

# STUDY REGARDING THE IMPACT OF SPORT COMPETITIONS ON STUDENTS SOCIALIZATION

*Sopa Ioan Sabin, PhD Student*

National University of Physical Education and Sport, Bucharest, Romania

*Pomohaci Marcel, Conf. Univ. PhD*

University “Lucian Blaga”, Faculty of Science, Department of Environment  
Sciences, Physics, Physical Education and Sport, Sibiu, Romania

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## Abstract

Sport activities are considered to be the perfect setting in training young generations, being appreciated as an important socializing factor with increasingly higher value in modern society. Sport competitions does not only prove who is the best team or player, but are ways of bringing the sportives together to compete, know each other, socialize and make friends. Using the observation method and the questionnaire method, we tried to analyze the impact of sport competition on students socialization level. We build up a questionnaire using 15 items and applied it on the teams that participated in the 4th edition of mixed volleyball competition for students known as “Cupa Primăverii”. However, this competition was reserved for students from the University “Lucian Blaga”, Sibiu. The results showed us that students participated in this kind of activities to compete with others, play volleyball, make friends and socialize.

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**Keywords:** Socialization through sport, sport competition, volleyball

## Introduction

The need for an emulation boost around sports phenomenon in the Faculties of “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu, has become stringent and so we decided to find a solution to attract students to participate, compete and socialize through and with sport. This solution was called “Cupa Primăverii” at volleyball. Therefore, thinking about social inclusion, we decided that this cup competition should be mixed (male and female) in both teams from the Faculties of “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu. Starting from the idea that “the relationships created in various circles of participants at various competitions are unusually durable and exercise an important role in shaping social microstructure” or “sports is a good opportunity of self revealing in an

open contact with others, as it approaches the participants in these games, generate links, collegial attitudes and modes of behavior" (Cârstea, 1981), we choose to promote sports through socializing means of sports competition and volleyball game.

Through games and sports competition, youth can gain confidence and can try new forms of networking, so as to improve their potential and skills, make friends and know their colleagues better. "Sports cultivate teamwork and enhance self-confidence. Undoubtedly, the biggest gain of socialization in sport is that it develops in us the idea of social belonging and team spirit". (Gavriliuță, 2005)

The competition started back in 2009, and in this year, the competition had its 6<sup>th</sup> edition. However, since not only the level of the volleyball competition was the primary aim of this activity, we analyzed through the observation method that students were more emotionally involved, and their main purpose was not only to win the competition but also to socialize, compete and make friends from other faculties. As a result, we wanted to see what motivates them to participate in this kind of activity and their level of socialization through volleyball competition.

### **Purpose**

The scope of the present study was to analyze the impact of sports competition on students' motivations and socializing level. We wanted to demonstrate that using volleyball sport competitions can be a successful way in bringing students together to socialize, to socially integrate other students, make friends and compete with others.

### **Objectives**

Our main objectives was to analyze through the methods of observation and questionnaire, the socializing means of volleyball sport competitions and their impact on students' motivation in sport activities.

### **Hypothesis**

This study started from the assumption that using the means of sport competitions and volleyball game, we can raise the level of motivation of students in participating in sports activities and the level of their socialization. In other words, sports is a perfect framework by which students can feel free to express themselves and making new and durable friendships.

### **Methods of research**

In this study, we used the observation method which is one of the methods most commonly used for psychosocial research. It can be applied and organized relatively easily, and can quickly be adapted to and used in

various situations in analyzing the evolution of groups. In addition, it can also be used in varied forms depending not only on the objective of the investigation, but as well as the nature of the group. With this method, we can follow and record behavioral manifestations in various social situations individually or through psychosocial interaction and psychological analysis of the whole group or a particular individual.

We also used the questionnaire method in analyzing the level of socialization of students and their motivation for participating in sport activities. We build up a questionnaire with 15 items with 3 option scale (agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree), structured on 3 dimensions: students level of socialization, students' motivation for practicing sport activities and sport competition contributions in building strong relationships and good level of communication.

