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Opinions and Attitudes of Recreational Swimmers from Kosice to Other Sport Activities

Abstract

Regular physical activity positively affects the entire organism and also the vitality of the human body. The aim of our study was to analyse the attitude of recreational swimmers to other sports activities. The research group involved 55 participants from Košice (35 men aged $34 \pm 11,7$ and 20 women aged $33 \pm 10,7$). As a research method, we used a questionnaire with mostly closed questions.

The answers of recreational swimmers suggest a positive finding that recreational swimming inspires them to practice also other sports activities. Most of the recreational swimmers practice other sports activities that are not organized but they do other sports activity 1–5 times per week. The men prefer and practice more sports activities per week than women ($p < 0,05$). The participants mostly practice cycling, running, men also play football and hockey, whereas women practice fitness and dance. Most of the participants would like to do more activities but they are limited by lack of free time and specifically women are limited by family care ($p < 0,05$). All the participants practice other sports activities because of their own need, whilst women chose to maintain appropriate body weight and good figure as the significant reasons for practicing the sports activity. In general, we can conclude that recreational swimmers, who practice swimming 1–2 times per week and also practice 1–5 times per week other sports activities, have enough physical activity positively influencing their health and physical condition.

Keywords: Recreational swimmers, sports activities, physical activity, vitality, leisure time.

Introduction

Regular practice of physical activity positively affects the whole organism, but also the vitality of a man¹. Some authors define physical activity as a specific

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¹ J. Hřčka, *Kapitoly zo športovej zdravotvedy vysokoškolačka*, Žilina 2009; J. Kasa, *Pohybová aktivita*, Bratislava 1995; A. Hogenová, *Pohyb a tělo: výber filosofických textu*, Praha 2000.

type of muscle work, other authors understand it as a human feature, the same as for example purposefulness or resolution. Regular physical activity helps to build up health, lowers risk of metabolic syndrome, obesity and cardiovascular diseases. European Commission presents a lot of alarming information in the field of public health related to decrease of physical activity and inappropriate eating habits in European countries². The EC points out an increased number of people suffering from overweight or obesity. Physical activity can be divided with respect to load, management and repetition of activity into organized and non-organized activity³. Organized physical activity is conducted by qualified professionals or organizations (sports clubs, sports courses). Non-organized physical activity (recreational activity) is performed of one's own free will and internal need; it is practiced with friends and for fun. According to physical load, activities can also be divided into recreational and performance activities. According to a frequency per week we recognise regular and irregular activity⁴. Sport and recreational activities include walking, swimming, running, cycling, dancing and ski running, that should be practiced at least 3 times per week, 30–45 minutes⁵. Being physically active is important to prevent heart disease and stroke, the nation's No. 1 and No. 5 factors of morbidity. To improve overall cardiovascular health, it is recommended to perform at least 150 minutes per week of moderate exercise or 75 minutes per week of vigorous exercise (or a combination of moderate and vigorous activity). Thirty minutes a day, five times a week is an easy goal to remember. People will also experience benefits even if they divide their time into two or three segments of 10 to 15 minutes per day⁶. Swimming is very popular and belongs to one of the most popular sport-recreational activities. During swimming, almost all muscle groups are used and we can consider it as a very effective cardio training. Swimming also positively affects body posture, it has calm and relaxing effects on the body and it also helps to lower stress⁷. In the previous study we paid attention to opinions and attitudes of recreational swimmers to recreational swimming. We found that the

² G. Belēvičs, *Zdravý životný štýl pre zdravšiu budúcnosť v EÚ, Lotyšská republika 2016*, http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/policy/index_sk.htm.

³ B. Hodaň, *Úvod do teórie telesnej kultúry*, Olomouc 1997.

⁴ B. Hodaň, T. Dohnal, *Rekrealógia*, Olomouc 2008.

⁵ M. Máček, J. Máčková, *Fyziológia telesných cvičení*, Brno 1997; J. Hřčka, *Kapitoly zo športovej zdravotvedy vysokoškolačka*, Žilina 2009.

⁶ American Heart Association, *The American heart association recommendations for physical activity in adults*, USA 2015, http://www.heart.org/idc/groups/heart-public/@wcm/@fc/documents/downloadable/ucm_469557.pdf; British Heart Foundation, *Physical activity statistics 2015*, UK 2015, <https://www.bhf.org.uk/publications/statistics/physical-activity-statistics-2015>; World Health Organization, *Global recommendations on physical activity for health*. Switzerland 2010. http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/44399/1/9789241599979_eng.pdf.

