

Health promotion landmarks of students

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Abstract. The issue of maintaining and promoting health in the modern world is more relevant than ever against the backdrop of global social and economic changes in society. The sociological study was carried out at Transbaikal State University among students who completed their first year of study in June 2023. The purpose of the study is a comparative analysis of gender differences in the assessment of health savings goals of students at the end of the first year of study at a university. The study was conducted in the form of a survey remotely using Google Forms. It was revealed that adherence to the principles of a healthy lifestyle (HLS) registered among young men ($\chi^2=14.3$, $p<0.001$). 21.6% of girls and 15% of boys reported lack of sleep. Survey participants indicated their own responsibility for health in 95% of cases. The obtained data can be an aspect for improving outreach work at the university, aimed at developing a HLS among first-year students.

1 Introduction

The issue of maintaining and promoting health in the modern world is more relevant than ever against the backdrop of global social and economic changes in society. Russia is currently ranked 127th in the world in terms of health, according to WHO [3]. That is why among the main principles of the Concept of the demographic policy of the Russian Federation for the period until 2025 are the maintaining and strengthening of public health, increasing the active life expectancy duration, creating HLS motivation, a marked reduction in the incidence of socially significant diseases, etc. [2].

From this point of view, the main focus group for the implementation of preventive programs, including informing the population about health issues, is youth.

Knowledge and understandable landmarks for the maintaining and promotion of health, personal input and the necessary share of effort, the ability to adapt to the environment significantly determine a person's lifestyle and psychosocial health [5, 6].

According to the WHO definition, "health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". The awareness of the importance of health and its priority increase the probability of achieving active longevity, as evidenced by the scientific and theoretical developments of domestic scientists (V.K.

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Balsevich, I.I. Brehman, G.K. Zaitsev, E.M. Kazin, etc.). Numerous works by M. V. Lyadova, N. V. Chuklova, A. V. Voronin, Yu. V. Kuzmin, A. M. Maratov and others are devoted to the issues of HLS. The development of health-preserving competencies as personal resources of student youth is devoted to the works of foreign authors [23, 22].

Meanwhile, according to the literature, the intensity of the value attitude towards health is maximum in younger adolescents, decreases somewhat towards middle adolescence and drops sharply in older adolescents [3].

It should be noted that the level of health has been steadily declining during the period of study at a university, due to the existing modern requirements of educational standards, the demands of society, high competition and the lack of formation of a value-based attitude towards their health among junior students [9].

Applicants are not sufficiently prepared for learning from the point of view of psychophysical health, which leads to psycho-emotional disorders, the growth of harmful habits and a decrease in physical activity (PA) [21]. The health-preserving skills acquired over the years of study at school based on value orientations, worldview, social and moral experience are insufficient for their implementation in the university environment [10, 20].

According to research by Japanese scientists, to preserve the mental health of students, in the context of a variety of traumatic external factors, requires the development of integrated programmes, Motivating the development of health-saving competences and assisting students in various stressful situations [11]. European researchers emphasize the need for a differentiated approach to students, taking into account their subjective qualities and the prevailing socio-cultural environment [12]. According to some studies, the psychological well-being of students is directly related to the improvement of physical health, contributing to the growth of positive emotions, sense of meaning and purpose [13, 26]. At the same time, regular PA benefits psychophysical health and has a positive impact on the educational results of students [24]. However, with each subsequent year of study, an increase in hypokinesia among students is recorded [25].

In this regard, the issue of studying health values and motivational aspects of developing a HLS among young people is becoming relevant, which determined the direction of this study.

The purpose of the study is a comparative analysis of gender differences in the assessment of health savings goals of students at the end of the first year of study at a university.

2 Materials and Methods

The sociological study was carried out at Transbaikal State University among students who completed their first year of study in June 2023. The selection of participants was based on voluntary informed consent and anonymity. The study involved 330 students. Using a random sampling method, the project included individuals who entered the university immediately after graduating from secondary school and who lived with their parents or close relatives before entering the university. The average age of the respondents was $18,5 \pm 1,3$ years. The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in the table (table 1).

