



INFLUENCE OF THE STATE OF EMERGENCY ON THE TRAINING ATTITUDES OF STUDENTS FROM UNWE ATHLETICS TEAM

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ABSTRACT

The restrictive measures have greatly affected sports life and sporting events in the country. Therefore, we conducted a survey among students from the athletics team of UNWE with the **purpose** to determine their attitude to the training process, their participation in competitions in a pandemic environment. The survey contained 10 questions and was conducted through the electronic platform for distance learning of UNWE. It was attended by 30 students - 15 women and 15 men. The **results** of the survey were processed mathematically and statistically. The analysis of the results shows that the needs of students for training activities are growing significantly, as over 75% of the women respondents and 85% of the men respondents need training and train more than three times a week. All athletes from the team give an unequivocal answer that with the opening of the stadiums they have managed to conduct quality training and the state of emergency has not had a detrimental effect on their sports form. The results provide us with the reason to **conclude** that the athletes are motivated and accept calmly the coming competitions; realize the importance of the sports activities for overcoming their physical and psychic problem.

Key words: athletics, students, survey, state of emergency, opinion.

INTRODUCTION

The state of emergency established in the world set up great challenges in all spheres of life; both before the various branches and sectors of the industry and economic activities and in the sphere of culture and education. Important are the problems provoked and set up for solution by the pandemic situation in the physical education and sport field too. People's health is a basic factor for the prosperity of each nation. The economic state of a nation conditions the welfare of the population which depends on labour productivity while it depends on the quality of labour force: on the physical and intellectual abilities of the workers and employees, on their life activity and creative initiative. It is proved long ago

that physical education and sport provide harmonic physical development, assist the strengthening of the natural defensive forces of the organism, prevent various illnesses (1).

Particularly today "the active participation of the students from the nonspecialized in sport high establishments in the physical education and sport school sessions and the acquisition of qualities and skill needed for their future professional realization" (2) as well as a prevention of their psychic and physical health. According to L. Kasabova, "the physical education and sport lecturers who should possess knowledge and skills for the effective management of the educational and training process, take particularly important place in that process"(3). It was in that aspect that we have made our survey.

Under the pandemic environment and the „contemporary urban way of life, the scientific and technical achievements, the lack of time appear the main cause for the growing hypodynamia and hypokinesia among students

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resulting in lower vital parameters and deterioration in health and lowering the learning abilities (4). Sport in the system of the higher education is of decisive role for entering the young people in various forms of physical activities, which is particularly important counteraction to the higher students' sedentary way of life (5).

More and more actual is the ancient Greek proverb: "If you want to stay strong – run, if you want to be beautiful – run, if you want to be clever – run" which adds even greater and intransient meaning during the world Covid19 pandemic. Aleksieva and Borukova mention in their works that "for the first time in the modern history the students from all higher schools have passed completely to a distant form of education even on the practical disciplines" (6).

Sport activities acquire even more important role today and bring numerous benefits to the body which even non practicing sport man or woman can number, i.e.: maintains and improves the general health status, increases endurance, helps struggle against extra kilograms, decreases stress, brings confidence and etc...

In the course of time men concluded that sport activities and particularly athletics can improve his body build, functional abilities and he can improve his entire way of life. In our time these activities have got preventive and building functions too – to protect man from atrophy of organs and systems resulting from the powerful intrusion of technique in his life. To become as well an objective measure for man's abilities towards the high sports performance. That adds importance and non-transience to the knowledge about the basic sport in human history – athletics (7).

Athletics is an individual sport. Such particularity presupposes ability for self-construction, self-control and self-evaluation – for the development of strong personal qualities (8).

Basic purpose of the study is to establish the problems met by the athletic competitors in the state of emergency imposed by corona virus epidemic and the possibility for their overcoming.

We have set up the following tasks for implementing the purpose of the study:

1. Development of survey card in the electronic platform.
2. Holding an inquiry with the students from UNWE athletic team.
3. Processing and analysis of the survey data.
4. Making conclusions and recommendations for the coaches' practice applicable in the state of emergency.

METHODOLOGY

The following methods are applied for implementing the purpose and tasks of the study: survey study of specific literature, inquiry method, mathematic-statistic methods. Object of the study is the training process of the UNWE athletic team in the state of emergency.

Subject of the study are the attitudes of the inquired students-athletes in relation to their sport-competitive preparation.