⁷ I. Čechovská, T. Miller, *Plavání*, Praha 2001; Z. Hofer, *Technika plaveckých způsobů*, Praha 2000; Y. Macejková et al., *Didaktika plávania*, Bratislava 2005.

male and female swimmers who regularly swim 1–2 per week think that it would be appropriate to swim 2–3 times per week. They practiced leisure swimming in maximum one hour per week. When we take into account men and women, the men performed this activity on a more regular basis. The main reasons for not swimming more often were lack of time or too much work⁸. We agree with the opinions of various professionals that swimming supplements physical activity but it cannot replace all the other physical activities⁹. During swimming, there is a lower gravity and thus a lower load on bones and joints and this decreases the activity of ligament cells¹⁰. Therefore the choice of physical activity is very important because it should optimally and adequately to age stimulate the movement system. The aim of this study was to receive opinions and attitudes of recreational swimmers in Košice to other sports activities.

Methods

The research group involved 53 recreational swimmers, 20 women aged $33 \pm 10,7$ and 35 men aged $34 \pm 11,7$. The group was chosen on the grounds of direct observation and interview. The research took place at a swimming pool in a secondary school in Košice-Šaca and at the city swimming pool in Košice.

We used a questionnaire for obtaining the research data. The questionnaire was aimed at the relationship of recreational swimmers to other physical activities and it contained semi – opened and closed questions. All the questionnaires were printed and distributed in printed form.

The data obtained by means of the questionnaire were first organized and sorted in MS Excel. We used basic statistical characteristics for evaluation of the research data. We used Chi-square test for stating statistical significance between variables. The results were evaluated and interpreted with use of logical analysis, synthesis, induction and deduction.

Results

One of the questions was whether recreational swimming motivates people to perform other activities and most of the participant answered positively. The men answered yes in higher number than women, whereas women answered rather yes more often than men. Neutral answer (I don't know) was chosen more

⁸ I. Matúš, *Názory a postoje rekreačných plavcov k rekreačnému plávaniu v Košiciach*, [in:] J. Broďáni (red.), *Pohyb a kvalita života*, Nitra 2015, pp. 59–68.

⁹ I. Dylevský, J. Kálal, P. Kolář, M. Kučera, P. Korbelář, C. Noble, *Pohybový systém a zátěž*. Praha 1997, p. 249.

¹⁰ W. Noak, *Arthrose und Sport*, Deutschland 1991, p. 354.

often by the women than by the men. Negative answer (rather no) was chosen by 15% of women and the answer no was chosen by 20% of men. In general, we can conclude that more positive answers support the interest of recreational swimmers in practicing other sports activities (Fig. 1).

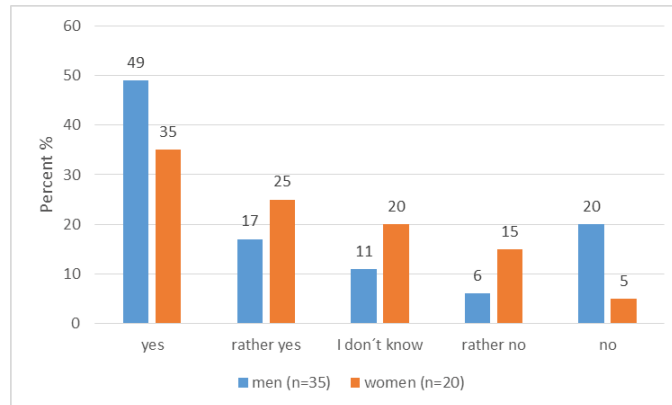


Figure 1. Motivation of recreational swimmers to do other sports activities

Most of the recreational swimmers think that it is good to do also other sports activities apart from swimming 1–5 times a week, whilst women prefer other sports activities 2–3 times a week and men 2–5 times a week. Some of the recreational swimmers (11% of men) think that it is appropriate to do other physical activities 7 times a week (Fig. 2).

