

# **'ACTIVE' VS. 'CULTURAL' USE OF TIME: HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND SENSE OF BELONGING**

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# RESEARCH CONTEXT

- Social Science and Humanities Research Council and Sport Canada
- Our Grant: an examination of urban youth populations in Canada and their engagement levels in sport (2007-2010)

# OUR INTEREST

- **Program of research:** provide knowledge and value to strategists in the business, non-profit, sport, and government sectors. Of particular note are the applied benefits to:
  - Sport Canada policy makers,
  - Provincial Sport Governing Bodies (PSOs)
  - National Sport Organizations (NSOs)

# THE CHALLENGE (OUR INTEREST)

- Most developed countries report:
  - an alarming rise in obesity levels
  - significant decline in sport participation rates
- Governments face a challenging paradox:
  - While health and fitness dominate our agenda, the population as a whole is becoming less healthy, less fit and less active.
- Activity studies consistently find:
  - Young people increasingly select sedentary leisure-time activities such as television viewing, video games and personal computing.

# PREVIOUS WORK

- Longitudinal cohort analysis of sport participation by gender, geography and socio-economic status
- Drivers of youth sport participation (gender, age, geography, socio-economic status, parent's place of birth, and household participation)

# LEISURE ACTIVITIES

## ■ Sport Benefits:

- health, skill development, quality of life, healthy communities, strong families, and reduction of anti-social and self-destructive behaviours (Torjman, 2004; Bloom, Grant & Watt, 2005).

## ■ Less Active Pursuits:

- Provide separate, but equally important benefits to mental health, skill development, and social capital (Torjman, 2004)

# SPORT PARTICIPATION

- Research Aim

*to critically examine Canadians' use of leisure time in the context of self-described health, happiness and sense of belonging*

