

Hadjı Faychal

University of Tebessa

<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-2591-5660>

faycal.hadjı@univ-tebessa.dz

Balboul Farid

University of M'sila

<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-2591-5250>

farid.balboul@univ-msila.dz

Motives for Sports Practice Among Secondary School Students

Abstract

This study explores the motives behind sports practice among secondary school students, focusing on both in-school and out-of-school activities. Sports practice is considered an essential aspect of a healthy lifestyle, contributing to physical development, social integration, and psychological well-being. It plays a key role in enhancing body functions, teaching social skills and reducing psychological stress. Recognizing the importance of sports, the state and educational institutions have invested substantial resources to encourage participation, particularly during adolescence. The research aims to identify the main motivational factors influencing students' engagement in sports activities, whether intrinsic, such as personal enjoyment and self-improvement, or extrinsic, such as social recognition and competitive success.

Keywords: sports practice, motivation, secondary school students, physical health, social integration, psychological welfare, adolescence

Hacı Fayçal

Tebessa Üniversitesi

<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-2591-5660>

faycal.hadjı@univ-tebessa.dz

Balboul Fərid

Msilə Üniversitesi

<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-2591-5250>

farid.balboul@univ-msila.dz

Orta məktəb şagirdləri arasında idman məşqinin motivləri

Xülasə

Bu tədqiqat həm məktəbdaxili, həm də məktəbdən kənar fəaliyyətlərə diqqət yetirərək, orta məktəb şagirdləri arasında idman təcrübəsinin motivlərini araşdırır. İdman təcrübəsi sağlam həyat tərzinin vacib aspekti hesab olunur, fiziki inkişafa, sosial integrasiyaya və psixoloji rifaha kömək edir. Bədən funksiyalarının artırılmasında, sosial bacarıqların öyrədilməsində və psixoloji stressin azaldılmasında əsas rol oynayır. İdmanın əhəmiyyətini dərk edərək, dövlət və təhsil müəssisələri, xüsusən də yeniyetməlik dövründə idmando iştirakçılığı təşviq etmək üçün əhəmiyyətli resurslar yatırımlar. Tədqiqat tələbələrin idman fəaliyyətlərinə cəlb edilməsinə təsir edən əsas motivasiya amillərini müəyyən etmək məqsədi daşıyır — istər şəxsi həzz və özünü təkmilləşdirmə kimi daxili, istərsə də sosial tanınma və rəqabət uğuru kimi xarici amillər.

Açar sözlər: idman təcrübəsi, motivasiya, orta məktəb şagirdləri, fiziki sağlamlıq, sosial integrasiya, psixoloji rifah, yeniyetməlik

Introduction

Sports practice is considered one of the healthy lifestyle patterns in our present time due to its effects on physical health. Physical sports activity is, in fact, a developmental process of the body's functions in order to place the individual in a good state of adaptation. In addition to the importance of sports from a social perspective, it teaches the individual social skills that enable proper integration into society, being influenced by it, and influencing it. Sports also contribute to alleviating individuals' psychological pressures, ensuring them sound mental and psychological health. Therefore, all societies, past and present, have engaged in sports and encouraged individuals to practice them, especially during childhood and adolescence. The state has allocated enormous resources to encourage individuals to practice sports.

Research

Through this study, we wanted to illuminate on the motives for sports practice among secondary school students. By "sports practice," we mean all sports activities carried out by the student inside or outside the school. Motives, as is known, are the desire to engage in a certain behavior; in this case, we mean by motives everything that stimulates the student and makes him engage in a specific sports activity.

Problematic

Sports are of great importance because they are an activity that concerns both the individual and society alike. They are considered a means for physical, social, psychological, mental and cultural upbringing, among others. Interest in sports practice begins in childhood, as it helps the child's motor, mental, and psychological development. The child practices this activity in the external environment outside his home, then at the school level in the form of physical education classes, and sports practice reaches its peak during adolescence due to the completion of physical, mental, and psychological growth, making the individual capable of performing sports activity with optimal performance.

The sports practice intended in this topic includes all sports activities performed by the student, whether recreational or competitive, as well as school or non-school sports activities (Ahmed, 1973).