The study was performed by an inquiry of students from the UNWE representative athletic team in the UNWE online platform during the period of February 8-21, 2021 where 30 competitors took part /15 men and 15 women/.

The questionnaire card is anonymous and contains 10 questions referring to the problems of interest /**Annex 1**/.

Survey study data are subjected to mathematic-statistic processing – the results are processed in Excel by frequency analysis via one measure distribution of the frequencies.

RESULTS ANALYSIS

The sequence of the survey study answers is observed when analyzing the results.

To the question: "For how many years do you practice athletics?" All respondents give an unequivocal answer – they are practicing for more than 5 years – an indicator for the homogeneity of the group in relation to the length of training of the students-athletes.

To the second question "What raises your interest to active sport activities?", 33% of the women and 28% of men answer that sport improves their health. Approximately one third (33%) of men wish to be realized in professional sport while only 22% of the women look for professional realization. Impressive is the fact that the respondents from

both sexes answer by similar percentage correlation that sport helps them to create new social contacts. Respectively 15% of the

women and 11% of men answer that active sport practice increases their workability. (Figure 1 and Figure 2)

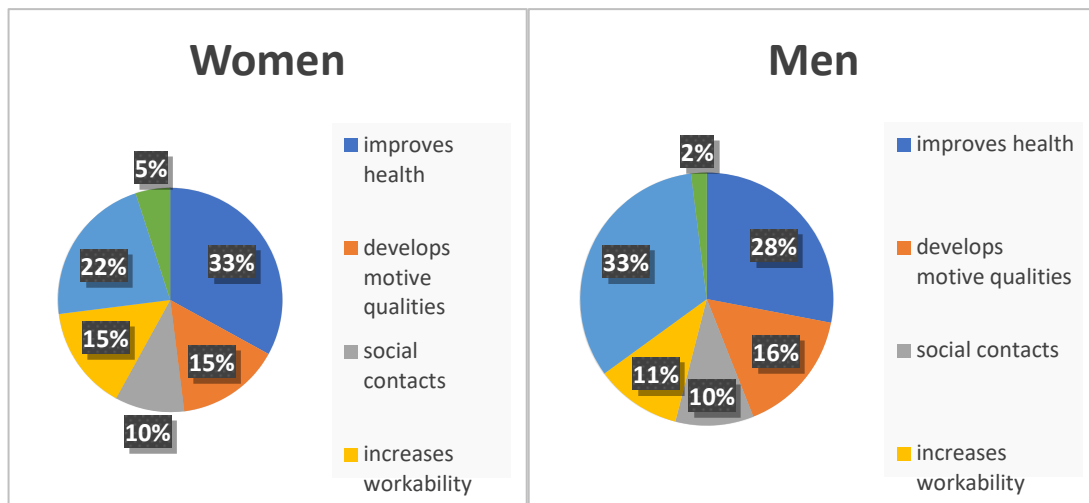


Figure 1.

Figure 2.

“Percentage distribution of the answers to the question” What raises your interest to active sport activities?”

To the question: “How often do you practice sport in a week?” It is seen in Figure 3 that 85% of men and 80% of the women succeed to effect more than three sport sessions per week which is a very good indicator for developing the sport form. Same percentage correlation – 15% of them effect three sessions a week.

Only 5% of the women train two times a week. All competitors from the UNWE representative athletic team combine education and sport in their everyday life during the state of emergency.

