

UDC 379.8

DOI <https://doi.org/10.32782/hst-2023-16-93-17>

## ORGANIZATION OF LEISURE SERVICE: ASSESSING THE NEEDS

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BIRUTA, SVAGZDIENE<sup>2</sup>**Abstract**

Relevance and novelty.

Years of research show that leisure has a positive impact on a person's overall well-being, from time management skills to fulfilling basic psychological needs such as: autonomy, mastery, belonging, and significance. The therapeutic influence of leisure in reducing the negative effects of stressful situations has long been documented. Empirical studies have examined the benefits of leisure in coping with daily concerns, normal life stress, chronic and occupational stress, and life-changing events (Shen, MacDonald, Logan, Parkinson, Gorrell & Hatfield, 2022). Because we live in a fast-paced, work- and productivity-oriented, time-poor life, we feel compelled to quickly recover, regain strength, and live up to expectations as quickly as possible (Kinczel & Müller, 2022). COVID-19 has dramatically changed the way we live our lives, including our leisure time, which has resulted in a significant reduction in travel and group activities (Takiguchi, Matsui, Kikutani & Ebina, 2022). Problematic question: how is the organization of free time identified in changing market conditions? The purpose of the article: to identify the organization of leisure time in changing market conditions. Object: identification of leisure in changing conditions. Tasks: 1) to define the essence of the organization of leisure and work in changing market conditions in a theoretical aspect; 2) discuss the peculiarities of the organization of leisure services during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic; 3) to present researches revealing aspects of leisure consumption and quality of life. Methods: analysis, systematization and interpretation of scientific literature.

**Key words:** leisure, organization, service, free time.

The essence of leisure and work organization in changing market conditions from a theoretical perspective

Accelerating pace of life, increasing competition in the labor market place high demands on the personality. To be successful in today's society, you need to be able to change and adapt very quickly – learn and work, communicate and cooperate, and this is becoming more and more difficult as the economy becomes less industrial as the service sphere expands. 21st century a person spends most of his time performing his duties at work, fulfilling obligations to the family, thus limiting the opportunities to freely organize free time – time free from necessary activities, dedicated to meeting personal needs, expanding knowledge, education and spiritual development.

Paškauskas (2020) claims that since the 19th century at the end of the 20th century, leisure became a topic of public debate due to its importance to the modernizing society.

*The importance and necessity of free time.* Leisure time is an essential and important factor

in everyone's life, which they want to spend doing various activities (Kinczel & Müller, 2022). Takiguchi et al., (2022) describe the meaning of leisure more precisely, stating that leisure is any activity that is performed without being bound by work, family, or societal regulations. It is also added that free time does not include activities that are directly related to life or living, such as: work, sleep, housework, etc. Leisure activities reduce the impact of stressful experiences because they promote positive emotions related to self-actualization and well-being. Therefore, it helps prevent mental illnesses such as depression (Takiguchi et al., 2022). According to research, leisure activities can immediately improve a person's subjective well-being by inducing positive emotions that create effective, long-lasting resistance to stress. Using Broaden-and-Build theory, posits that positive emissions enrich an individual's thoughts and actions, which create greater resilience to future stress (Fredrickson, 2001 – cit., Reschly et al., 2008 – cit. iš Takiguchi et al., 2022).

The article discusses two main opposing positions on the issue of free time. Arguments of workers' rights defenders, who present free time as a condition for better work, can be attributed to the first. Such an approach is perceived as one of the means of connecting workers with the rest of the modernizing society. On the other hand, most of the 19th century

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help – 20th century Ave. the leisure practices chosen by the employees raised a lot of passions, especially among the representatives of another prominent layer – the employers. Researching the analyzed aspects of scientific interests in the matter of leisure is broader and more specific. Correct organization of free time is inseparable from order, efficient organization of public and private life, training and education. In this case, free time is perceived as a means of reforming a part of society and national consolidation. As Mažeikienė (2020) states, analyzing Mackevičius' (2020) scientific research, it became clear that the quality of life includes not only the satisfaction of material needs (food, housing, clothes), but also an orderly environment, quality food. Access to adequate medical services, access to social security in case of unforeseen events, desired education and employment contribute to the quality of life. The author also distinguishes that a higher quality of life indicator depends on the provision of more diverse cultural and recreational opportunities. Works note that the quality of life is a sociological category that expresses the satisfaction of material and cultural needs. Needs that are inseparable from the quality of life: clothing, food, living space, health care, ways of spending free time, education, communication, creativity, ways to overcome stress, etc. (Mažeikienė, 2020).

