

Motivation That Leads Older People To Practice Bodybuilding

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Summary

The objective of this study was to know the reasons why the elderly practice bodybuilding. The research has a descriptive character, the sample was composed of 23 senior citizens with ages ranging from 50 to 80, who already did bodybuilding and who had been practicing for more than 6 months. The research was done in three fitness centers of São Paulo. A questionnaire was used to collect data, the results indicated the following reasons for senior citizens to seek fitness centers for physical activity (bodybuilding): quality of life, medical advice and making new friends. We concluded that bodybuilding is extremely important for the elderly. Some of the seniors who answered the questionnaire claimed that through bodybuilding they felt better in several ways. Some showed interest in friendships, so the fitness center is a place to escape from loneliness, but they also pointed out that it helped a lot in the matter of socialization and appearance.

Introduction

The aging process reduces physical activity making everyday chores almost impossible. Older adults find themselves forced to rely on training to perform basic tasks, so many seniors are looking for fitness centers for physical activity. The main focus is on bodybuilding. The practice of bodybuilding is an important factor as it helps prevent many diseases such as osteoporosis, obesity, hypertension, arthritis, cholesterol, diabetes. It also increases bone density, muscle mass, improves strength, balance and coordination. In this way, the elderly can make small daily efforts more easily, with a better disposition, safety and principal without depending on anyone. The objective of this study is to investigate the causes that led the elderly to practice bodybuilding and which benefits this practice has brought to their lives. It is believed that the elderly have been living a life with more quality and health, not only in the physical part but also in the social environment. We performed a quantitative field survey, using a questionnaire with 23 elderly people practicing bodybuilding.

Brazil is undergoing a very accelerated aging process [1]. The aging process is a sum of several factors that involve the biopsychosocial aspects, since in the elderly the transformations are progressive, such as cellular losses, decreased muscle strength, hearing impairment, and visual impairment among others, which may even cause immobility [1]. Regular physical activity makes the elderly more dynamic with a lower incidence of diseases. With

this, senior citizens will have better quality of life and self esteem, improving not only the physical part but their social environment. The most recommended physical activity is bodybuilding. It can increase muscle strength which improves the basic daily movements of the elderly [2]. The aging process of the muscular system reduces static, dynamic and maximum strength, as well as the strength and maximum velocity. However, they can be increased for seniors who practice regular daily bodybuilding programs [3].

The aging process starts at conception. So, aging is a dynamic and progressive process in which both morphological and functional, biochemical and psychological changes determine the progressive loss of capacity and fitness to the environment. This causes a higher incidence of pathological processes, which is as a natural expected phenomenon [4].

Benefits

A well-planned bodybuilding program can result in innumerable benefits for the elderly, such as increased muscle mass, muscle fiber hypertrophy, increased bone density, and improved performance in both daily life activities and in activities that require muscle strength. There seems to be endocrine system improvements related to strength training [5,6].

Among the general benefits are:

- Increased muscle strength

- Small increase in muscle power
- Increased muscle fibers of both type 1 and type 2
- Increased bone density
- Decreased risks of cardiovascular disease
- Decreased risks of developing diabetes
- Improvement of overall posture
- Decreased injuries due to falls
- Increased Agility
- Increased flexibility
- Increased resistance
- Increased functional capacity

The list tends to continue as studies find other important benefits for improving the quality of life of the elderly. Among the many benefits that exercise practice promotes for all ages, one of the most important is protection of functional capacity mainly in the elderly. Functional ability is understood as the performance in everyday activities or activities of daily living, basic activities that become very important for the elderly. The Activities of Daily Living (ADL) can be classified according to various indexes, they are referred to as: bathing, dressing, getting up, sitting, walking a short distance; that is, basic personal care activities and Instrumental Activities Of Daily Living (IADL) such as cooking, cleaning the house, shopping, that is, more complex activities of daily living [7,8].

A physically inactive lifestyle may be the primary cause of the inability to perform ADL. However according to his study a program of regular physical exercises can promote more qualitative rather than quantitative changes, such as changes in the way of moving, increase in the speed of exercises [9]. That is; the elderly become more agile in carrying out any activity, either basic or complex, and adopting safety measures to carry out the task [10].

Besides benefiting the functional capacity, physical exercise promotes improvement in the physical fitness of the elderly, the components of physical fitness suffer a decline that can affect their health and mobility [9]. The main diseases related to aging are: arthritis, arthrosis and osteoporosis. Thus, with so many diseases reaching a senior age, we can conclude that the majority of the elderly choose to the practice physical exercise (bodybuilding) [8] to have a better quality of life and not only in the physical part but also in the social environment. In addition, physical exercise, in particular resistance training (bodybuilding), provides means to

prevent the diseases that most affect the elderly, with several benefits. Among them are agility, flexibility, strength and endurance, making the elderly more independent to carry out their daily lives activities [10,11]. According to the lack of exercise and the capacity of response of the elderly are the main health problems related to aging, diseases acquired over the years, therefore the importance of the practice of physical activity precisely to prevent such diseases [11].

