

# MOTIVES OF STUDENTS OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS ON PLAYING SPORTS

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**Abstract:** *People go in for sports from different beliefs, attitudes and interests, so the difference in the motives of sports can be seen as quite natural thing. Motivation is the set of processes that encourage, guide and maintain human behavior to achieve specific aims. Motives are the needs and motivators of human resources for the satisfaction of certain needs. Sport, by its very nature, involves direct interaction of the participants in which every individual realizes the need for recognition in society.*

*The subject of this study was the motives of students, primary and secondary schools were included. Motives that drive these students of this age were studied. Objective of this study was to analyze the motives that occur with students depending on gender and age of the respondents.*

*Health, mental and physical development and impact of sport on mood are powerful motivating factors in the school population. Students in primary and secondary schools were no statistically significant different in the importance they attach to money and fame as a motivational factor in sports. The society is not a strong motivating but moderate factor within the school population. The results show that children are mostly motivated by health and proper physical and psychological development. A nice physical appearance is a strong motivator in sports, to which female students give much more importance than the male students do as a motivator. Primary school pupils give relative importance, while the attitudes of high school students are on the border separating the relative and negligible influence of parents as a motivator for the sport.*

**Keywords:** *motivation, motivators, sports*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

People go in for sports from different beliefs, attitudes and interests, so the difference in the motives of sports can be seen as quite natural thing.

Technological development in terms of the informational achievements is significantly responsible for weakening the physical activity of children and young people. Young people increasingly realize their social needs through the Internet. In this way, they become "dependent" of that kind of communication and social communication. Reduced physical activity and interest to become involved in sport are noticeable in all age categories and are

a serious problem of youth development. The school represented in the form of physical activity corresponds to a standard program. Sports are present in the planned curriculum as well as an optional sport at the third class of physical education. Curriculum covers only certain sports (handball, basketball, volleyball, football, athletics and gymnastics), which considerably limits the choice of students. This is one of the limiting factors in terms of motivation and commitment of students to the sport. This is one reason why students who are engaged actively in sports opt for some of these sports. Material conditions also determine what will be covered by the plan of activities to implement. Schools that have gymnasiums, equipment and props can fully realize all the activities and provide students with adequate contact with sports.

For the reduction of sports activities, schools are "responsible" too. In an increasingly smaller number of schools sports sections are organized to support physical activity as part of the curriculum. The greatest number of students for the first time is having contact with organized physical activity and sports activities in schools. It is the right place and time for motivating children to become involved in sport and to create a habit.

It is necessary to systematically approach and to solve problems according to preferences and interests of students, to offer an appropriate program of activities. The first steps of a systematic approach must be based on research that will provide enough valuable information necessary for proper planning and setting goals and objectives.

## **2. THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Motivation is the set of processes that encourage, guide and maintain human behavior to achieve specific aims. The motives and motivators are mutually different terms. Motives are the human needs and motivators are the resources for the satisfaction of certain needs. The motive is the reason for certain behavior, expression and application of knowledge and skills in an activity. Motive is defined as an inner psychological and emotional boost for a particular activity, in which the stimulus can refer to material or psychological achievement. It determines the human behavior (Ćamilović and Vujic, 2007). The motifs are of great importance in the sport and they are a significant factor of the sports effectiveness and the strongest support process in sport management, (Tomić, 2001).

The term motivation has not the same meaning in all theoretical and practical uses. Someone by that term implies the need, some consider it a drive and other speaks of it as the objective, some still believe that these are aspirations, desires, intentions, and so on. (Lazarević, 2001). The motifs can be defined as the reasons for certain behavior, expressions and application of knowledge and skills in an activity. They represent the inner psychological and emotional incentives for an activity (Ćamilović and Vujić, 2007). Motivation cannot be seen separated from the needs that exist in individuals or groups. The need can be defined as the internal state of an individual or group that makes some outcomes appear attractive (Robins, 2005). The need for a particular situation or activity affects the individual and encourages him to practice sports. If within the students involved in sports, there are some unmet needs, then the tension that occurs with these students causes discomfort. In order to overcome the tension, they carry out appropriate actions and thus meet the needs.