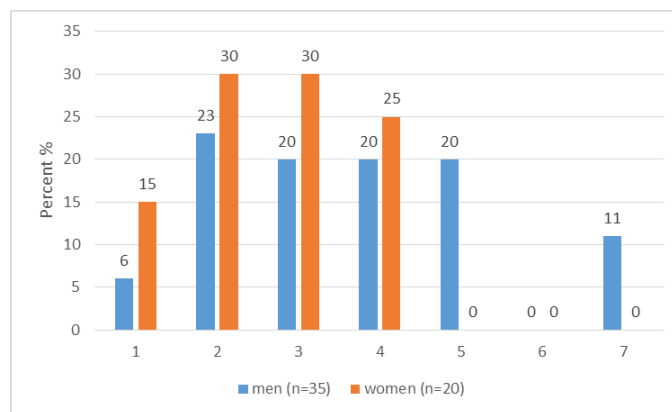
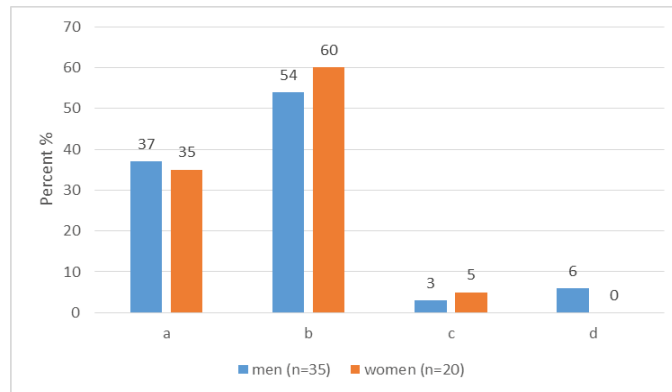


Figure 2. Opinion of swimmers' about participating in other sports activities per week

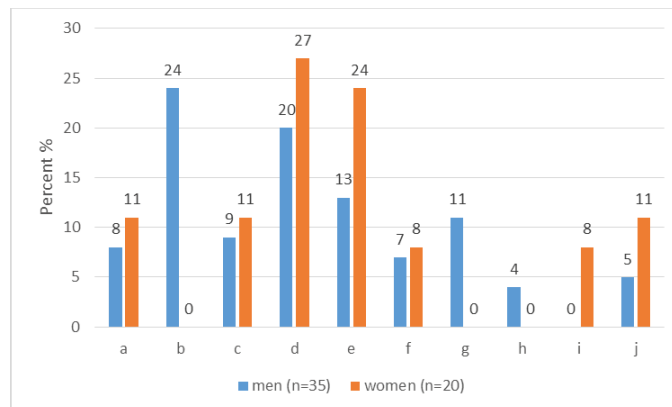
Most of the participants (Fig. 3) practice other sports activities that are not organized; they do the activities with friends or for fun. The second most frequently chosen answer was organized form of other sports activity either in

a school club or at a sports course, etc. These results suggest the conclusion that most of the recreational swimmers prefer non-organized form of other physical activity.



Legend: a – yes, organized (sports club, spot),
 b – not organized (with friends, for fun),
 c – don't do sports activity in your leisure time,
 d – don't do sports activity in their leisure time for other reasons (please specify)

Figure 3. Organizational form of other sports activities



Legend: a – fitness, b – football, c – tennis, d – cycling, e – running, f – hiking, g – ice hockey, h – combat sports, i – volleyball, j – others

Figure 4. Sport activities practiced apart from recreational swimming

Recreational male and female swimmers mostly prefer cycling as their other activity, and then running. More than one fourth of the men prefer playing football. However, women are keener on fitness, tennis and other sports (dancing, skating and walking). These answers suggest that women do more individual sports (cycling, running, fitness, tennis and others) than team sports, and to-

gether with this we suppose that most of these sports are aimed at cardiovascular training with maintaining the body weight. The men practice individual and team sports to the same extent (Fig. 4).

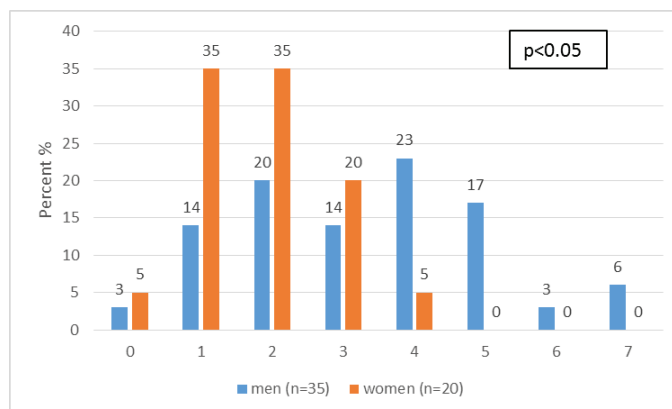


Figure 5. Frequency of other sports activities per week

Recreational female swimmers practice other sports activities once a week, significantly more than men ($p < 0.05$). Together, apart from swimming, women practice other sports activities 1–4 times a week (Fig. 5). On the other hand, male recreational swimmers offer more days to other sports activities than women. In comparison with the results of the study of¹¹, men practice other sports activities with higher frequency than recreational swimming.