Practicing such sports activities for the adolescent student requires a healthy environment that helps him do so—an environment that includes the family, the school, and the external surroundings. All the actors in this environment are required to push the student toward sports practice. This is precisely the problem to be studied in this paper—what are these motives that stimulate the student's behavior and make him willing to engage in sports activities?

On this basis, the main problematic and sub-problematic questions are formulated as follows:

Main problematic: What are the motives for sports practice among secondary school students?

Sub-problematic questions:

1. Is the family environment considered a motive for sports practice among secondary school students?

2. Can the external environment be considered a motive for sports practice among secondary school students?

3. Can guaranteeing social status be considered a motive for sports practice among secondary school students?

Hypotheses:

Main hypothesis: The motives for sports practice among secondary school students are multiple, some of which are intrinsic, related to the individual himself (such as self-esteem and ensuring social status, etc.), and others are extrinsic (the surrounding environment), such as the family and the external environment.

Sub-hypotheses:

1. The family environment is considered a motive for sports practice among secondary school students.

2. The external environment can be considered a motive for sports practice among secondary school students.

3. Ensuring social status can be considered a motive for sports practice among secondary school students.

Reasons for choosing the topic: The reasons for choosing the topic can be summarized as follows:

- Raising awareness about the importance of sports practice during adolescence.
- Shedding light on the topic of motives due to its importance in the behavioral aspect of the adolescent.
- Raising awareness of the importance of strengthening the relationship between the family, the student, and the environment (Talib, Al-Baker, 2025).

Research objectives: The research objectives can be summarized as follows:

- To identify the importance of the family's influence on the individual's motives.
- To identify the effects of the external environment on the individual's motives.
- To identify the importance of ensuring social status on the individual's motives.

Research importance: The importance of the research can be summarized as follows:

- Highlighting the importance of sports practice on the physical, psychological, and mental health of the adolescent.
- Highlighting the psychological foundations of physical sports activity.
- Highlighting the social foundations of physical and sports activity.

Definition of terms and concepts:

Motivation: The word "Motivation" has roots in the Latin word *mover*, which means "to move" or "to push" in psychology (El-Sayed, & Fahim, 1984).

Some researchers have tried to differentiate between the concept of "motive" and "motivation," but so far there is no justification for separating them. Most researchers use the term "motive" as synonymous with "motivation." Accordingly, when we use either of these concepts, we mean the same thing (Rateb, 1990).

Several definitions of motivation have been given, reflecting various theoretical orientations. The most important definitions are:

- **P.T. Young:** "It is a state of arousal and internal tension that stimulates behavior and drives it toward achieving a specific goal" (Rateb, & Khalifa, 1999).
- **A.H. Maslow:** "It is a fixed, continuous, changeable, complex, and general characteristic that exerts an influence in all the states of a living organism" (Mahmoud, 1981).
- **Staats:** "Motivation is the emotional conditioning of specific, complex stimuli directed by a source of reinforcement" (Reda, 1965).
- **J. Kagan:** "A motive is a cognitive representation of desired or preferred goals organized hierarchically, similar to the representation of concepts in general" (Abdel Khaleq, 2000).
- **Hebb:** "Motivation is the effect of two sensory events: the cognitive function and the arousal function, which provide the individual with movement energy."
- **D. McClelland et al.:** "A motive is the reintegration and renewal of activity resulting from a change in emotional state."
- **N.T. Feather:** "A motive is a relatively stable personal readiness that may have an innate basis but is the result or outcome of early learning processes, to approach or avoid stimuli" (Murray, 1988).

Sports practice: Sport is one of the refined forms of human movement. It is an advanced stage of play, more organized, and of higher skill. The word "sport" in English and French, and the Latin *disport*, has the original meaning of "disport," which means change and transformation. It acquired its meaning and content from people when they transformed their concerns and work engagements into entertainment and recreation through sport (Al-Ashoul, 1989).

Adolescence: The word "adolescent" comes from the Latin verb *adolescerie*, meaning "to approach maturity." In Arabic, its derivation comes from the verb *rahaqa*, which, depending on context, means either recklessness and ignorance, or the approach, closeness, and nearness. It is said "rahaqa al-ghulam" meaning he approached puberty but had not yet reached it—thus he is an adolescent (*murahiq*).