Table 1. Socio-demographic features of the researched, Chita, 2023

Answer options	Group I (n=250)		Group II (n=80)	
	Person	%	Person	%
1. Direction of training, including:				
	117	46,8	12	15

1.1 humanitarian	48	19,2	42	52,5
1.2 technical	85	34	26	32,5
1.3 natural science	123	49,2	36	45
2. Option for student accommodation during their first year of study at the university, including:	104	41,6	32	40
2.1 living with parents	23	9,2	12	15

All subjects were divided into 2 groups by gender: group I consisted of girls, group II consisted of boys.

A questionnaire was developed that included three blocks of questions: socio-demographic characteristics of students, assessment of their own health and questions reflecting lifestyle (PA, nutrition, sleep and mental health).

The study was conducted in the form of a survey remotely using Google Forms.

The data were presented as the absolute number of responses for each question and relative values as percentages. Pearson's χ^2 test was used to analyze the data. Confidence level of 95% was considered minimally sufficient ($p < 0.05$). To process and analyze empirical data, licensed versions of Statistica 10.0 and MS Excel 2010 programme were used.

3 Results and discussion

Based on the results of the study, statistically significant differences were revealed in the subjective assessment of the indicators of girls' and boys' own health at the end of the first year of study at a university ($\chi^2=9.4, p=0.025$) (graph 1).

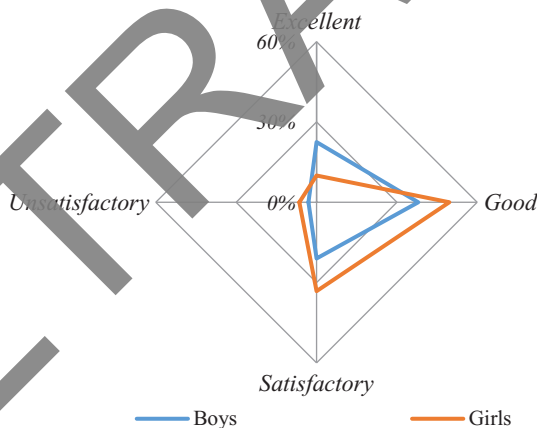


Fig. 1. Health status assessment by respondents, Chita, 2023

Group II respondents were 2.2 times more likely to rate their health as excellent compared to group I participants, which is consistent with the results of previous studies [18]. Probably, the low self-assessment of their own health among girls is caused by the peculiarity of the subjective perception of personal health, greater conservatism, responsibility, as well as the psychological desire to preserve their own position while studying at a university.

More than 80% of students in both groups considered their lifestyle to be a significant factor in maintaining and improving health ($p>0.05$). External factors accounted for 67 per cent of respondents ($p>0.05$).

38.2 per cent of the students surveyed were in favour of observing the principles of the HLS. Girls' adherence to these principles was statistically significantly lower than that of boys ($\chi^2=8.8$, $p=0.013$).

An assessment of potential factors that could change the position of project participants regarding adherence to a HLS showed that 45.6% of female respondents and 52.5% of male respondents were in favor of revising their lifestyle. The distribution of possible reasons for lifestyle changes is presented in the figure (graph 2).

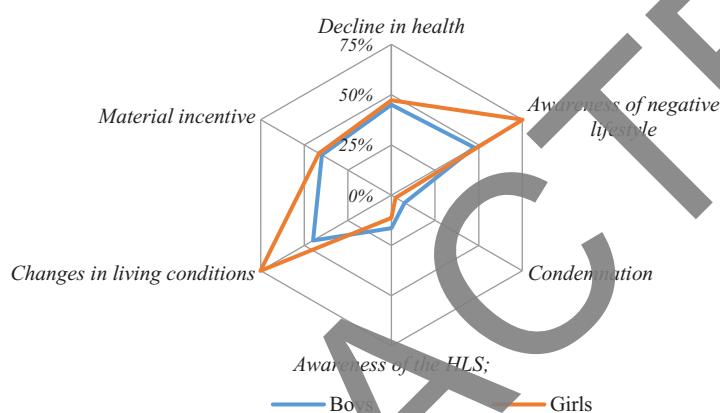


Fig. 2. Assessment of factors by respondents that could potentially change their lifestyle for the better, Chita, 2023

At the same time, 6.4% of girls and 11.3% of boys categorically declared their unwillingness to change anything. It is important to note that among the reasons preventing the formation and adherence to a HLS, the girls noted fatigue and lack of motivation, although no statistically significant differences were found in the assessments of respondents of both groups.

