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ADOLESCENTS AND LIFESTYLES. A STUDY ON STUDENTS' LEISURE IN THE PROVINCE OF ROME

ADOLESCENCIA Y ESTILO DE VIDA. ESTUDIO DEL OCIO DE LOS ESCOLARES DE LA PROVINCIA DE ROMA

ADOLESCÊNCIA E ESTILO DE VIDA. INVESTIGAÇÃO SOBRE AS PRÁTICAS DE LAZER DOS ALUNOS NA PROVÍNCIA DE ROMA

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PALABRAS CLAVE:
Adolescencia
Estilo de vida
Tiempo libre
Ocio

RESUMEN: El presente estudio trata de descubrir las prácticas que experimentan los adolescentes en su tiempo libre. El interés social que despiertan los comportamientos efectuados durante la adolescencia, radica en que nos permiten aportar conocimiento acerca del estilo de vida que se lleva a cabo en el tiempo libre. De aquí que el objetivo de la investigación sea conocer las prácticas de ocio realizadas, así como las deseadas, de los adolescentes italianos de la provincia de Roma, descubriendo además posibles elementos que puedan estar asociados a estos comportamientos. Para tal fin se ha optado por la utilización de una metodología cuantitativa de tipo descriptiva e inferencial, empleando como instrumento de medida el cuestionario MACOFYD que fue suministrado a un total de 2401 escolares romanos de Educación Secundaria de primer grado. Entre los resultados obtenidos se destaca que las actividades físico-deportivas son elegidas y deseadas por la mayor parte de los escolares analizados; prácticas que están estrechamente vinculadas con el nivel de estudios de los progenitores. Las conclusiones del estudio subrayan el vínculo descubierto entre los adolescentes romanos y sus comportamientos físico-deportivos, así como la enorme difusión que tienen las prácticas de carácter tecnológico en la vida de los adolescentes.

KEYWORDS:
Adolescents
Lifestyle
Free-time
Leisure

ABSTRACT: This study aims at analyzing and interpreting the practices that adolescence influences in their spare time. The social interest aroused during adolescence influences social behaviors and allow us to collect data and better know the lifestyles of adolescents in their leisure time. For this reason, the main aim of this research is to study the leisure practices pursued and desired by Italian adolescents in the province of Rome, discovering the main elements that may be associated with these behaviors. To this scope, we have opted, in this study, for the use of a quantitative methodology, both descriptive and inferential, using, as a measure, the MACOFYD questionnaire, which was administered to a total sample of 2401 secondary school students from the Province of Rome, Italy. The results of this study have highlighted that the physical and sport activities are chosen and desired by most of the pupils studied, and that these practices are closely linked to the level of education of their parents. Moreover, the findings of these research also stress the link discovered between Roman adolescents and their physical and sport behaviors, and the enormous popularity that technological practices have in the lives of adolescents.

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PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Adolescentes, estilo de vida, tempo livre, lazer.

RESUMO: O presente estudo pretende descobrir as práticas que os adolescentes experimentam no seus tempos livres. O interesse social que despertam os comportamentos tidos durante a adolescencia, que permitem obter conhecimento através do estilo de vida que esta faixa etária leva a cabo nos seus tempos livres. O objetivo desta investigação é conhecer as práticas de lazer dos adolescentes Italianos da província de Roma, descobrindo assim possíveis elementos que possam estar associados a estes comportamentos. Para tal optou-se pela utilização de uma metodologia quantitativa do tipo descritivo e inferencial, empregado como instrumento de medida o questionário MACOFYD que foi preenchido a um total de 2401 estudantes romanos do ensino Secundário do Primeiro grau. Dos resultados obtidos concluise que as atividades físico-desportivas são mais escolhidas e desejadas pela maior parte dos indivíduos que integraram o estudo, práticas estas que estão diretamente ligadas com o nível de formação e estudos dos seus progenitores. As conclusões do estudo, destacam também o vínculo descoberto entre os adolescentes romanos e seus comportamentos físico-desportivos, bem como enorme difusão e aceitação que tem as práticas do caráter tecnológico na vida destes adolescentes.

1. Introduction

In our society, the model of health and wellness is considered an important goal to achieve and to maintain throughout the whole lifespan. This model is variable and depends upon a number of specific factors and dynamic elements that make it fluctuate, and are based on both individual and social aspects, including the ability of the person to freely live satisfying life experiences, which are considered fundamental.

As indicated by researchers Lalonde (1974) and Perea Quesada (2009), choosing positive lifestyles is very important for achieving and maintaining wellness factors. Although the concept of lifestyle is not definitely clarified, most of authors, such as Pastor, Balaguer and García-Merita (1998) define healthy lifestyles as a set of behavioral models with positive life impact on the health of the person.

Regarding the choice of a lifestyle, it can be conditioned by factors such as the political, cultural and/or socioeconomic ones, and by the possibility of an enjoyment of prevention, promotion and health care (Mirowsky & Ross, 2003; Aleandri, 2011; WHO, 1999; Maulini, 2006, 2014).

