one of the most pivotal issues in research. Self-efficacy or self-sufficiency is the degree of confidence each person holds considering his abilities to implement a set of activities or undertaking a certain responsibility (9). People usually seek and tend willingly toward some activities and situations which they feel capable of doing and adjusting whereas they are reluctant to do some activities whose performing seems beyond their abilities. A meta-analysis of 68 studies with regard to self-efficacy published between 1989 and 1997 revealed that self-efficacy beliefs would positively correlate with individuals' actions (9).

There are a large number of underpinning sources for self-efficacy. To name a few, one might consider the personal experience which requires a person to confront a failure (or at least a threat to be failed). In this way, experiences contribute to becoming self-efficacious which entails the other side of success (failure or similar conditions). It seems that physical activities, especially professional sports, possess this characteristic. This issue has drawn the attention of those who are involved in mental healthcare to focus more seriously on the psychological precursors and consequences of sport. Feltz and Lirg found a significant relationship between self-efficacy and cooperation in physical activities (26). In addition, a significant positive relationship was found between self-efficacy and doing exercises regularly (Aghamollaii, Tavafiyani, & Zare, 2008). Mokhtari, Shojaei, and Dana (2007) also demonstrated the role of self-efficacy in learning, acquiring, and teaching sport skills.

However, it does not seem that the relationship between doing physical exercises and improvement of mental health is a general and exclusive issue (31). Evidence to date suggests that such sports as aerobics with mild level of activity would make more impact on mental health (27). Hence, it seems that doing leisure activities accompanying mild motor ones without any competition, would contribute the most for improving individuals' psychological health. Previous studies mostly referred to the relationship between doing sport leisure activities and mental health. Indeed, spending leisure time doing physical, cultural entertainments is conceived of as one of the best ways to promote individuals' mental condition.

As it was previously mentioned, the results of many studies have demonstrated that doing exercises in leisure time would contribute to individuals' self-efficacy. A large body of research has showed that self-efficacy would make an impact on behavioral consequences and would predict a number of important professional consequences, e.g. job tendencies, skill development, job performance. Zhao (6) and Gu and Day (7) maintained that self-efficacy is an important determining factor in predicting teachers' self-efficacious teaching and students' academic performance and their ability to overcome the difficulties. Moreover, the role of self-efficacy as a moderator has been investigated in a large number of studies (29, 39). The findings proved the contributing role of physical cooperation in leisure time in schools and educational organization in developing the teachers' and employees' physical power and personality traits, e.g. self-efficacy, social development, and perfectionism. Nevertheless, what seems clear is that taking into account the current condition of the societies and automatized life, people's mobility is less than before. Considering their busy schedule, teachers and employees in educational organization would not tend to do some physical activities unless suitable conditions are provided.

Taking into consideration the dearth of research on the possible relationship between leisure time, self-efficacy, and physical activity among different strata of Iranian society, the current study aimed to decipher the relationship between the aforementioned factors among teachers and employees in Qazvin. The study specifically addressed the following questions:

- 1) Is there any significant difference between teachers and employees of educational organization in Qazvin province in terms of the way of spending leisure time?

- 2) Is there any significant difference between teachers and employees of educational organization in Qazvin province regarding physical activity and the way of spending their leisure time in terms of their gender?
- 3) Is there any significant difference between teachers' and employees' self-efficacy beliefs in terms of their gender in educational organization of Qazvin province?
- 4) Is there any significant relationship between both male and female teachers' and employees' leisure time and their self-efficacy in educational organization of Qazvin province?

METHODOLOGY

The current study belongs to descriptive and correlational field ones.

Participants: The statistical population consisted of all the teachers and employees of the educational organization in Qazvin province in the academic year 2012-2013. A total number of 375 people (158 males and 218 females) were included in the sample that included 82, 61, and 202 teachers at elementary, junior high school and high school, respectively and 30 employees.

Leisure Time Questionnaire: The questionnaire comprises of 28 questions eliciting the required information considering personal, academic, socio-economic information, leisure time activities, physical activities, etc. Its validity was confirmed by the expert judgment and its reliability was calculated through Cronbach alpha as 0.80.