#### **The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on leisure time**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on the whole world, causing inconvenience in daily life (Shen et al., 2022). In order to stop the spread of the COVID-19 disease, in March 2020, the population of England was ordered to stay at home, allowing only essential shopping, going to medical facilities, work and exercise (Strain, Sharp, Spiers, Price, Williams, Fraser, Brage, Wijndaele & Kelly, 2022). Such and similar restrictions on daily life were observed all over the world, not only in England. Government restrictions on daily life to protect public and global health have also affected other aspects of life, such as socioeconomic conditions and worker productivity (Huls, Sajjad, Kanters, Hakkaart-van Roijen, Brouwer & van Exel, 2022). Research has also found that public health measures to stop the spread of the pandemic, such as staying at home or social distancing, not only increased the incidence of poor mental health, but took away what people could do to would maintain a good quality of life. Although the vast majority of researches emphasize the risk factors of the mental state, the vulnerability, recently there is an increasing number of analyzes that determine the means

and mechanisms that can help to cope with it and gain resistance to it. It has been examined that leisure activities are one such way to continue meeting your physical, cognitive, social and emotional needs in order to cope with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic (Shen et al., 2022).

More and more adults have sedentary jobs, and children spend more and more time sitting in front of computers, television screens or surfing on their phones. In this way, an imbalance of consumed energy develops, which leads to various health disorders and overweight (Skarbaliūtė, 2020). Leisure organization services provided in order to avoid social problems (for preventive purposes), reducing social isolation, and activating the community are understood as ocio-cultural services. There is competition in the market, so companies must encourage their employees so that they can carry out the company's activities professionally and feel safe. Employee motivation is necessary so that we do not lose qualified employees who could go to a competitor. Motivation is an important factor influencing human performance. Today's difficult economic situation poses challenges for organizations seeking to retain staff through various motivational means (Šalkauskienė, & Šakūnaitė, 2022).

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#### **Research done**

Strain et al., (2022) found that in the months of April-May 2020, the activity of the residents of England was the lowest, comparing the same months with the years 2016–2019 (respectively, 682 average active minutes per week and 754–765 average. active min/week).

