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THE IMPORTANCE OF THERAPEUTIC RECREATION INTERVENTIONS IN RECREATION MANAGEMENT

Ilbilge Ozsu Nebioglu

*Usak University, Sports Science Faculty, Usak, **TURKEY***

E-mail: ilbilge.ozsu@usak.edu.tr

ABSTRACT

In this review study, recreational applications that have effects on different components of health individually and socially, and therapeutic recreation applications that have a special application area under the roof of health recreation are included. The main purpose of the study is to draw attention to the importance of therapeutic recreation practices in recreation management. The difference between the concepts of recreational therapy and therapeutic recreation, which are close to each other, has been mentioned. The relationship between the concept of recreation management and health was discussed, and then the effects of recreational practices on health were examined and studies on the concept of therapeutic recreation and therapeutic recreation practices were discussed. Therapeutic recreation practices were analyzed by considering different groups and various health complaints. Therapeutic recreation practices are included in the prevention or treatment of the negative experiences of the individual and society under conditions that make life difficult and reduce the quality of life. The deficiencies and importance of therapeutic recreation practices in recreation management are mentioned. It is recommended that these practices be planned and systematically designed considering the needs of the individual and society in recreation management.

Keywords: *Recreational Therapy, Therapeutic Recreation, Recreation Management*

INTRODUCTION

The lifestyle of each individual is different and the lifestyle that the individual acquires directly affects the quality of life. Responsibilities that must be fulfilled on a daily basis can cause health to be postponed to the second plan. Our lifestyle is

one of the most important factors that directly affects our health. While maintaining a physically active lifestyle based on movement positively affects the quality of life, a sedentary lifestyle carries the risk of many diseases such as coronary heart diseases, cancer, diabetes and stroke (Anokye et al., 2012). It is known that even long-term sitting behavior, which we ignore the effect of, has a dominant place in the lifestyle of individuals, has health hazards and negatively affects the individual in terms of diabetes and cardiovascular diseases risk (Dunstan et al., 2012). From this point of view, it is obvious that individuals who are aware of protecting their health should manage their leisure time well in order to be protected from such health damages caused by their lifestyle. Recreational activities, which are considered within the scope of the evaluation of leisure time, are at the forefront in protecting the health of the individual and therefore the society. Individuals who make good use of their leisure time have an advantage in achieving ideal well-being. Ideal well-being requires the individual to feel good physically, emotionally, spiritually, mentally and socially. Correctly designed recreation programs required for the individual and society to achieve their ideal well-being play an important role in supporting the quality of life of the individual and society. All activities that protect health, improve health or treat health fall under the umbrella of health recreation. Health recreation also includes disadvantaged individuals with any limitations or disabilities. Planned and systematically applied recreational activities for such groups are considered recreational therapy. All applications in recreational therapy aim to improve the individual's health functions and improve their quality of life. It is a clinical application. However, therapeutic recreation is a specific recreational practice, not a drug or treatment method. It is used to help alleviate and eliminate the complaints caused by various ailments that the individual will experience during the treatment. In this respect, therapeutic recreation practices have a position that always maintains its importance in recreation management.

METHODOLOGY

In the literature search to perform of this review study, "recreation", "recreation practices", "therapeutic recreation", "therapeutic recreation practices" and "recreation management" were used as keywords. The literature analysis was done through Google scholar, and the studies were reviewed and discussed by including refereed international scientific publications.

RECREATION MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH

The development of technology and the getting easy of life cause people to move away from movement. The decrease in the work based on physical strength

both keeps the individual away from the movement and loses the ability to use his body, causing the organism to suffer not only physical but also many functional losses in the spiritual, mental, social and societal areas, and the diversification of the health problems experienced (Marmot, 1999; Baum et al., 2000; Savage et al., 2013; Dalgard and Lund, 1998; Kwak et al., 2006; Babyak et al., 2000; Crone et al., 2005; Bennett et al., 2006; McCreynolds et al., 2004; Cacioppo et al., 2006). Increasing population density constitutes a major obstacle for individuals to benefit from health services and increases the level of stress and anxiety of individuals (Ventimiglia and Seedat, 2009).