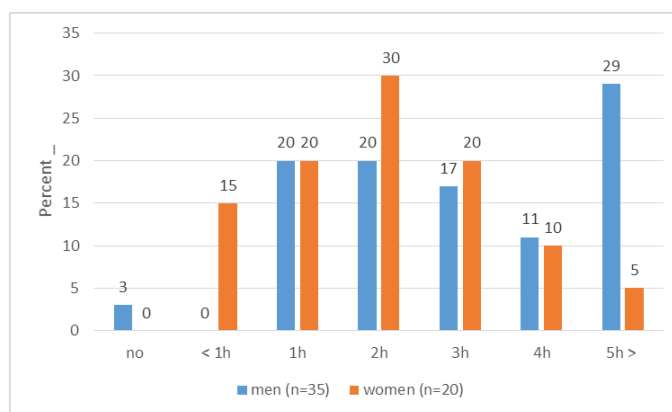


Figure 6. Time spent on other sports activities per week

¹¹ I. Matuš, *Názory a postoje rekreačných plavcov k rekreačnému plávaniu v Košiciach*, [in:] J. Broďáni (ed.), *Pohyb a kvalita života*, Nitra 2015, pp. 59–68.

Figure 6 shows that women practice sports activities from less than one hour per week to five hours per week, whilst one third of the women chose two hours per week of other activities. Men do other sports activities from on hour to five hours and more per week and almost one third of the men chose sports activity 5 and more hours per week. When we compared these results with the study of¹² we can conclude that recreational swimmers practice more hours of other sports activities than hours of recreational swimming. This fact can be influenced by higher financial expenses related to recreational swimming (pool entry, equipment, etc.) because most of the recreational swimmers answered that they practiced other non-organized sports activity.

Most of the participants, more women than men, would like to practice more sports activities per week. Fewer men than women were neutral about this question. Negative answer was chosen by 8% more men than women. The positive fact is, that recreational swimmers practice swimming, but they are willing to practice more sports activities per week (Fig. 7).

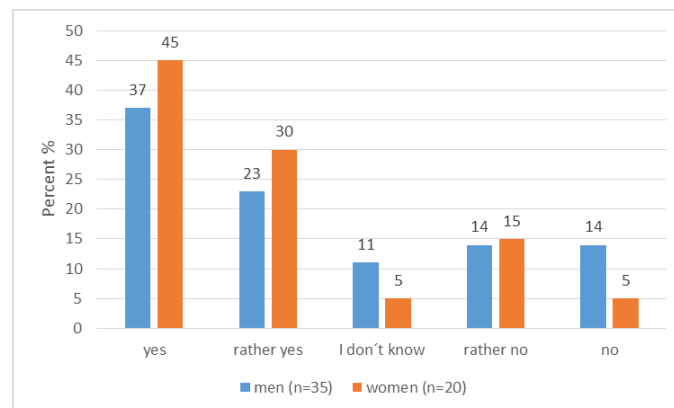


Figure 7. Participants' view on an increase of the number of days of taking part in sports activities per week

One of the reasons for not increasing the frequency of other sports activities was lack of free time and this answer was chosen by half of the men and two thirds of the women. The second reason included various factors as for example work duty, work load especially in the male group. On the other hand, there was a significant importance of family care in women ($p < 0.01$). Whilst most of the recreational swimmers practice other sports activities that are non-organized, this might be an explanation that financial expenses are not influencing the frequency of other sports activities (Fig. 8). In coherence with the previous question we suppose that recreational swimmers who answered this question nega-

¹² I. Matúš, *Názory a postoje rekreačných plavcov k rekreačnému plávaniu v Košiciach*, [in:] J. Broďáni (red.), *Pohyb a kvalita života*, Nitra 2015, pp. 59–68.

tively have not enough free time or they are satisfied with the frequency of swimming as well as with the frequency of other sports activities.

