

ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

MOTIVES OF YOUNG BASKETBALL PLAYERS FOR GOING IN FOR SPORTS

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Abstract

The aim of the research is to analyze the motives for going in for sports among young basketball players within the age group of 9-16 years. Research methods are as follows: analysis of relevant scientific research, questionnaire, and statistical analysis. Data was collected by cooperating with Silute Sports School upon receipt of consent; questionnaires were handed out to the pupils of the sports school. The research sample was composed of 100 respondents between the ages of 9 – 16 years attending Silute Sports School. The results of the present research identified and named the most common and significant motives encouraging the young basketball players to engage in sports across all age groups (interval of 10—16 years), which are the improvement of health and the possibility of making own sport-related achievements public. Considering different age groups, results demonstrate that boys at the age of 9 – 10 consider the following motives fundamental: to improve health and to express emotions. They believe that emotional enrichment when emotions experienced in sports come along with pleasure in doing such sports and appreciation of own achievements is highly significant. When it comes to the adolescents falling into the group of 11 – 12 year olds, willingness to compete, fight, and control oneself are the central motives, while to the adolescents at the age of 13 – 14 years it was to experience pleasure in sports, however, the group of 15 – 16 year olds name a possibility to become famous for sport-related achievements as the most significant motive.

Key words: young basketball players, motives, go in for sports.

Introduction

Childhood, adolescence, and youth periods are characterized by fast biological, social, intellectual, and sports-related personal maturity influencing thinking, behavior, self-expression, and the choice of values. It is considered to be the most favorable period when the search for talents and expression of individual competencies are concerned. During these periods a choice of sports and developmental process are highly influenced by age, gender, individual skills, excellence in sports, social environment, and moral values (Barkauskaitė, 2001).

Motives for engaging in sports form the fastest during the youth period which, in its turn, influences a further sports-related activity. Young adolescents, engaged in sports, are influenced by supportive factors, such as conditions of training workouts, relationships with a coach, and relationships with teammates as well as by activity and motivating factors, such as an opportunity for improvement, achievements, and recognition. Both of these two motivational groups are vital for younger athletes in order to realize themselves and to satisfy their needs (Miškinis, 2002).

A human is in a need for motives in order to engage in a direct activity. School learners usually start exercising with one motive in mind, however, a number of motives increases with time and motivation develops to engage not only in sports. In order to find answers to a question what influences a decision to engage in sports, the choice of one or another sport, it is of high importance to know what the primary motives originate from and where the motives to be proactive come from. The motive is considered to be a core of biological, cognitive, and social regulation (Ryan, Deci, 2000). However, increasingly more often research has been focusing on physical activity and sporting motives of youth at different age periods; which attempts to identify the sources of such motives. Motivation to engage in sports was researched by a number of researchers (Ebbeck, Gibbons, 1995; Gibson, Fosters, 2002; Malinauskas, 1998, 2003, 2008; Žilinskienė et al., 2007; Sabaliauskas, Poteliūnienė, 2010; Bo et al., 2010), however, relevance of research pertaining to motivation to engage in sports is determined by an ongoing search for theories of such motivation and identification of motives to engage in different sports.

Scientific research problem. In all fields of life, and especially in sports, a question often rises as to why one young athlete is more successful than another. Why do some achieve good results at ease, while others need a lot of will, persistence and efforts, however, still fail to achieve desired results in sports? On the other hand, we notice that such young person lacks motivation and inspiration to achieve high results or neglects sports when

faced by difficulties or failure in such activity. For this reason, factors motivating to regularly engage in sports and achieve high results remain a relevant research problem. Up until now, there has been no universal classification of motives which influence sports-related activity and which allow to define the influence of all motivational factors in pursuing high results in sports. For this reason, the unsolved question is what influences the motivation of young basketball players to go in for sports and pursue good results.

The research aim is to analyze the motives for going in for sports among young basketball players (of Silute Sports School) within the age group of 9 – 16 years.

Material and Methods

The method of scientific literature analysis was used to analyze research articles, course books, monographs, and databases. The motives of young basketball players to go in for sports and factors influencing such were identified. Using the method of scientific literature analysis the research aim and tasks were identified and research methodology was developed.

