

SOCIO-PEDAGOGICAL PREREQUISITES FOR FITNESS INDUSTRY FUNCTIONING IN BELARUS

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Abstract

The purpose of our questionnaire is the uncovering of prerequisites for recognizing fitness as a format of mass physical education.

Materials and methods. We questioned 100 respondents ranging in age from 20 to 60, with work experience from 1 to 40 years, more than 60% of the respondents have work experience from 5 to 20 years, and different specialization of work with population (aerobic, strength, competitive, oriental, water kinds of physical activity). The results were processed with statistical distribution-free methods (χ^2). When the number of testees exceeded 100 ($n = 100$), we used the method of Kolmogorov-Smirnov under normal distribution of selection.

Results. In accordance with the demand, aerobics and strength training occupy the 1st place, 30% and 40%, respectively. At the 2nd place, we have trouble zones exercises for women, swimming and water aerobics – 30% and 28%, respectively. At the 3rd place – sports and outdoor games, stretching – 18% and 13%, respectively. The other forms received less than 8%. The forms presented were evaluated in points, all the points were summed. In general, the demand is estimated to be 1.99 ± 1.31 points out of 12 possible, indicating the specialization in working with the population through the use of fitness technologies, based on 3-4 types of physical activity.

Conclusions. We think that the development of mass sport, sport for everybody, fitness as a means of health improvement is a prerogative of the Government via local authorities, sport organizations, institutions at this level, and, of course, the population.

In our opinion, fitness in Belarus functions independently but unsystematically, it develops unilaterally – it is self-organized in the process and in the use of fitness technologies only. The work on intentional development of and managing this form of mass physical education within the system is necessary.

Keywords: physical culture, sport, fitness, improvement of public health, physical activity, membership, instructors-methodologists.

Introduction

One of the recent and most grounded research papers on fitness analysis is a PhD thesis of Saykina (2009) who analyses fitness from the position of system-activity and system approaches as “... the process of dedicated and voluntary sport trainings aimed at wellness, improvement and maintenance of physical capacity, improving the standard of living (personal success and physical well-being) and effectiveness of professional activity by means of innovative technologies and equipment. Fitness is a social, complex, open, managed dynamic system, where the core factor is objective community’s demands to the physical culture and physical condition of a person, i.e. to improvement

and maintenance of the level of their physical capacity and health – to getting a useful effect” (p. 424).

Smirnov’s (2013) research sheds light on enhancement of the process of managing fitness services sphere taking into account organizational-pedagogical factors. The author claims that fitness is a sociocultural phenomenon, which is a modern way of health-improving physical education, and at the same time fitness is considered as “a form of physical education of a person, which bundles the basics of sport activity, the basics of healthy lifestyle, and the availability of comfortable sociocultural conditions” (p. 7).

The purpose of our questionnaire is the uncovering of prerequisites for recognizing fitness as a format of mass physical education.

Materials and Methods

We questioned 100 respondents ranging in age from 20 to 60, with work experience from 1 to 40 years, more than 60% of the respondents have work experience from 5 to 20 years, and different specialization of work with population (aerobic, strength, competitive, oriental, water kinds of physical activity). Experience and opinion of health-improving physical education instructors-methodologists might help us to see the prospects of recognizing organizational-managing and commercial activity in fitness field.

A case study was organized at the Institute for Advanced Studies and Retraining of the University of Physical Culture, Minsk, Republic of Belarus, from 1.09.2016 to 07.31.2017. In the specified period, instructors-methodologists of improving physical culture were students of advanced training faculties ($n = 100$). The survey was conducted face to face in the classroom, after the main classes.

We gave the participants a questionnaire, which consisted of 15 questions – open, closed, with several possible answers. Before answering the question, the participants were instructed. They carefully read all the suggested answers, and then chose the one that matches their opinion.

The data obtained during the survey were not disclosed and were used only in a generalized form. The surname was not indicated.

The results were processed with statistical distribution-free methods (Chi-square). When the number of testees exceeded 100 ($n = 100$), we used the method of Kolmogorov-Smirnov under normal distribution of selection.