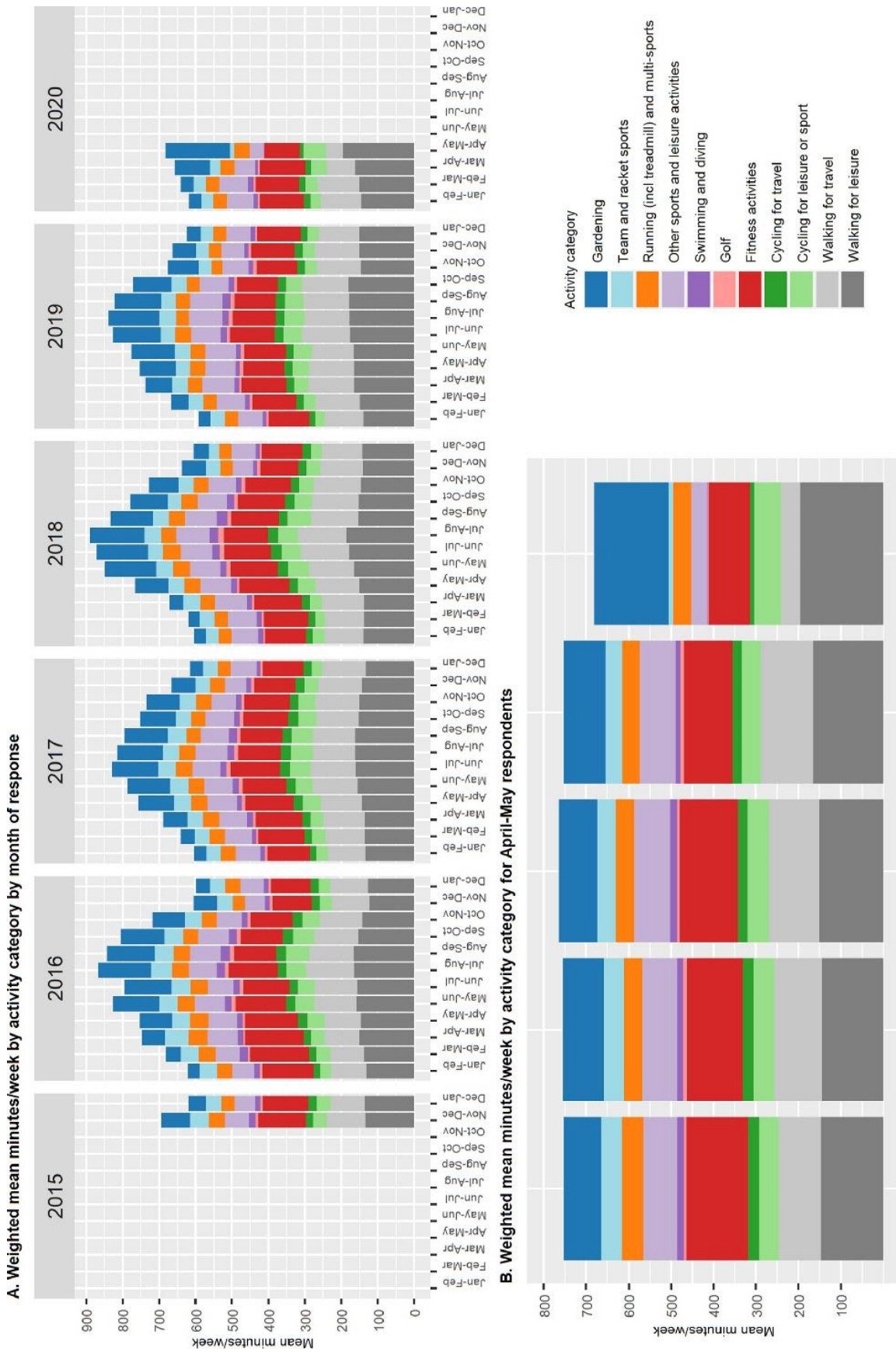


Fig. 1. Change in different activities

Strain et al., (2022)

As can be seen in the presented figure 1, after the beginning of the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, people began to spend almost twice as much time in gardening and leisure walking. Meanwhile, less time was allocated to all other activities in 2020. in April-May than in 2016–2019. in the same months, resulting in an overall decrease in activity (Strain et al., 2022).

Among adults, it was found that activities related to work, studying, cooking, watching movies and series, online chats in social networks, reading, housework and physical activity increased the most during the pandemic. Meanwhile, in the same study, which examined adults from Spain, the following activities were most frequent: reading for pleasure (54.5 %), talking with family members (51.5 %), board games (37 %), doing nothing (40.1 %).

Judging by gender, men paid less attention to physical activity (43.2 %) than women (44.6 %) (Jaskulska, Jankowiak, Marciniak & Klichowski, 2022). A survey of Polish schoolchildren (ages 9–20) found that 45 % of respondents (N=1995) say their physical condition has worsened since the start of pandemic restrictions and distance learning, while 35 % of schoolchildren said their physical condition has not changed. Further, it was found that almost 30 % of schoolchildren noticed that their free time had worsened, 30 % said that their free time had improved, and 40 % felt that it had not changed (Jaskulska et al., 2022).

Shen et al., (2022) looked for associations between broad patterns of people's leisure activities and their mental health and well-being in the United States population during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was relevant to conduct this study with the US population, as the US had the highest number of cases of COVID-19 (59.4 million cases, as of January 11, 2020) and was the 5th country in terms of mortality (254.9 cases per 100,000 population).

The results showed that the majority of respondents (64 %) felt normal stress, almost 30 % felt mild or moderate stress, and 13 % of respondents noted that they felt severe or very severe stress. 24 % of respondents revealed that they felt major symptoms of depression, and 7 % revealed about poor mental health (Shen et al., 2022).

Data on engagement and participation in specified activities for the time/week before the COVID-19 pandemic and the desired amount provided by the respondents themselves were evaluated. It was found that on average more time is spent listening to music, watching TV/movies,

playing online computer games, reading and writing (4–5k/sav), followed by walks, gardening and offline computer games. It was noticed that very few people are engaged in outdoor and indoor sports, activities in nature, traveling (up to 1k/week). Comparing the answers given before and during the pandemic, it was found that even more time was spent watching TV/computer games. Walking and gardening maintained similar levels of activity, while outdoor activities and physical activity decreased further (Shen et al., 2022).

The results of the study revealed that changes in the level of leisure activities and involvement in them due to the COVID-19 pandemic were directly related to increased stress, depressive symptoms and a deterioration in general mental state. Meanwhile, the association with the decrease in the frequency of usual, favorite activities and the influence on the listed symptoms was not observed (Shen et al., 2022). In Japan, looking for the relationship between leisure and mental health, 1200 Japanese residents were surveyed using the Resilience scale (Nishi et al., 2010 -cit., Takiguchi et al., 2022). The survey was conducted twice – in January 2020. and February 2021. The respondents were divided into 3 main groups: young people (20–39 years old), middle-aged people (40–59 years old) and men-older people (60–89 years old) (Takiguchi et al., 2022).

