

UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING HEALTH BEHAVIOURS

EXPLORING HEALTH AND LIFESTYLE FACTORS IN PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN THE BRANIČEVO DISTRICT, SERBIA: INTERESTS, SPORTS ENGAGEMENT AND SLEEP

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Background: The overall importance of sleep, physical activity, and hobbies for the well-being and development of children is well known to the scientific and professional community.

Methods and Objectives: We conducted a cross-sectional survey among 836 primary school children aged 11-15 years (from April 2019 to May 2019) in the Braničevo District. Data were collected on interests in art and sports, weekly hours spent on sports, sleep duration, BMI percentiles, and the prevalence of obesity. Statistical analysis was performed to determine mean values, standard deviations, medians, and distributions across different categories. This study aims to explore the interest in art and sports, weekly engagement in sports, sleep duration, and Body Mass Index (BMI) percentiles among a population sample of primary school children in the Braničevo District.

Results: Gender distribution was nearly even, with 51.6% female and 48.4% male primary school children. The average BMI percentile was 50.05 ± 32.03 . Additionally, 6.9% of participants were classified as obese (>95th percentile). Regarding interests in art and sports, 36.6% of participants were interested in art, while 63.4% were not. In contrast, 53.8% of participants engaged in sports, while 46.2% did not. The average weekly hours spent on sports was 5.52 ± 4.47 hours. In terms of sleep duration, most participants (54.3%) reported sleeping 9-10 hours weekly, 38.6% reported 6-8 hours, 3.7% less than 6 hours, and 3.4% more than 10 hours.

Conclusions: The findings indicate a higher interest in sports than in art among participants. Sleep duration varies widely, with a majority reporting sufficient sleep. BMI percentiles are normally distributed, but a small percentage of the population is obese. These insights can guide health and educational program development in the Braničevo District.

Keywords: Braničevo District, hobby, weekly sports engagement, sleep duration, primary school