Sport by its very nature involves direct interaction of the participants in which every individual realizes the need for recognition in society. The human nature is the need that human has to be respected by others. Each individual strives to satisfy a motive of respect and adapt its activities to that purpose.

Motivation exercised its influence in a wide range, and due to its effect can be seen in the context of individual preferences for participation in a sports activity, persistence of dealing with the activities and success in that activity. From the people who motivate others and their methods in this procedure, the commitment of individuals to deal with some of the sports activities will depend on. Lazarevic, 2001 states that the motives, by its type, nature, intensity, and in particular stability, influence active and continuous practicing of sports activities.

### **Tangible and intangible motivations**

Motivation of athlete contributes to material compensation as a means that influence the improvement of financial status of athletes. The term material compensation refers to the money and the various prizes and gifts. Money is the oldest and universal way of motivation for work. If the money is used only as a motivational tool, it is possible to reach saturation in terms of proportional increase in performance compared to the increase in compensation (salary). It is therefore necessary to use the money in conjunction with awards and gifts to maintain the motivation at high level. Among school population, remuneration and incentives would have a negative impact and would be contrary to the principles that promotes school sports. Intangible motivation includes praise, recognition, appreciation, status, promotion, and everything else that can motivate an athlete and that is intangible. The motivations are intangible and some other social factors such as social equity, security and continuity of employment, functional communication and communication, etc.

In the sport there is expressed desire for self-actualization according to the nature of sport and aspirations of every individual to personal development. Sport affects the mental and physical development of athletes and the desire of everyone to constantly progress and achieve high sporting standards in every respect.

In the sport is also expressed the affiliative motive refers to the tendency of individuals to socialize and establish relationships. There is a difference of opinion whether the affiliative motive is inherent or not. Some authors claim this motif is expressed in all people; it is universal for all people and therefore innate. Other authors citing this motive is acquired (Lazarević, 2001). Athletes spend time during and after training and matches, and thus exercise strong social and psychological ties. Athletes gain friends in the sport due to the similar interests who are related to the sport and everything about it. There are of the situations in which individuals are engaged in the same sport due to friendship. Therefore, in sports can be meet athletes who attend the same school or live in the same area. Affiliative motivation is especially pronounced in puberty when athletes find their role in the group and when the successful socialization is a priority of every individual athlete.

Sport includes the achievements as the motive that characterizes a constant desire of individuals to achieve better results. Athletes of younger ages perceive sport as a game and the achievement motive in them is less pronounced than within the older age athletes. While practicing sports athletes develop achievement of motivation. To the development of this motif many factors contributes. One of them is the very nature of sport and the goal that is difficult to achieve. Sport is by its nature different from physical education because it emphasizes the victory. The expectations of coaches, club management, sports public an additional motivating factors for achieving better results. Athletes gain experience over time and need to succeed because success arises from the need that we all want to meet.

### **3. SCOPE, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH**

The subject of this study was the motives of students, primary and secondary schools were included. Motives that drive these students of this age were studied.

Objective of this study was to analyze the motives that occur with students depending on gender and age of the respondents. The study is to determine the motives that drive students, as well as defining the similarities and differences with the motifs in other areas of social action. The aim of the study is the comparison of obtained results with the results of other studies, and consequently the performance of certain conclusions. The research aims is the practical applicability of the results in terms of getting to know students and professors with the results of research motivations in sports. Thus, the research is to provide the understanding of the importance of motivation in sport and the possibility of its application in improving sports' performance. The research is going in the direction of education of students, athletes, and potential coaches that could take advantage of the results of this and similar studies in their training practice.

The tasks were:

- to construct a question of motives.
- to define socio-demographic factors of students taking into account gender and age,
- to determine the relationship between socio-demographic factors and motivation in sports

### **4. HYPOTHESIS OF RESEARCH**

H1 - Health, mental and physical development and impact of sport on mood are strong motivational factors in the school population

H2 - Students of different ages are statistically different regarding the importance they pay to money and fame as motivational factors.

