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## **The Positive Effects of Tourism with Horse Riding on Human Health**

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### **Abstract**

Horses bring many benefits to the lives of those around them. They are both beautiful to watch and of significant impact to the lives of many. They are a fun, enjoyable, different alternative to the ordinary tourism style for those who need more physical activity in their lives. They are a morale booster, a friend, and a teacher for those who are depressed, stressed, or lonely. Just because we no longer depend on them as a means to an end, does not mean their meaning in our life has ended. Horses still have an important health-related role to play in our everyday lives. People with physical disabilities can benefit from riding as a low- impact sport that is gentler on their joints and offers an enjoyable alternative to physical therapy in a Tourism. There are many different types of riding, so everyone can find the one that suits them. The aim of this research is to analyze the contribution of horse riding tourism to community health. According to searching of databases; Most of the studies in this area have shown the benefit of horse riding on improving heart health, lowering stress, and having a positive impact on depression. Many differently abled children, such as those coping with Autism, have also benefitted from working with horses. There are schools that take children in and teach them how to care for and ride horses, teaching them patience and responsibility, and lowering behavioral problems. New programs using horses to treat those suffering from PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome), including soldiers returning from deployment, have shown great success. According to the results of studies; recreational horse riding seems to have contribution to tourism with positive impacts on health.

Key words: Human, Health, Tourism, Horse

### **Introduction**

Horse assisted therapy has favourable effects as sensory connection, communication connection, and neuroconnection [Meregillano G.(2004), Shurtleff TL,( 2010) Shurtleff TL(2009), Zadnikar M, (2011), Rigby BR, (2016)] on different domains as physical, social, cognitive, psychologic fields, learning, and adaptive behaviours. Horse assisted therapy is the most important method in recent years as one of the new way for recovery. Sustainable horse industry has been develop the industry's contribution to the health, cultural, social, educational and sporting life of the nations. Mainly due to the benefits that are being screened by scientific works. Horse species has a high economic potential, mainly due to the use of health and tourism. According to recent studies; horse assisted therapy has been succesfull for recovery of the physical, social, and sensory functions. As an occupational therapy; Movements of the horse are utilized with the intention to improve motor control, coordination, balance, attention, sensory processes, and performance in daily activities. Sensory processes, vestibular, proprioceptive, tactile, visual, and auditory systems are targeted simultaneously [Komppula, R. (2006), Debusse D, Chandler C, Gibb C(2005)]. As a physical therapy; Multidirectional movements of the horse are utilized in gait training, balance, postural control, strengthening, and increasing range of motion. In many studies, improvements in gross motor skills, and functional activities have been reported in disabled children [Silkwood-

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Sherer DJ, (2012), Debusse D(2005), Meregillano G. (2004), Snider L, (2007), Zadnikar M, (2011)]. As speech and language therapy; Also targets improvements in speech, language, cognitive, and masticatory functions [Silkwood-Sherer DJ, (2012), Debusse D(2005), Meregillano G. (2004)]. Scientific clinical studies; Horse assisted therapy provides sensory feedback by utilizing movements of the horse, this impact would be important for neurological conditions. Horse assisted therapy with MS patients can improve postural balance, and gait. The authors concluded that horse assisted therapy can improve static balance, and gait in elder population [Kim SG, (2014)]. Horse assisted therapy can be one of the complementary treatment strategies in autistic children. [Ajzenman HF, (2013)] In children with cerebral palsy (SP) exercise-based therapies aimed at improving postural control have been used more frequently during the last decade [Snider L, (2007), Zadnikar M, (2011)]. In many studies, the authors have concluded that Horse assisted therapy improved balance and postural control. [Park ES, (2014)] We can say that hippotherapy exerts favourable effects on gross motor functions, and postural balance of children with SP at various functional levels [Park ES, (2014), Kwon JY, (2015), Benda W, (2003)]

In recent years, in pediatric, and adolescent psychiatry horse or pony-assisted therapy has been an interesting phenomenon which is also encouraged by health professionals [Masini A. (2010), Quint C, (1998)] investigated the effectiveness of Horse assisted therapy in two young women (18, and 21 years of age, respectively) who were exposed to sexual assault during childhood [Guerino MR, (2015)]. They observed serious motor limitation, coordination disorders, conspicuous muscle spasms, and postural disorders as thoracic, and cervical kyphosis, and cervical protrusion in these girls. These two patients had undergone 20 sessions of hippotherapy each lasting for 30 minutes. At the end of the therapy, they observed improvements in the posture (30%), coordination (80%), body balance, sociality, and self-confidence (50%) at indicated rates.