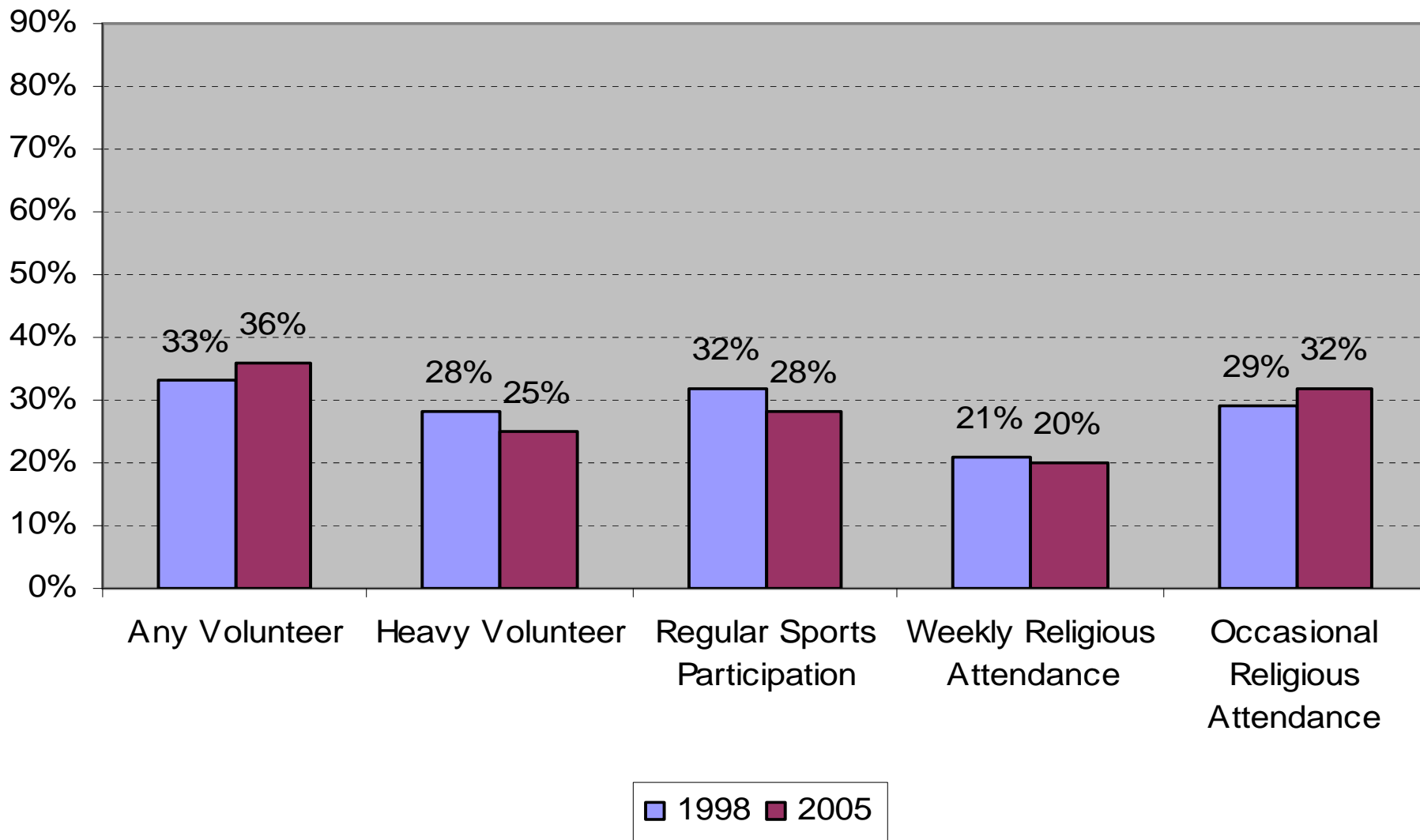
# RESEARCH APPROACH

- Analysis of public use data sets of Statistics Canada's 1998 and 2005 General Social Survey (GSS) (Cycles 12 and 19)
- Half of the respondents completed the Culture, Sport and Physical Activity module (n=10,749 and 9,851)

# LEISURE DEFINITIONS

- Leisure time: *An activity done for recreation, and not done for paid work or studies.*
- Sports participation: *Activities that involve training or competition, with some level of physical intensity or organization.*
- Religious attendance: *Frequency of attending religious services or meetings, other than on special occasions.*