Argue that before prescribing an exercise for the elderly it is important to know the losses at muscle level. As a greater index, muscle fatigue, decrease in speed of conduction and regeneration capacity. All these morphological and functional changes occur over time and can be evidenced by a combination of three factors - aging, presence of disease, and sedentary lifestyle [7,12-14].

Methodology

This research is characterized by data collection procedure. We used a questionnaire with 13 questions that is widely used as a research tool. A survey was conducted with senior citizens with ages ranging from 50 to 80 years. Ten worked out at New Sports Base Fitness Center, 10 at the Space Fit Fitness Center and 3 at the Fire Fitness Center, all located in the São Paulo region. As a base we chose places that had the largest number of elderly people practicing bodybuilding.

We collected data at the fitness centers mentioned above, the questionnaire was answered by the groups of elderly, 23 in the total, who attend the fitness centers and that practice bodybuilding. We explained what the research and our goal would be like between 50 and 80 years old, including 10. We collected the data in the fitness centers cited above, the questionnaire was answered by the groups of the elderly in the total 23, that attend the fitness centers and that practice bodybuilding. We explained what the research and our goal.

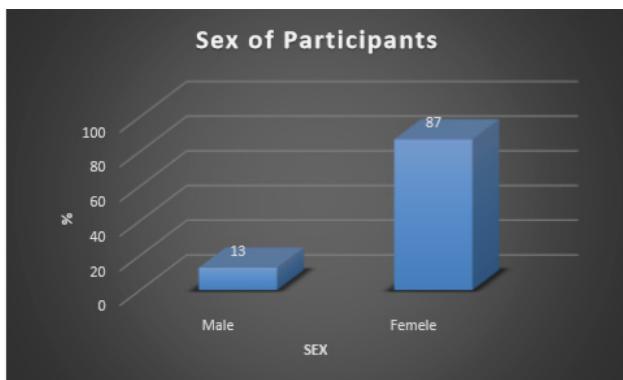
Results

First part of the questionnaire:

Interview sheet

- **Graphics 1 and 2:** Age of respondents and Sex of respondents:

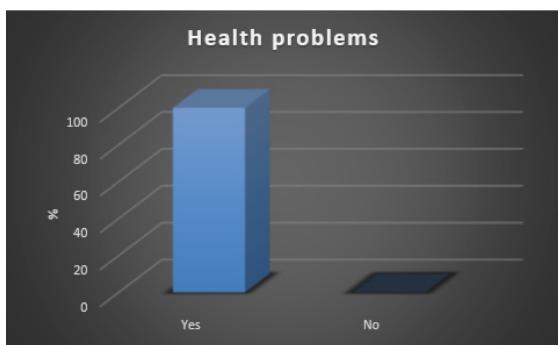
In the first graphic, we divided the elderly into 3 groups: 50 to 60 years, with 15 people, 65%; 61 to 70 years, with 6 people, 26% and 71 to 80 years, with 2 people. In the second graphic to specify the sex, with the majority female, 20 women, 87% and 3 men, 13%.



Graphic 1 and 2: Age of research participants and Sex of the research participants.

Health in General

- **Graphic 3:** In the first chart on health in general, we asked if there were any health problems. Eleven of them said they did, 48% and 12 of them said they did not 52%.



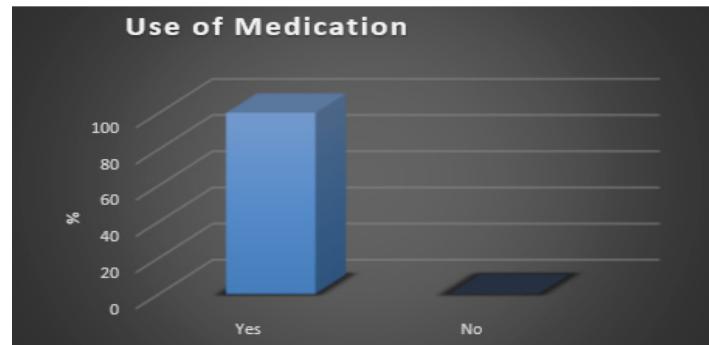
Graphic 3: Sex of the research participants.

