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*Original article*

## YOUNG SPORTSMEN BETWEEN MOTIVATION AND INFLUENCE

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### Abstract

*Purpose.* The study proposes to catch the influence of certain social circles upon the decision of young people to practice sports in the context of own motivations and interests.

*Method.* The method that was used consists in a sociological inquiry through questionnaires. For the statistical analysis, the data were recorded and processed with the aid of the SPSS program. Univariate analysis for frequencies and percentage analysis for answers were applied.

*Results.* The influent circle upon Practicing Sports is friends. Family, Physical Education teachers, media and health institutions neglect to have an effect on youth in this matter.

*Conclusions.* Under social influences offered by the consumer society, the questioned young people matter more for hierarchical aspects of life than for vital ones like health condition and physical comfort.

*Keywords:* sports market, influences, motivation, social trend

### Introduction

Sedentary life dependent on electronic games, world wide web and many other comfortable issues, consists an ever growing problem for people's health condition. Sports, as a healthy alternative of concern, polarizes between performance sports and playful activities. In this context, people's demands and necessities, participants' motivation and qualities, school's schedule for Physical Education and Sport should be linked to sports proposal.

Connecting individual qualities and expectations to sports market proposal, regarded through social paradigm and theories, has the task to offer new perspectives and points of view to the deciders in the world of sports and education.

The globalization of the consumer society induces democratization in sports and other cultural aspects through more and more commercialized occurrences and representations (Horne, 2006). Consuming becomes a basic economic activity of the human society though there are authors who claim that the manner in which people purchase goods is not natural (Bocock, 1992).

Face to face communication, through silent messages or through mass-media leads to what it is called symbolic interaction of the factors in the market and has the role to influence each other (Smith, citing Mead, 1974).

Supply and demand are primarily known through mass-media. Young people's choices and decisions regarding sports are within a very flexible reference frame formed by education and socialization in connection to the trends in the consumer society.

In this context, Coenen-Hunter (2007) considers that groups that appeared at the fringes of traditional

organizations and associations sensed the benefit they could gain from advertisement in mass-media on condition that their activities will get a spectacular aspect, while Boudon and Bourricaud (1982) point out the reversal of traditional values by the media too.

Sports consumers as practitioners in various ways express certain needs based on specific motivation (Crăciun, 1012) within market's influences.

Researchers in this area approached sports themes from the symbolic and playful point of view (Beaton and assistants, 2011) of preventing obesity and sedentariness through common sports programs (Rowe and assistants, 2013), of the role of sports in developing competitiveness, of abilities and expressivity of the students in anticipation of practicing various disciplines in sports (Franken and assistants, 1994).

This study proposes to reveal ways to influence young people in their choice on the sports market, through individual-structure theory.

The objectives are directed to reveal the influence of the family, of Physical Education and Sport teachers, of physicians and of mass-media upon sample's members and their desires, expectations and areas of interest. The social context consists of the contemporary trends promoted by the proximal or remote social environment and the individual that interact socially in this ambient.

Sports market comprises prices for clothes and equipment, sport newspapers and magazines, tickets for games, shows, demonstrations and expenses for travels, accommodation, training, sport activities, fitness, recovery and medical treatment.

Sport expenditure reveals the level of market and industry development and measures also the life

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standard and health condition.

**Article I. Purpose**

Perceiving the attitude of 15 – 25 years of age people in Cluj –Napoca for physical practicing motivation, named generally sports in the existing conditions of the sports market.

**Article II. Subjects**

The subjects of the research are 15 to 25 years old pupils and students in the urban area.

The sample was selected by a simple random method considering the following aspects: age between 15 and 25; pupils or students; practicing sport at least once a week.

**Article III. Methods**

Article IV. The method was the sociological inquiry through questionnaires.

The questionnaire regarding the influence of the social environment on young people's decisions pursued the following aspects: the level at which young people get to be influenced in deciding about sport practicing by the family, by the Physical Education teacher, by friends and by mass-media. The questionnaire regarding young people's motivation for physical activity in the current social context regarded youth's perception on the benefits of Practicing Sports by: integration in the social trend; health condition; social acknowledgement; domination; recreation; prestige; corporality; fitness; hobby.

The location of the inquiry through operators was the high schools or the colleges where the young people study, the streets, the parks or other places. Questionnaires were also applied on the web to acquaintances that practice sports for leisure. Approval was asked for subjects' comfort and they were assured of confidentiality; the interviewers introduced themselves and proved their good will.

The answers were ciphered, recorded on a five-level scale and rendered with the SPSS program.

**Results**

An univariate analysis of frequencies was acquired.

