Factors for increasing elderly men’s participation in physical activity and sports

Dmitriy Nikolayevich Pukhov1,1, Guzalia Zakirzyanovna Samigullina2, Alexander Vladimirovich Malinin1, Andrey Ivanovich Grebennikov1, and Anna Vladislavovna Tsareva1

1Saint-Petersburg Scientific-Research Institute for Physical Culture, Saint-Petersburg
2Civil Protection Institute, Udmurt State University, Izhevsk

Abstract. The article analyzes the results of questionnaire survey of elderly men in the monitoring of physical activity of different population groups. It was revealed that the most important motivational preferences for physical activity of men of this age were the strengthening of their health and self-improvement. Furthermore, a reliable correlation between interest in gaining social ties, new acquaintances and involvement in physical exercise and sports was revealed in the group of elderly men, which allows considering the possibility of socialization and new friendships as an effective motive for physical activity and sports activity of the elderly.

1 Introduction

Preservation and promotion of health of elderly men is a necessary condition for the full provision of their vital needs. Negative factors, including the peculiarities of modern fast pace of living, significant mental stress, as well as inactive lifestyle contribute to the increase in the number of diseases of elderly people in general, and men in particular [1-3]. The increase in the number of chronic diseases in this age group is significant [2].

To solve the described problem, it is necessary to develop a scientifically justified set of measures, including the development of physical qualities of the elderly person as a necessary component of organized physical culture and recreational activities that ensure the growth of functional capabilities of the body. At the same time, it will contribute to the provision of interesting, useful for health, including mental health, leisure activities.

However, at present, a significant number of elderly men demonstrate not only a pronounced lack of physical activity but also a lack of interest in it. The factors contributing to this attitude are the peculiarities of cultural traditions that influence, among other things, the lack of motivation for a healthy lifestyle and physical activity. At the same time, motivation is the most important condition for involving citizens in physical fitness and sports activities.

1 Corresponding author: dpuhov@spbniifk.ru

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Physical culture and sport have become the most important factors in ensuring a full human life in modern society, contributing to human development and increasing life expectancy. It finds considerable support at the national and state level.

It is enough, for example, to mention the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation from July 21, 2020 “On the national development goals of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030”, “Strategy for the development of physical culture and sport in the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030”, the “Sport is a norm of life” Federal project [4-6].

The study was conducted to analyze the peculiarities of motivation of elderly men to physical culture.

2 Materials and methods

The study used the survey method to identify the peculiarities of respondents’ motivation for physical exercise. Men (age range was 60-75 years) participated in the study. The total number of respondents was 355. Determination of the expression of various aspects of motivation to organized and independent physical activity and sports was conducted during online survey of respondents with the help of specially developed in Federal State Budget Institution Saint-Petersburg Scientific-Research Institute for Physical Culture web-service on the website of the study.

The whole contingent of respondents was divided into the group engaged in physical exercise and / or sport at least twice a week (EPE, n=131) and the group not engaged in physical exercise (NEPE, n=224).

Respondents answered proposed questions regarding different motivational preferences for physical activity and rated their importance using response options on a “(1) very important – (2) important – (3) not important” scale. The following motivations were analyzed: 1) “Finding new friends and acquaintances”; 2) “Need to look good”; 3) “Success in sports”; 4) “Improving health”.

During the processing and analysis of the material, the results of the answers to the questions in the EPE and NEPE groups were compared. Reliability was assessed using the $\chi^2$ criterion.