Hurlock defines adolescence in her book *Carmyle* as a physiological and psychological stage, where its beginning is determined physiologically, but its continuation and end are determined psychologically. An individual becomes a youth upon sexual maturity and the ability to reproduce, and adolescence ends psychologically and temporally when a steady and widespread level of maturity is reached (Ibrahim, & Farhat, 1998).

Stanley Hall, one of the founders of psychology, sees adolescence as a period of storm and stress. Bernard says: "Adolescence can be defined as the period of emerging independence, which extends until the assumption of responsibility for performing the various roles of adults" (Al-Khouli, 2001).

Ahmad Zaki Saleh defines it as "the developmental stage or phase through which the immature individual—physically, emotionally, mentally, and socially—passes toward the beginning of physical, mental, and social maturity" (Al-Khouli, Anan, & Halloun, 1994).

Erikson, a psychoanalyst, sees adolescence as "a period of searching for identity," and Fred Newburg takes the same approach, saying that "adolescence is more than mere sexual maturity—it is primarily a social process that leads to the individual defining his identity. It is a kind of dialectical struggle with society." Blos considers it "the sum total of all adjustment attempts to the stage of sexual maturity, and the sum of the internal and external favorable circumstances the individual faces" (Mahmoud, 1981).

Study Methodology:

It is clear that scientific research is a set of general rules formulated in a way that leads to reaching the truth, and these rules are characterized by organization, control, and objectivity (Mahasna, 2006).

The methods of scientific research are many and vary according to the subject and problem of the research. What matters to us in educational, psychological, and social research is the descriptive research method, which we have chosen as the methodology for this study.

The descriptive method is any investigation focusing on an educational, psychological, or social phenomenon as it exists in the present, with the aim of diagnosing it, revealing its aspects, and determining the relationships between its elements or between it and other psychological or social phenomena.

Determining the Variables:

• Independent variable (cause):

It is the variable whose change in value leads to an effect on the values of other related variables. In our current research, the independent variable was identified as: *Motives*.

• Dependent variable (result):

It is the variable whose value depends on the values of other variables. This means that when the researcher makes changes to the values of the independent variable, the results of those changes appear on the values of the dependent variable. In our research, it was identified as: *Sports practice among secondary school students*.

Research Population:

Secondary school students in M'sila Province.

Research Sample:

The sample is considered a part of the whole or a portion of the total, and the idea behind studying it is to try to reach generalizations for a certain phenomenon, that is, to study several cases rather than limiting the study to one case. Accordingly, our research sample was randomly selected and included 40 students (males and females).

Research Tools:

We designed a questionnaire addressed to secondary school students. The questionnaire is one of the tools used to obtain facts, data, and information, which are collected by means of a questionnaire through a set of prepared questions. Among the advantages of this method is that it saves effort and time and contributes to obtaining data from samples in the shortest time possible while meeting standardization requirements of validity, reliability, and objectivity.

Validity and Reliability of the Research Tools:

Validity of the Research Tools:

When a researcher wants to use a certain tool, the question that may come to mind is: Does the tool being used actually measure the phenomenon to be studied or not? The researcher finds himself obliged to prove the validity of the tool he intends to use, and there are several ways to do this. The most important are:

A – Face validity:

This type of validity depends on the researcher's view of the tool through its general appearance and judging whether it measures what it was designed to measure.

B – Content validity:

This type of validity depends on analyzing the elements of the tool logically to determine the function of each element and its suitability for the situations it measures. Usually, content validity for any tool is determined by resorting to expert judgment in the field that includes the phenomenon to be studied.

C – Intrinsic validity:

This refers to the internal validity of the tool and is measured by calculating the square root of the reliability coefficient of the tool.

To prove the validity of the questionnaire to be used, we relied on the intrinsic validity method by calculating the reliability coefficient:

• Intrinsic validity of the student questionnaire:

Reliability coefficient of the questionnaire = 0.72

Intrinsic validity coefficient = square root of reliability coefficient = 0.84

Reliability of the Research Tools:

Reliability means that if the tool is applied more than once to the same sample under the same conditions, we will obtain the same values. This is what we adopted to prove the reliability of the questionnaire:

The questionnaire was applied to a small sample of 10 students, then reapplied to the same sample under the same conditions with a one-week interval. The results obtained allowed us to calculate the Pearson correlation coefficient for the questionnaire as a whole, which was found to be 0.67.