We tried to study the mechanisms of the functioning of fitness industry in Belarus. Above all, we must admit that fitness in Belarus has all the features of the industry:

- a large number of product – fitness services and goods;
- the process of producing goods and services, various fitness products: from a sports event to sport and health services;
- different categories of consumers (membership in fitness-centers, service consumers of sport and health complexes and centers, rooters, spectators, sponsors, advertising providers and media).

One of the tasks of our study was a social research: poll, questionnaire, interviewing both fitness services consumers and producers – sport and health organizations heads – aimed at seeking actual mechanisms of fitness industry functioning.

Results

The problem of perceiving possibilities and consolidating efforts to promote and protect professional interests in physical education and sport organizations and associations has been discussed for long. 31% of all the respondents are members of a public organization: 11% – federations, 12% – clubs, the rest 1 to 3% are members of various club associations (Figure 1).

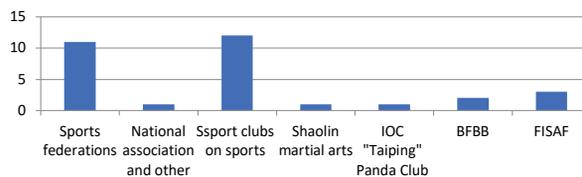


Figure 1. Membership in physical education and sport public organizations (%)

These data say that the third of all specialists of the field understand and use the possibility of uniting efforts to promote their kind of sport, to exchange experience, and to teach it at a significant and the Government-recognized level, as well as at the international level. Correspondingly, 69% of the respondents are not members of any public professional organizations.

We have studied the motives of fitness consumers of health-fitness-recreational services (fitness services) in the community, according to the opinion of the producers of these services – instructors-methodologists. Indicators were normally distributed ($p < 0.01$) (Table 1).

The respondents had to choose from 11 suggested motives. If any motives lacked, they could write theirs (3 motives at the bottom of the table) and to evaluate in points, grading them by significance. Such motives, as “To improve health”, “Abreaction”, “To shape balanced constitution” scored the biggest amount of points from 1.5 to 3. The following motives “To replete physical activity”, “Trainings themselves appeal”, “Possibility to enjoy oneself” got from 1 to 1.5 points. The other motives got 1 point.

When answering the question “What exercises are most in demand by your trainees?” instructors-methodologists indicated the following: step, aerobics, cardio exercises for women’s trouble zones, strength training, yoga, breathing exercises, Qigong, swimming, water

Table 1. Motives for choosing fitness trainings by fitness services consumer in the community ($\bar{x} \pm Sx$)

Motives for choosing fitness trainings	$\bar{x} \pm Sx$
To improve health	1.08±0.09
Abreaction	1.00±0.12
To shape balanced constitution	0.84±0.10
To replete physical activity	0.74±1.00
Possibility to enjoy oneself	0.67±0.10
Trainings themselves appeal	0.55±0.10
Joy from communicating with friends and like-minded people	0.45±0.09
To increase psychological stability, necessary in modern life	0.27±0.08
Training is prestigious	0.06±0.03
Trainer appeals	0.19±0.06
Activeness and working ability in family increases	0.04±0.03
To get rid of a pathologies	0.03±0.03
TV and cinema motivation	0,01±0,01
To participate in competitions	0.03±0.02

aerobics, sport and mobile games, “unusual exercises”, dancing exercises, figure skating, stretching (Figure 2). We evaluated the most popular forms of fitness activities.

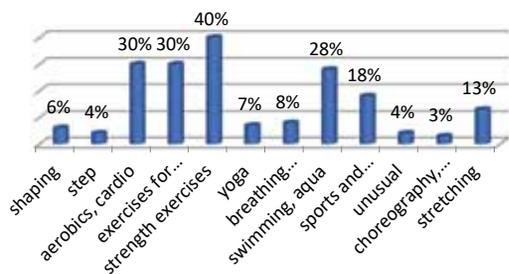


Figure 2. Exercises demand by trainees (%)

In accordance with the demand, aerobics and strength training occupy the 1st place, 30% and 40%, respectively. At the 2nd place, we have trouble zones exercises for women, swimming and water aerobics – 30% and 28%, respectively. At the 3rd place – sports and outdoor games, stretching – 18% and 13%, respectively. The other forms received less than 8%. The forms presented were evaluated in points, all the points were summed. In general, the demand is estimated to be 1.99 ± 1.31 points out of 12 possible, indicating the specialization in working with the population through the use of fitness technologies, based on 3-4 types of physical activity.