To be clear, during the transition period between childhood and adulthood, the adolescent is particularly receptive and vulnerable to the influence that society can exercise through collective representations, and the way she or he declares to manage and organize her/his own free-time (Manetti, Rania & Zunino, 2007). Likewise, adolescents tend to show their desire and basic need to meet their peers and to perform a variety of activities which have, among other things, the function of providing them with social support, friendship and contact with others.

For adolescents, free-time also serves to foreshadow useful moments in the development and enrichment of their age. In a research carried out on a total of 321 American students between 9th and 12th grade, Gilman (2001) has shown that, in contemporary society, the experiences in leisure time constitute an essential element in determining the general welfare of adolescents and youth.

For its part, the study of Cohen-Gewerc and Stebbins (2013), has shown the interaction between the processes of socialization and recreation, analyzing how we become individuals and how we tend to adapt ourselves to the social and personal life starting from a view rooted to leisure.

With reference to this term, Cuenca (2004) considers leisure as all those free experiences which are rewarding and fulfilling, and that take place during free time. Moreover, nowadays, leisure has begun to be considered a social phenomenon or personal experience in which intangible aspects such as emotions, motivations, values, perceptions benefits, use to play a leading role (San Salvador & Ortega, 2012).

However, one has to stress that in the Italian context, the term leisure tends to be simply translated as "leisure activities" (De Masi, 2002). Actually, the literal translation of the term *leisure* as *ozio* in Italian, has a pejorative connotation, because it is understood as "doing nothing" due to laziness, personal habits, illness or other impediments (Sabatini Coletti, 2007).

For all these reasons, the topic of this study has been analyzed starting from researches promoted in Italy by both public and private institutions. One of these is the study carried out by Eurispes and Telefono Azzurro (2013) on the conditions and behaviors of adolescents in Italy. These researches were based on a sample of 1,523 adolescents and young people between 12 and 18 years attending the high school. The data disclosed that adolescents tend to be completely immersed in new technologies. In fact, 66.5% of the sample indicated that they use the computer for more than an hour a day. In addition, 71.2% of the adolescents indicates that they use the internet more than an hour a day, highlighting that 16.2% of them use it about four hours a day.

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Another study has highlighted that Italy is a country linked to the international research project HBSC (Health Behavior in School-aged Children), and that Piemonte was the Italian region which participated as a scenario for a research aimed at studying the behaviors and habits of 9,212 adolescents between 11 and 15 years. In this context, Borraccino and Papalia (2009) have analyzed the management and organization of leisure time in adolescents. Their study has revealed that the majority of adolescents tend to perform some kind of physical and sport activities out of their school hours. But this habit has not to be considered as an established one between Piemonte's adolescents, since only 15% of them manage to reach the levels recommended in international guidelines. Furthermore, differences between the physical practice of boys and girls have been discovered (girls show a very low level of practice, very beneath the international recommendations).

Finally, the study of Borraccio and Papalia has stressed that more than 85% of students at all ages, dedicate, in proportion, their free time to stay with their peers.

In this same context, Surdo (2012) has carried out a research aimed at knowing how 1,500 adolescents and youths who live in Marche region, tend to spend their free time. The results of Surdo's study have revealed that 25.8% spend their free time in their own hobbies and interests. Sport is the second activity chosen by the 16.6% of the sample, followed by staying at home by 15.7% of the sample, and by going to bars by 14.6% of them.

Other researches carried out outside of Italy, such as the studies by Santos Gomes Ribeiro and Mota (2005), Tammelin, Ekelund, Remes and Nayha (2007), Ussher, Owen, Cook and Whincup (2007), Ramos, Ponce de León and Sanz (2010), Butt, Weinberg, Breckon, and Clayor (2011), or Kauderer and Randler (2013), have described and analyzed the variety of school activities performed in free time by adolescents.

To sum up, Santos et al. (2005) have stressed that among 444 Portuguese schoolchildren, sedentary activities such as watching TV or listening to music, are the busiest practices by adolescents in winter (95.9% and 94.6% respectively), and summer (respectively, 92.6% and 96.2%). However, more physical active practices occupy secondary positions among the activities carried out by these students, as it happens in the case of non-organized physical activities, performed by 73.9% of the students in summer, and by 64% of them in winter.

Moreover, a research by Tammelin et al. (2007), which has analyzed physical and sedentary behaviors among 6,928 Finnish adolescents between 15-16 years old, has shown some differences dealing with behaviors in relation to gender. To be clear, 59% of boys used to be involved in some physical activities for about 60 minutes or more each day, and that this proportion dropped to 50% for girls. Likewise, the results have shown that, in proportion, 48% of boys more than girls (44%), have stated to use to watch TV more than two hours a day.

Furthermore, the findings revealed a strict link between the behaviors of the students who have stated to watch television and to use the computer, and those who showed less physical-sport behaviors.