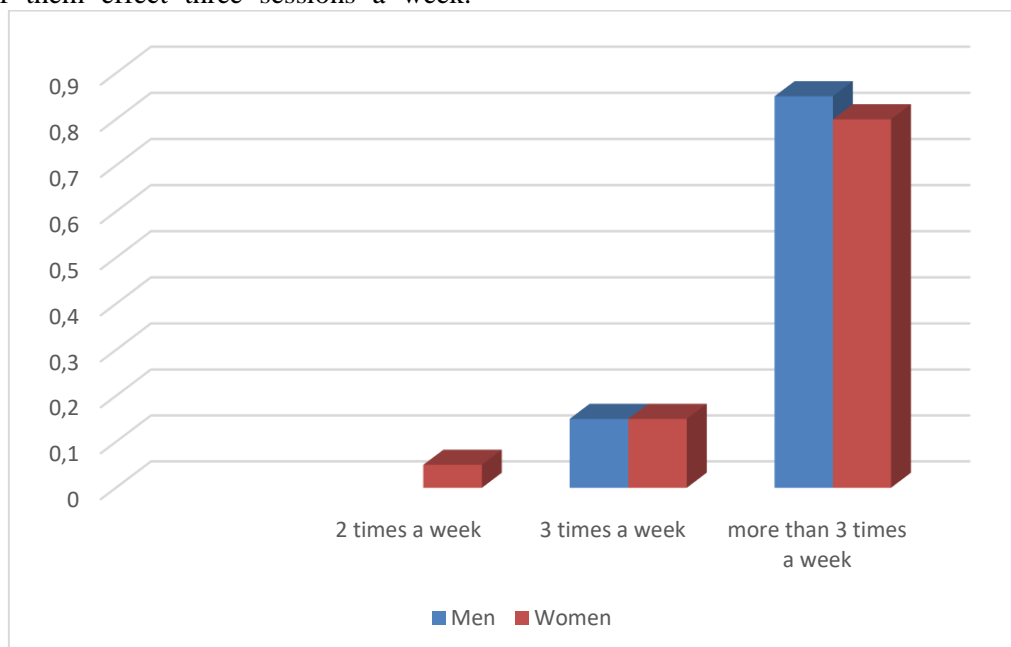


Figure 3. Percentage distribution of the answers to the question: ”How often do you practice sport in a week?”

The fourth question put to the students-athletes: ”How does the state of emergency in the country impact your preparation for the coming competitions?” arise from the necessity to find how the restrictions imposed in relation to the epidemic environment have influenced the systematic sport sessions and 800

events (training, competitions and tournaments) as nearly all sport events were cancelled and deferred in the time; to what degree and if the training process of the competitors was infringed.

The athletic competitions in “Akademic” Students’ sport association” calendar were suspended for several months and later on restored again. After the measures were eased and the parks and stadiums opened and accessible for work and preparation during the summer, the competitors from UNWE athletic representative team renewed their training activity.

All competitors from the team give unequivocal answer to the question: “How does the state of emergency in the country impact your preparation for the coming competitions?” – that after the stadiums were opened, they had succeeded to hold quality preparation and the state of emergency had not had a detrimental effect on their sport form.

The introduced quarantine has seriously affected the self-confidence of the people practicing sport, manifested by changes in their health status, both psychic and physical. Each person takes differently the social distance and isolation. Anyway, at first the idea to stay

home and enjoy the cosines of home was attractable for a lot of people but the unexpected long period of staying at home affected more than negatively the people, respectively the students practicing actively athletics.

As the question “What did you go through during the last months?” provides possibility of giving more than one answer, it can be seen in **Figure 4** that 73% of the women and 79% of men are even more motivated in respect to the coming competitions having in mind the epidemic environment. 51% of the women and 30% of men felt calm. High is the percentage of the women having experienced a state of anxiety during these months – 79% while the percentage of men is much lower – 23%. Alarmingly high is the percent of competitors experiencing irritability from the Covid19 pandemic – 65% of men and 58% of the women. Low is the percentage of the students experiencing indignation, boredom and nostalgia.