H3 - The society has a strong impact on the individual in terms of motivation in sports.

H4 – For female students, a nice physical appearance is a more powerful motivator in sports than for male students.

H5 - Parents are powerful motivating factor for students of younger ages.

### **5. APPLIED METHODOLOGY**

In this paper, transverse experimental research was applied using bibliographic and empirical methods. The data relevant for this paper were collected by interviewing technique.

The survey was conducted in 4 primary and 8 secondary schools in Zrenjanin in the period from 10.03.2010 to 20.05.2010, and it included 794 respondents.

To form the initial database, database of the school administration of Zrenjanin city was used.

Before completing the questionnaire the respondents were informed with the nature of research and all the details relevant to the proper data input (responses) in question. Criteria and therefore questions of the questionnaire covered the whole range of motives that arise or may arise in the sport. Based on these motives it is possible to gain insight into the specifics of students' motivation. There were no irregularities that could affect the validity of the data or the quality of research. The simplified procedure, the opening remarks and the instructions largely contributed to this.

**5.1 The sample of variables and methods for their measurement. The independent variables are the following:**

- ▪ students' gender,
- ▪ the age of students.

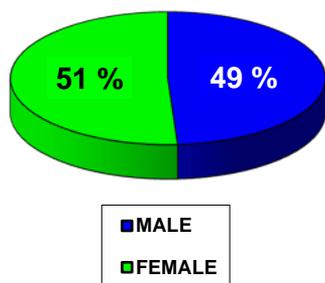
Data belonging to the independent variables were obtained by the general part questionnaire. Dependent variables consisted of the following motives:

- |                                  |                           |                                |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Health                         | • Company                 | • Money                        |
| • Psycho-physical development    | • Sports idol             | • Popularity                   |
| • Type of sport                  | • The fame                | • In therapeutic purposes      |
| • Attractive physical appearance | • Popularity of the sport | • Closeness of the sports hall |
| • Mood                           | • Sports equipment        | • Sports section               |
| • •The competition               | • •Parents                | • • Acceptance by the society  |

**6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

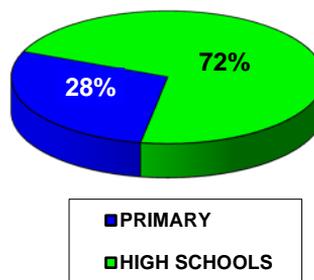
The study included 794 respondents with approximate percentage of representation of both genders (Figure 1). Primary and secondary schools were included, and a higher percentage of respondents were in high schools (Figure 2).

**THE GENDER OF RESPONDENTS**



Graph. 1

**AGE**



Graph. 2

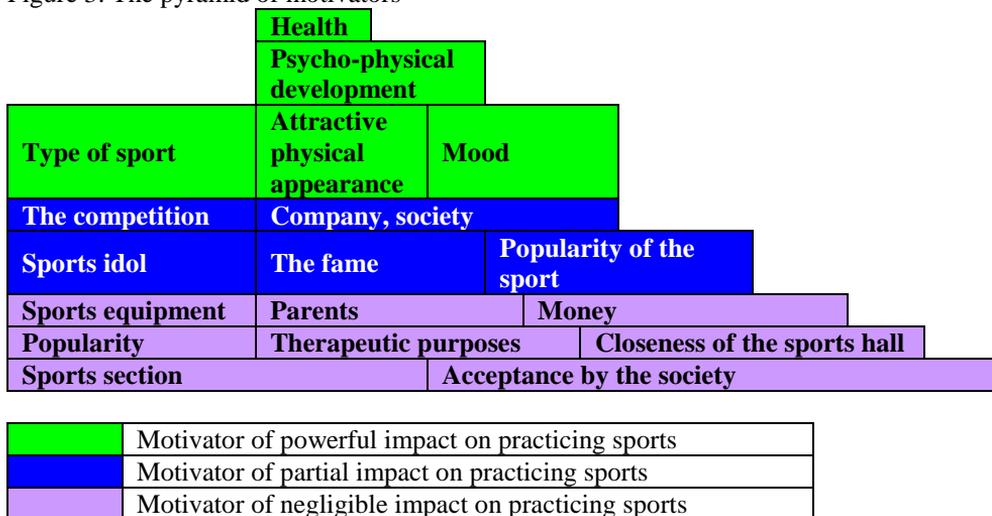
Respondents answered to the questions (in the form of motifs) expressing their attitude toward all motivators for sport the questionnaire covered. Using statistical analysis, the results, which indicate the dominance of certain motivators for all respondents, were obtained. Comparative statistical procedure allowed reaching certain conclusions on the level of the entire sample, and the level of sub-samples. Descriptive statistical procedures determined the minimum and maximum values and mean values of responses covered by the questionnaire. The results of this procedure are presented in table (Table 1), while motivators are sorted according to values of means (from the smallest to the largest value - Mean).