**Family's Influence on Practicing Sports**

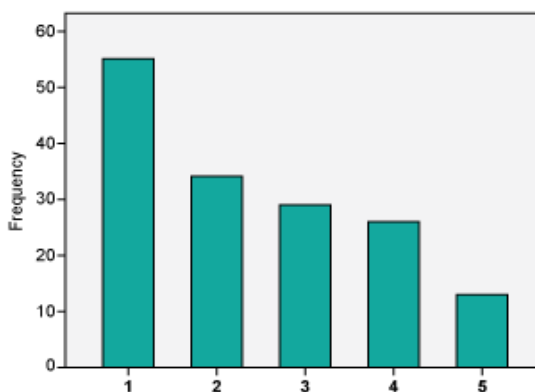


Chart nr. 1

**Legend**

1 = very low; 2 = low; 3 = so and so;

4 = high; 5 = very high.

The first two bars reveal that 88 of the respondents claim that family doesn't involve when deciding about practicing sports.

The third bar shows that 30 of the respondents' families don't take conclusive decisions.

The last two bars reveal 40 affirmative answers in family's influence on practicing sports by young people.

Level 1 represents the highest degree of disengagement for the reference group on young people's decision of practicing sports.

Level 5 represents the lowest degree of disengagement for the reference group on young people's decision of practicing sports.

**Physical Education Teacher's Influence on Practicing Sports**

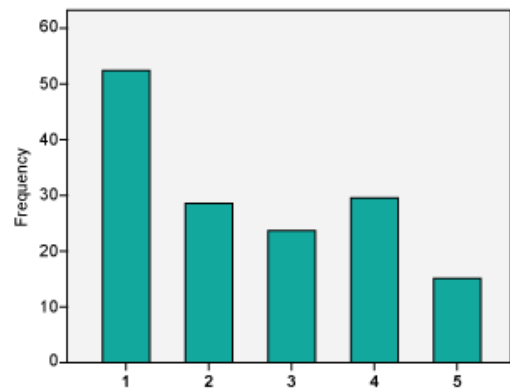


Chart nr. 2

The first two bars of chart nr. 2 represent 85 answers and show that the Physical Education and Sport teacher has a low influence on practicing sports by pupils and students. The chart reveals 30 neutral answers at the third bar and there are 45 answers that acknowledge a high influence of the expert in practicing sports.

**Friends' Influence on Practicing Sports**

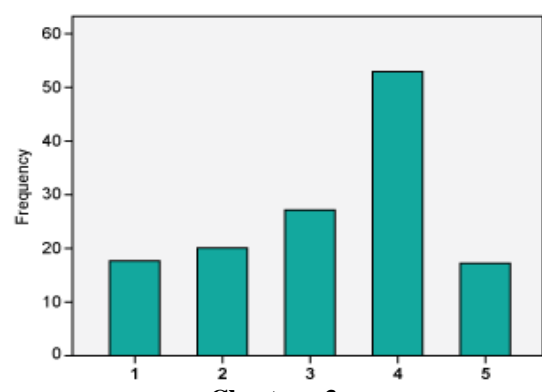


Chart nr. 3.

Friends' influence on practicing sports is represented by 80 affirmative, 42 negative and 30 neutral answers for influence. It is to emphasize the record-breaking of 80 affirmative answers by which friends affect each other in practicing sports and 42 relative disinterested attitudes. There are also 30 indecisive so and so answers.

Answers about physicians' and mass-media's attitudes on the sample's members were also recorded. These categories don't affect youth in physical activity but in a low degree.

### The Motivation for Practicing Sports Linked to Marketing in Sports. The Social Context.

Motivation in a social context states the respondents' perceptions about social trends and their will to adjust to the expectations of those close to them.

The answers were recorded in percents and represented in chart nr. 4.

- Social trend.....16%.  
Versions: that's how others do; it's in; I don't want to be dissimilar.
- Prestige .....14%.  
financial gain; other material benefits; chances.
- Sănătate.....11%.  
diabetes; obesity; sedentariness; potentiality; force; resistance.
- Corporality.....11%.  
musculature; physical aspect; corporal attitude; expressivity.
- Social acknowledgment...10%.  
reputation; performance; popularity; respect; appreciation; resources.
- Domination .....10%.  
Power; win-winner; leader; example; security; self-confidence.
- Recreation.....9%.  
pleasure of playing; pleasure for a moderate physical effort; friends.
- Fitness.....8%.  
wellbeing; energy; lively; cheerful.  
Stare de bine; energic; vioi; bine dispus.
- Exposure.....8%.  
presence in the media; various opportunities; popularity; image.
- Hobby.....2%.  
interest; leisure; emulation state.

