

ORIGINAL SCIENTIFIC PAPER

Youth and Sport in Montenegro

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Abstract

In this paper we investigate to which measure sport is developed among young people in Montenegro and what should be done to improve and spread physical culture among young people and beyond school systems in order to influence their proper development and to create opportunities for choosing potential talents for certain sports disciplines, who would later grow into top athletes and members of national teams. In addition to the theoretical framework set out from referent literature on sports, we will analyze the indicators - the existing regulation and strategy, and analyze the structured interviews conducted among sports professionals, based on which we will form the theory and sublimate the conclusions of work, as recommendations for improving sports among young people. Disadvantages are inadequate realization of teaching in schools, lack of adequate infrastructure in schools, lack of athletic stadium in the capital of Montenegro and lack of sports schools beyond classes. Advantages are great sports potential in youth, youth interest in sport and generations of educated professors in physical culture. The recommendations are related to addressing the shortcomings that exist and the adoption of laws that will stimulate the development of sports among young people.

Key words: *sport, youth, physical culture, state*

Introduction

Successfully completed classes of the Physical Culture during elementary and secondary school and also engagement into sport activities during childhood and youth undoubtedly influence the proper development of the population of a country. Young people are developing physically and mentally, and with being engaged into such healthy activity, they avoid being close to vices and addiction illnesses. Additionally, sports activities from the earliest days are the best way to recognize talents that later can professionally be engaged with a particular sport and become part of a national representation of a country. During the previous survey, “inadequate sports education” was registered as a weakness, “interest in sports” as a force, and “sports education” as a chance, and “population depopulation” and “changing the field of interest among young people” as a threat, in SWOT analysis of positive and negative factors related to sport in Montenegro (Maros, & Mujak, 2015).

The lack of adequate sports education from the earliest age is certainly a problem for the development of sports, because in athletics as a basic sport mass development is necessary (from the fifth grade to the end of the secondary school),

and in the football schools adequate training for gifted and after the youngest age must be enabled, which is now missing. Teaching practice is more focused on training sports-technical elements and less to the development of motor-and functional abilities of students (Ljubojevic et al., 2016).

“In a decision adopted by the European Parliament in November 2007, physical education is the only school class that seeks to prepare children for a healthy life and focuses on their overall physical and mental development and transfers important social values such as: fairness, self-discipline, solidarity, team spirit, tolerance, fair play ... Together with sports, physical education is considered one of the most important tools for social integration” (Hardman, 2007).

The highest normative acts of the Council of Europe and the United Nations, in particular the European Sports Charter in Article 5, are dedicated to the participation of young people in sports, which speaks of the significance of this issue, highlighted in the first of the articles in SE Committee of Ministers: “Every society should provide conditions to young people for engaging into physical activities, which provide constructive use of free time, but also helps to solve many social problems, such as intolerance, goal absence, violence, alcoholism, illegal



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drug use, etc.” (Djordjevic, 2007). It is also noted that adequate attention is not paid to the physical activity of young people, that in order to improve the current state the private-public partnership must be developed, and that public authorities should implement a policy that will develop positive attitudes towards lifelong engagement in sport and physical activity.

The National Sports Development Program of Montenegro states that there are school sports societies in six sports (athletics, handball, basketball, volleyball, small football and chess) and that at competitions organized by the Union of School Sports Associations of Montenegro, participate over 30,000 pupils - athletes from elementary schools. The problem is that in high schools, for many years now, the system of school sports competitions is not functional. The quality movement in this segment of sports was stimulated by the work of the Student Sports Union of Montenegro, through which the overall policy of student sports development is conducted, for over 3,000 students, and students are included in the system of competitions organized by the World Student Sport Association.

Improving sports in youth assumes insufficiently concrete measures, which we notice by reading the National Program, because planned activities are seminars for teachers and contest organizers, establishing a network of participants and a creative approach ... The only concrete measure would be under item 3: “linking physical education and extra-sporting activities through cooperation of schools with sports associations and clubs, in order to create opportunities for prospective students – athletes to achieve top-notch sports achievements” (National program of sports development in Montenegro).

In addition to the fact that insufficient physical activity in youth damages development and contributes to poor socialization and lack of recognition of sports talents, it certainly affects the increase in obesity among children, which is often the case in the world, and especially in Britain. “Compared to other European countries, an increase in the number of obese people in England is high and practically reflects the situation in the United States where, technically, 30% of the adult population is obese (Crossley, 2004). It is claimed that a dramatic increase in obesity in England occurred, among other things, because in the last generation physical activity decreased by 70 percent (Parkinson, 1966)” (Skembler, 2007).

It is similar in Montenegro where extensive research is carried out, as a part of an international project, among the elementary school population, in the realization of the Faculty for Sport and Physical Education and the Institute for Public Health. However, earlier studies among high school students are worrying, according to the data from the Action Plan for Food consumption and safety of Montenegro (2010-2014), 21% of children and adolescents aged 7 to 19 years had an excessive weight, or are obese, and three quarters are with healthy weight. The fact that more than 20 percent of school-age children have an increased body mass or belong to the category of obese should have to worry everyone, parents, schools, health workers, the whole society.