Table 1

MOTIFS	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Health	1.00	3.00	1.33	0.59
Psycho-physical development	1.00	3.00	1.37	0.65
Type of sport	1.00	3.00	1.50	0.72
Attractive physical appearance	1.00	3.00	1.55	0.69
Mood	1.00	3.00	1.69	0.71
The competition	1.00	3.00	1.85	0.75
Company, society	1.00	3.00	2.16	0.76
Sports idol	1.00	3.00	2.19	0.78
The fame	1.00	3.00	2.27	0.70
Popularity of the sport	1.00	3.00	2.28	0.76
Sports equipment	1.00	3.00	2.39	0.74
Parents	1.00	3.00	2.40	0.71
Money	1.00	3.00	2.41	0.70
Popularity	1.00	3.00	2.51	0.71
In therapeutic purposes	1.00	3.00	2.52	0.72
Closeness of the sports hall	1.00	3.00	2.57	0.67
Sports section	1.00	3.00	2.65	0.63
Acceptance by the society	1.00	3.00	2.65	0.64

Based on the values of the arithmetic mean (Mean) can be concluded that the internal factors (health, psychophysical development, an attractive physical appearance, and mood) are important motivational factors in sports. The only external factor that is important as a motivator is the kind of sport. Looking at external factors we can notice that competition, society, sports idol, fame, popularity of the sport, sporting goods, money and the parents are partial motivators i.e. that these factors affect the sport, but their influence is quite weak. Other external factors included in the survey have no influence on the orientation of the respondents for sports or their influence is negligible (popularity, therapeutic purpose, closeness of the sports hall, sports section, acceptance by the society). Motivators are in accordance with the importance they have presented in the form of a pyramid (Figure 3).

Figure 3. The pyramid of motivators



Objective of this study was to analyze the impact of socio-demographic factors (gender and age) on the motives that drive students to practice sports. For this purpose we used the comparative analyzes using the t-test with respect to two-categorical nature of independent factors (gender and age).

Taking gender as a possible factor in the differentiation of the respondents regarding the motivators, we can see that males and females subjects differ significantly in terms of most of the studied motivator (Table 2). Values of means show how this difference is manifested, and which of these sub-samples pay more/less importance to a particular motivator.

Table 2 T-test (gender)

	GENDER	N	Mean	t	P
ATTRACTIVE PHYSICAL APPEARANCE	male	389	1.63	3.43	0.00*
	female	405	1.47	3.42	
THE COMPETITION	male	389	1.75	-3.88	0.00*
	female	405	1.95	-3.88	
THE FAME	male	389	2.12	-6.34	0.00*
	female	405	2.43	-6.33	
POPULARITY OF THE SPORT	male	389	2.13	-5.67	0.00*
	female	405	2.43	-5.66	
MONEY	male	389	2.28	-5.23	0.00*
	female	405	2.54	-5.23	
POPULARITY	male	389	2.39	-4.90	0.00*
	female	405	2.63	-4.89	
ACCEPTANCE BY THE SOCIETY	male	389	2.06	-3.97	0.02*
	female	405	2.27	-3.97	
CLOSENESS OF THE SPORTS HALL	male	389	2.49	-3.28	0.00*
	female	405	2.65	-3.27	
SPORTS SECTION	male	389	2.71	2.74	0.01*
	female	405	2.59	2.75	
THERAPEUTIC PURPOSES	male	389	2.59	2.83	0.01*
	female	405	2.45	2.83	
COMPANY, SOCIETY	male	389	2.06	-3.95	0.00*
	female	405	2.3	-3.95	