The trends in the sports consumer society are symbolically expressed. Young people are concerned

with corporality and prestige as means of communication and a status on the social scale.

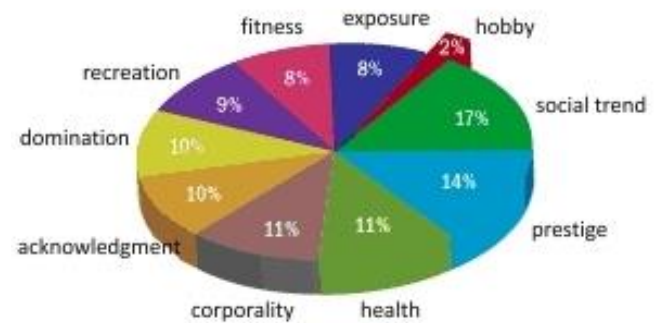


Chart nr. 4

Recreation and hobby represent only 11% of the total.

Social acknowledgement with 10% includes reputation; performance; popularity; respect; appreciation.

The consideration for the symbolic aspects of the behavior is shown through adhering to the social trend.

Concern for health – 11% and fitness – 8% covers 19% in all.

### Debates

Researches on similar subjects reveal the double motivation of the sports consumption based on social trend and its activation. With no target, there is no motivation for consumption. Residents that have different personalities, get different consumption motivations (Xianliang, Hongying, 2012).

The questions 'Who am I?'; 'What do I want to be?'; 'What could I be?' were the cause of a research regarding the individual personality and some of its properties as revealed within a sample of voluntary students through physical practice. The self-involvement in agreed programs recorded spectacular results regarding self-knowledge, self-confidence, the will to compete, spontaneity, self-limits active corporal mass, general knowledge about one's self (Ganciu, 2013).

The present research study the effects as perceived by the accessed sample in permanent action and reaction between supply and demand on the sports market after more than two decades since the transition from centralized to liberal economy. Buyer's taste and consumption are built within fashion, within the social trend.

Health condition and wellbeing had a more profound, vital motivation.

The research revealed sports' consumers nuances of motivations and attitudes. The five social categories, friends, family Physical Education and Sports teachers,



physicians and mass-media have different capacities of influencing the questioned people.

Social trends, expansive consumption on the sports market are represented by answers frequency and express the character of the urban interviewed sample, with no regard for social gender, income, culture, traditions, etc.

Young people are focused on social status more than on the slogan 'mens sana in corpore sano'.

Private media in sports and the public one don't grow such attitudes and concerns. The myth of the virtuous was forgotten.

The selection of the information in sports and physical activity is based on economical aspects more than educative ones.

Health organizations represented by medical staff is not distinguished by actions that will encourage activity for health. Individual actions of certain physicians to promote the active style of life are not perceived by young people of 15 to 25 years old but at a small extent, without enabling a social trend.

Parents' and teachers' reserve in cultivating a healthy activity is to be remarked. Financial motives, lack of time or other similar reasons lead to alarming situations concerning obvious obesity. The educational and health systems are to provide assistance to communities while youth's and adults' education are meant to offer information on the ways to claim them.

The results in sports of the national teams are also in regress. If, since not long ago, the selection of the sportsmen enjoyed a large basis of children that were able to surpass their condition through benefits that performance sports provided, the present study reveal a low interest of the young people and, indirectly, of their families for competitions.

The age of adolescence and early youth prove the potential of friends' influence and solidarity compared to other generations. These affect each other when involving in sports at a high degree.

It is to be remarked a low level of sports media's acknowledgment in the promotion of its own activity. Media's role is no longer propagandistic but it acts as an active player on the consumer market.

The analysis of the motivation for practicing sports reveals interviewed young people's interest in resources and dominant social status. For some of them, sports is a mean of achievement. This is shown by the interest in corporality, financial success, social acknowledgement, prestige, etc.

Health condition through the means of sports doesn't represent such a great value for this sample. The reasons will become another research subject among young people, the future adults and elders.

## Conclusions

Sports consumer society is not a unitary one.

Family and Physical Education and Sport teachers neglect to influence young people in practicing sports.

The reasons may base a new research.

Professional sports miss coherent programs on middle and long terms that will provide selection basis as well as a symbolic frame.

The interest for sports is shaped by the social context in which young people live.

The interest for their own pleasure and joy that recreation sports and hobbies provide is less appreciated.

Sports as physical activity keep indirectly its initial meaning as a wellbeing and health condition provider, becoming also an expression of the social hierarchies within a globalized consumer society.

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