Participation in sports and recreational activities can reduce stress, anxiety and depression (Street et al., 2007; Penedo and Dahn, 2005). World Health Organization constitute "*Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.*". This definition emphasizes that health is weak when evaluated only in terms of anatomy and physiology, and that the functions of the mind and the individual's place in society should be included in the concept of health. For this reason, in recreational management, recreational therapies, which are the practices in which the individual can improve mentally and socially, can be added to the medical methods applied for the treatment of any disease, and the individual's full well-being can be supported.

Addressing all aspects of health requires addressing the issue of nutrition as well. Nutrition refers to the process of feeding body tissues for growth and repair with substances necessary for a living thing to live. The content of what an individual eats directly affects emotions and mood in general. Therefore, nutrition directly affects the health of the individual. If the individual uses his leisure time by exercising and combines it with a good and healthy nutrition program, the health level of the organism will increase even more (Ritov et al., 2005; Sreekumar and Nair, 2007). The use of leisure time with 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity and exercise most of the week brings many health benefits (Manley, 1996). Nutrition and exercise should be considered as an inseparable whole in recreation management.

Structured leisure activities with physical activity and exercise can extend life expectancy (Paffenbarger et al., 1994; Powell et al., 2011; Lee and Paffenbarger, 2000; Franklin, 2001). A sedentary lifestyle has a 31% higher risk of death from all causes than those who are regularly active (Powell et al., 2011; Blair and Wei 2000). According to these studies, it can also be interpreted that individuals with an active lifestyle will have a longer lifespan, since it reduces the risk of heart attack and cancer.

Regular exercise also has positive effects on psychological health. Up to 8 hours after exercise, the individual may feel less anxious or less stressed. For this

reason, the benefit of recreational activities can also increase motivation to improve health (Penedo and Dahn, 2005). Thus, individuals will be able to regenerate mentally and physically if sports are included in the recreation management and leisure time activities to be planned.

In terms of the health benefits mentioned above, the effect of recreation can be evaluated in two main parts as preventive health services and rehabilitation and rehabilitation services. Preventive health services are recreational services provided to healthy individuals, and rehabilitation and rehabilitation services are provided to individuals with disabilities and health problems (Tutuncu, 2012). Preventive health services consist of measures taken to prevent any disease. Immunization of individuals, prevention of cancer, reducing the risk of chronic diseases can be counted among preventive health services. Activities that allow the preservation, recovery or improvement of impaired daily vital functions can be expressed as recovery and rehabilitation services. Health services create an effect for preventive purposes before any health problems occur, and healing and rehabilitation services create an effect that supports the treatment applied after any health problem and helps recovery.

THERAPEUTIC RECREATION

Although recreational activities are mentioned with their positive effects on health, recreation is not a treatment method. Activities carried out to support treatment and protect and improve health after any health problem are health recreation. Treatment requires the reduction of the symptoms of the disease after the chosen method with the diagnosis made by a medical specialist. The concepts of rehabilitation and therapy are based on the identification of the obstacles and constraints in the functions of the individual's organism and the development of a number of skills to overcome these obstacles and constraints (Karakucuk, 2012).

The primary purpose of recreational therapy practice is to improve the health and quality of life of clients by reducing impairments in body function and structure, activity restrictions, participation restrictions and environmental barriers (Porter et al., 2020). Therapeutic recreation (in the form of a therapeutic camp) is a unique way of combining activities, adventure, positive stress experience and social connectedness for people whose daily life is routine and sedentary (Moxham et al., 2015). While therapeutic recreation appears as a leisure activity, recreational therapy can be considered as a private clinical service.