Female respondents pay more importance to attractive physical appearance as one of the motivators in sports. With regard to the following motivators: sports section and therapeutic purposes, female students through the answers of the questionnaire expressed less negative attitudes about these motivators, i.e. to a lesser degree than male students characterized as insignificant in terms of motivation.

Male respondents (students) pay greater importance to competition as a motivator for the sport. In other motivators in which the observed differentiation of the genders in terms of attitudes towards these motivators, the students paid more importance to these motivators, and to a lesser degree characterized as irrelevant (fame, society, the popularity of the sport, money, popularity, acceptance by society and proximity to the gymnasium).

Looking at age as a possible factor in the differentiation of the respondents regarding the motivators we can see that the primary and secondary schools statistically are different only in terms of three potential motivators (Table 3). Values of means show how this difference

is manifested, and which of these sub-samples more/less importance paid to a particular motivator.

Table 3: T-test (age)

	AGE	N	Mean	t	P
THERAPEUTIC PURPOSES	Primary school	226	2.66	3.69	0.00*
	High school	568	2.46	4.09	
SPORTS IDOL	Primary school	226	2.05	-2.49	0.01*
	High school	568	2.30	-3.1	
PARENTS	Primary school	226	2.20	-5.35	0.00*
	High school	568	2.49	-5.1	

Primary school pupils pay greater importance to sports idol as a motivator in sports, although based on the value of means is evident that this motivator is one of the partial motivator. In addition, in terms of parents as a potential motivator, elementary school students have demonstrated a lower degree of negativity towards the motivator, and to a lesser extent, consider unimportant compared to high school students in terms of motivation to become involved in sport. The therapeutic purposes motivator high school students to a lesser degree than elementary characterized as irrelevant motivator.

Using T-test was determined the potential statistical differences between categories of respondents (elementary school students, high school) in terms of attitude toward money and fame as motivators (Table 4). Results indicate that elementary school students and high school students do not differ significantly in terms of attitude about money and fame as possible motivators. Neither money nor fame in their opinion is not significant motivation in sports, it can be found on the border between low and no motivation.

Table 4. T-test: Age of respondents (money/fame)

	AGE	N	Mean	t	p
Money	Primary school	226	2.45	0.824	0.410
	High school	568	2.40		
Fame	Primary school	226	2.21	-1.674	0.094
	High school	568	2.30		

The values of T-test results for the respondents of both genders in terms of an attractive physical look as a potential motivator for sports show that male and female students differ significantly in this respect (Table 5). Values of means specifying the diversity and based on their values can be concluded that an attractive physical look is an important motivating factor, while female students attribute greater importance than male students do.

Table 5. T-test: Gender of respondents (an attractive physical appearance as a factor of motivation)

	GENDER	N	Mean	t	p
An attractive physical appearance	male	389	1.637	3.579	0.000
	female	405	1.464		

T-test results show that primary school pupils and high school students differ significantly in terms of attitude on the impact of parents' motivation to sport (Table 6). Arithmetic mean values indicate partial motivational impact parents on students with elementary school students pay more importance motivational influence of parents.

Table 6. T-test: Age of respondents (parents as a motivation factor)

	AGE	N	Mean	t	p
Parents	Primary school	226	2.199	-5.352	0.000
	High school	568	2.493		

## 7. RESUME

Based on frequency distribution and obtained mean values we can conclude that the hypothesis H1 is confirmed, and that the health, psychological and physical development and impact of sports on the mood are the powerful motivational factors in the school population. These results are quite logical given the fact that the sport in this region is identified with health. Starting from the parents, through teachers, professors, to literature and media, children learn about the importance of sport and its role in the preservation of health. Unfortunately in recent years, children spend more time with television, internet, computer games, etc. which significantly affects the occurrence of spinal deformity, obesity, vision problems, problems with concentration, the occurrence of aggression and a host of other negative effects. The development of information technology brought more challenges and opportunities that children should be allowed but in a balanced relation with physical activity and involvement in sports, whether it is recreational, amateur, professional, academic and other types of sports.