“Finally, efforts in population-based prevention of overweight and obesity in children and adolescents should be matched with enhancing access to health-care interventions for weight management and for reducing the adverse effects of obesity, including intensive behavioural therapy to change diet and exercise; screening for and management of hyper-

tension, glucose intolerance, dyslipidaemia, and abnormal liver function in children and adolescents with obesity; and in extreme cases bariatric surgery” by the NCD Risk Factor Collaboration (NCD-RisC).

Theoreticians primarily expect from the state to play a patronizing role in the development of sports among young people, either in providing funding, in norming, or in encouraging physical and sports activities: “State involvement through these activities creates, at the very least, waves of influence through all aspects of sport: from sports development and amateur sport to professional sports and international competitions, from sports in school to many sports-related jobs, from improving national health (and by that additional savings) to improving the infrastructure, national pride and world recognition. The complexity of these interactions makes the role of the state - whatever it is - so important. Because of this importance, one of the vital aspects of business and sports management is understanding and influencing that role” (Beech, & Chadwick, 2010)

The establishment of the Ministry of Sport (formerly the Directorate for Youth and Sports) promoted the youth's sports activity in and outside of schools, and one of the steps in that direction is the introduction of free medical examinations, which makes easier for young people who already have significant expenses to pay membership in clubs to stay engaged in sports. “We have the idea to create a diagnostic center that would deal with the examination of all of our athletes” (N. Janovic, personal communication).

Methods

For the purposes of this paper, we conducted interviews with relevant sports workers who have scanned the current situation in the field of youth sports in Montenegro, each from their own perspective, and then gave opinions and recommendations what should be done in order to improve, to better develop sports among young people. Interviewed are: Milorad Vuletic, President of the Athletic Association of Montenegro, Branko Krivokapic, sports journalist of TV Vijesti, Milovan Ljubojevic, professor at the Faculty for Sport and Physical Education and Pavle Malovic, president of the Student Council of the Faculty for Sport and Physical Education in Niksic. The responses were analyzed by double open coding by selecting significant and removing insufficiently significant codes, i.e. characteristics for this topic, and then individually and together analyzed. This led to the formation of a kind of theory about sport among young people in Montenegro, which objectively presented the current state and made recommendations for its improvement.

Results

Interviewed as problems in the development of sports in young people stated inadequate realization of physical education teaching in elementary and secondary schools, lack of adequate infrastructure in schools, lack of athletic stadium and track in the capital of Montenegro. In addition to these problems, it is considered that there are disadvantages in the adequate engagement into sports outside the school system. What is considered to be an advantage is the great sporting potential in youth and generations of educated professors of physical culture who come from the faculty. As a positive aspect, it is necessary to emphasize that more and more young people sees sports as their main activity outside school.

Table 1. Disadvantages and advantages of youth in sport in Montenegro

Disadvantages	Advantages
Inadequate realization of teaching in schools	Great sports potential in youth
Lack of adequate infrastructure in schools	Youth interest in sport
Lack of athletic stadium in the capital of Montenegro	Generations of educated professors in physical culture
Lack of sports schools beyond classes	

Discussion

Generations of young people go through elementary and secondary school without adequate physical education. This is generally considered to be a lighter subject, one which does not require much effort and knowledge, thus grades in these subjects are often given for better overall success. The place where the classes are held is often inadequate, the gyms roofs are leaking, and the dressing rooms are unregulated. Teachers of physical culture either can not face with such a state or contribute to it by ignoring it.

We are witnesses that physical education in elementary and secondary schools is not basic, but the subject of secondary significance: teaching is mostly performed in an uncomfortable space, absences are easily passed, grades are copied and “given away”, the form is more important than the essence” (Branko Krivokapic).

We definitely can't talk about some kind of high-quality physical education, and it's permanent in the last 20 years, which is not good (Milorad Vuletic).

In schools, physical education is limited by the number of hours, space capacities and equipment (Milovan Ljubojevic).

Sports among young people, within the framework of physical culture in schools, suffers from extremely high, I can say freely, lack of seriousness and engagement of young people (Pavle Malovic).

Interviewed persons also state specific problems. The teaching of physical education is carried out for several departments together in a gym that is not sufficient for one department, and in such conditions the foreseen movement and activity can't be realized. The problem is the lack of equipment, and the number of hours of physical education in elementary school as an elective subject is also reduced.

As a solution to overcome this problem priority is given to providing conditions for adequate physical education, which is under jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Sports Ministry, thus each school would have a functional gym. Right behind it is continual professional development of teachers of physical education, and third - a constant work in promoting awareness among young people that physical education and sports, is not seen as a school subject, but as a healthy habit. “Here is even the least important if and in what percentage they will become top athletes - it is important first of all to learn to walk properly; that care of their own body becomes a cultural code. Another item stands out - affirmation and media popularization of school sports competitions” (Branko Krivokapic).