### **Horse Raising and Market Value**

There are two main markets in horse economy as an International and Domestic Horse raising. All over the World Types of horse tourism are Trekking, Training and Cultural. Besides, Non of the involve riding; In France and Spain, religious festivals which feature horses and 'Horse Festivals' themselves attract a large audience. Travel of education and training is also overnight stay tourism. Horse assisted therapy has been contribute tourism with the activities of Riding for the Disabled, Purchasing horses, Shows/competitions, Native breeds.

All over the Europe ,Horses as known that used for Racing, Other major Equestrian Sports, Breeding which supports this sector, Betting and the commercialisation of sport in the past. But, last research Show that new horse sector has improved with Pleasure riding, Tourism, Urban recuperation/encounters with 'nature'/fitness and well-being, Equine-Horse Assisted Therapies, Equine-Horse Assisted Education. According to number of Horses in Europe; 6 million plus horses started to used for 12% Sport & professional competition and 70 – 80% used in leisure and recreation by Higher educational levels users.

According to recent studies; A quarter of the businesses offer horse rental in the form of a short ride of about an hour or two in length, and only 6% offer tours of 8–10 days. Riding tours of 2– 5 days are offered by 14% of the businesses. When asked to identify the most profitable products about 70% of the participants mentioned shorter tours. While they have a clear notion of what type of product is profitable, the owners and operators seemed to have some difficulty with the big picture of their business. They had for instance trouble with identifying the assets of the business, several of them mentioned that they found this difficult and many did not provide that information in the survey. Their reasons were that they did not have readily availablevaluations of their assets and partly there is a reticence regarding discussing the financial

situation of the business.

### **Selection of the Therapy Horse for Tourism**

All horse therapy centres had several horses of different size, which allows for choosing a horse individually for a patient and visitors and enables conducting activities for different age groups. Also their sex, age, breed and exterior parameters are concerned. The carried out observations confirm a possibility of training gradually 4 years old horses to rehabilitation activities, i.e. the younger ones that are recommended by the literature, provided that they have been thoroughly evaluated in advance in respect of their psychological features and skills. From among large horses, native half-bred breeds (Wielkopolski horses) were most frequently used in horse assisted therapy, while native primitive breeds – the Hutsul horses and the Polish Koniks – out of smaller breeds.

### **Relationship between Horse Therapy and Tourism**

#### *Percentage of participants who do no other sporting activity*

According to; The first Active People Survey (Sport England 2007) also examined the other sports, if any, in which people participated. As can be seen in Table 1 horse riding is distinctive as it is one of a number of sports where a high proportion of those people participating (48 percent) take part in no other sporting activity. Only bowls, angling and golf have higher percentages. This is an important feature of horse riding since a high proportion of riders rely on horse riding for moderate intensity physical exercise and unless they changed their exercise habits would be otherwise sedentary.

#### *Benefits from Sustainable exercise with Horse riding*

Existing scientific research into the health benefits of physical exercise often assesses the metabolic process linked to exercise which involves the breaking down of substances in the body to create energy. The resting metabolic rate in addition to the metabolic cost of different physical activities, such as walking, running, working, and other sporting activities, is useful for assessing the energy expenditure of an individual during a representative day (World Health Organisation, the Food and Agriculture Organisation and the United Nations University (FAO/WHO/UNU) (1985). In 2004 the Department of Health reported that 30 minutes of moderate intensity, physical activity for five or more days a week should be recommended for promoting physical activity and the prevention of diseases associated with inactivity (i.e. coronary heart disease, osteoporosis, hypertension, obesity and type II diabetes, Department of Health, 2004). Besides, as a recreational activity horse riding is contribute to improve learning for child and youth.

#### *Qualitative findings; feelings, motivations and tour request*

According to studies; A number of positive feelings were strongly associated with horse riding by respondents. More than 90 percent of respondents reported that horse riding made them feel 'quite a lot' or 'extremely' cheerful and the equivalent figure is in excess of 80 percent for feeling relaxed, happy and active. Generally, negative feelings were not strongly associated with horse riding and more than 90 percent of respondents reported that when horse riding they experienced these negative feelings either 'a little' or 'not at all'. The positive and negative feelings associated with horse riding do not differ markedly according to exercise frequency.' The noticeable differences that can be identified are intuitively correct since those who had taken part less than 12 times in the last four weeks had lower percentages in the 'quite a lot' and 'extremely' categories for feeling active and energetic. While riders who regularly participate less than 12 times over four weeks may not obtain significant physical health benefits, they may still experience psychological benefits.