Consistent with previous research, the work of Ussher et al. (2007), who analyzed a total of 2,623 British adolescents aged 13-16 years old, showed that a higher proportion of boys (21.1%) more than girls (16.4%) have expressed to spend more than 3 hours a day watching TV or playing computer games. Furthermore, for what it concerns the physical behavior, 29.9% of girls stated that they used to spend all or the most of their free time in performing things that imply very little physical exercise, compared to the 12.2% of boys.

In a research by Ramos et al. (2010), in addition to the management of their free time, leisure satisfaction was also analyzed taking into account how they use to schedule/organize their free time time in a sample of 1,798 schoolchildren in La Rioja, a region of Northern Spain. For this research, secondary education students were chosen as a sample. In relation to the organization and spending of their time, the going out and staying with friends in pubs, discos or parks, was the busiest practice by Rioja adolescents (85.3% of them), followed by playing sport and doing physical exercise (78.4%). This research has shown significant differences in relation to gender, with boys who used to be more involved in these physical and sport behaviors. The third and fourth practice most performed during leisure time were: watching television or using computers (76.1% of schoolchildren), and reading or listening to music (64.6% of adolescents); no gender or age differences was shown. Moreover, there existed significant correlations between those occupations of leisure performed by the adolescents and the activities they wanted to do. Finally, the results showed that 59.3% of those adolescents felt satisfied with their leisure time, ant that only 4.4% were the schoolchildren who were unhappy with how they used to spend their free time.

Furthermore, in order to study the physical/sport and sedentary behaviors of US teens, a research by Butt et al. (2011) analyzed a total of 1,163 students (703 girls and 460 boys) aged between 13 and 16 years old in 12 public and private schools in the Midwest of the United States, using, for this purpose, the CAPA questionnaire (Children's Attraction to Physical Activity). The results gained by the abovementioned researchers revealed significant differences for what it concerns gender (Wilks's lambda = .98 F (5.988) = 4.04; P .001), with the girls, especially the older ones, who participated less in physical activities and through a lower intensity than boys. However, the data from

the abovementioned research also showed that the American students use to spend more time in sedentary activities.

Finally, a recent study by Kauderer and Randler (2013) analyzed the free time management of a group of German teenagers, finding significant differences depending upon various factors such as gender. For this scope, a questionnaire was built and administered to a total of 678 adolescents between 11 and 17 years with a mean age of 13.83 years. The results showed the presence of significant gender differences in some activities during leisure time. In a nutshell, it was found that women used to spend less time playing the sports, watching TV and using the computer, and spent more time reading books.

Given to the theoretical framework of our research, and in order to contribute to the study and knowledge about Italian teenagers' lifestyles, the main objectives this study wants to achieve are:

- To better know what are the behaviors that adolescents in the province of Rome perform in their free time.
- To check whether the practices they are engaged in leisure time match their desires and expectations or not.
- To analyze the possible existence of personal factors (such as gender and school grade) or sociocultural (such us as the type of school or educational level and employment status got by their parents) that can be associated with these free time practices.

2. Methodology

In the present study we have decided to use a quantitative methodology, making a descriptive and inferential analysis of the variables studied, using a questionnaire as a measuring instrument.

The universe of population was composed by all the young students attending the three courses of Secondary Education (II level) in the schools of the Province of Rome during the academic year 2012-2013. The population amounted to a total of 120,744 people (their age was between 10 and 15 years). Figure provided by Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca Scolastico Ufficio Regionale per il Lazio.

Since our population is considered statistically infinite (composed of more than 100,000 units), the following formula was used to establish the study sample:

$$N = \frac{Z^2 \; p\,q}{E^2}$$

N = Population
Z = Confidence Level
pq = Population variance
E = Sampling error

Thus, estimating a confidence level of 95%, equivalent to one standard deviation from the mean of 2 units, a sampling error of 2% and a proportion of the population of 50%, the sample size amounted to a total of 2,401 subjects.

The sampling procedure followed in the investigation was stratified cluster with allocation of the first stage units in a proportional way. To be clear, in this first phase, students were divided into different strata in proportion: first, by type of school, i.e. if they are studying in public centers or private; and, moreover, it was also taken into account the geographical location, choosing schools depending upon whether they were located in the Roman capital or belonged to any other town in the province.

In the following table, we can see that the proportions of each sampling stratum fits the actual proportion of each group within the whole population of students attending secondary education schools in the province of Rome.

In a second phase, for each stratum defined in the previous stage, was randomly chosen some schools, from which were selected, in a third step, the classroom students groups and, finally, the last sampling units or subjects for the survey.

If we focus on the personal characteristics that the sample presents, one can highlight an equal distribution among adolescents analyzed by gender, since among the 2,401 subjects who were part of the final sample, 50.3% were females, and 49.69% males.

Moreover, according to age, sample subjects show a modal value of 13, with a mean age of 12.49 years. One can see how half of these teenagers was between 11 and 12 years, while 50% was 13 years older.