Questionnaire was used to identify the motives for going in for sports among young basketball players of Silute Sports School. The current research used the adapted questionnaire, designed by Miškinis and Skyrius (2005). The questionnaire was composed of 30 questions in total (see Annex 1). Responses to all statements were rated on a 3-point rating scale: from 1 (not important), 2 (moderately important) to 3 (very important). Respondents were asked to choose only one answer to each question provided (by personally evaluating the points ranging from completely wrong to completely true). In order to find out about the age of the respondents, an additional question was included which divided the respondents into four age groups: a) up to 10 years; b) 11 – 12 years; c) 13 – 14 years; d) 15 – 16 years.

Mathematical method of statistics was used to calculate percentage frequencies, statistical significance among the age groups is identified when $p < 0.05$. Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (r) was used to identify statistically important relations between variables (age and motives) and the strength of these relations. Results were entered and processed using the SPSS 20 statistical software.

Research sample and organization of the research

Data was collected by cooperating with Silute Sports School upon receipt of consent; questionnaires were handed out to the pupils of the sports school. The research sample was composed of 100 respondents between the

ages of 9 – 16 years attending Silute Sports School. During the course of research, in total 112 questionnaires were handed out at Silute Sports School. Total number of properly filled out questionnaires equaled to a 100. Close cooperation was held with a coach who agreed to have the questionnaires handed out before the activity. The questionnaires were handed out to pupils considering currently organized activities which are held three times per week. The research was conducted during the year 2014 from February 1 to April 11. The research sample consisted of young basketball players at the age of 9 – 16 years, who were divided into four age groups.

Results

The largest group of the research sample consisted of young adolescents within the age group of 11 – 14 years (58.0%), youngsters in the age group of up to 10 years took a share of 19.0%. Young athletes from 15 to 16 years formed 23.0% of the entire research sample. This data demonstrates that the research sample mainly consists of adolescents within the age group of 11 – 16 years.

Survey pertaining to motives of young basketball players to go in for sports was conducted after the workouts. The research aimed at identifying why school learners engage in sports-related activity. Such survey will allow to identify the motives encouraging engaging in sports not only for a specific group of learners, but also to analyze common factors motivating Lithuanian learners.

Health-related motives encouraging in sports. The research revealed that a motive to improve health is more important to young basketball players at the age of 11 – 12 (Fig. 1).

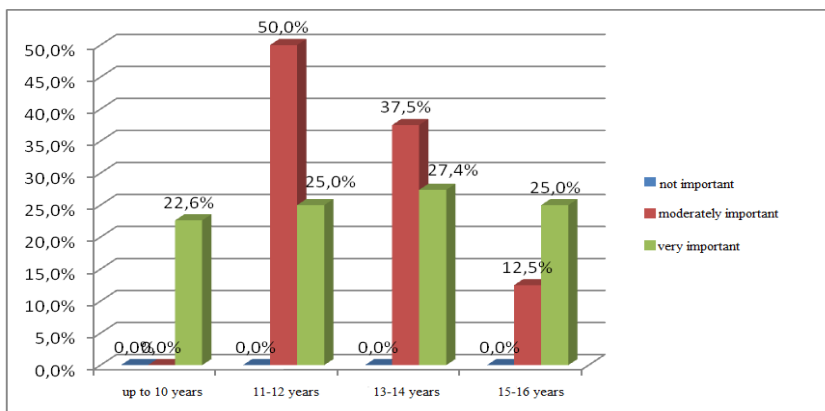


Figure 1. Respondents on willingness to improve health

The motive to improve health to adolescents at the age of 13 – 14 is very important only to 27.4%, moderately important to 37.5% of the respondents (n=29), while for the adolescents at the age of 15 – 16 this motive is very important to 25.0% of the respondents (n=23). It was established that there is a statistically significant relationship among the age groups ($r=0.243$ $p=0.015$). Having analyzed the data obtained from the health-related motives, it was established that results of our research are consistent with the results obtained from other research (Garuckienė et al., 2014), which prove that a majority of respondents agree with a statement that they are willing to be healthy and physically active. It may be concluded that respondents are motivated to engage in sports in a pursuit of health.