Therapeutic recreation is a holistic process that deliberately uses recreational and experiential interventions to protect the individual's health status, functional capacity and quality of life, and to bring about a change in order

to improve the individual socially, emotionally, intellectually, physically and spiritually (Carter et al., 2003).

Therapeutic recreation is defined as a systematic process that uses activity therapy, education and recreation/leisure to improve the health and well-being of people who need special care because of illness, disability or social situation (Sylvester et al., 2011; Dieser, 2013). It is not a drug or a stand-alone treatment. In addition to these groups, it is applied for the integration of individuals who are isolated for various reasons into the society in the process of social integration and it is also applied for preventive purposes for individuals who are criminals and drug addicts or risk groups with a tendency to crime and drugs (Karakucuk, 2012).

The primary role of the therapeutic recreation professional is to help clients enjoy health and well-being by providing them with leisure experiences (eg, joining a birdwatching community or finding a sense of belonging to an online chess club. Therapeutic recreation professionals identify and prescribe activities to improve illness and disease-related symptoms. In this process, the pleasure of the participant from the leisure activity is not taken into consideration. Even if the participant does not enjoy playing console games after a spinal cord injury, it is recommended to do so as part of the rehabilitation plan to increase fine motor skill development (Dieser, 2013). One of the main problems that recreation management should address is that specialists who practice therapeutic recreation should maintain their expertise without becoming a copy of health professionals such as physical therapy, occupational therapy or social work.

Among the therapeutic recreation users, there are individuals who do not have any disease but have age-based emotional and psychosocial adjustment problems or have entered a new phase of life such as retirement. Immigrants and refugees, who have recently become a social problem, can also be expressed as service users of therapeutic recreation (Sevil, 2015). The quality of life of individuals can be contributed by including therapeutic recreation practices for therapeutic recreation users in recreation management.

THERAPEUTIC RECREATION INTERVENTIONS

Therapeutic recreation practices are designed and delivered as a service to all types of people to promote play, recreation and leisure time: dementia patients (Ferguson et al., 2020), individuals with chronic diseases (Walker and Pearman, 2009), the elderly (Kim, 2018), depression (Johnson, 2000), autism (Lawson et al., 2021), adaptive sports (Zabrinskie et al., 2005), pain management (Kinney, 2019), cerebral palsy (Farmer and Watson, 2019), individuals with mental disorders (Picton et al., 2019).

Therapeutic recreation practices applied to young people who are socially and psychologically at risk; It encourages the positive character traits of young people, provides alternative options to spend their leisure time, and develops coping mechanisms to manage their daily lives. Although there are a limited number of studies on this subject, all of them report the need and positive benefits that young people at risk gain by participating in recreation programs (Young et al., 2015). Human resources and support structures in recreation management can be established to help and guide the development and transformation of at-risk youth over a period of time.

Virtual reality experiences in dementia patients appear as one of the therapeutic recreation applications (Ferguson et al., 2020). In addition, therapeutic recreation programs are also applied for the family in individuals with dementia and have positive effects on patients with dementia (Lee, J. K et al., 2019; Lee, M. S. et al., 2019). The use of safe and entertaining virtual reality with family therapeutic recreation applications can be considered as a special area that should be addressed in recreation management, as it is a meaningful activity for individuals at the end of life and increases their quality of life.

Few studies have been found on therapeutic recreation practices in children and young people with chronic diseases. Therapeutic recreation practices are beneficial for young people as they improve self-esteem, knowledge of illness, emotional well-being, adaptation to illness, and symptom control (Walker and Pearman, 2009). Therapeutic recreation practices to be carried out in the form of camps can be included in the recreation management, helping to select and further develop these experiences for young people with poor health.

