

SAHK

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Introduction: Leisure activities have long been underrated its value in Chinese culture. “Hard working is much beneficial than play (勤有功, 戏无益)” is an old Chinese proverb which reflects the traditional attitudes towards leisure activities. However, more and more literatures believed on the other way round. Positive health can be achieved when one has the choice to engage in leisure besides self-care and work (AOTA, 1995; CAOT, 1996). Leisure participation provides the opportunities for enjoyment, skills development, personal growth, social relationship formation, life-purpose determination and achieving mental and physical health in adults with physical disabilities (Specht, King, Brown & Foris, 2002). In addition, recreation or leisure is recognized as one of the major routes for people with disability to integrate into community under the system of Conductive Education in adult services of Hong Kong (Fung & Su, 1995). This paper is trying to look into the effect of regular leisure activities on persons with disability in adult services of SAHK from their own perspective.

Methods: Boccia, which first became a Paralympics sport in 1984, is one of the most commonly participated leisure activities in our sheltered workshop. Questionnaires and interviews were conducted with clients in order to understand their life experience of being an amateur boccia player. Five Hong Kong Boccia Team members (present or former) who have joined the team ranged from 7-17 years were selected. 7-question questionnaires were distributed to the participants. Structured interviews were held for further data collection.

Results: The most common reflection was that boccia has broadened their horizons and social network, providing participants chances to visit various countries such as Brazil, Korea, China and Australia. Award attainment from international boccia competitions was considered as a life achievement and facilitation of personal growth. Repetitive, intensive (3 days weekly) and goal-oriented practice had challenged their concentration and endurance. Some participants reported that boccia practising and skills training has even assisted their emotion management.

Conclusion: Engagement in the Hong Kong Boccia Team has positive influences to the lives of clients with physical disabilities and in turn assists their integration into community. It is worthwhile for service providers to consider setting up similar leisure projects and skills training programs. Barriers and enablers of leisure implementation for adults with physical disabilities could be further investigated, so as to promote leisure participation in an appropriate and effective manner.

References

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