Self-expression motives encouraging engagement in sports. Research participants were provided a question on self-control, asking whether they agree with the statement that a decision to engage in sports is influenced by willingness to learn self-control and overcome oneself.

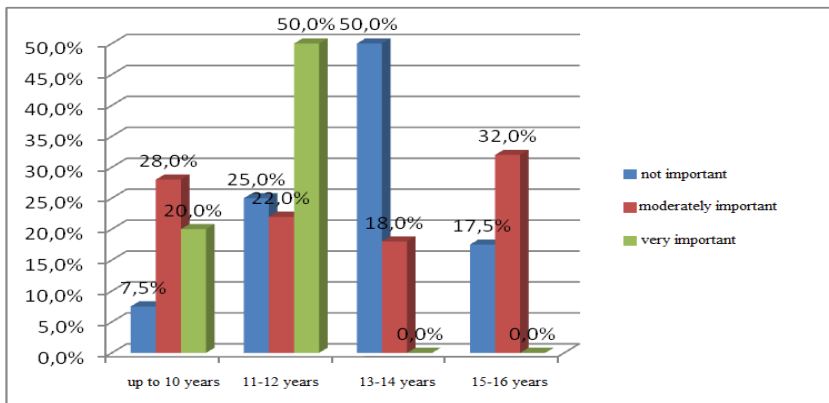


Figure 2. Research participants on willingness to learn self-control

Half of the respondents at the age of 11 – 12 believed that willingness to master self-control and overcome oneself is one of the main reasons influencing a choice of a sport. 50.0% of the respondents falling in this group believed that learning self-control and how to overcome oneself is a highly significant motive. The same percentage (50.0%) of the respondents from a different age group (13 – 14 years), i.e. older adolescents, claimed the contrary, that is, such a motive is absolutely unimportant. Willingness to master self-control and overcome oneself at the age of 15 – 16 is a moderately important motive only to 32.0% of the respondents (n=23). It was established that there is a statistically significant

relationship between different age groups ($r=-0.236$; $p=0.018$). It may be presumed that the older the respondents are, the less influential this motive becomes.

In order to learn whether the young basketball players consider emotions experienced during a game or a match important and, if important, to what degree, a statement was given asking whether they are willing to express their emotions during the game. Distribution of responses based on the age groups allows to conclude that possibility to express emotions is important only to 23.7% of adolescents within the age group of up to 10, while 18.5% of respondents believe that such motive is only partially important ($n=19$). Possibility to express emotions in sports is not important to 42.5% of the respondents within the age group of 11 – 12, i.e., partially important to 29.6% and very important only to 21.1% of the respondents ($n=29$). Only 26.3% of respondents within the age group of 13 – 14 years favor the possibility to express emotions in sports. Such possibility was partially important only to 29.6% and absolutely not important for more than a third of the respondents (37.5%) ($n=29$). Different results were observed with adolescents at the age of 15 – 16, as almost a third (28.9%) of the respondents favor the possibility to express emotions in sports and 22.2% of respondents considered it as moderately important ($n=23$).

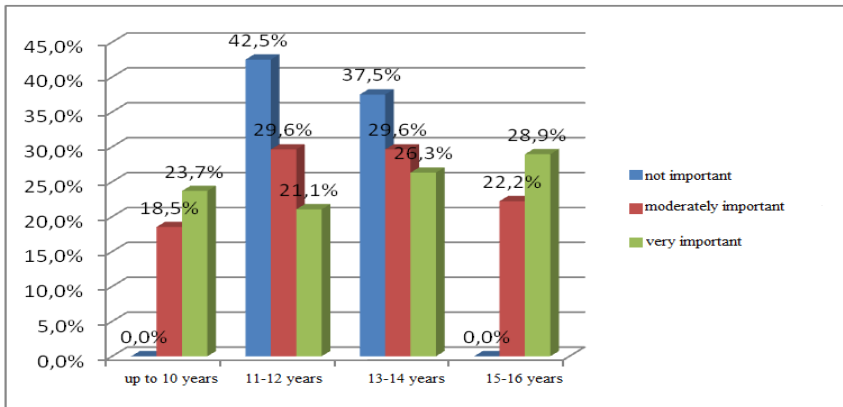


Figure 3. Respondents on possibilities to express emotions

Authors who analyze motives encouraging engagement in sports note that most often children start exercising in order to engage in a competitive experience (Siegenthaler, Gonzalez, 1997; Martens, 1999). Responses to a statement allow proposing that possibility to express emotions in sports is a significant element of sports, which the young basketball players focus on during the sports-related activity, however, no

statistically significant relationship ($r=0.064$; $p=0.527$) was identified among different age groups. Results of this research are consistent with the results obtained from other research (Garuckienė et al., 2014), demonstrating that joy experienced during the game is one of the most significant motives encouraging the respondents to engage in sports.