- **Graphic 4:** Some examples of diseases more common among the elderly and the option of “others” for diseases not described in the questions:



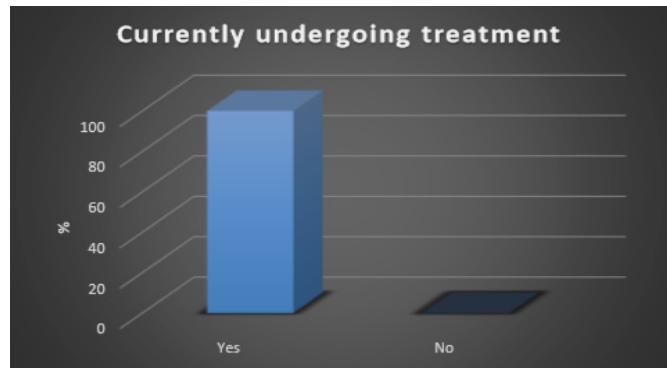
Graphic 4: Health Problems Reports.

- **Graphics 5:** The second question was whether they used medications: 13 of them said “yes”, 57% of the total and 10 of them “no”, being 43% of the total:



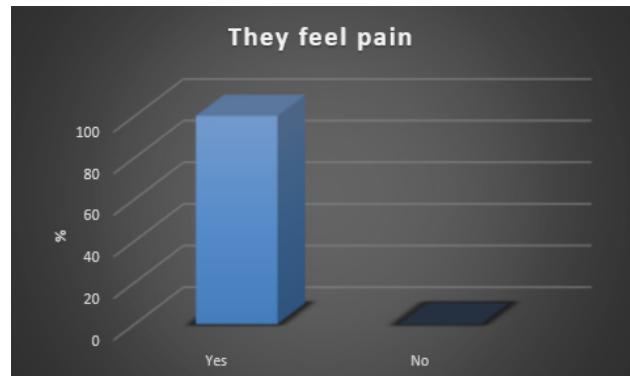
Graph 5: Use of medicines.

- **Graphic 6:** The third question asked if they were currently undergoing any treatment: Six of them said they were, 26% of the total and 17 of them said that they were not 74%:



Graphic 6: Elderly who undergo medical treatment.

- **Graphics 7:** The fourth question was whether the elderly were in pain, 15 of them said they did, being 65%, and 8 of them said that they did not 35%.



Graphic 7: Represents who feels pain or not.

- **Graphic 8:** Among the elderly who said yes, 14 affirmed those who felt pain at times and 1 of them reported experiencing pain at all times. The fifth alternative question, if they had problems with insomnia: 5 of them said yes 22% and 18 of them not 78%.



Graphic 8: People who have difficulty sleeping or not.

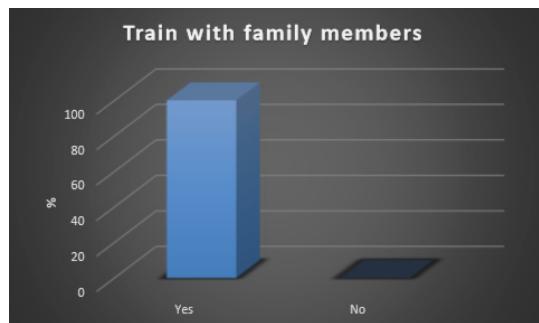
Motivation

- **Graphics 9:** The first question: What made you practice bodybuilding? Some of the reasons were: 13 of them refer 52% for Medical Advice, 3 of them to Improve their appearance 12%; 2 of them to socialize 8% and 7 of them for other reasons 28%. Second question:



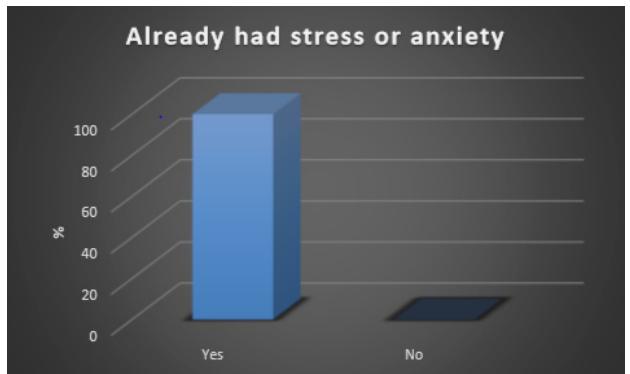
Graphic 9: You represent the reasons that led them to choose bodybuilding.