Self-efficacy Questionnaire: It includes 17 five-point Likert scale items (from 1 s completely disagree to 5 as completely agree). The scoring is from 1 to 5. It is worth mentioning that items 1, 3, 8, 9, 13, 15 receive the score 1 to 5 from the right to the left whereas it is vice versa for the rest of the items. The maximum and minimum score are 85 and 7, respectively. The reported reliability is 0.82 through Cronbach alpha.

Data analysis procedure: Having examined the normal distribution of the data through Test, both descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Pearson product-moment correlation, t-test, Chi-square) were run through SPSS 18.00 and the significant level was set as $p \leq 0.05$.

Results

As Table 1 indicates, the results reveal no significant difference between the teachers and employees of educational organization in terms of the way they spend their leisure time.

Table 1. the results of Chi-square test for examining the difference regarding the way teachers and employees spend their leisure time

		Non-pedagogical studies	Watching TV	Doing exercises (playing sports)	Listening to radio	Religious activities	Going to cinema or theatre	Artistic works
Teachers	percentage	13	19/4	17/1	2/6	3/2	4/9	2
Employees	percentage	10	20	16/7	3/3	3/3	3/3	3/3

		Using computer	Walking	Listening to music	Solving the puzzle	خی دو	df	Sig
Teachers	percentage	14/8	9/9	6/1	7			
Employees	percentage	16/7	13/3	3/3	6/7	1/385	10	0/99

According to Table 2, the extent of physical activities is significantly higher among teachers compared to employees. Moreover, men are more involved in physical activities than women ($p \leq 0.05$).

Table 2. The results of independent t-test for examining the difference among groups in terms of the extent of their physical activities in their leisure time

Variable	Group	M and SD	T	df	sig
The extent of physical activity	Teachers	2/60±0/94	2/096	373	* 0/03
	Employees	2/23±0/72			
	Male	2/73±0/91	2/245	373	* 0/02
	Female	2/51±0/94			

- Significant at $p \leq 0.05$.

As Table 3 illustrates, teachers' self-efficacy is higher than that of the employees. In addition, men enjoy higher self-efficacy than women ($p \leq 0.05$).

Table 3. The results of independent t-test for examining the difference among groups in terms of the extent of their physical activities in their leisure time

Variable	Group	M and SD	T	df	Sig
Self-efficacy	Teachers	64/23±7/54	2/024	373	* 0/04
	Employees	61/36±6/16			
	Male	66/91±6/87	6/358	373	* 0/00
	Female	62/15±7/32			

- Significant at $p \leq 0.05$.

As Table 4 displays, there is a significant relationship between leisure time and self-efficacy among the teachers and employees (both males and females).

Table 4. the results of Pearson Product-moment correlation test for examining the relationship between leisure time and self-efficacy

		Self-efficacy	
Leisure time	Teacher and employees of educational organization	r	0/423
		Sig	* 0/00
	Males and females	r	0/542
		Sig	* 0/02

- Significant at $p \leq 0.05$.

DISCUSSION

A revision of the attitudes toward spending leisure time is obvious in both small-scale and large-scale planning of the developed countries. People are paying more attention to its significance to be included in their daily life. However, in developing countries, the traditional view is still dominant due to a wide range of factors so that its real significance is intentionally or unintentionally overlooked (31). A number of advantages of appropriate planning to fill the leisure time with suitable entertainments include enhancing the life quality, decreasing of the healthcare expenses, decreasing the employees' absences, promoting the job performance and satisfaction.

The mental health of people in each society highly depends on planning for these hours since they fill the rest of their time and have no chance of thinking of other issues. However, when they are disposed of their duties, they find an opportunity to think of others and themselves. Mental health, as an indicator of the establishment of a healthy society, is not achieved until a planning is provisioned for these hours.