The results for respondents who participated in horse riding less than 12 times in the last four weeks are presented. There is little marked difference between the rows, indicating that motivations for going horse riding do not differ according to exercise frequency. However, there are marked differences in the ratings given to certain 'important' and 'very important' ratings are combined. The motivation of interacting with horses was rated by far the most important of all motivations and 82 percent of respondents rated this motivation as either 'very important' or 'extremely important'. No other motivation has a percentage of more than 50 percent when the Other motivations involving interactions with nature also receive high ratings compared to other motivations. Contact with nature and scenery and views were motivations rated as 'important', 'very important' or 'extremely important' by more than 80 percent of respondents. Certain personal development motivations including escape, develop skills, challenge myself, experience excitement, physically active and to relax were rated relatively highly compared to other motivations with in excess of 80 percent of respondents rating these as either 'important', 'very important' or 'extremely important'. By contrast, relatively few respondents rated weight loss or to improve fitness as 'very important' or 'extremely important' motivations for horse riding.

## **Results**

According to studies; When we compare with feelings we observed; %38,8 percentage positive, %1.02 percentage negative feelings. The motivation of interacting with horses was rated by far the most important of all motivations and 82 percent of respondents rated this motivation as either 'very important' or 'extremely important'. A number of horse riding would be increase to following touristic activities with horses. Just as; More than 12 times in the last 4 weeks in frequency of riding activity changed from %49 to %51. Asked to rate different motivations for going horse riding 82 percent of questionnaire respondents rated the motivation of 'interaction with horses' as either 'very important' or 'extremely important'. More than 80 percent of questionnaire respondents rated the motivations 'contact with nature' and 'scenery and views' 'important', 'very important' or 'extremely important'.

A number of positive feelings were strongly associated with horse riding by respondents. More than 90 percent of respondents reported that horse riding made them feel 'quite a lot' or 'extremely' cheerful and the equivalent figure is in excess of 80 percent for feeling relaxed, happy and active. It is also noteworthy that regular periods of trotting in a riding session may enhance the associated health benefits. In addition, just over three quarters of respondents (78 percent) indicated that activities associated with horse riding in the last four weeks, such as grooming and mucking out, involved at least moderate intensity activity which may further enhance the health benefits that can be obtained through involvement in riding. Importantly, the self reported measures of physical exercise intensity and frequency indicate that 68 percent of questionnaire respondents are likely to be achieving physical health benefits through riding and activities associated with horse riding as this involves them undertaking moderate or high intensity physical exercise at least 12 times a month.

Current evidence also suggests that people with disabilities may receive some specific health benefits from horse riding due to the nature of the physical activity involved (Crane, 1999; Bertoti, 1988; Kubota et al, 2006; Bronson et al, 2010; Hosaka et al, 2010). There is also existing evidence that additional health and well-being benefits can occur through forms of exercise, such as horse riding, that involve outdoor natural environments, contact with nature and interaction with animals.

The research presented in this report was designed to explore not only the physical health benefits of riding but also the related mental health and social benefits. The research methods used were designed to explore the key issues of exercise intensity and frequency that influence the physical health benefits arising from exercise. In particular, the study aimed to assess using a variety of methods if recreational horse riding can be classified as a moderate intensity exercise and to examine the

frequency with which individuals take part in horse riding and activities associated with horse riding such as mucking out and grooming.

## **Conclusion**

The psychological and social benefits of horse riding tourism activities. Horse riding stimulates mainly positive psychological feelings. Horse riders are strongly motivated to take part in riding by the sense of well-being they gain from interacting with horses. This important positive psychological interaction with an animal occurs in a very few sports. Being outdoors and in contact with nature are important motivations for the vast majority of horse riders. The present body of literature provides evidence that horse-assisted activities and therapies are an effective means of improving many measures of physical health. 6 million plus horses have participated from 2001 to 2009 in Europe by tourism sector 70 – 80% used in leisure and recreation. So, We suggest that tourism with horse riding would be positive effects on human health like feelings, motivations, learning, motor functions and demanding of tourism activities with horses.

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