The participants from the volleyball competition that also formed the sample group for this study was formed by students from several Faculties in “Lucian Blaga” University. However, they include Law Faculty - 10 students, Social Sciences Faculty – 10 students, Faculty of Engineering – 12 students, Faculty of Medicine – 11 students, Faculty of Economics – 12 students, and Faculty of Sciences Department of Physical Education and Sport – 12 students. The total number of students that participated in this study was 67; therefore all students were on full time studies at the first, second or third year of license.

The place where the competition and our study took place was the Faculty of Science at the Department of Physical Education and Sport on the 23<sup>rd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> of March 2013.

The responses for each item from the questionnaire were recorded and were translated into graphics with percentages. Therefore, this will enable us to analyze it and understand the level of socialization and the mark that our volleyball competition had on student relationships.

## **I.**

Socialization through motor activities and sport competitions aims at a wide range of consequences in practicing physical education: starting from the development of motor skills and social competence, to the acquisition of values and social norms. In other words, it refers to what is been learnt in sports without necessarily seeking out sport utility” (Patriksoon, 1996). Sport socialization represents a process of social integration through communication, understanding and cooperation with an interactive role for active and conscious conflict resolution. Therefore, it is structured on cognitive constructions, affective and motivational individual, as well as representation, behaviors and performance of sports groups”. (Serban, 1998)

This activity produces beneficial effects on health maintenance, tone and personality development also. Consequently, time has validated the positive effects of physical activity and sport on self-concept, self-esteem, anxiety, depression, pressure and stress, self-confidence, energy, mood, efficiency and wellbeing. Sport and physical activity has contributed to the socialization of men especially young people, in circumstances where there is a good control. Also, it has been said that socialization in sport can be promoted only when there are highlighted moral qualities, attitudes, skills and rules assimilated in physical activities which can be transferred to any other social sphere and can be adapted to the specifics of any other social institution. Sports and physical education promotes respect for moral values in both the Olympic spirit and the core values of life in the community, thereby fostering integration of the group, society and communication skills. (Turcu, 2010)

Viewed as a social institution, sport has its own sociological base in the society in that it has regulations, specific laws, sanctioning ways, establishes relationships (social and cultural) and communication systems, and assists in the identification of role-sets and status-sets together with their ideology and principles. Nowadays, societies (modern) sport acquires other connotations as: it becomes increasingly important in the sense that it is practiced by an increasing number of individuals within the school or leisure. In addition, it is followed with great interest (either directly or indirectly as a spectator or media) and has become a profession for most people. (Rusu, 2000).

Many important skills are learned by young people through team sport, and one of them is competition. Nowadays, we face competition every day in every domain. As adults face competition when looking for a job or trying to be better at their jobs, children are also facing competition in school in acquiring good grades and becoming the best in sport activity. Therefore, competition can give children the chance to find a healthy way to live and an opportunity to find new friends at an early age. In addition, it seems that children who participates in sports activities have more chances to emerge best in competitions in other areas of their life. (Yan & McCullagh, 2004)

Socialization enables members of a society to interact with one another and as such pass on skills, values, beliefs, knowledge, and modes of behavior pertaining to that society. The sport is generally regarded as playing a significant role in socialization. (Kent, 2007)

Physical benefits of sport are well known and very important, but the social part entices children into practicing a sport. They are happy that they can meet their friends and spend time with them outside school, and this is more important than knowing they are physically active. Thus, social interaction through team sports teaches young people to associate with their

friends, solve and prevent conflicts, communicate and socialize better with their colleagues. (Harrison & Naraya, 2003)

**Research Results**

Based on the results of the socialization through volleyball competition and the motivation of students to participate in sport activities applied on our sample group, we found the following as shown in Figure 1 and Table 1 below:

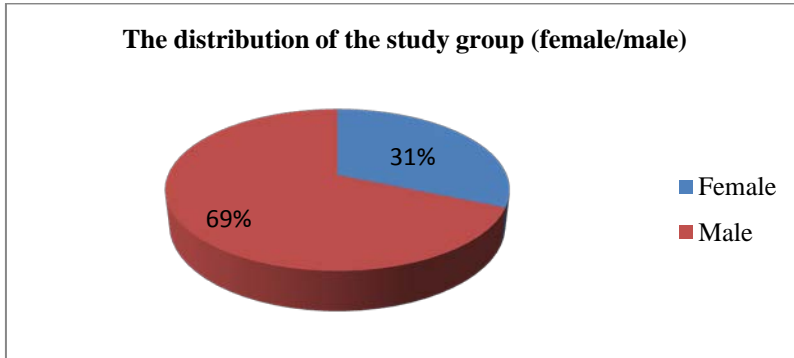


Figure 1. The distribution of the study group (female/male)

Sex	Law Faculty	Faculty of Engineering	Faculty of Medicine	Faculty of Economics	Social Sciences Faculty	Department of Physical Education	Total
Male	7	9	7	8	7	8	46
Female	3	3	4	4	3	4	21

Table 1. The distribution of the study group (female/male) on Faculties

As we can see from Table 1 and Figure 1, the distribution of the study group regarding their sex (male/female) is showing us that the group was mixed and the male respondents were dominant.

Dimensions of the questionnaire	Number of question
Students' level of socialization	1,4,7,11,14
Students' motivation for practicing sport activities	2,8,10,13,15
Sport competition contributions in building strong relationships and good communication level	3,5,6,9,12

Table 2. Dimensions of the questionnaire

In Table 2, we have the distribution of the dimensions of our questionnaire. Thus, we structured our questionnaire into 3 dimensions, namely: students level of socialization (questions 1,4,7,11,14); students' motivation for practicing sport activities (questions 2,8,10,13,15) and sport competition contributions in building strong relationship and good communication level (questions 3,5,6,9,12).

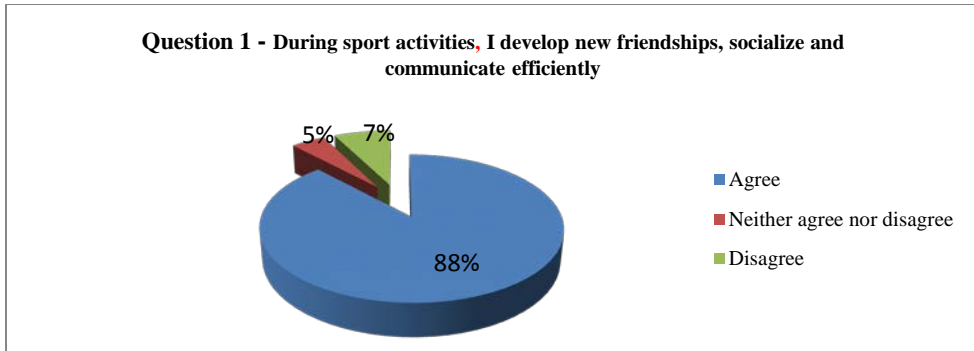


Figure 1. Sport activities are the perfect framework for communication and socialization

In Figure 1., we can see the results from the first question. So, students were asked if during sport activities they develop new friendships, socialize and communicate efficiently. However, the results showed us that more than 88% of the respondents agreed with the affirmation, 5% neither agree nor disagree and just 7% of the respondents disagree with the statement. Analyzing the result from this first question, we can conclude that students that participated in the volleyball competition developed new friendships through the entire tour, socialize with everyone involved in the game and communicate more efficiently. Thus, we can say that with the help of good communication and socialization that results from volleyball game, students developed new friendships or discovered new friends.