3 Results

When comparing the answers of the respondents in the EPE group to the question “Finding new friends and acquaintances” with the answers in the NEPE group, 14.5 percent of respondents in the EPE group chose the answer option “(1) very important”, while 5.3 percent of respondents chose this answer in the NEPE group. In the EPE group 55.7 percent of respondents chose the response option “(2) important” and in the NEPE group this response was chosen by 9.9 percent of respondents. The answer option “(3) not important” was chosen by 29.8 percent of respondents in the EPE group and by 84.8 percent of respondents in the NEPE group. In EPE group, the highest number of respondents (55.7 percent) selected the response option “(2) important”. In the NEPE group, the most frequent answer “(3) not important” was selected by 84.8 percent of the respondents. The maximum difference of 55 percentage points (p.p.) between EPE and NEPE was found in the answer “(3) not important”. The differences in the EPE and NEPE groups are reliable (p<0.01), which suggests that the motive of being included in social and friendly relations has a pronounced connection with involvement in physical activity.

When answering the “To look good” question, 13.7 percent of respondents in the EPE group chose the answer option “(1) very important”, and in the NEPE group this answer
was chosen by 26.5 percent. The answer “(3) not important” was chosen by 16.1 percent of respondents in the EPE group and 28.3 percent in the NEPE group, respectively. In both the EPE group and the NEPE group, the most frequent response option seemed to be “(2) important.” It was selected by 70.2 percent of the respondents in the EPE group and 45.2 percent in the NEPE group.

Thus, it was revealed that the maximum difference of 25 p.p. between FJS and NEPE was found in the answer “(2) important”, and the differences between the groups are not reliable.

The respondents’ choice of answers to the question “Success in sports” showed the following distribution. The answer “(1) very important” was chosen by 4.6 percent of respondents in the EPE group. In the NEPE group, 8.5 percent of respondents chose this response. The answer “(2) important” was chosen by 63.3 percent of respondents of the EPE group. Respondents of the NEPE group chose such an answer in only 18.9 percent of times. Only 32.1 percent of respondents of group chose the answer “(3) not important”, 72.6 percent of respondents chose this answer in NEPE group.

Thus, respondents in the EPE group were more likely to choose the answer “(2) important” (63.3 percent), while in the NEPE group, the most frequent answer was “(3) not important” – 72.6 percent.

The largest differences of 40.5 pp. between the answers in the EPE and NEPE groups are noted in the choice of the option “(3) does not matter”. The differences between the groups are reliable (p<0.05).

When analyzing the answers to the question “Improvement of health”, it was revealed that 75.6 percent of respondents in the EPE group chose the answer “(1) very important”, in the NEPE group this answer was chosen by 42.6 percent of respondents. The answer “(2) important” was chosen by 22.9 percent of the respondents in EPE group, while 50.2 percent of the respondents in NEPE group chose this answer. One and a half percent of respondents in the EPE group chose “(3) not important”, while in the NEPE group this answer was chosen by 7.2 percent of respondents.

Thus, respondents in the EPE group most frequently selected the answer “(1) very important” (75.6 percent) and respondents in the NEPE group selected the answer “(2) important” – (50.2 percent).

The largest difference of 33 p.p. was found between the EPE and NEPE groups in the “(1) very important” response. However, the differences between the groups are not reliable.

4 Discussion

Based on the conducted research, the peculiarities of motivation of elderly men were considered when developing approaches in the organization of physical training and recreational activities for this contingent. The use of the revealed peculiarities of motivation will allow increasing the interest of the participants to the specially developed programs and will form conditions for increasing the involvement of elderly men in physical activity.

Thus, it is shown that the motives of health promotion and self-improvement are important for more than 71 percent of men engaged in physical exercise. Also, in the group of elderly men a reliable correlation of interest in gaining friendships, new acquaintances and involvement in physical fitness and health activities was revealed, which allows considering the possibility of socialization and new friendships as an effective motive of physical fitness and sports activity of the elderly.
5 Conclusion

The study has shown that for the respondents of the engaged and non-engaged groups the important motives are health improvement and various aspects of self-improvement. To increase the level of involvement of the elderly it is necessary to have objective information about the structure of motivational preferences of this age category, as well as to consider individual perceptions and awareness of each. Increasing the awareness of older people about the features of a healthy lifestyle will promote their involvement in activities and awareness of the role of physical activity in its maintenance.

References