Table 1. Population and study sample

	POPULATION			%			STUDY SAMPLE		
	Rome	Province	Total	Rome	Province	Total	Rome	Province	Total
Public	70772	41108	111880	58.6%	34.1%	93%	1407	819	2226
Private	7646	1218	8864	6.3%	1%	7%	151	24	175
Total	78418	42326	**120744**	64.6%	35.4%	**100%**	1558	843	**2401**

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For what it concerns the instrument used in this research, a translated-into-Italian questionnaire MACOFYD (Ponce de León, Sanz, Ramos and Valdemoros, 2010) was administered. The questionnaire was developed by the research group AFYDO, from the University of La Rioja. This questionnaire was duly validated, and used in a previous investigation by Ponce de Ramos, Ponce de León and Sanz (2010), whose aim was to understand the motivations, attitudes and behaviors towards physical activity and the sport in La Rioja adolescents. As happened for the previous research, in this study, in order to establish the validity of the instrument, was used both a content and construct validity.

Specifically, for what it concerns content validity, once translated the questionnaire into Italian, before being administered in the various schools of the province of Rome, a validation process was carried out using two different methods: that is, a group of experts (counting with the collaboration of three university researchers) and a preliminary pilot study test administered to a group composed of 20 adolescents from the province of Rome.

Experts' opinion allowed us to positively assess aspects such as the presentation of the questionnaire, easiness to answer the questions, clearness of instructions, order of questions, and length of the questionnaire. Moreover, also after experts inputs, the categories of some variables were adapted to be better analyzed, as happened in the case of the academic year, which was reduced to three categories (1st, 2nd and 3rd year), eliminating references to other educational grade levels that appeared in the first version of the questionnaire.

On the other hand, the preliminary pilot test administered to the previous group, allowed us to make changes in the presentation of some questions, and to understand that they could influence the explanation of some issues. This process also allowed us to calculate the time required to complete the whole questionnaire. Specifically, the 20 boys and girls aged between 11 and 14 years who participated in this group completed the questionnaire spending a time between 15 and 34 minutes.

Regarding the construct validity, it was made with the purpose of use it as a method of clarification of the information obtained. In so doing, this method allowed us to remove all the values which were outside the path of each variable, treating the right track between the filter and the filtered questions, so to have a logical consistency between some key questions, and also to took into account the ineffectiveness of some questions to the experimental analysis, and to cancel the answers which did not make sense or did not have any value. At the end, after carrying out the different strategies for data cleaning, 59 questionnaires were canceled.

Moreover, to achieve the reliability and internal consistency of the measurement scales between more than two items, it was decided to calculate the Cronbach alpha coefficient. This procedure allowed us to obtain a value of 0.764, and to confirm the reliability of the variables for what they wanted to measure.

To sum up, the variables used to achieve the objective of the study were: identifier variables such as gender, academic year of attendance, type of school (public or private), family socio-economic level, parents' educational level; and variables that referred to the management of leisure time, the degree of satisfaction achieved through the practices carried out in this period, besides those related to activities the adolescents wanted to experience in their free time.

With reference to the statistics used in this study, we want to stress that the information collected through questionnaires, it was quantitatively treated through descriptive and inferential statistical procedures. To do this, we used the SPSS 21.0 statistical package, and analyzed variables through different procedures, both descriptive and inferential, in the first and second phase. To sum up, in the first phase, a descriptive analysis was carried out to analyze the frequencies and percentages of variables, and later, to calculate a test of independence as is the X2 (Chi-square) and, where there was significance, to calculate the level of association with Cramer's V coefficient or D Somers.

Likewise, between each pair of variables found as significantly related, we used the Z test, that allowed us to determine the relative ordering of the categories in the Columns variables in terms of proportions linked to Rows category variable; the differences between couples of categories were ascertained, and the effect of these differences noted.

3. Results

We present here the results obtained in the framework of our study. First, we analyze how the adolescents, object of this research, tend to spend their time; i.e., how they manage their free time, finding out what occupations they held. To be clear, the data show that an important proportion of Italian schoolchildren, specifically 84.8% of them, use part of their free time to regularly do some kind of exercises. Moreover, the second type of activities carried out by a higher proportion of teenagers is watching TV, surfing the internet, and playing video games... this happens for the 76% of the Italian students, as shown in the graph below, which also reflect other activities carried out by students in their free time.