When evaluating the general response of the respondents during the second survey, it was seen that people chose fewer leisure activities. However, when compared by group, younger people chose more activities than older people, and no change was observed in the middle-aged group. During the second survey, a marked decrease in the frequency of activities was observed. The activity choices of individual respondents were also evaluated during the first and second survey. In the second survey, respondents often chose other activities or marked the same ones, but significantly less. However, there were exceptions. Indoor activities and those that can be done alone had the greatest continuity in both surveys, for example: watching movies, knitting, reading; as well as physical activities that can be done alone, such as jogging, walking, yoga and strength training. New activities chosen by the respondents during the second survey could be done at home, for example: gardening, computer games and learning (Tagikuchi et al., 2022).

Tagikuchi et al., (2022) evaluating the results of the survey, it was found that older people had greater resistance than the other 2 groups, between

which there was no change. Older people were rated at a lower level of depression than young respondents. When analyzing the influence of the change in leisure activities on the symptoms of depression, it was observed that the change between the two surveys was too small to assess significance. However, it was found that a higher level of resistance to stress had a direct impact on depressive symptoms, so older respondents were more resistant to depression, and younger respondents were vice versa.

### Conclusions and discussion

In order to harmonize all spheres of personal life and improve, taking into account not only the interests of one's own, but also the interests of one's family and employers, it is necessary to properly choose a time planning strategy that would create conditions for harmonizing the areas of work and leisure – advantages for the organization and the employee. After revealing the forms of work organization that create more favorable opportunities, it is necessary to strive for high-quality provision of leisure services. In order to determine the current situation, evaluate and predict possible changes, it is necessary to carry out thorough research, i.e. i.e. document analysis

and survey. The revealed results of the study found that labor productivity and the growth of the gross domestic product are related to shorter working hours and the application of flexible forms of work organization, which create a favorable situation for combining work and leisure time. Also, research has established that the quality of free time depends on free time planning, the assessment of the importance of free time, and funds allocated outside of work.

In summary, it can be said that occupational therapy is one of the problem-solving processes. The solution to the problem may be to reduce the influencing factors of employees and employers or to support the existing functioning. Such a process of solving the problem of organizing free time through employment therapy is holistic, i.e. i.e. administration is provided in a comprehensive manner. Emotional, cognitive, social, physical, sensory and perceptual areas are an indivisible whole, therefore, a number of different instruments for solving the problem are applied in the therapy of quality leisure organization. The most important need of every individual is meaningful activity. In employment therapy, the aim is to improve the daily functioning of employees.

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### ОРГАНІЗАЦІЯ ДОЗВІЛЛЯ: ОЦІНКА ПОТРЕБ

#### Анотація

Актуальність і новизна. Багаторічні дослідження показують, що дозвілля позитивно впливає на загальне самопочуття людини, від навичок управління часом до задоволення основних психологічних потреб, таких як автономія, майстерність, приналежність і значимість. Терапевтичний вплив дозвілля на зменшення негативних наслідків стресових ситуацій давно підтверджено. Емпіричні дослідження вивчали переваги дозвілля для подолання повсякденних турбот, звичайного життєвого стресу, хронічного та професійного стресу та подій, які змінюють життя (Shen, MacDonald, Logan, Parkinson, Gorrell & Hatfield, 2022). Оскільки ми живемо в стрімкому темпі життя, орієнтованому на роботу та продуктивність, у якому бракує часу, ми відчуваємо потребу якомога швидше одужати, відновити сили та виправдати очікування (Kinczel & Müller, 2022). COVID-19 кардинально змінив спосіб нашого життя, включно з нашим дозвіллям, що призвело до значного скорочення подорожей і групових заходів (Takiguchi, Matsui, Kikutani & Ebina, 2022). Проблемне питання: як ідентифікується організація вільного часу в мінливих ринкових умовах? Мета статті: виявити організацію вільного часу в мінливих ринкових умовах. Об'єкт: ідентифікація дозвілля в мінливих умовах. Завдання: 1. Визначити сутність організації відпочинку та праці в мінливих ринкових умовах у теоретичному аспекті; 2. Обговорити особливості організації дозвілля в період пандемії COVID-19; 3. Представити дослідження, що розкривають аспекти споживання дозвілля та якості життя. Методи: аналіз, систематизація та інтерпретація наукової літератури.

**Ключові слова:** дозвілля, організація, обслуговування, вільний час.

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Received date 05.08.2023  
Accepted date 15.06.2023  
Published date 05.09.2023

**How to cite:** Kalesnikovas, Paulius, & Svagzdiene, Biruta. Organization of leisure service: assessing the needs. Humanities studies : Collection of Scientific Papers / Ed. V. Voronkova. Zaporizhzhia : Publishing house "Helvetica". 2023. 16 (93). P. 168–173.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.32782/hst-2023-16-93-17>