Encouragement, in this sense, comes from a student of the final year of physical education who believes that we should trust in the young generations of professor of the course “Thanks to the more and more quality generations coming out from our University departments, there is hope that the quality of work and dedication coming from such persons will attract the attention of youth in a subtle and interesting way,

thus affecting the stated syndrome” (Pavle Malovic).

One of the biggest problems in the development of sports among young people is the lack of an athletic stadium and the track in the capital of Montenegro, said Milorad Vuletic, president of the Athletic Association of Montenegro, who states that this did not happen even after half a century of efforts, and that without mass presence there is no quality. The construction of such a stadium would mark an threshold in the development of the Montenegrin sport, and it could be built in real terms if capital would provide the land with the necessary infrastructure and become the owner of the stadium later. The Athletic Association would contribute by equipping the stadium with a rubber backing tartan track through the World Athletics Federation, and the state could round up a financial construction with a public-private partnership, as is the case in the region. “This means, above all, seriously planned investment in available sports facilities in the part of renovation and reconstruction in order to get an architectural comfortable areas, as well as increasing the capacity of indoor and outdoor areas for sport” (Popovic et al., 2016).

Sport outside the school has some problems, the interviewees stated. There are many sports clubs, schools and organizations, but because of the market competition, quality is neglected for the sake of quantity. This can mean a certain kind of recreation for children provided by their parents, but this is not a way of working with talents, who need more attention and the work with professional teams.

I think that the number of professional services in the clubs should increase (health service, kinesiological monitoring service, psychologist, etc.). The Sports Act must define the areas of education for people working in sports, mostly in professional services. A person who manages the development process of one's organism can't be without formal education in the field related human organism (Milovan Ljubojevic).

Another item stands out - affirmation and media popularization of school sports competitions. Example: the women's soccer team of Montenegro is practically formed on the basis of representation of primary and secondary schools.

It is necessary to develop a national, networked information system that would record every qualitative sporting step forward of children at equal level from any part of Montenegro. They should be encouraged to compete with their peers from Europe, and scholarships should also be provided by the state, in addition to the Montenegrin Olympic Committee and the national federations (Branko Krivokapic).

The interviewees confirm the authors' thesis that the efforts of the newly founded Ministry of Sports are going in the right direction, because in cooperation with the Ministry of Education it improves the sports environment for young people, so that physical education becomes factually obligatory subject, and not optional, and the fund of classes is increased, which requires new education of teaching staff, especially professor of physical education. Pedagogues should be directed

towards the affinities they possess, from general education to the scouting method of selecting pupils and their adequate sports, by using medicine and everything else, and directing after the age of ten.

In order to extract the quality from the masses, it is necessary to have skilled and qualified teaching staff-trainers, because they are deficient in those sports that are basic for dealing with some other kind of highly specialized sports (Milorad Vuletic).

It would be necessary, as the Faculty for Sport and Physical Education states, to adhere to the attitudes of professional teams, who would rely on the true qualities of athletes, which so far may not always have been the case, since parents had other desires, as well as managers.

We all must trust the trainers and let them do their job. Without intrusion of parents, managers and others (Milovan Ljubojevic)

Recruiting young people from the school sports system is not at a level that is already active in more developed countries, but instead young people choose a certain sport discipline under someone's influence or are simply lead towards some sport discipline, regardless of whether this sport corresponds to its anthropological status (Pavle Malovic).

The draft of the new Law on Sports of Montenegro (2017) provides stimulation measures that will enable the inclusion of as many children as possible in sports activities; they are related the co-financing of their membership in sports clubs, that is, by paying part of their membership fee". The legislation draft stipulates that funds are paid on the account of a professional sports club, within which the child is engaged in sports activity, for the previous period and at most for two months at a time. This method of payment is foreseen for the purpose of avoiding possible misuse, given that a professional sports club will have to provide evidence that the child was really involved in sports within that club in the previous period for which the payment of funds is being made". Call for a public invitation is also planned for co-financing children for sport engagement, and professional sports clubs with at least ten children will be eligible to apply. The legislation draft further states that the root of this idea lie primarily in the desire to create a healthy and physically active nation because the physical activity prevents the emergence of certain non-communicable diseases, such as, for example, obesity disease, and related illnesses. On the other hand, Montenegro is a nation that continuously

achieves high sports results at the domestic and international level, and it is necessary to establish conditions for engaging into sports, in order to achieve such results in the future.

We can conclude that in any case there are enough candidates for sports, for managing the sport and for producing good results, which we have shown in all sports from individual to collective, since 2006 when they start competing for Montenegro. Nevertheless, the examination of the problem, and its resolution and improvement of the situation, would certainly help the development of sports among young people in Montenegro, the acquisition of healthy habits and more successes in sports.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflict of interest.

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