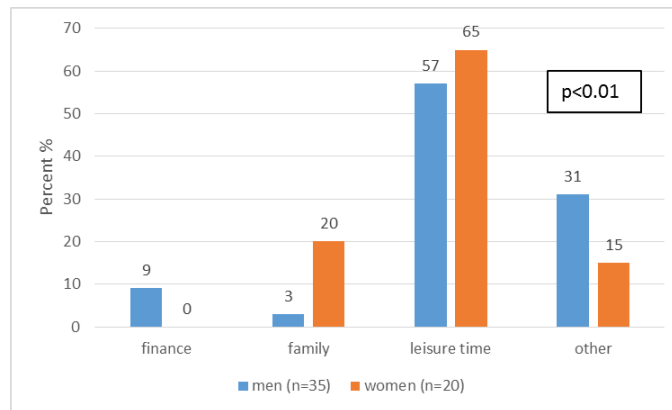


Figure 8. Reasons for not increasing participation in other sports activities

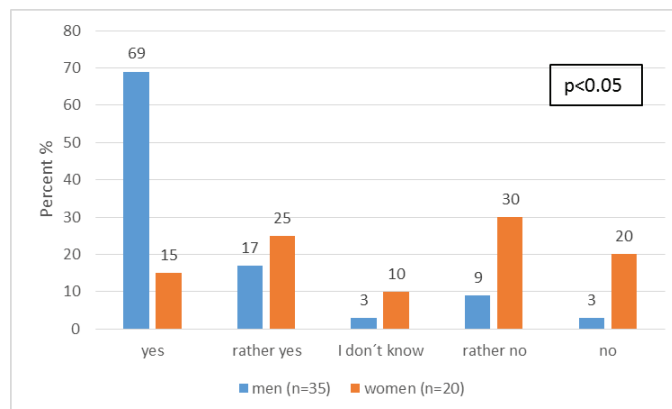
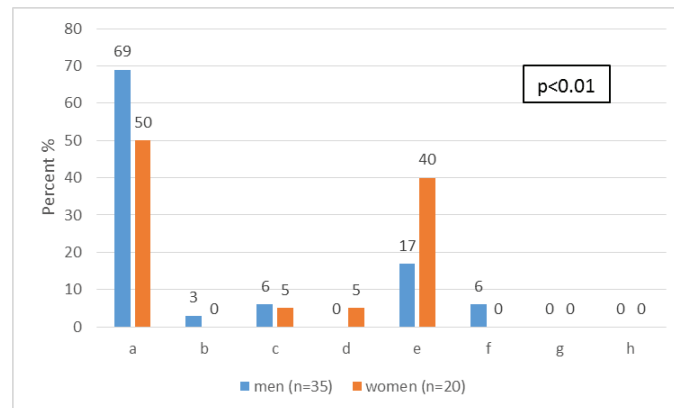


Figure 9. Opinion on the volume and intensity of the participation in sports activities

The opinions of participants on the volume and intensity of practiced sports activity are shown in Figure 9. A significant difference between men and women was found in positive answers of men ($p < 0.05$). This can be explained by the fact that women do not have as much time for practicing sports activities as men, because of family care.

The most frequent reason for practicing sports activity was an inner need with higher percentage of men than women. The second most common answer was maintaining body weight. The answers suggest that if recreational swimmers practice other activity this motivates them to do more sports activities. We also found that women want to maintain their body weight not only through recreational swimming but also through other sports activities in comparison to men ($p < 0.01$).



Legend: a – internal need, b – wish of a family member, c – meeting place with friends, d – medical recommendation, e – retention of body weight, f – better social contact, g – fashion trend, h – other

Figure 10. The reasons behind participating in other sports activities

Discussion

In comparison to previous research we conclude that recreational swimmers think that it is suitable to practice this activity 2–3 times per week, however, in reality they are able to practice swimming only 1–2 times per week, which means altogether less than one hour per week and men practice swimming more often than women¹³. A positive finding is that recreational swimming motivates recreational swimmers to practice other sports activities. These activities mostly include cycling, running¹⁴. Men prefer football and hockey and women prefer fitness, tennis and other sports activities (dancing etc.). We agree with the opinion that the choice of physical activities is related to differences between men and women from anatomical, physiological as well as psychical and pedagogical point of view¹⁵. Recreational swimmers would like to practice these activities 1–5 times per week and to this extent they mostly manage that. Men are in general more active than women and not only in recreational swimming but also in other sports activities. Recreational swimming belongs to non-organized sports activities and also other sports activities practiced by participants are non-organized, which means they do it with friends, for fun. An interesting fact is that the participants practice other sports activities more often than recreational swimming.