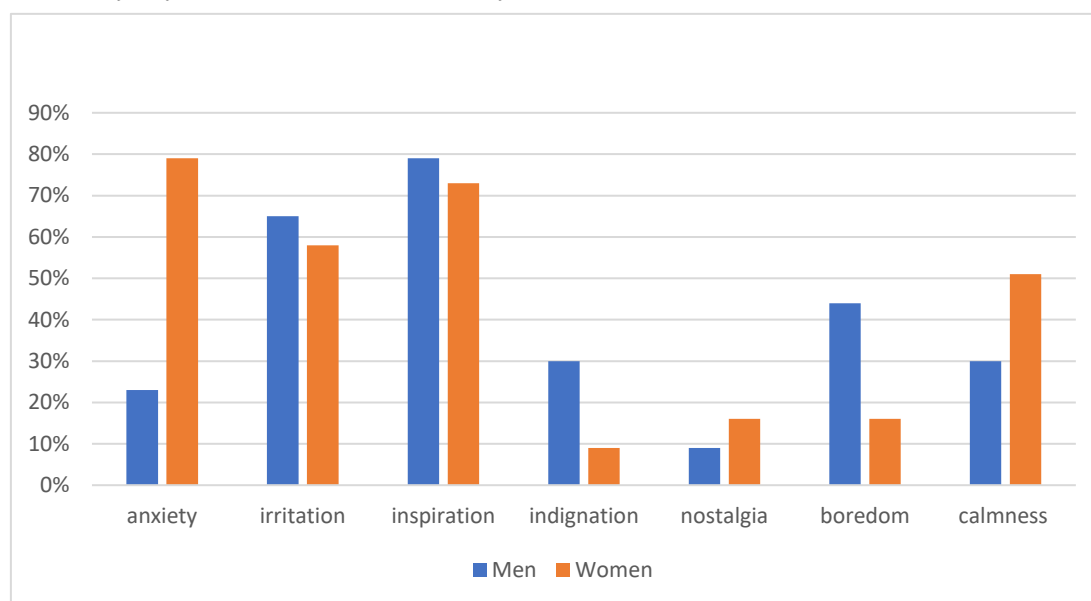


Figure 4. Answers received to the question: What did you go through during the last months?”

The next question is: “How does the state of emergency affect your health status?” Former studies point out that exhaustion, discomfort, eye problems, headache, increased stress level appear only part of the health problems experienced by people during pandemic. Physical activity and healthy food are important factors for achieving life of full value. Sport and physical exercises contribute not only for maintaining healthy weight but

prevent a range of illnesses as well as improving the physical and psychic health.

Figure 5 presents the results from inquiring that question. Here 85% of the men and 75% of the women state that nothing is changed in their health status. Non-important is the percentage of the athletes asked who had problems with sleeping, experienced anxiety and headache.

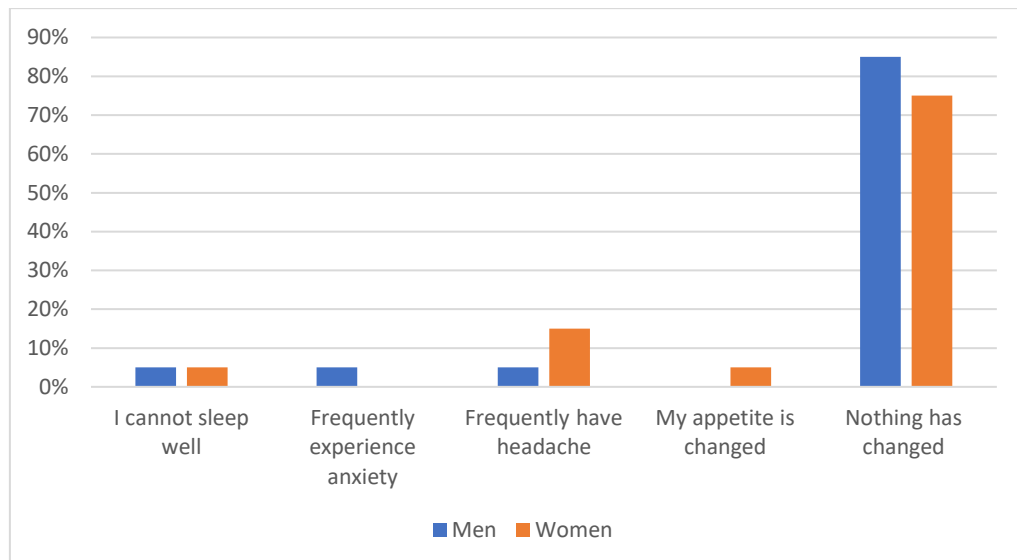


Figure 5. Students' answers to the question: "How does the state of emergency affect your health status?"

The question referred to the optimization and the order of the various activities of the students' everyday programme is: "Are you successful in organizing your daily routine?" All respondents have given unequivocal answer to that question. They were successful in organizing the educational and training process at high level during the pandemic period.

From the answers to the question: "How did the state of emergency affect your personal life?" it is obvious that the lack of social contacts is of greatest share in between the

answers of the athletes from the representative athletics team. They lack the social contacts with their colleagues, lecturers and team mates. It is seen in **Figure 6** that 70% of the men and 75% of the women did not have the possibility to travel and take part in competitions. Comparatively great is the percentage of the athletes-respondents – 45% of the men and 30% of the women who did not have the possibility to develop their personality. It is a pity that for great number of them – 85% of the men and 70% of the women lacked entertainments.