We have studied the attendance of fitness trainings by clients per week (Figure 3): twice a week – 40%, 3 times a week – 44%, more than 3 times a week – 16%, it should be noted that in addition to established forms of group exercises with instructors, self-trainings have also been recorded – from 1 to 5 times a week.



Figure 3. The attendance of fitness trainings per week (%)

Within our research, the respondents demonstrated their attitude towards the use of fitness means in the programs of sport and recreation groups. A “good” was chosen by 62% of the respondents, “very good” – by 36%, “indifferent” – by 2% (Figure 4).

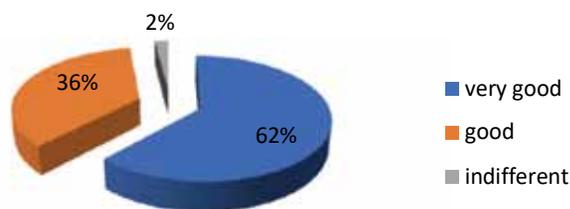


Figure 4. The attitude towards the use of fitness means in the programs of sport and recreation groups (%)

As a part of the study related to the control of the heart rate measurement and other indicators of the functional state during trainings, the respondents indicated the following: “necessary” – 55%, “desirable” – 40%, “optional” – 2%, found it difficult to answer – 3% (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Attitude towards the control of the heart rate measurement and other indicators of the functional state during trainings (%)

We have also found a repeatedly visible connection of personal and professional qualities of the expert, and, consequently, the ability to create an appropriate atmosphere during trainings.

While answering the question “What, in your opinion, is the most significant specific quality of an instructor-methodologist of sport and recreation groups?” the respondents marked with figures from 1 to 4; on the 1st place – the most significant one. Answers: “Ability to communicate”, “Having a sense of humor”, “No special preferences” – occupied the 1st place among the other qualities. Remarkably, “Knowledge and professionalism”, “Charisma and talent”, and “Leadership features” are on the 2nd place. In our opinion, it is most likely that communication skills play the primary role for services in comparison with professional ones, since in the sphere of “person-to-person” relations the most important are understanding, empathy and psychological components of interaction, and only then – professional features (Table 2).

61% of instructors-methodologists refer to the network to improve their skills, and only 11% – to books and magazines. At the same time, 50% of the respondents prefer one of the most popular forms of education – seminars. Respondents also noted the following forms of enhancing their skills: participation in festivals – 16%, conventions – 21%, individual training at the “gurus” of the direction, recognized authorities – 25% (Figure 6).

Table 2. Sport and health instructor’s qualities ($\bar{x} \pm S_x$)

Instructor’s features	$\bar{x} \pm S_x$
Ability to communicate	1.86±0.05
Having a sense of humor	2.90±0.05
Knowledge and professionalism	1.43±0.07
No special preferences	2.91±0.17
Charisma and talent	0.46±0.12
Leadership features	0.30±0.10
Personal growth, desire to help	0.05±0.04
Personal experience and example	0.16±0.07

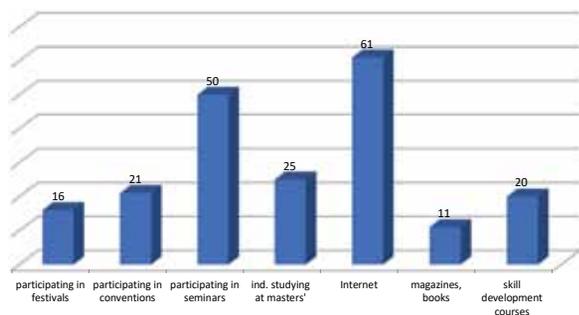


Figure 6. Ways of skill development for instructors-methodologists (%)