The current study was conducted aiming at investigating the relationship between male and female teachers and employees' leisure-time physical activities and their self-efficacy. The findings revealed significant differences among the participants considering the way they spend their leisure time. The teachers had more physical activities than the employees (teachers 2.60, employees 2.23). Moreover, men had more physical activities than women (men 2.73, women 2.51). The teachers' self-efficacy was higher than that of employees (teachers 64.23, employees 61.36). Men's self-efficacy outweighed women's self-efficacy as well (men 66.91, women 62.15). In addition, a significant relationship was found between both male and female teachers' and employees' self-efficacy and their leisure time.

Leisure time can act as an appropriate opportunity for developing the personality and/or showing some behavioral disorders, moral deviations and social crimes. Hence, a plethora of researchers and scholars and those who are involved in the educational system and planning the cultural issues of the society have increasingly focused on leisure time and the best ways to take advantage of it due to its paramount importance as well as its constructive and positive consequences, e.g. mental health, creativity and innovation, behavioral modifications, personality development, etc.

As it was previously pinpointed, the results of the current study showed that teachers more than employees and men more than women do physical activities. However, within the last few years, people have grown higher tendencies toward spending their leisure time inactively, which is in sharp contrast to the ultimate goal of leisure time. The findings indicate that teachers and employees in educational organization of Qazvin province allocate less time to doing exercises. This is even worse among women. This might be attributed to lack of sufficient facilities, especially for women. Saneii (1994), Navvabi Nejad and Neysiyan (1997) pointed to the same reason for devoting no time to sport in leisure time (4, 21). According to the studies in the Youth National Organization (2002), people in Iranian society tend to spend their leisure time individually and inactively, e.g. watching TV. Indeed, watching

TV proved to occupy the largest proportion of the youths' leisure time which would lead to their isolation and frustration (14).

The results of the study revealed no significant difference among teachers and employees of educational organizations in Qazvin in terms of the way they spend their leisure time. The findings indicated that watching TV, doing exercises, studying non-academic materials, and using computer are among the most practiced activities. The results are in line with those of Delavar (2001), Zarei (2001), and Safaiian (2001) (6, 8, 11). Tondnevis also mentioned that despite the existence of physical education equipment and facilities to fill the leisure time, they do not suffice (5).

On the other hand, since the results of previous studies have pointed to the relationship between moral deviations and social vulnerabilities and individuals' leisure time, the issue has also gained prominence among the psychologists and sociologists (2, 19). Definitely, the presence of qualified and efficient teachers and trainers would play a pivotal role in growing and leading the society toward its desired outcomes. This requires the teachers to take a great advantage of their leisure time in order to develop spiritually, scientifically, etc. In this way, they would be able to undertake their responsibilities for educating the adolescents and helping them to make the most use of their leisure time, and thereby, leading the society toward achieving full independence and self-sufficiency. However, in spite of their significant role, evidence to date indicates that teachers spend not only their leisure time but also most of their daily time working for meeting their economic and financial needs due to a number of socio-economic problems. Accordingly, there is, by no means, enough time for their scientific and practical development as well as mental and physical health.

Moreover, the findings pointed to higher level of self-efficacy among teachers and male participants compared to the employees and female ones. In line with the results of previous studies, the current study pointed to the higher mean score of self-efficacy among athletes compared to their non-athlete counterparts. Since the results revealed that teachers play sports more than the employees, higher level of their self-efficacy might be attributed to their more physical activities. In this regard, the results bear some similarities with those of Bilgin and Akkapulu (2007), Rod et al. (2006), Abdoli (2010), Safavi et al. (2012) (12, 13, 22, 35). The findings also revealed that sport and physical activity sets the scene for developing self-efficacy. Rolim et al. (2007) and Hapler and Chaus (2008) attributed this to the presence of positive psychological effects resulted from the nature of physical activity and cooperation. According to Visman (2004), enhancing the personality factors through physical activity and cooperation would lead to enhanced identity (30, 36, 38). Likewise, Tennisli (1995) reported the same results and referred to providing physical, spiritual and psychological, and mental health as three main components which underlie people's willingness to do some activities (18). In their study on the relationship between self-efficacy and mental health among high school students, Najafi and Fooladchang (2007) found out no significant difference in terms of gender, which is at odd with the findings of the current study.