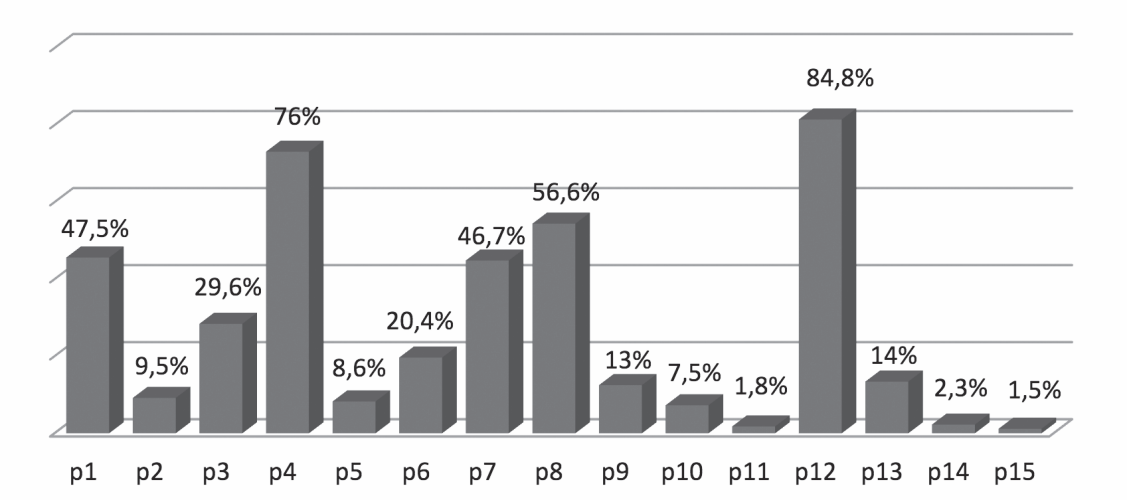

Figure 1. Activities performed in free time.

P1: Reading, music, theater...
P2: Board games
P3: Shopping
P4: Watching TV, surfing the internet, and playing video games...
P5: To visit museums
P6: To play music
P7: To stay with family
P8: To stay with friends
P9: To be with partner
P10: To study
P11: Volunteering
P12: To practice physical and sport activities
P13: To make crafts
P14: To go to club, association...
P15: Others

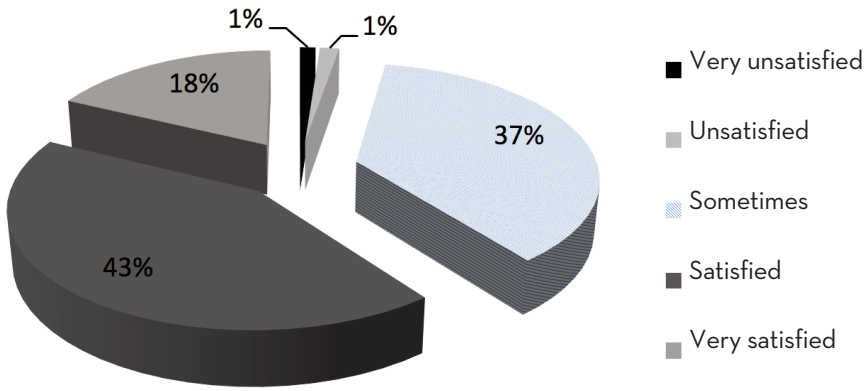

Figure 2. Level of satisfaction with the activities carried out.

Then we can see the level of satisfaction with their free time by the Italian teenagers. This analysis allows us to discover that 6 of 10 students are satisfied with what they do in their free time, while 37% is not always satisfied with the activities they perform.

After knowing the level of satisfaction that students perceived about the activities carried out in their free time, it seemed interesting to know what activities Italian adolescents would like to do, in order to understand whether there existed a distortion or contradiction between what they did in practice and what they would like to do.

As one can see in the figure below, the main activities desired to perform by the most of adolescents (8 of 10) consist of doing some kind of physical exercise. This type of practice is followed by other two strictly linked activities that are: watching TV, using the internet... (59.7% of subjects), and staying with friends (indicated by 57.7% of adolescents).

Note that 75.1% of students who regularly do exercise, also use to spend part of their free time in activities which are technological, mainly watching TV, surfing in the internet or playing video games.

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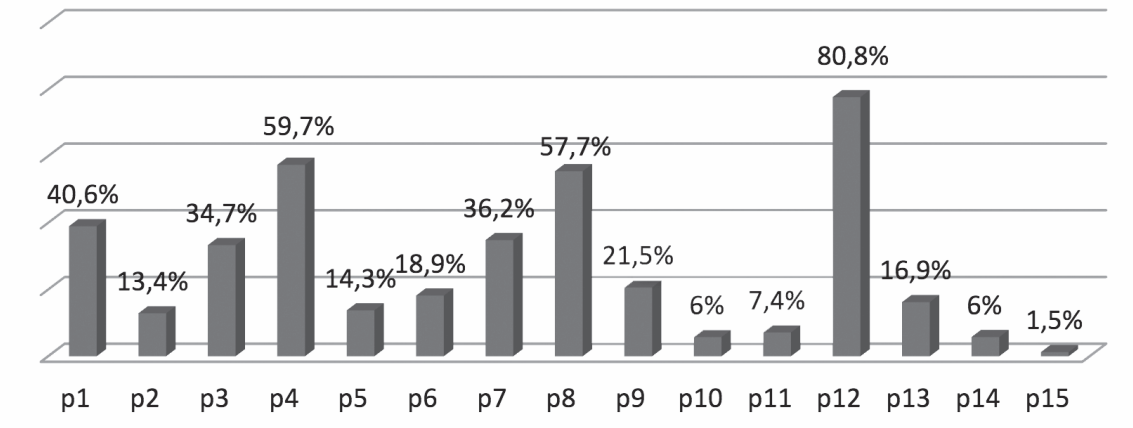

Figure 3. Desired activities to perform in free time.