Hedonistic and other motives encouraging engagement in sports. In order to learn whether the young basketball players consider the willingness to compete and fight in sports important and, if important, to what degree, a statement “I am willing to compete and fight” was given, which aimed at identifying whether competition and willingness to fight motivate adolescents to engage in sports.

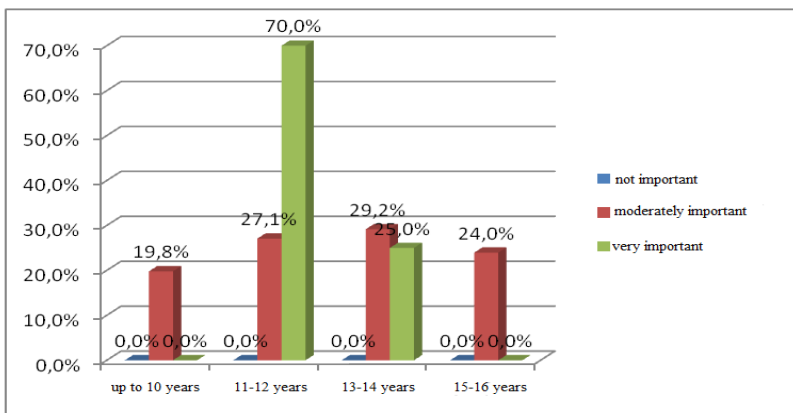


Figure 4. Respondents on willingness to compete and fight

Distribution of responses based on the age groups demonstrates that willingness to compete and fight among adolescents until the age of 10 is moderately important to 19.8% of respondents. For adolescents at the age of 11 – 12 this motive is dominant as 70% of the respondents claimed that such motive is very important, while it was moderately important to 27.1% of the respondents ($n=29$). This motive encouraging to engage in sports is of a lesser importance to adolescents within the age group of 13 – 16 years. 25.0 % of adolescents within the age interval of 13-14 years completely agreed with the statement and 29.2% of the respondents ($n=29$) partially agreed with it. However, none of the adolescents falling into the age group of 15 – 16 years named willingness to compete and fight as an important motive encouraging to engage in sports or as an influential factor in choosing a sport. Such motive was only partially important to 24.0% of the respondents

(n=23). It was identified that no statistically significant relationship is present among different age groups ($r=-0.047$; $p=0.642$).

Distribution of results based on the age groups allows proposing that willingness to compete and fight acts as a motive encouraging engagement in sports mainly for adolescents falling into the age category of 11 – 12 years. Judging from the distribution of responses, such motive is not dominant in other age groups.

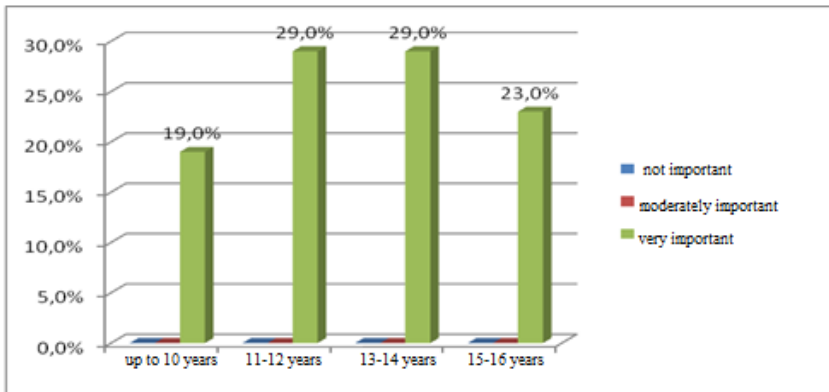


Figure 5. Respondents on pleasure experienced in sport

Sense of satisfaction is one of the motives encouraging engagement in sports (Weinberg et al., 2011). When a person engages in sports and experiences joy and pleasure due to efforts made by him, such motive to engage in sport is repeatedly reinforced.