T-test results indicate that the primary and secondary schools do not significantly differ in the importance they pay to money and fame as a motivational factor in sports. Thus, hypothesis H2 is not confirmed. Pre-pubertal, pubertal and adolescent period is characterized by a strong influence of society, the need for acceptance and identification with the group. The society is sensitive to the cultural sense in times of economic crisis and war conditions. It is this scenario from the 90's that was a fertile ground for the development of distorted value system based on superficiality, arrogance, money, quick and easy success, and the like. Most sensitive is the population of children of primary school and secondary school age. The trend of promoting material values, popularity, fame, instant success continued until today. Sport could not resist the convergence of capitalist society only to the capital either. Transfers involving millions of players, incredibly high incomes the most popular and most successful athletes are just some of the many dilemmas faced by young athletes. Bombarded with information with the pressure of parents, most young athletes in

the sport saw a way out of crisis, poverty, anonymity and the like. Given the age of the respondents and the fact their origins in sports are associated with the period after 2000, we are proud that money and fame aren't powerful but relative motivators to for them.

Based on frequency distributions and obtained mean values we can conclude that hypothesis H3 is not confirmed, that society is not strong but moderate motivating factor in sports in school population. The results show that most motivators are children's health and proper physical and psychological development. The company is perceived as a group to which belong other factors: the place of residence (near the place of living), age, the school and so on. Belonging to a group children see as similarities in the thinking, attitudes, interests (music, fashion, etc.). Their desire is to be part of a group based on the previously mentioned factors and not because they are involved in sports.

T-test results indicate that students of different gender differ significantly in terms of an attractive physical appearance as motivator in sports. Thus, the hypothesis H4 was confirmed with the statement that the attractive physical appearance is a more powerful motivating factor for girls than for boys. Values of means suggest that attractive physical appearance is a nice strong motivator in sports, in which female students pay much more importance than the male students are. Given the fact that girls reach puberty earlier and that are more prone to obesity in that period, the greater motivational effect of attractive appearance on girls becomes quite logical.

Based on the results achieved using the comparative statistical procedures in form of T-test, there is a statistically significant difference between elementary and high school students on the importance they pay to their parents as a potential motivator in sports. Values of means clearly express the difference, where it is evident the relative importance of primary school pupils, while the attitudes of high school are on the border separating the relative and negligible influence of parents as a motivator for the sport. Based on these results we can conclude that the hypothesis H5 is confirmed, that parents are more powerful motivator for primary school pupils. One possible explanation of this valuation of hypotheses H5 can be explained by the fact that high school students have already built a clear position about the sport, the importance of sport and the commitment and motives that drive them to practice sports. Parents are trying to achieve its maximum impact during the formation of attitudes of the child (the period of primary schooling), aware of the fact that their impact on children of secondary school age will be significantly lower. High school students have a need for individuality and self-making of many decisions that affect their interests (hobbies, arts, sports, choice of music, fashion trends, etc.). Besides the parents, a significant impact on students' interest towards the sport has achieved an educational institution, not individually, but in combination with sports organizations. Sports organizations should be involved in a serious sense because a student population that practice sport and sporting activity are necessary, but as the population that can make serious and targeted market group. Kastratović stated that one of the basic and most important steps in the strategic marketing planning skills is to recognize the target market. Market research must identify the cause of dissatisfaction or partial satisfaction (Kastratović, 2012). Sports organizations must constantly learn in order to be able to recognize the market potential and exploit the maximum capabilities. The learning organization is one in which all people; individually and collectively continually enhance their capacity to produce results they care about. In a learning organization employees continually strengthen its ability to create the results they want, foster new, more advanced forms of thinking, individual and collective aspirations and are constantly learning how to learn together (Kopilović, 2012).

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