P1: Reading, music, theater...
P2: Board games
P3: Shopping
P4: Watching TV, surfing the internet, and playing video games...
P5: To visit museums
P6: To play music
P7: To stay with family
P8: To stay with friends
P9: To be with partner
P10: To study
P11: Volunteering
P12: To practice physical and sport activities
P13: To make crafts
P14: To go to club, association...
P15: Others

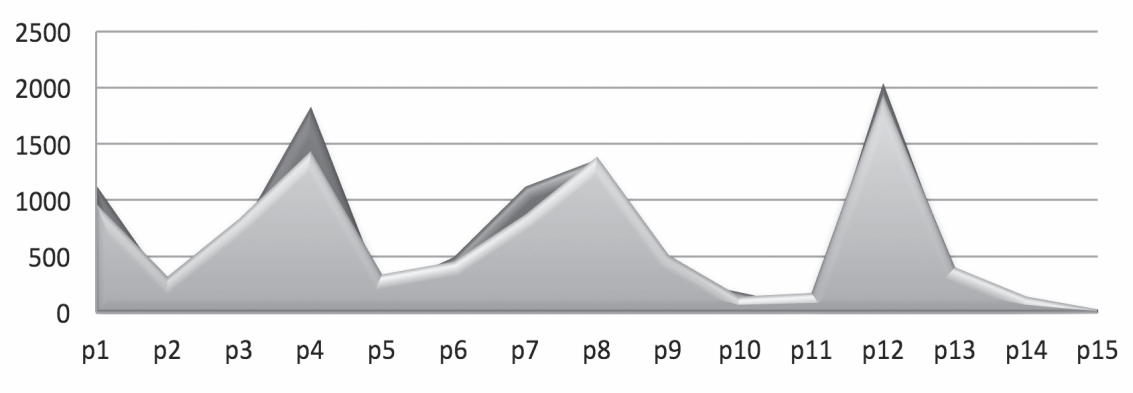

Figure 4. Activities performed and desired.

Finally, if we compare the findings related to the actual activities and the desired ones, one can see that the proportion of students who watch television, play video games, or staying with family, is larger than those who virtually desire to do these activities, whereas the proportion between desired and really performed activities, such as staying with friends and doing physical and sport activities, is equal.

If we better analyze the results achieved, a significant difference between what the students from the province of Rome actually do and what they would like to do in their free time can be found, as shown in the following table:

Table 2. Significant relationships between what students do and want to do in free time

Performed activities	Relationship level*	Desired activities
R1: Reading, music, theater...	← (0,619) *** →	D1: Reading, music, theater...
R2: Board games	← (0,495) *** →	D2: Board games
R3: Shopping	← (0,558) *** →	D3: Shopping
R4: Watching TV, surfing the internet, and playing video games...	← (0,457) *** →	D4: Watching TV, surfing the internet, and playing video games...
R5: To visit museums	← (0,429) *** →	D5: To visit museums
R6: To play music	← (0,579) *** →	D6: To play music
R7: To stay with family	← (0,557) *** →	D7: To stay with family
R8: To stay with friends	← (0,437) *** →	D8: To stay with friends
R9: To be with partner	← (0,565) *** →	D9: To be with partner
R10: To study	← (0,418) *** →	D10: To study
R11: Volunteering	← (0,253) *** →	D11: Volunteering
R12: To practice physical and sport activities	← (0,432) *** →	D12: To practice physical and sport activities
R13: To make crafts	← (0,529) *** →	D13: To make crafts
R14: To go to club, association...	← (0,387) *** →	D14: To go to club, association...

In bivariate relational analysis, the asterisks that accompany each coefficient indicate their level of significance: [significance p <0.05; significance ** p <0.01; *** significance p <0.001]

Likewise, one can see significant relationships linked to gender variable among some activities carried out in free time, and regarding: reading, listening to music, etc., which reach a level of low intensity (0.259), or going shopping, which has moderate intensity (0.457).

For this reason, in order to deepen these relationships among variables, it was decided to carried out a check of column proportions (z test). For this reason, we can point out, between each significant pair, which category presents a significantly higher proportion.

To be clear, after further analyzing the correlation between preferred practices such as reading, listening to music, going to the theater, and gender, we can see that among girls is significantly higher the proportion of students who perform this type of activity in comparison with those who don't do it. However, we have found that among males, there exists a significantly higher proportion of students who do not perform this type of practice in comparison with those who carry them out.

Table 3. Contingency table regarding gender and reading, and listening to music in free time*

		Reading, music...	
		No	Yes
Gender	Woman	37,3%	63,2%
	Man	62,7%	36,8%
Total		100,0%	100,0%

		Reading, music...
Gender	Chi-square	160,534
	gl	1
	Sig.	,000(*)

*In the contingency tables, after carrying out the Z test, and taking into account each significant pair, we will stress the category with a higher significant proportion.

