

Brief scientific article

SPORTS MOTIVATION AND GOAL ORIENTATION OF YOUNG SERBIAN BASKETBALL PLAYERS

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Abstract: For optimal psychological development and affirmation of young athletes, it is important to highlight intrinsic motives and goal orientations aimed at managing the tasks and development of competencies. The aim of this research was to study sports motivation and goal orientation of young basketball players of U16 Serbian national team. 21 basketball players have been examined, aged 15-16. Sport motivation scale (SMS-28) and goal orientation scale (TEOSQ) have been used. The values of Cronbach alpha show satisfying validity of these instruments. The data have been analyzed by descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. The results have shown that intrinsic motives and goal orientation are primarily directed towards development of competencies.

Keywords: *intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, goal orientation, basketball*

INTRODUCTION

Studies investigated the reasons for participating in sports activities have shown that the dissimilitude of outer (extrinsic) and inner (intrinsic) motives is quite valid (Vallerand, Deci & Ryan, 1987). Extrinsic factors are

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unavoidable in sport, even though intrinsic reasons for sports have a more positive effect on self-confidence, emotional stability and overall mental health.

When people enjoy physical activity or sport, there is an inner or intrinsic motivation. Participating in favourite sports activity is a reward on its own and it does not require additional incentives. However, sport also implies numerous extrinsic components. For instance, a competition is ended by proclamation of winners and trophy awards.

An athlete can personally be under pressure, as sports achievement becomes the main self-evaluation benchmark. Participating in sport in order to prove one's own value and not in order to participate in the activity is also an example of extrinsic motivation.

Early theories and research in the field of motivation have assumed that the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is additive. The overall motivation represents the sum of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. In the context of motivation in sport, such an assumption would imply that extrinsic incentives are added to overall motivation and that they complement intrinsic motivation. However, it has been shown that the relationship between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation is much more complex than it was originally thought (Mladenović, 2010; Mladenovic & Marjanovic, 2011).

There is a vast number of extrinsic and intrinsic reasons for sports activities. One division of extrinsic and intrinsic motives implies three types of intrinsic motivation, three types of extrinsic motivation and one condition described as the lack of any intention to be in action- amotivation (Vallerand & Ratelle, 2004).

Any sports activity is inseparable from extrinsic factors and is most certainly under the influence of environment factors. Many aspects of sports activities do not have to be interesting, but they are unpleasant, or even pointless. For instance, time spent in the gym can be quite monotonous and seemingly separated from main sports activity, but crucial for physical fitness. Some activities, taken from a whole set, may be seen as pointless, boring and non-motivating if an athlete has not developed an awareness of their significance for sports activity and overall success. Successful internalization of the significance of these seemingly boring activities is vital for the development of sense of responsibility and for sports achievement as well. A person who understands and accepts the significance of extrinsic reasons develops responsible behaviour. When an athlete approaches all their obligations, both those they enjoy and those they find less interesting and pleasant with responsibility and commitment, it is said that there is *extrinsic motivation by identification*. However, it could be that extrinsic reasons for dealing with boring activities are not internalized completely, but only superficially. For instance, an athlete goes to the gym because the coach

demands so, and not because he or she is aware of the fact that this part of the training is important for its overall success. There is probably no coach who has not been faced with the silent resistance of athletes regarding some aspects of trainings. In that case, when an athlete performs a certain aspect of training only superficially or automatically because 'it should be done', it is said that there is *extrinsic motivation by introjection*. The third type of extrinsic motivation is *extrinsic motivation by external regulation*, which is a type of motivation that we usually have in mind when we talk about extrinsic motivation, while it refers to extrinsic incentives (money, title, medal, trophy etc).

When it comes to intrinsic reasons for sports activities, there are three motives that are highlighted. The first one is *intrinsic motivation to know*. The desire to know and learn something about sport is the most important and it could be considered the beginning 'trigger' which directs a potential athlete to meet a certain sport 'from the inside'. As the knowledge broadens and technical elements are perfected, a suitable ground is prepared for another aspect of intrinsic motivation - *intrinsic motivation to accomplish* something within the chosen sport. When an athlete masters physical and technical demands of sports to a certain level and when he/she increases his/her knowledge, there is an intrinsic challenge to enhance the existing competencies even more. The third type of intrinsic motivation is *intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation*. This type of motivation implies inspiration which appears when an activity performed quite competently represents a new inspiration for performing this activity.

Complete absence of any intention of action is *amotivation*.