Graphic 10: Does any member of the family train together with you? 6 of them answered yes 26% and 17 of them, no 74%:

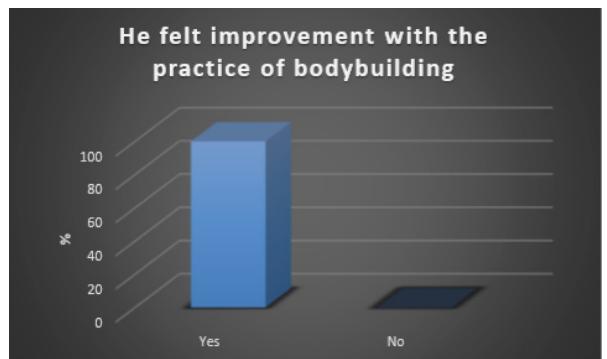


Graphic 10: Represents whether or not a family member trains with the elderly.

- **Graphic 11:** Third question: Has your stress or anxiety diminished? 17 of them yes 74% and 6 of them not 26%:



Graphic 11: Represents whether or not the participants already had stress or anxiety Graphic 12With the practice of bodybuilding has there been improvement? Twenty two of them, yes 96% and 1 of them not 4%.



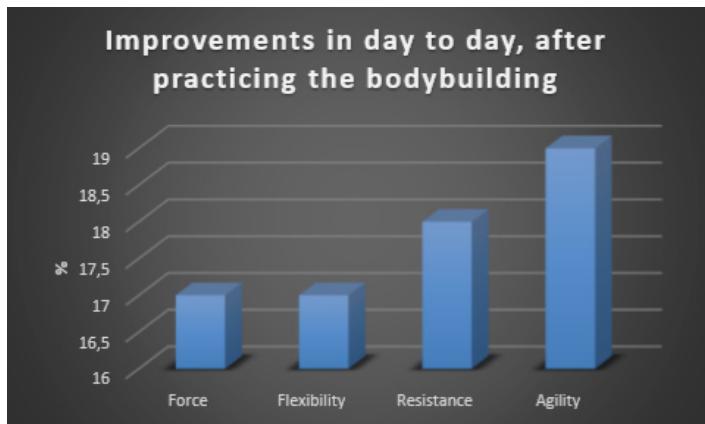
Graphic 12: Represents whether the practitioners felt or did not improve with the practice of bodybuilding.

- **Graphics 13:** Fourth question: Did you feel better in your daily life, after you started to work out bodybuilding? 22 yes 96% 1 not 4%:



Graphic 13: Represents whether or not there was improvement in the day of the practitioner after bodybuilding.

- **Graphic 14:** Improvements in the physical capabilities as the chart below shows:



Graphic 14: Represents the percentage of improvement in basic physical capacities.

- **Graphic 15:** Fifth and last question: Would you recommend practicing bodybuilding? 23 of them yes 100% and none no:



Graphic 15: It represents the percentage of participants that would indicate the practice of bodybuilding for other people.

Discussion

Compared with Gislaine Cristina and Adriana Baratela (2007) who made a research with 24 elderly women between 60 and 80 years in 2007. Our research had 20 elderly people between 50 and 80 years old, 87% of the elderly female. In the item health problems, the elderly women had fewer hypertension problems. But the old women feeling pain were minimal. In our research there were more senior citizens with hypertension problems. But a great part of elderly had illnesses, a similarity in those who had no health problems.

Comparing Gislaine Cristina and Adriana Baratela (2007), among the reasons that led to the practice of bodybuilding, the search due to medical advice was lower, but most of them due to

reasons of social contact.

In our research, most of them of the elderly sought bodybuilding because of medical indication, however a great part seek bodybuilding for other reasons. Comparing Gislaine Cristina and Adriana Baratela (2007), there are improvements with practice, in the majority of the elderly women there was improvement in the muscular agility, but in the other capacities there were not so many improvements.

In our research, similar to that of Gislaine Cristina and Adriana Baratela (2007), most participants improved their muscular capacity and agility, while the great majority improved in other capacities: flexibility, strength and endurance.

Conclusion

Our research made it possible to conclude that with old age the human being loses vitality. The body becomes weak, walking slows down, the body loses muscle mass, bones become weak, and the probability of illness increases. Especially when sedentarism and aging go hand in hand. However, it has already been demonstrated that physical activity brings numerous benefits, not only for the elderly but also for people of all ages. But bodybuilding is recommended for seniors because it is an activity that provides great health benefits for the elderly and all those who practice it.

We conclude that bodybuilding is extremely important for the elderly. Some elderly people answered a questionnaire about the practice of bodybuilding, claiming that they felt better in several ways. Some have shown an interest in friendships, so the fitness center is a place for the escape from loneliness, but also that it has helped a lot in the matter of social activity and improving appearance. The elderly are becoming more and more aware of the importance of bodybuilding to their lives, showing an increased interest in pursuing their dreams and well-being. Bodybuilding, also called strength training, provides greater autonomy for the elderly, that is, they gain functional independence, more vitality to perform their daily tasks.

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