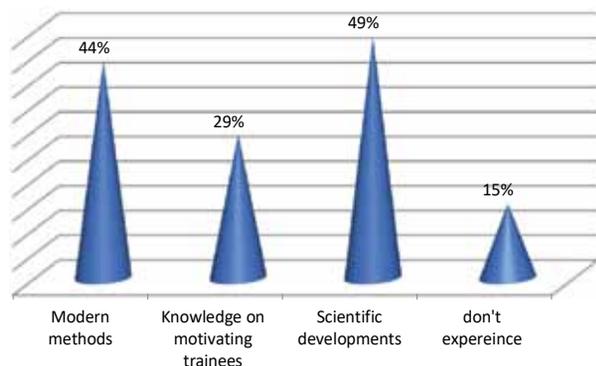


Figure 7. Instructors-methodologists' lack of information (%)

However, the answers to the question: “Do you have a lack of information on ...”, are as follows (Figure 7).

Within our research, we analyzed the instructors-methodologists' satisfaction with their work, organization and health improvement process during the services provided for population (Table 3).

Among all the testees, 52% are satisfied according to the average estimate of all parameters from 13.5 ± 3.48 points or higher (up to 24 points out of 30 possible). To understand the trends in estimating satisfaction, we have presented the data $X \pm SX$ of every indicator individually, see Table 3 for details. Instructors-methodologists' identified satisfaction with their work, organization and health improvement process when providing services for population is adequate towards today's socio-economic conditions of Belarus in the field of health improvement.

Table 3. Instructors-methodologists' satisfaction with their work, organization and health improvement process

Instructors-methodologists' satisfaction	$x \pm Sx$
The material and technical conditions of your work	2.28±0.87
The activeness of population about trainings and sport	2.47±0.98
The policy of promoting your services and the services of the organization you work in	2.50±0.96
Employer's requirements to your competence	1.85±0.83
Trainees' requirements to your competence	1.67±0.68
Your organization's efforts to increase your wages	2.76±1.07

52% of the respondents noted the need to consolidate the industry specialists – instructors-methodologists, trainers, teachers, including sport management, marketing specialists, with the aim of bringing mass sport, as a reserve for professional one, in the Republic of Belarus to a new level of development. The need for advocacy, protection, and presentation of scientific and practical interests of the industry from the standpoint of international standards of providing physical education and sport services was noted by 24% of the testees. And the recognition of fitness as a format of mass physical education at the current stage of the industry development, and consequently, the recognition of the profession of a “fitness specialist” was stated by 73% of the respondents (Figure 8).

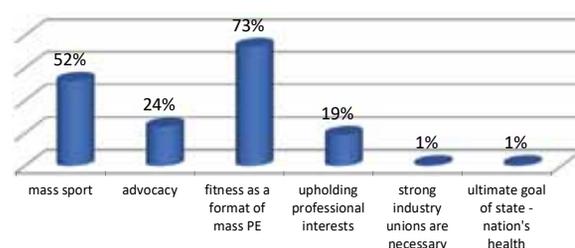


Figure 8. The need to consolidate the industry specialists (%)

That confirms the understanding of the role of the respondents' profession in the mission of health improvement of the population, understanding of the level and the capabilities of its reserve to participate in the process. In general, the need to defend any professional interests (19%), which, in particular, was explained by the instructors-methodologists in the field “something else”; “strong industry unions are needed”, “the ultimate goal of the state is the health of the nation” were noted by 1%.

Discussion

Scientists and experts should pay attention to this candidate pool, working with which it is possible to predict strengthening of the field potential in health-improving work through fitness. Apparently, the majority of health-improving physical education instructors-methodologists have no idea about the possibilities that normally open up through cooperating in all forms with public organizations of different levels (local, national, international). Special information work is needed in this direction.

It is known, that the issue of motivation to physical training has been studied since the mid-60s of the 20th century. So, Ilyin (2002) admits, that on the initial level the reasons to start doing sport (regardless of a kind of activity) can be: aspiration to self-perfection, aspiration to self-expression and self-esteem, social attitudes, satisfaction of spiritual and bodily needs.