Table 4. Contingency table between gender and shopping

		Shopping	
		No	Sí
Gender	Woman	34,8%	84,8%
	Man	65,2%	15,2%
Total		100,0%	100,0%

		Shopping
Gender	Chi-square	500,830
	gl	1
	Sig.	,000(*)

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Similarly, with reference to the relationship between gender and shopping in free time, one can see that among girls there is also a significant higher proportion of students who use to spend their free time in such practices, in comparison with those who do not, and reverse situation in the case of boys.

No other significant relationship between gender variable and the rest of activities analyzed in the study, were found.

Likewise, no statistically significant correlations between the various practices performed by students from the province of Rome and variables such as: school year of attendance, type school (public or private), employment status of parents, were found.

However, following the inferential analysis, other significant relationships of low intensity between fathers' education level (0.234), mothers' one (0.253) and physical and sports practices were found. Furthermore, in order to deepen these relationships, we decided also to carry out a Z test, since it was considered particularly interesting to find out which categories were responsible for these relationships. In this case, the letter "A" was assigned to the category of "no" physical and sport activity, and the letter "B" to category of "yes".

Moreover, we can see that among those students whose fathers did not earn any education degree, the proportion of adolescents who are not physically active is significantly higher than of who practice. A similar situation can be seen when there are students whose parents have elementary and secondary education.

But among the subjects whose parents have a college and university education, we find that the proportion of adolescents who perform some exercises, is significantly higher than the percentage of students who do not. A similar situation can be found when we analyze those students whose fathers have earned a doctorate, as can be seen below.

Similarly, significant differences about the level of adolescents' engagement in physical activity and sport, depending upon the level of education that mothers have, has been also found. Specifically, if we look at those adolescents whose mothers have a university level education, it appears that the proportion of students who practice physical activities in their free time exceeds that one of those who don't practice them.

However, after analyzing the answers by students whose mothers did not have any education level, the results disclosed that the proportion of physically inactive adolescents in their free time is significantly higher than those who choose to do some kind of exercise. A similar situation happens when we analyze students whose mothers have a low level of education, or a medium level, as one can see in the following table.

Table 5. Contingency table: fathers' education and physical and sport activities

		Students' physical-sport activities	
		No	Sí
Mothers' education	Uneducated	3,0%	1,3%
	Elementary	3,0%	1,1%
	Average	24,5%	15,4%
	Higher	27,2%	29,7%
	University	11,0%	29,6%
	Doctorate	,3%	7,0%
	It does not know	31,0%	16,0%
Total		100,0%	100,0%

		Students' physical-sport activities
Mothers' education	Chi-square	131,384
	gl	6
	Sig.	,000

Table 6. Contingency table: mothers' education and physical and sport activities

		Students' physical-sport activities	
		No	Sí
Fathers' education	Uneducated	4.1%	1.0%
	Elementary	3.0%	1.3%
	Average	22.0%	12.1%
	Higher	32.7%	31.1%
	University	9.6%	34.1%
	Doctorate		4.4%
	It does not know	28.6%	16.0%
Total		100,0%	100,0%

		Students' physical-sport activities
Fathers' education	Chi-square	153.813
	gl	6
	Sig.	,000

4. Discussion and interpretation of results

The main results of the study disclosed that physical and sports practices, sedentary activities such as watching television or using the computer, and staying with friends, are behaviors which are widespread among adolescents of the province of Rome in their free time. Likewise, the study has shown significant relationships between those activities performed during free time and the desire to practice the same ones.

On the other hand, from this study emerges that girls are more involved in activities such as shopping, reading, or listening to music. It has also to be noticed that the education level of parents is related to the level of involvement in physical and sport activities of adolescents.

If we focus on the results, specifically in the leading role played by physical and sport activities among Roman students, one can see that the results are consistent with studies such as Borraccino and Papalia (2009), Ramos et al. (2010), and Surdo (2012), whose researches have shown that such practices are the most preferred by teenagers in their free time.

However, unlike the results obtained by Tammelin et al. (2007), Ussher et al. (2007), Ramos et al. (2010) and Butt et al. (2011) Kauderer and Randler (2013), from our study does not emerge any significant difference related to gender in the behaviors dealing with physical and sport activities. Actually, our study reveals an equal situation between boys and girls in the province of Rome for what it concerns the practice of physical activity and sport in free time.

These findings underscore the strong diffusion of physical activities among Roman adolescents, and although these early data don't assure us the adoption of a healthy and active life style based on sport and physical activity by these Roman adolescents, it gives us important information that induces us to reflect upon the educational value and importance of physical activity and sport in contemporary society.

As Gilman (2001), Maulini (2006) and Perea Quesada (2009) have shown, physical activity and sport have an enormous potential in promoting individual well-being and harmonious development of the person. This is the reason why, as indicated by Mirowsky and Ross (2003), and Maulini (2014), we should tend towards an educational sport activity.