Adolescents' choice of a sport is often related to a pure satisfaction obtained when being involved in sports, thus during the survey a statement "I feel a great pleasure when engaged in sports" was presented to the adolescents. Such statement aimed at confirming a defined theoretical statement that adolescents engage in sports because they feel a pleasure in moving, being a team member, and appreciate achieved results or an opportunity to express oneself.

Distribution of adolescents' responses from all age groups demonstrates that adolescents need to experience a pleasure in playing. However, it was established that no statistically significant relationship ($r=0.002$; $p=0.987$) is present among different age groups.

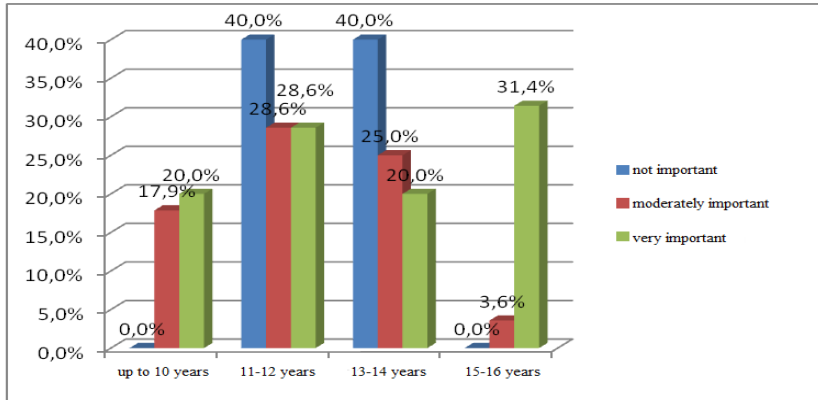


Figure 6. Respondents on willingness to become famous for sports-related achievements

Discussion

Motivation to win grants an opportunity to achieve a set goal even when the external conditions are not in favor (Malinauskas, 2008). During the survey, the young basketball players were provided with a statement, which aimed at identifying whether the adolescents engage in sports-related activity for a reason to become famous for their sports-related achievements. In order to obtain such information, respondents were asked to rate a statement “I wish to become famous for sports-related achievements”. Distribution of results among the adolescents based on the age groups suggests that this motive is important to 20% of the respondents within the age group of up to 10 years, to 20.0% of the respondents within the 13 – 14 years of age group, and for the adolescents at the age of 11 – 12 the wish to become famous for sports-related achievements was also not a dominant motive influencing a choice to play basketball. In this age group only 28.6% of the respondents named this motive as very important, 28.6% believe that this motive is moderately important and as many as 40% listed this motive as not important when engagement in sports is concerned (n=29). It was established that no statistically significant relationship ($r=0.095$; $p=0.347$) is present among different age groups.

Distribution of adolescents’ responses to the statement based on the age groups suggests that adolescents falling into the group of 9 – 13 years of age relate their engagement in sports and a choice of a sport with pleasure in being active, wish to belong to a team, however, not with a wish to achieve high sports-related results. While for adolescents within the group of 15 – 16 years of age a wish to become famous for their sports-related

achievements is dominant as they focus on excellence and pursuit of recognition.

Conclusions

The present research identified and named the most common and significant motives encouraging the young basketball players of Silute Sports School to engage in sports across all age groups (interval of 10 – 16 years), which are improvement of health and possibility of making own sports-related achievements public.

Considering different age groups of young basketball players of Silute Sports School, results demonstrate that boys at the age of 9 – 10 consider the following motives fundamental: to improve health and to express emotions. They believe that emotional enrichment when emotions experienced in sports come along with pleasure in doing such sport and appreciation of own achievements is highly significant. When it comes to the adolescents falling into the group of 11 – 12 year olds, willingness to compete, fight, and control oneself are the central motives, while to the adolescents at the age of 13 – 14 years the dominant motive is to experience a pleasure in sport; however, the group of 15 – 16 year olds identify a possibility to become famous for sports-related achievements as the most significant motive.

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