In the context of sports competition, implicit strategies and accomplishment goals have a specific significance. There are two types of goal orientation in literature (Duda, 1989), *task orientation* and *ego orientation*. It is assumed that these two orientations depict the ways in which a person defines and experiences success and failure and evaluates his/her competence. Task orientation exists when a person is primarily motivated to master a certain task, overcome the challenges by skills development, and promote efficiency. Success is estimated by the perception of actual level of personal competence when compared to the previous personal achievement. Another goal orientation is ego orientation. The reference for the evaluation of personal competence is in others. Success and failure are estimated by direct comparison to the achievements of others. A person is primarily motivated to demonstrate normative competence.

Studies have shown that the differentiation between two goal orientations is relevant in sports context and that it is connected with the perception of cause of success and failure in sport (Duda, 1992; Nicholls et al., 1990; Duda et al., 1992). Task orientation is connected with the

perception of sports situation as a context used to increase self-respect and status. The cause of success in sport is attributed to one's own superior sports competences when compared to other athletes. Ego orientation is connected with the strategy of working hard and continually on the development and improvement of competences. The success is seen as the result of persistence and effort. The situation of sports achievement is seen prosocially, as a place when relative competences of athletes are measured in specific moment.

The aim of this research was to explore whether extrinsic or intrinsic motives are dominant in the group of young basketball cadet players, as well as whether the dominant goal orientation is task orientation or ego orientation.

The main hypothesis assumes that there is the domination of intrinsic motivation and task orientation.

METHODOLOGY

The research has included 21 participants, U16 basketball players of the Serbian national team. Four examinees are aged 15, while the others are aged 16. The research was conducted in 2015, during the preparations for the European Championship in Lithuania.

The research consists of two questionnaires, SMS-28 sport motivation scale (Pelletier et al., 1995) and TEOSQ goal orientation (Duda, 1989).

SMS-28 sport motivation scale includes 28 items in the form of Likert scale. Four items measure: the aspects of intrinsic motivation (to know, to accomplish, to experience stimulation), the aspects of extrinsic motivation (for identification, introjection and external regulation) and amotivation.

TEOSQ goal orientation consists of 13 items also in the form of Likert scale. Six items belong to task orientation scale, while seven items measure ego orientation.

The data have been analyzed by descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficient in SPSS, version 22.

RESULTS

The value of Cronbach alpha for SMS-28 sport motivation scale is 0.898. In subscales, the validity is from 0.439 for the amotivation subscale to 0.884 for the intrinsic motivation to accomplish subscale. The validity regarding other subscales is the following: 0.801 for intrinsic motivation to know, 0.787 for intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation, 0.813 for extrinsic motivation by identification, 0.795 for extrinsic motivation by introjection and 0.724 for extrinsic motivation by external regulation.

The validity of TEOSQ goal orientation scale is 0.811. The value of Cronbach alpha for the subscale of task orientation is 0.976, and for the subscale of ego orientation is 0.750.

The descriptive statistics results presented in Table 1 show that intrinsic motives are dominant for young basketball players. The most dominant motive is intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation (IMES), and the motive to achieve accomplishment through basketball (IMAC), as well as the motive to constantly learn about the game of basketball (IMKW). Regarding external motives, the most dominant motivation is by introjection (EMIJ), the motivation by identification and, finally, the motivation by material awards (Table 1).

Table 1. *The results of descriptive statistics for intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and amotivation (N=21)*

	AS	SD	min	max
IMES	6,01	0,77	4,50	7,00
IMAC	5,74	0,97	3,25	7,00
IMKW	5,65	0,90	3,75	7,00
EMIJ	5,29	1,27	2,50	7,00
EMID	4,85	1,23	2,25	7,00
EMER	4,11	1,21	1,75	6,00
AMOT	1,94	0,75	1,00	4,00

IMKW – intrinsic motivation to know; IMAC– intrinsic motivation to accomplish; IMES – intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation; EMID – extrinsic motivation by identification; EMIJ- extrinsic motivation by introjection; EMER – extrinsic motivation by external regulation; AMOT – amotivation

Regarding goal orientation, the descriptive statistics results presented in Table 2 show that the dominant goal orientation for young U16 basketball players of the Serbian national team is directed towards task, i.e. the development of competences.

Table 2. *The results of descriptive statistics for goal orientation (N=21)*

	AS	SD	min	max
TASK	4,26	0,50	3,00	4,86
EGO	3,71	0,69	2,17	5,00

TASK – task orientation; EGO – ego orientation.

The results of correlation analysis are presented in Table 3. High correlations are visible between all three aspects of intrinsic motivation.

Apart from intrinsic aspects, one aspect of extrinsic motivation is highly correlated - extrinsic motivation by identification. It has also been shown that intrinsic motivation for accomplishment is positively connected with the extrinsic motivation by introjection. The extrinsic motivation by external regulation is not connected either with extrinsic or with intrinsic motivation and goal orientation. Amotivation is not connected with extrinsic or intrinsic motivation, but it has a negative correlation with goal orientation directed towards personal emphasis and the demonstration of competences.