Moreover, the results of our research show us how sedentary activities such as watching television, surfing the internet or playing video games, are among those which are the most preferred by Roman teenagers (7 of 10 confirm it), coinciding with the findings from researches such as Eurispes and Telefono Azzurro's ones (2013) or Santos et al. (2005). However, in contrast to the results of Tammelin et al. (2007) and in agreement with Borraccino and Papalia (2009), as well as with Ramos et al. (2010), although this type of sedentary behaviors are performed by a large part of Italian teenagers, no results show us that such practices are in direct opposition with the physical-sporting behaviors of students. Actually, 3 of 4 students state to do some physical activities and sport, and also to spend a part of their free time in sedentary activities technological.

In addition, and similarly to the above-mentioned proportion, our research has shown that another important activities experienced by Italian students in their free time, has to do with being with friends, as also shown by Borraccino and Papalia (2009). This situation encourages us to think that the social representation of free time, which serves to build a consensual universe proposing moments and rituals of encounter and introducing individual situations of familiarity and friendship, in some cases occurs through "real" experiences and, in other ones, through virtual reality or simulated, as it happens in the case of use of virtual social networks.

Regarding another research findings, and in accordance with Ramos et al. (2010), significant relationships were seen between the practices that adolescents experience in their free time and the desire to implement same of these activities. This result is considered important, because the fact that a person performs, and also wants to experience any physical activity, is a way to favor a greater predisposition to it, and the maintenance of this practice in the future.

If one looks at the relationships that can be established between gender and some of the practices carried out in free time, the results are in line with those of Kauderer and Randler (2013), who identify significant gender differences in cultural activities such as reading, and spending more time in similar activities.

Other findings highlighted in our research deal with the discovering of a link between the level of education earned by parents and the sport and physical activity practiced by teenagers; this partially coincides with a research by Cordente (2006), who, after analyzing a group of Madrid secondary education students, has found that the educational level of mothers was closely related to the level of physical activity and sport practiced by their sons and daughters, although this was not true in the case of fathers. This finding encourages us to think that when families have high levels of education, they can become more aware of the educational potential that physical activity and sport can play in the development of the individual, and can encourage such activities in their children.

Finally, we are aware of the limitations of this first study, and we know that it is necessary to better delve into the results obtained by collecting information from other variables capable to reveal with greater precision and deeper the characteristics of physical activities or of other behaviors performed by adolescents

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in their free time. All this information will allow us to better improve resources, infrastructures and space in order to promote and optimize healthy lifestyles in Roman adolescents.

We are also aware of the fact that the results presented in this study do not allow us to ensure the adoption of a healthy active life style by adolescents, since we have deeply analyzed only those activities performed during free time. For this reason, we think that we should investigate better aspects such as the characteristics and nature of these type of activities, better studying attitudes and expectations shown by students towards these practices, or study betteR the motivations that lead to their realization or abandonment, in order to establish the existence of a healthy physical and sport life among Romans adolescents.

5. Conclusions and proposals

After analyzing the results obtained with this study, conclusions and proposals that emerge from it are as follows:

- Being engaged in physical activity and sport it is revealed as the most widespread way of spending their leisure time by Roman adolescents. Besides being performed by 8 of 10 adolescents, these activities are the most desired by them.
- Our study reveals the enormous popularity of technological practices in the lives of adolescents. 3 of 4 Roman students usually spend their free time watching television, surfing the internet or playing video games. These activities are preferred to meeting friends, being with family, reading, and listening to music.
- One can see some dissatisfaction with what the Romans adolescents do, because 4 of 10 students are not usually satisfied with the activities carried out in their free time.
- Significant relationships between some practices carried out in free time by adolescents (such as reading, listening to music or shopping) and gender, have been discovered. These relationships do not emerge in the main activities practiced by the analyzed sample, such as being engaged in physical activity and sport, watching TV, surfing the internet and/or playing video games.
- Our study shows a close relationship between the level of education of parents and the practice of physical and sport activities. These activities tend to be mainly chosen and practiced by those adolescents whose fathers or mothers have a higher level of education.

The findings of our research show the existence of a link between Roman adolescents and their physical behavior, stimulating us to reflect upon the enormous potential that, at educational level, such experiences could actually develop in students.

We also think that it is important the spread of information and programs which help people to take awareness of the use of new technologies. These programs have to be addressed, first of all, to families and educators (teachers, coaches, trainers, etc.), so that they can help adolescents and youths to develop critical abilities in the use of new technologies and the content they can enjoy from them.

Regarding the level of dissatisfaction found in what some Roman students do, it could be interesting, in the future, to investigate what the reasons for this are, and to try to understand whether there are activities that generate this unpleasant sensation in adolescents or not. In our future research, other variables such as the amount of time spent, frequency, context or who the Roman students have carried out the most preferred and requested activities with, will be considered relevant.

To conclude, our intention in the future, is to conduct a qualitative study, such as in-depth interviews or focus groups, involving those educational agents who are closer to adolescents, and to analyze not only the lifestyle of this population, but also the public and private sport facilities offered to Roman adolescents. All this will be done with the purpose of enhancing proposals for action and the development of a more adequate response to needs and requirements for a healthy lifestyle by teenagers.

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