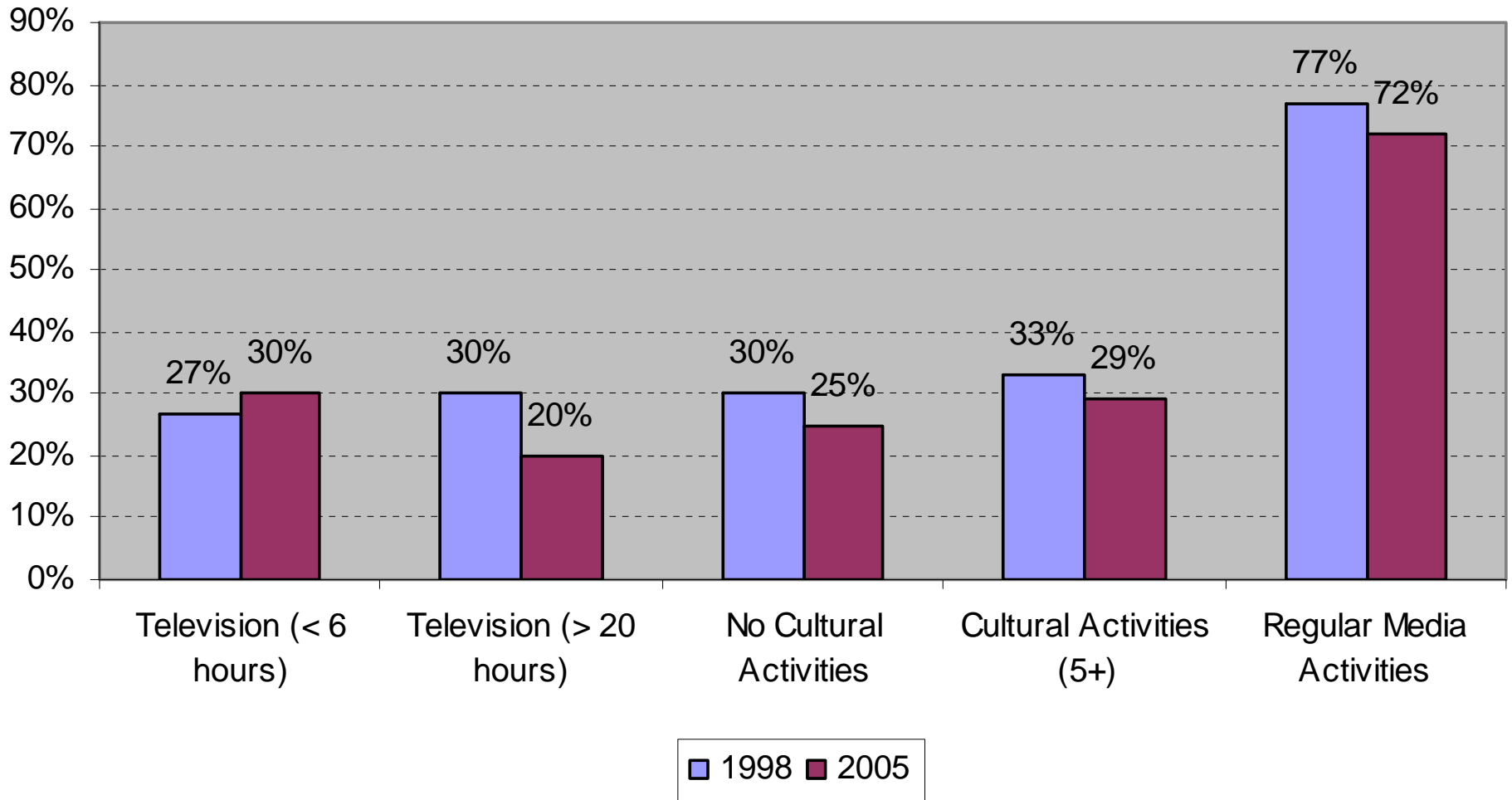
# LEISURE ACTIVITIES: 1998 & 2005



# LEISURE DEFINITIONS (CON'T)

- Cultural activities: *Include musical and theatrical performances, cultural, heritage and artistic festivals, visiting museums, art galleries, historical sites, zoos, botanical gardens, planetariums, etc.*
- Media activities: *Include reading newspapers, magazines, books, using library services, watching movies (both on DVD/VHS and at the cinema), listening to music and listening to the radio.*