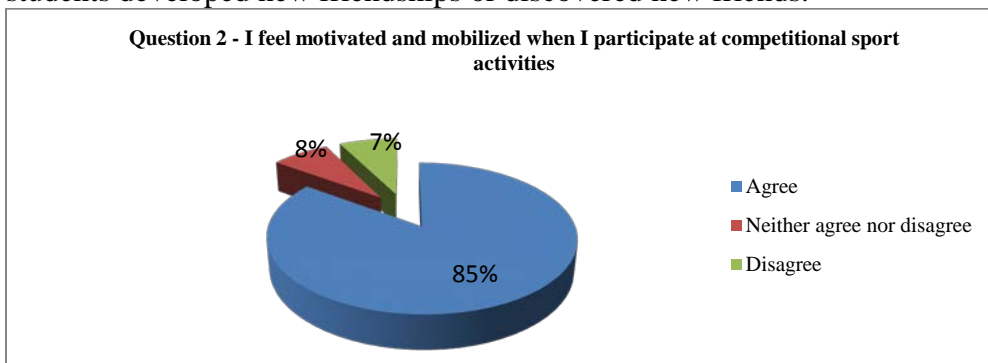


Figure 2. Sport motivates the participants

In question 2 with the affirmation: “I feel motivated and mobilized when I participate in competitive sport activities”. Hence, students' responses showed that 85% of the respondents agree with the statement, 8% were undecided and less than 7% of them did not agree. Analyzing the graphic from Figure 2., we can say that majority of students is feeling motivated and mobilized when they participate in any kind of computational form of sport activities. As a result, we can conclude that our initiative of developing a mixed volleyball cup between faculties is a good framework for our students

to develop their ambitions, work hard for the best results and be combative. From the lowest percentage that did not agree or are undecided with this statement, we can conclude that the majority of our students are being motivated to participate in our cup.

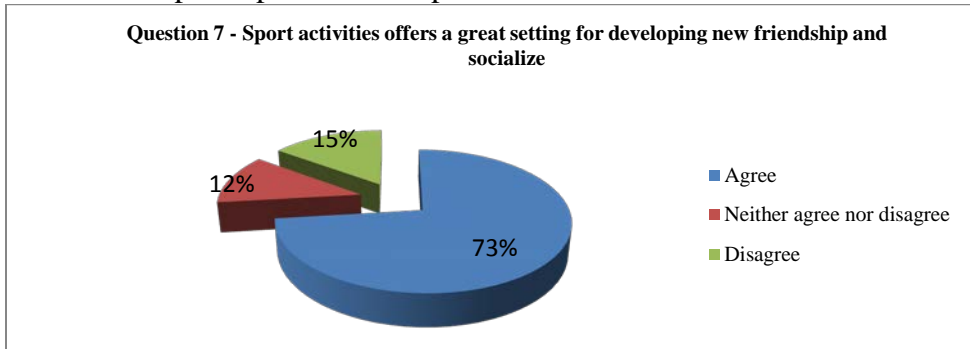


Figure 3. Sport activities are important for developing friendship and socialize

Regarding question 7 from our questionnaire, the results presented in Figure 3 shows us that at the statement “Sport activities offers a great setting for developing new friendships and socialize”. Thus, student’s responses are: 73% says yes and agree with the affirmation, 12% neither agree nor disagree and 15% of the respondents disagree. Analyzing the responses, we can see that the majority of our students agree with the statement and believed that sport is a great framework for socializing and making good and durable friendships.

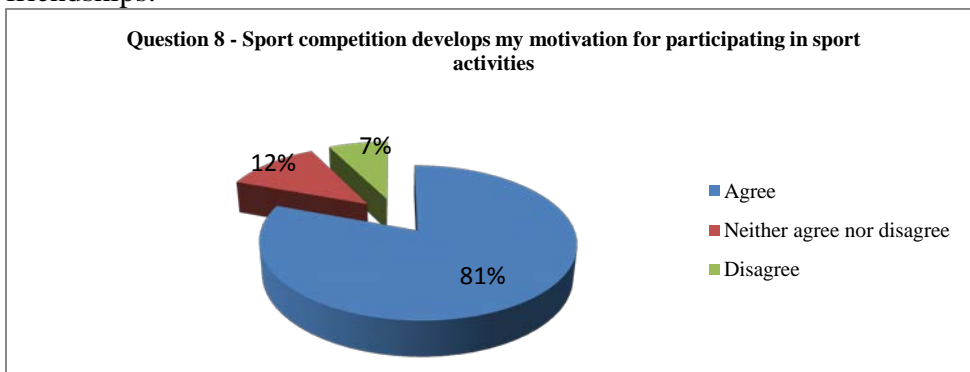


Figure 4. Sport competition develops motivation for participating in sport activities

When asked if sport competition develops their motivation for participating in sport activities in question 8, the responses showed in Figure 4., where: 81% of the respondents agreed with the statement, 12% were undecided and just 7% disagreed. So we can conclude that students like and are feeling motivated by competition to participate in sport activities.