Depression is known as an old age disorder that occurs with physical limitations. Therapeutic recreation practices can be an effective method for elderly and home-based depression patients. Since therapeutic recreation is an effective and versatile method, it is an ideal psychosocial support for the home environment. It is an effective practice in the management of depression with various interventions such as poetry, music and exercise as part of the treatment (Johnson, 2000). In addition, program duration and session hours in therapeutic recreation applications to be used in the elderly stand out as very important factors in the design of therapeutic recreation programs for the elderly and reveal positive changes (Kim et al., 2020).

For individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), leisure time is used to describe free and enjoyable activities, experiences, and time. Therefore, recreation is associated with individuals' quality of life as it includes the passions and preferences of individuals with ASD. The benefits of therapeutic recreation on individuals with ASD; improvement in physical functionality, improvement in cognitive functionality, improvement in communication and social skills, decrease

in incompatible or inappropriate behaviors, increase in age-appropriate behaviors in society, and increase in friendship and social support networks. Therapeutic recreation practices for this can be applied in a variety of settings including home, school, clinic, hospital, camp and park and recreation departments to maximize the leisure time experience (Kensinger, 2019).

Therapeutic recreational practices used in adaptive sports, including individuals with physical and sometimes mental disabilities, have positive effects on an increase in quality of life, improvement in general health, and family and social quality of life (Zabrinskie et al., 2005). In another study, therapeutic recreational practices applied to individuals with various disability situations reveal increases in flexibility, muscle strength, muscular endurance, balance, self-confidence and perceived improvement in mood (Delaney et al., 2014). By adding experimental research to recreation management, individuals with various disabilities (cerebral palsy, spinal cord injury, stroke and traumatic brain injury) can be given opportunities to experience emotional changes by participating in fitness and non-competitive sports.

Therapeutic recreational practices used for pain management include music, relaxation, deep breathing, exercise, distraction, stress coping skills, stress management, guided imagery, yoga, and play. Studies show that pain management programs need individuals who are experts in pain management and that there is a lack of pain assessment (Kinney, 2019). With a program in addition to recreation management, pain management protocols and pain administration groups can be created.

Cerebral palsy is a neurological disorder and causes brain damage. Depending on where the damage is in the brain, the individual's complaints may vary. Fine and gross motor skills and coordination in these skills are the primary problems. Therapeutic recreation, unlike traditional treatment methods, can be used as a way of maximizing the general health, well-being and quality of life of the individual in their leisure time. Children with cerebral palsy, on the other hand, can benefit from therapeutic recreation practices in terms of their cognitive, social and motor functions and can go a long way in improving social and emotional health. Therapeutic recreation practices improve individuals' strength, posture stability, gross and fine motor skills, as well as improve social and emotional health (Farmer and Watson, 2019).

CONCLUSION

Recreation practices appear as methods of leisure time that increase the level of health and well-being. It contributes to the benefits of leisure time on the components of health by removing the individual from the tiring, intense,

monotonous and adverse environmental conditions that disturb the individual for a certain period of time. The fact that these benefits are noticeable by the individual paves the way for the individual to continue recreational practices. Activities and recreation practices that provide physical, mental, social, spiritual and emotional regeneration of individuals who want to attain a state of complete well-being come to the fore.

Due to the numerous effects of recreational practices on health, it can be applied in a planned and systematic way for the purpose of recovery and treatment for the ailments experienced by individuals for various reasons. Therapeutic recreation, which is a part of health recreation, comes to the fore in this sense. It contributes to the elimination or alleviation of the limitations by rehabilitating individuals with limitations and limitations, which are expressed as special groups. In recreation management, therapeutic recreation practices should be included in the relevant departments of educational institutions and universities, culture, art and sports centers, especially local governments and social service institutions, in terms of the health of the individual and therefore the society. In order to eliminate or mitigate the negativities or possible risks that may occur in the society, it may be suggested to include therapeutic recreation practices in recreation management programs or to increase their importance. Therapeutic recreation programs that can meet the expectations of the society and the individual, meet their needs and complement their deficiencies will contribute to reaching the ideal of a healthy individual-healthy society.

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