¹³ I. Matúš, *Názory a postoje rekreačných plavcov k rekreačnému plávaniu v Košiciach*, [in:] J. Broďáni (ed.), *Pohyb a kvalita života*, Nitra 2015, pp. 59–68.

¹⁴ K. Custis, *Detection and treatment of osteoporosis*, UK 1992, pp. 711–716.

¹⁵ L.Y. Griffin, *Women in sport*, [in:] G.R. Scuderi, P.D. McCann, P.J. Bruno (ed.), *Sports Medicine – Principles of Primary Care*, St. Louis 1997.

But we can conclude that all the participants have enough physical activity whether in the form of swimming or in the form of other sports activities. The question is the quality of technique during swimming or during other sports activities when they are non-organized that means without any supervision.

Conclusions

Recreational swimming motivates recreational swimmers to practice other sports activities. Recreational swimmers think that it is appropriate to practice other sports activities 1–5 times per week, whilst men prefer 2–5 times per week and women 2–3 times per week. In reality most of the recreational swimmers practice other sports activities as much as they want 1–5 times per week (men 5 hours per week and women 2 hour per week). The most popular sports activities are cycling, running, football and hockey among men and fitness, tennis, dancing, skating among women. Most of the participants would like to do more sports activities per week, and the main factors influencing this are lack of free time and family care. The men, contrary to women, think that the volume and intensity of other sports activity is sufficient to maintain their body weight. Other sports activities apart from swimming are practiced because of one's inner need. On the basis of recommendations of World Health Organization (2010), American Heart Association (2015) and British Heart Foundation (2015) about practicing physical activity we found that recreational swimmers have enough physical activity in their weekly regimen either in form of swimming or in a form of other sports activity.

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Opinie i nastawienie pływających rekreacyjnie mieszkańców Koszyc do innych zajęć sportowych

Streszczenie

Regularna aktywność fizyczna pozytywnie wpływa na cały organizm, jak również na witalność ludzkiego ciała. Celem naszego badania było zanalizowanie nastawienia osób pływających rekreacyjnie do innych czynności sportowych. Badaniem objęto grupę 55 mieszkańców Koszyc (35 mężczyzn w wieku 34±11,7 lat, oraz 20 kobiet w wieku 33±10,7 lat). Zastosowaną metodą badawczą był kwestionariusz zawierający głównie pytania szczegółowe.

Odpowiedzi udzielone przez osoby pływające rekreacyjnie sugerują pozytywne stwierdzenie, że pływanie rekreacyjne pobudza ich do uprawiania również innych dyscyplin sportu. Większość pływających rekreacyjnie uprawia inne, niezorganizowane, zajęcia sportowe 1–5 razy w tygodniu. Mężczyźni uprawiają w tygodniu więcej dyscyplin sportowych niż kobiety ($p < 0,05$). Uczestnicy przeważnie uprawiają kolarstwo i bieganie, mężczyźni grają w piłkę nożną i w hokeja, natomiast kobiety uczęszczają na fitness i tańce. Większość uczestników chciałaby brać udział w jeszcze innych zajęciach, ale są ograniczani przez brak wolnego czasu oraz – szczególnie kobiety – przez obowiązki domowe ($p < 0,05$). Wszyscy uczestnicy uprawiają inne dyscypliny sportu ze względu na własne potrzeby, natomiast kobiety wybierają te, które pomagają im utrzymać odpowiednią wagę ciała i zgrabną figurę, co jest ważnym argumentem na rzecz uprawianego przez nie sportu. Uogólniając, można wnioskować, że osoby uprawiające pływanie rekreacyjne 1–2 razy w tygodniu oraz biorące udział w innych zajęciach sportowych 1–5 razy w tygodniu zażywają wystarczającą dawkę aktywności fizycznej pozytywnie wpływającą na ich zdrowie i warunki fizyczne.

Słowa kluczowe: osoby pływające rekreacyjnie, zajęcia sportowe, aktywność fizyczna, witalność, czas wolny.