Gorbunov (1977) includes to this complex the following needs: seeking activity, seeking movement, seeking realization of the reflexes of purpose and activ-

ity, seeking rivalry, the need to be part of a group, need to communicate, and need of new impressions, etc.

The motive is an incitement to a specific activity, to the satisfaction of needs in a certain way. If you need a source of the activity, the motives give a certain direction to this activity and keep people under this way (Gorbunov, 1977). The motives explain why these certain goals were set; relentless desire to achieve them is developing. For the sport activity, a wide variety of motives are indicative. This might be explained by physical and mental stress, and people must know what they strain for (Smirnov, 2013). The motivation for physical activity is a special state of the individual, aimed at achieving an optimal level of physical fitness and health.

According to the data (Lisitskaya & Sidneva, 2002; Saykina, 2015; Soloshenko, 2014) the main motive to choose fitness trainings both for men and women is dissatisfaction with their appearance and desire to prolong youth, etc.

It is worth admitting, that these popular types and forms, which, in fact, are the basis of the content of work groups – fitness technologies – remain unchanged from the beginning of the traditional health services market formation in the late 90s and early 2000s, in particular, aerobics, water aerobics, strength exercises, sport and outdoor games, stretching. Such, in general, long-known, but for various reasons still not popular in our country forms as yoga, qigong and breathing exercises have received the lowest score in regard to the lack of widespread popularity and recognition in the last few years. Today, “Belarusian State University of Physical Culture” and other institutions of higher education in the country provide training of sport and recreation activities instructors-methodologists. For more than 20 years, aerobics, aqua aerobics, strength exercises, sports and outdoor games, stretching, as an integral part of gymnastics traditionally used in the methods of improving population’s health, have been studied and carried out. As for the oriental health-improving, or “therapeutic”, as it is usually called now, directions – there are no training facilities, institutions in Belarus. Instructors offering such services tend to have studied or are studying abroad (India, China, Russia, Ukraine) and in the majority of cases, their level of training is below the level of our educational standard of the specialization “Instructor-methodologist on sport and recreation activities”. This phenomenon in the field is confirmed by a number of researchers (Ilyin, 2002; Lisitskaya & Sidneva, 2002; Saykina, 2015). Perhaps such a distribution of points is connected with the supply of those forms and types of health services traditionally studied and used in the work with the population.

The data achieved within the research described above refer to the recommendations of international research organizations and institutions, as well as the scientists in the sphere of physical education and recreation, such as World Health Organization (WHO).

Thus, the motivation for fitness is necessary at least to prevent and reduce the risk of diseases. The Global

Recommendations on Physical Activity for Health 2010 of the WHO emphasizes, “...routinely occur at levels of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity per week.” And the maximum effect is achieved by the motivation of the person’s psychophysical development – opposition to stress factors, the ability to adapt to the changing conditions of life, self-actualization.

It is worth to note the importance of the existing direct relationship between physical activity and cardiorespiratory system (reducing the risk of coronary heart disease, diseases of the cardiovascular system, stroke, hypertension), which, according to WHO, ought to be brought to attention.

Physical activity improves cardiorespiratory system. Fitness (physical form) is in a direct “dose – response” relationship between the intensity, frequency, duration and volume. There is a “dose – response” relationship for cardiovascular disease and coronary heart disease.

Due to the fact, that only during the last 20 years, traditional forms of fitness or fitness technologies have become the content of the activities of sport and recreation groups, we also studied the understanding of and commitment to fitness means for the experts who studied and graduated long ago, far earlier than fitness itself and its technologies appeared. They had the opportunity to learn fitness techniques only in refresher courses or by themselves. In the previous question, these specialists marked the forms of trainings that scored the lowest amount of points (traditional running, walking, cycling, PFD, etc.). This means that they do not use or partially use fitness means in their daily work. Apparently, the reason for this is the fear and ignorance of the basics of using these means in private professional practice. Nevertheless, no one chose a “negative” attitude as an answer – 0%.