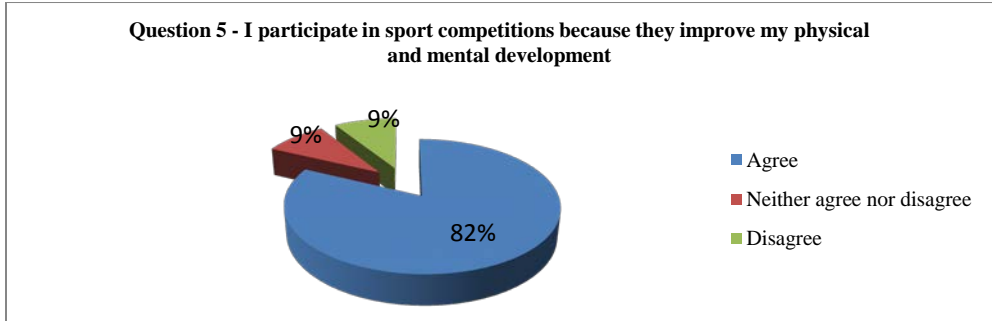


Figure 5. Sport competitions improve physical and mental development

In Figure 5., we can see the results from question 5 that states: “I participate in sport competitions because they improve my physical and mental development”. Therefore, the responses were: 82% of the students agreed with the statement, 9 % of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed and also 9% disagreed. So graphically, we can conclude that most of the students agreed with the idea that through sport competitions they can develop their physical and mental skills. However, few students did not agree with the statement.

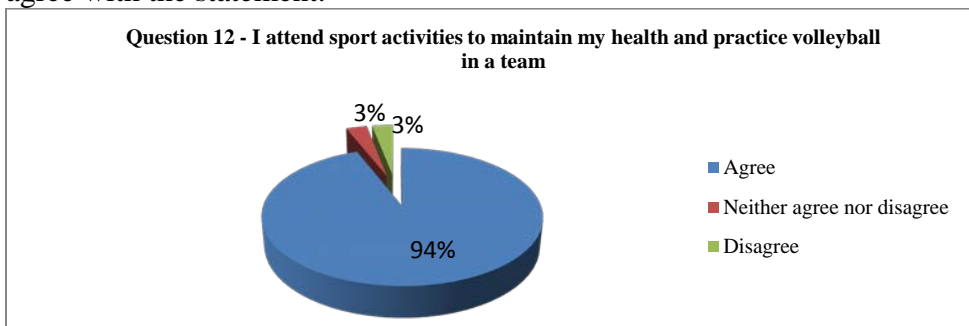


Figure 6. Students attend sport activities to maintain health and practice volleyball in a team

In question 12, the results presented in Figure 6: “I attend sport activities to maintain my health and practice volleyball in a team”, showed us that: 94% of the respondents agreed with the statement, 3% neither agreed nor disagreed while 3% of them disagreed. The results showed us that students like to attend sport activities and sport competitions so that they can maintain their health and physical form, and more than that is to practice volleyball in a team.

### Conclusion

Sport activities are an important setting in youth development. Thus, competitions can stimulate and motivate students to participate in this kind of activities.



Our study highlights the importance of sport competition in students' faculty's programs. However, this kind of activities unites them and helps in improving their relationships, their communication skills and socializing with others, and making long lasting friendships. Also, students appreciate this kind of activities for improving or maintaining their health and also for playing volleyball in a team with their friends or competing against them.

Therefore, we agree with the statement that "relationships created in circles of participants in various competitions are unusually durable and perform an important role in social microstructure" or "sport is a good way of revealing your own personality in free contact with others, and it appropriates the participants in these games, generates collegial links, attitudes and modes of behavior" (Cârstea, 1981). Through games and sports competition, the students can gain confidence and can try new forms of networking so as to improve his potential and qualities.

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