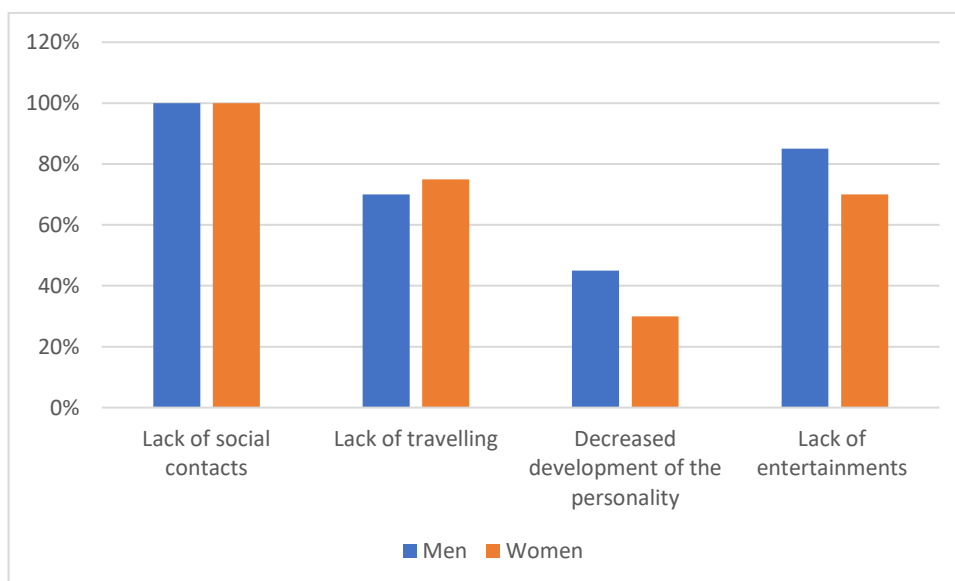


Figure 6. Answers to the question: "How did the state of emergency affect your personal life?"

Very interesting is the fact that the athletes-respondents accept the social isolation comparatively calmly and quickly get adapted

to the situation. It does not mean they are irresponsible to the seriousness of the epidemiologic environment, their health and

the health of their relatives. Younger people are much more adaptive and resourceful to quickly changing situations and opened to innovation approaches and methods for motive activity and way of life (9).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following conclusions can be made based on the results of the survey:

1. Great percentage of the athletes are motivated and calm in relation to the coming competitions.
2. The athletes-respondents realize the importance of practicing sport for overcoming physical and psychic problems.
3. Students orientate and adapt easily to innovative approaches and methods of motive activity and way of life.
4. The preparation of the athletes has not been disturbed nevertheless the situation. That is proved by their excellent results and classification in the SSA „Akademic” calendar competitions held during that time.

The following recommendations can be made for the practice:

1. It is necessary that the coaches of the students-athletes should work even more diligently for establishing better psychic stability and motivation of the competitors towards continuity of the training process and participation in competitions within the world pandemic.
2. We recommend to introduce and use innovative training means and methods into the training process which will permanently maintain training “hunger” and serious necessity and possibility for training and competitive load and manifestations of the competitors.

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Annex 1

Inquiry - Athletics

Made by: Senior lecturer Ekaterina Tosheva, PhD

The inquiry is purposed to study the motives of the students from the UNWE athletic representative team for active sport activities

1. Sex: Man Woman
2. Age :
3. For how many years do you practice athletics?
 - From 1 year
 - From 2 to 5 years
 - More than 5 years
4. What raises your interest to active sport?
 - Improves health
 - Develops complexly the motive qualities
 - Provides for social contacts
 - Increases workability
 - Possibility for professional realization
 - Other
5. How often do you practice sport a week?
 - Once
 - Twice
 - Three times
 - More than 3 times
6. How does the state of emergency in the country impact your preparation for the coming competitions?
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7. What did you go through during the last months? (More than one answer possible)
 - Anxiety
 - Irritation
 - Inspiration
 - Indignation
 - Nostalgia
 - Fear
 - Anger
 - Boredom
 - Calmness
8. How does the state of emergency affect your health status?
 - Cannot sleep well
 - Frequently experience anxiety
 - Frequently have headache
 - Appetite changed
 - Nothing has changed
 - Are you successful in organizing your daily routine?
 - Yes
 - No
10. How does the state of emergency affect your personal life?