The overwhelming majority of instructors-methodologists – 95% perceive, and are likely to exercise medical-pedagogical control during trainings, which they learned in the institutions of higher education. Throughout their professional career, they are periodically appraised in terms of medical and pedagogical control. This means that an instructor-methodologist manages the process of health improvement consciously and professionally, has information on the dynamics of the main indicators of physical development, physical preparedness and functional state of trainees that are impacted with the load suggested during a training. The need for medical-pedagogical control in the sport and recreation activities of an instructor-methodologist is proved by the normative documents and a number of researchers (Howley, Edward & Franks, 1997; Ilyin, 2002; Lukyanenko, 2008).

For the former Soviet Union consumers, especially in services, it is common to remain at the stage of “saturation” by them, which was not available to us 20 years ago, especially in physical education, that earlier had only a developing character and prepared the entire popula-

tion to work and defense, and had nothing to do with the needs of an individual (Supikov & Ponomarchuk, 2005).

Today a modern fitness instructor's work fills this gap and "saturate" the population with communication and understanding in the course of providing services that satisfy their individual needs of a physical and mental status. "Personal experience and example", "Personal growth, desire to help" occupy the 3rd place, the indicators were normally distributed ($p < 0.01$).

The problem of career enhancement in today's world of a high informatization of society is very acute. In the sphere of physical education and sport, where the transfer of personal experience and specific knowledge play a very big role, the current skill development acquires new forms and significance. Our research validates the correspondence of global trend line in many professions – training and professional development through Internet technologies.

The lack of information on modern sport and health improvement methods is noted by 44% of the respondents, 29% – of knowledge on attracting trainees to sports activities, on their motivation, on scientific developments of foreign and national sport and health improvement specialists (new equipment, opportunities of technical and information means of education, etc.) – 49%. 15% of the testees do not experience any lack of information.

Apparently, emphasis should be placed on Internet technologies in working out studying-methodological complexes, training and refresher courses, for the development of modern competence of physical education specialists. It is necessary to create ready-made high-quality scientifically grounded and well-proven "educational products" for online studying. The disadvantage of the current situation in using the Internet as the main and only source of information for an instructor-methodologist is that the overwhelming minority know about the existence of specialized professional resources, containing grounded information about the directions and kinds of fitness. A sad example is "strength training", everything we traditionally classify as strength kinds and athletic gymnastics. Everything displayed on the Internet as "strength" at once leads far from real methods and procedures of its development and is replaced by a "surrogate" with suggestions on "sport diet" and additional "extremely necessary means of building-up physique".

It is worth noting that a necessary form of skill development, provided by the Government, makes 20% of the respondents remain supporters of traditional courses in institutions of education, that are given the right to exercise educational activity.

The standardization of the services provided, including the field of physical education and sport, has been long discussed by the international community. Since the end of the 1980s, when TQM appeared, Japanese scientists and managers have created the quality control system, which was followed by the standards. Today we know still existing Russian GOST (all-Union State Standard), our Belarusian standard STB (Stand-

ards of the Republic of Belarus), and a wide range of other European and national (of independent states for their internal market) standards relevant for other spheres of economics. Belarus has no such a document or standard regulating fitness services, and we decided to learn the respondents' attitude towards the following question: "Do we need any standards in the field of providing physical education and sport services?" 82% responded affirmatively, 18% – negatively.

Here we see that in any way transparent requirements to the process of providing health improvement and fitness services are demanded not only by clients, which is obvious in accordance with the law "On Protection of Consumer Rights", but also by instructors-methodologists. That may result in everyone's greater responsibility for the whole process and, therefore, will provide the security and safety of the fitness and health services consumer. These provisions were marked by the respondents in the field "briefly explain".

Conclusion

We think that the development of mass sport, sport for everybody, fitness as a means of health improvement is a prerogative of the Government via local authorities, sport organizations, institutions at this level, and, of course, of population.

In our opinion, fitness in Belarus functions independently but unsystematically, it develops unilaterally – it is self-organized in the process and in the use of fitness technologies only. The work on intentional development of and managing this form of mass physical education within the system is necessary.