In a similar study, Shojaoddin (2006) showed that 38 percent of the employees play sports and men spend more time on this than women (10). Esmaili et al. (2004) also reiterated that in most countries, women take part in leisure activities less than men which might underlie several reasons (1). A number of researchers pinpointed that gender-related roles in the traditional form put obstacles in the way of women's cooperation compared to that of men. They drew this conclusion that sport, like other organizations in the man-oriented (masculine) communities has been developed for the sake of men's participation. This is in line with the results of the current study (13, 16). As reported by the Physical Education Organization, due to lack of stadiums, a limited number of women are doing sports. Indeed, there are a large number of obstacles in the way of women's alternatives to spend their leisure time and such issues as lack of enough time should not be overlooked. Women who are always working for providing an appropriate setting at home for their husbands and children enjoy less leisure time. This issue has been reiterated by a large number of scholars. Clark and Critcher mentioned that women have less leisure time and participate in more activities and the range of their alternatives to spend their leisure time is much more limited; they spend most of their time at home and with their families (15).

On the other hand, the findings of a considerable body of research have pointed to the mutual relationship between self-efficacy and doing exercises in leisure time and its enrichment. Most studies have demonstrated that individuals with higher self-efficacy were more physically satisfied and do more physical activities in their leisure time. Higher self-efficacy would lead individuals toward more advanced changes in physical activities and make them more prepared. In addition to its direct impact on an increase in physical activity, self-efficacy would indirectly lead to increased physical activity in leisure time through removing the barriers. Hence, allocating considerable attention in educational planning in general and in sport classes in particular is recommended to promote individuals' self-efficacy considering sport.

Ravasipoor and Mirhashemi referred to such factors as lack of enough facilities. The findings of a large body of research demonstrated that people like physical activities and sports in their leisure time while knowing the advantages. If an appropriate setting is provided and existing obstacles are removed or at least decreased, physical

activities will be prioritized (7). It might be inferred that enhancing the extent of physical activity in leisure time, facilities of stadiums should enhance. Teachers and employees should also be provided with opportunities to take advantage of them. Hence, those people in charge should provide an optimal condition through well-organized planning and creating required facilities. The results of the current study might suggest the necessity of planning for the development of substructures related to leisure time activities for all the strata of the society. This issue is more tangible due to lack of motor activities resulting from current industrial life. The results of the study might also imply that urban managers should increase the citizen's access to physical, cultural activities and look differently at the issue of leisure time in society.

Since sport is considered as a central factor in both mental and psychological health of individuals and societies, its more development among all social strata in general and teachers and employees of educational organizations in particular, who play a vital role in growing future generations of each society, seems to be of utmost significance. The governmental officials and involved organizations should not consider sport as an extra expense but they should view it as investing for the sake of individual and public health and social benefits which would bring about economic resources. Physical education organizations, education, healthcare and other involved organizations should collaborate on implementing the public sport-related programs in order to develop the culture of public sport.

Within the last years, devoting considerable attention to championship competitions demonstrates the extremist approach toward physical education which has received considerable attention in advertisements. This might be seen as a barrier in the way of publicizing sport and its accurate application in leisure time. The culture of public sport calls for education. In this regard, the government, mass media, and the Physical Education organization seem to play the most important role.

Leisure time and doing physical activities in it seems not to generate profit. Hence, governments should develop it through supportive policies. Making a balance between public and championship sports, the role of the government in codifying the rules, and developing sports are among the common challenges with which the governments are confronted. What seems to be more obvious is the growing intervention of the governments in this regard for providing facilities and implementing or coordinating them. The presence of women, handicapped and old people in the realm of physical activities in leisure time has resulted from the intervention of the governments and their management. This intervention indicates the necessity of the coordination. Nevertheless, what is of utmost significance is the support of the government.

Acknowledgment

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest in the research.

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