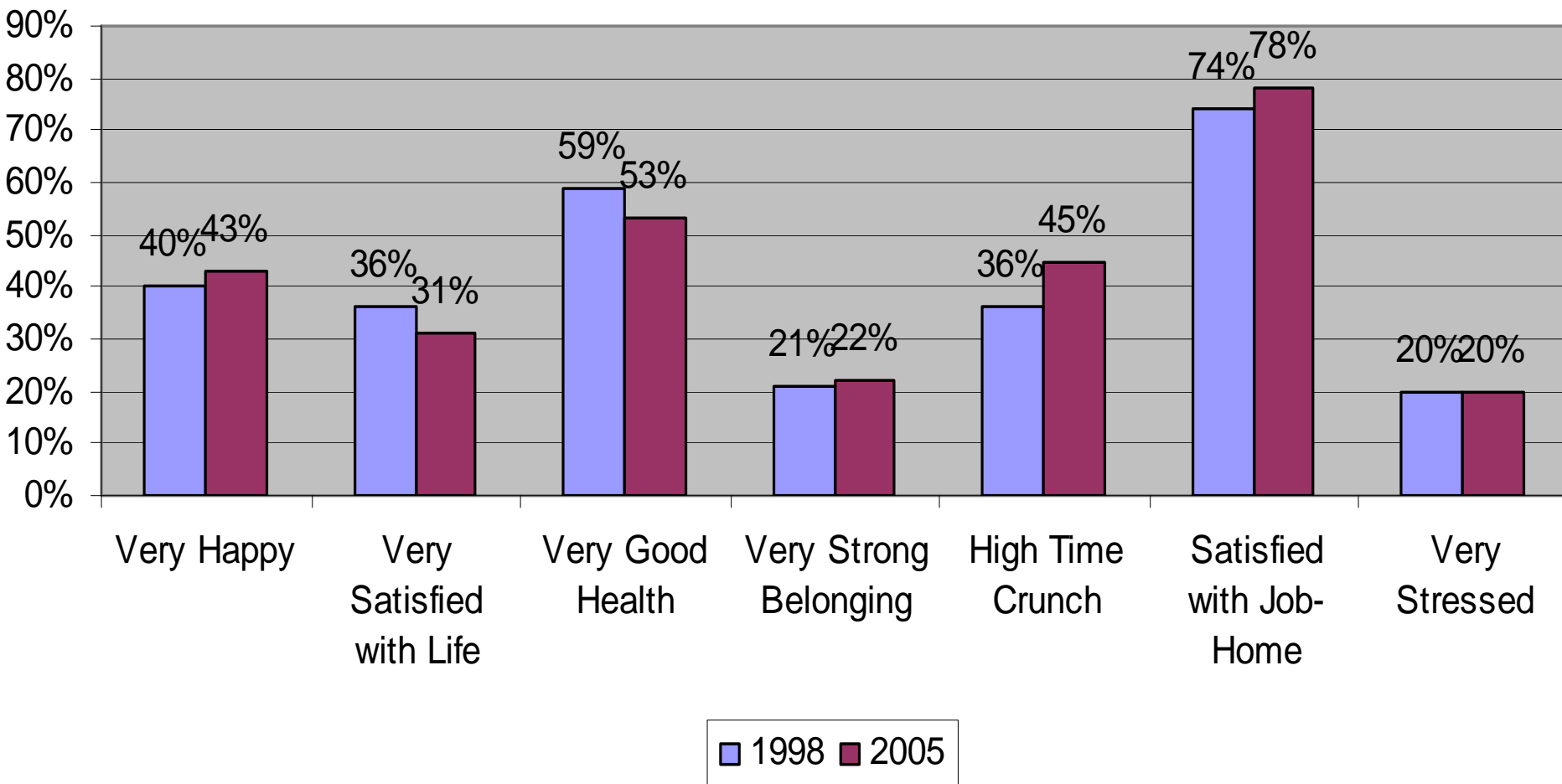
# LEISURE ACTIVITIES: 1998 & 2005



# WELL-BEING DEFINITIONS:

- Self-described health: *“In general, would you say your health is: Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, Poor”*
- Happiness: *“Presently, would you describe yourself as: Very Happy, Somewhat Happy, Somewhat Unhappy, Very Unhappy”*
- Sense of belonging: *“How would you describe your sense of belonging to your local community (your province, Canada): Very Strong, Somewhat Strong, Somewhat Weak, Very Weak”*
- Time Crunch: *Index of time pressure – 10 questions regarding having enough time.*

# WELL-BEING: 1998 & 2005



# FREQUENCY OF MEDIA ACTIVITIES

	Means				Significance
	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	
Sense of belonging	2.71	2.84	2.84	2.99	0.378
Self-described happiness	2.28	2.50	2.71	2.67	0.008 *
Daily stress	3.06	3.17	2.97	3.12	0.089
Life satisfaction	3.13	3.23	3.52	3.47	0.004 *
Time crunch	3.56	4.55	4.21	4.24	0.245
General health	2.67	3.03	3.23	2.78	0.001 *

\* significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level

# HOURS OF TELEVISION PER WEEK

Mean

0 to 6    6 to 12    12 to 21    21 to 95    Significance

Sense of belonging	2.79	2.83	2.85	2.88	0.622
Self-described happiness	2.65	2.71	2.72	2.52	0.044 *
Daily stress	3.30	3.03	2.97	2.89	0.000 *
Life satisfaction	3.37	3.53	3.54	3.33	0.066
Time crunch	4.96	4.66	4.09	3.58	0.000 *
General health	3.24	3.44	3.20	2.74	0.000 *

\* significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level

# RELIGIOUS ATTENDANCE

Mean

	None	1 / yr	2-4 / yr	1 / mth	1 / wk	Significance
Sense of belonging	2.70	2.82	2.94	2.93	3.08	0.000 *
Happiness	2.53	2.64	2.73	2.79	2.81	0.003 *
Daily stress	3.12	3.08	3.00	3.02	2.83	0.060
Life satisfaction	3.22	3.42	3.52	3.62	3.71	0.000 *
Time crunch	4.34	4.31	4.50	4.42	3.66	0.017 *
General health	3.00	3.22	3.22	3.09	3.31	0.021 *

\* significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level

# CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

	Mean				
	None	1 to 2	3 to 4	5 or more	Significance
Sense of belonging	2.86	2.85	2.79	2.88	0.685
Happiness	2.49	2.72	2.64	2.79	0.000 *
Daily stress	2.90	3.04	3.17	3.06	0.051
Life satisfaction	3.39	3.38	3.39	3.59	0.080
Time crunch	3.95	4.26	4.76	4.31	0.011 *
General health	2.90	3.11	3.23	3.41	0.000 *

\* significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level

# VOLUNTEER WORK

	Mean		Significance
	Yes	No	
Sense of belonging	2.96	2.79	0.001 *
Happiness	2.82	2.57	0.000 *
Daily stress	3.10	2.99	0.128
Life satisfaction	3.61	3.36	0.001 *
Time crunch	4.39	4.20	0.271
General health	3.28	3.07	0.004 *

\* significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level

# SPORTS PARTICIPATION

	Mean		Significance
	Yes	No	
Sense of belonging	2.95	2.82	0.034 *
Happiness	2.83	2.61	0.001 *
Daily stress	2.93	3.05	0.151
Life satisfaction	3.73	3.37	0.000 *
Time crunch	4.15	4.30	0.470
General health	3.50	3.05	0.000 *

\* significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level

# IMPLICATIONS

- Any type of leisure activity with the exception of watching television correlates positively with happiness and satisfaction with life, but only those activities that involve social contact correlate with health and sense of belonging.
- There is no relationship between the amount of stress on most days and any leisure activities.



# LIMITATIONS AND AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- Relationships are not causal.
- Psychometrically valid well-being scales as opposed to self-described.



# QUESTIONS?

***THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT.***