Task orientation is connected with intrinsic motivation to know and to accomplish, as well as with extrinsic motivation based on the mechanism of introjection.

Table 3. *The results of correlation analysis (N=21)*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Imkw	1	0,902**	0,677**	0,647**	0,408	0,041	0,129	0,043	0,568**
2. Imac		1	0,727**	0,763**	0,535*	0,169	0,195	0,099	0,578**
3. Imes			1	0,630**	0,304	0,090	0,206	-0,001	0,194
4. Emid				1	0,281	0,142	0,104	0,234	0,335
5. Emij					1	0,346	0,418	-0,201	0,502*
6. Emer						1	0,282	0,171	0,172
7. Amot							1	-0,596**	-0,315
8. Ego								1	0,448*
9. Task									1

IMKW – intrinsic motivation to know; IMAC – intrinsic motivation to accomplish; IMES – intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation; EMID – extrinsic motivation by identification; EMIJ- extrinsic motivation by introjection; EMER – extrinsic motivation by external regulation; AMOT – amotivation; TASK – task orientation; EGO – ego orientation.

**p<0,01

*p<0,05

DISCUSSION

The results have confirmed the starting assumptions. Intrinsic motives and ego orientation are the leading items for young U16 basketball players.

The most dominant intrinsic motive, intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation (M=6.01), proves that the most important thing for young cadet basketball players of the Serbian national team is enjoying the game of basketball, which is the source of inner satisfaction and further incentive for sports activity. Then there is the motive of accomplishing certain success in

basketball, which is also based on intrinsic motives (intrinsic motivation to accomplish).

Correlation analysis has shown high intercorrelations between intrinsic aspects of motivation, which points at interweaving of intrinsic reasons for sports activities (Table 3). As some previous studies have shown, extrinsic motivation by identification is connected with intrinsic aspects of motivation (Mladenović, 2010). This means that a connection between authentic intrinsic reasons for sports activity and extrinsic factors which can affect sports motivation is created by developing responsible and conscientious approach to all sports obligations. This research has shown that extrinsic motivation by introjection ($M=5.29$) is more dominant, which implies that young basketball players are still prone to perform their sports duties, as they consider it to be appropriate and necessary, and not because they actually understand and accept the significance of responsible and professional approach in sport. However, having in mind the actual age of examinees, as well as the positive correlations between intrinsic aspects of motivation and extrinsic motivation by identification, it can be assumed that the internalization of extrinsic reasons for basketball activities is currently only in the phase of introjection, and that it could turn into real identification with sports obligations through the process of maturing and sports socialization.

Extrinsic motivation by external regulation, as the clearest form of extrinsic motivation, is not connected either with extrinsic or with intrinsic aspects of motivation, or with goal orientations. It is obvious that motivation by material rewards is not connected with motivational factors which are based on an athlete's personality.

Regarding goal orientation, it has been shown that the dominant orientation is directed towards the development of competences ($M=4.26$), which is a very positive finding, especially if we take into consideration the fact that our examinees are aged 16 and that they are faced with intense tasks for development and enhancement of sports skills every day. This orientation directed towards task has a positive correlation with intrinsic motivation to know about basketball game ($r=0.586$; $p<0.01$) and intrinsic motivation to accomplish ($r=0.578$; $p<0.01$). A positive correlation has also been found between task orientation and extrinsic motivation by introjection ($r=0.502$; $p<0.05$), which means that young basketball players intuitively think that it is necessary to fulfill all sports obligations in order to develop basketball skills and gain affirmation, even when those are not seen as personal authentic motives.

Goal orientations have a positive mutual correlation ($r=0.448$; $p<0.05$). Goals of achievement are quite intertwined, even though the emphasis on one's own competences and efficiency or the demonstration of personal affirmation can be differentiated as separate tendencies.

Amotivation, as a special factor for motivational continuum, has not shown any correlation with motivational aspects but it has a negative correlation with ego orientation and personal affirmation ($r=-0.596$; $p<0.01$). This implies that there is a lack of orientation towards highlighting personal superiority over other athletes and desire for personal superiority when an athlete is in the state of apathy and amotivation for further sports activities.

CONCLUSION

The study of motivation and goal orientation regarding young U16 basketball players of the Serbian national team has shown that intrinsic motives (to know, to accomplish and to experience stimulation) are dominant. Regarding goal orientation, the dominant orientation is task orientation. Correlation analysis has shown that there is significant mutual connection between intrinsic aspects of sports motivation, as well as their connection with extrinsic motivation by identification. Extrinsic motivation by introjection is connected with intrinsic motivation for accomplishment and task orientation. Task orientation has a positive correlation with intrinsic motivation to know and to accomplish, as well as with the other goal orientation - ego orientation. Amotivation has a negative correlation with ego orientation.

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