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СОЦІАЛЬНО-ПЕДАГОГІЧНІ ПЕРЕДУМОВИ ФУНКЦІОНУВАННЯ ФІТНЕС-ІНДУСТРІЇ В БІЛОРУСІ

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Реферат. Стаття: 7 с., 3 табл., 8 рис., 10 джерел.

Метою нашої статті є виявлення передумов для визнання фітнесу в якості формату масового фізичного виховання.

Матеріали та методи. В опитуванні взяло участь 100 респондентів у віці від 20 до 60 років, з досвідом роботи від 1 до 40 років, понад 60% респондентів мають досвід роботи від 5 до 20 років і різну спеціалізацію роботи з населенням (аеробіка, сила, конкурентоспроможність, східні, водні види фізичної активності). Для обробки даних використовувався метод Колмогорова-Смирнова.

Результати. Відповідно до попиту аеробіка і силові тренування займають 1-е місце, 30% і 40% відповідно. На 2-му місці у нас в проблемних зонах вправи для жінок, плавання та аквааеробіка – 30% і 28% відповідно. На 3-му місці - спортивні та рухливі ігри, розтяжки - 18% і 13% відповідно. Інші форми отримали менше 8%. Пред-

ставлені форми оцінювалися в балах, всі бали підсумовувалися. В цілому попит оцінюється в $1,99 \pm 1,31$ бала з 12 можливих, що вказує на спеціалізацію по роботі з населенням з використанням фітнес-технологій, заснованих на 3–4 видах фізичної активності.

Висновки. Розвиток масового спорту, спорту для всіх, фітнесу як засобу оздоровлення є прерогативою уряду через місцеві органи влади, спортивні організації, установи.

Фітнес в Білорусі функціонує незалежно, він розвивається в односторонньому порядку: самоорганізується в процесі використання фітнес-технологій. Необхідна робота з планомірного розвитку і управління цією формою масового фізичного виховання в системі.

Ключові слова: фізична культура, спорт, фітнес, оздоровлення, фізична активність, членство, інструктори-методисти.

СОЦІАЛЬНО-ПЕДАГОГИЧЕСКИЕ ПРЕДПОСЫЛКИ ФУНКЦИОНИРОВАНИЯ ФИТНЕС-ИНДУСТРИИ В БЕЛАРУСИ

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Реферат. Статья: 7 с., 3 табл., 8 рис., 10 источников.

Целью нашей статьи является выявление предпосылок для признания фитнеса в качестве формата массового физического воспитания.

Материалы и методы. В опросе приняло участие 100 респондентов в возрасте от 20 до 60 лет, с опытом работы от 1 до 40 лет, более 60% респондентов имеют опыт работы от 5 до 20 лет и различную специализацию работы с населением (аэробика, сила, конкурентоспособность, восточные, водные виды физической активности). Для обработки данных использовался метод Колмогорова-Смирнова.

Результаты. В соответствии со спросом аэробика и силовые тренировки занимают 1-е место, 30% и 40% соответственно. На 2-м месте у нас в проблемных зонах упражнения для женщин, плавание и аквааэробика – 30% и 28% соответственно. На 3-м месте – спортивные и подвижные игры, растяжки – 18% и 13% соответственно. Другие формы получили менее 8%. Представленные

формы оценивались в баллах, все баллы суммировались. В целом спрос оценивается в $1,99 \pm 1,31$ балла из 12 возможных, что указывает на специализацию по работе с населением с использованием фитнес-технологий, основанных на 3–4 видах физической активности.

Выводы. Развитие массового спорта, спорта для всех, фитнеса как средства оздоровления является прерогативой правительства через местные органы власти, спортивные организации, учреждения.

Фитнес в Беларуси функционирует независимо, он развивается в одностороннем порядке: самоорганизуется в процессе использования фитнес-технологий. Необходимо работа по планомерному развитию и управлению этой формой массового физического воспитания в системе.

Ключевые слова: физическая культура, спорт, фитнес, оздоровление, физическая активность, членство, инструкторы-методисты.

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