In 95% of cases, survey participants indicated their own responsibility for health; 25% of students considered health authorities responsible for the health of the population. Government support programs accounted for 6.4 per cent and 16.3 per cent respectively for girls and boys.

There was no statistically significant difference in the level of awareness on issues of protecting one's own health among the subjects ($\chi^2=3.3$, $p=0.195$). However, 23.2 per cent and 13.8 per cent of girls and boys, respectively, are concerned about the lack of knowledge about the formation of HLS.

The high rhythm of student life during university studies contributes to the growth of negative consequences on the health of students. This is due to the lack of proper self-discipline in the first year and prioritization in the regime of the day. According to the results of the study, no significant gender differences were revealed in the assessment of the regime of the day ($\chi^2=5.0$, $p=0.13$). Meanwhile, only 10.4% of girls and 18.8% of boys fully comply with the daily schedule. The lack of an orderly rhythm of life was noted by 22.8% and 26% of girls and boys, respectively.

It is important to note that only 50% of students in both groups indicate the need for knowledge about healthy eating as a determining factor of health. A balanced diet increases

the body's resistance to negative environmental factors, helps maintain and strengthen health and productive performance.

There were no statistically significant gender differences in the frequency of meals per day ($\chi^2=3.2$, $p=0.519$). About 8% of respondents answered that they eat 1-2 times a day. 47.6% and 26.3% of girls and boys, respectively, adhere to three meals a day. 18% of girls and 20% of boys indicated chaotic eating.

The statistically significant difference in the study groups ($\chi^2=9.8$, $p=0.008$) was found in the assessment of the adherence to a good diet. Young men were more likely to be nutritious. The choice of products according to the opinion of students, primarily depended on taste preferences, material capabilities, the availability of a range of dishes in the dining room or at home.

The results of the PA evaluation showed statistically significant gender differences ($\chi^2=8.5$, $p=0.015$). Boys more often characterized their PA as high than girls. Low rates of PA among respondents were 19.6% and 18.8% of girls and boys, respectively. It is important to note that more than half of the girls (58.4%) indicated that they do not regularly engage in PA. Meanwhile, 19.6% of girls and 11.3% of boys noted the absence of regular PA at all.

It is common knowledge that normal sleep provides an adequate psychophysiological state of a person. Sleep disturbance is a determining factor in maladaptive processes in students [15]. There were no statistically significant gender differences in sleep assessment ($p>0.05$). However, 21.2% and 28.8% of girls and boys, respectively, spend at least 8 hours on their sleep. 21.6% of girls and 15% of boys reported lack of sleep.

Among the most important maladaptive symptoms of students while studying at a university, researchers note increased fatigue, general anxiety, and insomnia. According to the results of the study, it was revealed that girls suffer from increased fatigue and insomnia statistically significantly more often ($\chi^2 = 1.7$, $p = 0.014$), which is consistent with the data of E. V. Lakarova [16].

According to the literature, about 60% of first-year students suffer from anxiety and depression, which is higher than the same level among older students (31%) [15, 16, 18]. This is probably due to the increased mental stability and self-confidence that many students develop by the end of their studies. According to the survey, a favorable psychological state is statistically significantly registered among young men ($\chi^2=14.3$, $p<0.001$). However, only a quarter of respondents indicated a desire to improve psychological stability skills, while 11% of respondents indicated a categorical "no".

4 Conclusion

Professional training at a university is associated with a number of risk factors for the development of health disorders, which requires the development of a set of practical competencies, worldview and an active life position on the formation of a HLS among young people.

Analysis of the data obtained revealed that 80% of students in both groups are informed about the importance of a HLS in preserving and promoting health.

It was revealed that adherence to the principles of a HLS among girls was statistically significantly lower than among boys ($\chi^2=8.8$, $p=0.013$). There were no statistically significant gender differences in the assessment of daily regimen ($\chi^2=5.0$, $p=0.13$). Young men more often characterized their PA as high and adhered to a balanced diet. According to the survey, a favorable psychological state was statistically significantly registered among young men ($\chi^2=14.3$, $p<0.001$). 21.6% of girls and 15% of boys reported lack of sleep.

Survey participants indicated their own responsibility for health in 95% of cases.

The obtained data can be an aspect for improving outreach work at the university, aimed at developing a HLS among first-year students.

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