Presentation and Analysis of Results:

The study's findings can be summarized in the following points:

1. We found that the family greatly influences the adolescent student's orientation towards sports practice by providing the necessary means for sports activities, such as sportswear and others, as well as through the encouragement the individual receives within the family. The individual usually engages in sports by following the example of the parents or another family member.

2. The external environment contributes significantly to developing an individual's motivation for sports practice through:

- The school, by providing the necessary means for engaging in sports activities.
- Residential neighborhoods, by providing play areas.
- Sports associations, by fully engaging in encouraging individuals to practice sports.
- The state's orientations towards developing individuals' physical, mental, and psychological health, which can only be achieved by encouraging sports activities.

3. We found that a large percentage of students practice sports to achieve social status, especially in high-level competitive sports that yield significant financial gains.

Based on the above results, we can draw the following points:

- The adolescent student is influenced by his external environment: family – school – living environment.
- It is possible to distinguish between two types of driving forces within each of us:
- **Positive type:** such as desires, appetites, and needs, seen as positive forces pushing a person towards certain things or states.

○ **Negative type:** such as fears and dislikes, seen as negative forces moving the individual away from certain things or states.

• **Sources of driving needs in humans:** According to the fields or dimensions through which motivation is studied, *Huitt* identifies multiple sources of drive that express needs classified according to the field or dimension they belong to. These sources are:

○ **External behavioral sources:** Stimuli (triggered by innate causes), desires (pleasant or rewarding sequences—rewards—or escape from unwanted demands or unpleasant sequences).

○ **Social sources:** Positive models that invite imitation, as humans are members of a group or valued members.

○ **Biological sources:** Increase (or decrease) in arousal (activation), functioning of the senses (smell, touch, taste, hearing, sight), reducing hunger, thirst, discomfort, etc., and achieving biological balance.

○ **Cognitive sources:** Attempting to pay attention to something important, enjoyable, or challenging; obtaining meaning or understanding something; increasing cognitive imbalance (ambiguity or separation from it); solving problems or making decisions; determining a specific shape for something; eliminating a threat or danger.

○ **Emotional sources:** Increasing or reducing emotional dissonance, increasing feelings of well-being, reducing negative or undesirable feelings, increasing feelings of security by reducing threats to self-affirmation, reaching an appropriate level of optimism.

○ **Volitional sources:** Individual or group confrontation with a goal, achieving a personal dream, obtaining or developing a level of self-efficacy, adopting a way to control aspects of life, eliminating threats to goal pursuit or dream achievement.

○ **Spiritual sources:** Understanding the meaning or purpose of life, attachment of the self to the unseen.

• **Classification of motives:** It is not easy to establish a classification of motives based on the behavior they produce due to the complexity of the relationship between motives and behavior:

○ The same motive may lead to different types of behavior depending on the individual: the desire for social esteem may lead one person to appear in the field of social activity, another to write a story, a third to marry into a prestigious family, and a fourth to remain single. The need for security may push one person to accumulate wealth, another to join an association or club, and a third to withdraw from people.

○ The same motive may lead to different types of behavior in the same individual depending on his view of the external situation: a child's desire to attract attention may lead him to rebellion and mischief at home but to obedience at school if he sees that rebellion there would not achieve his desire.

○ The same behavior may result from different motives: killing may be driven by anger, fear, greed, or sexual motive; lying may result from a hidden feeling of inferiority, a desire for revenge, or loyalty to a friend to protect him from punishment.

• **Characteristics of motivation:** Motivation is characterized by several properties, summarized as follows:

○ A motive may be a physical state (such as hunger or thirst) or a psychological state (such as the desire for excellence or a sense of duty).

○ It may be temporary (such as hunger or anger) or relatively permanent (such as curiosity or social motive).

○ It may be innate and inherited (such as hunger) or acquired (such as a sense of duty).

○ A motive is both a driving and a directing force: it stimulates behavior towards a goal that satisfies it; if prevented from reaching the goal, the individual remains in a state of tension. In other words, a motive has two aspects: an internal driving aspect and an external aspect—the goal the behavior seeks to reach.

○ The strength of the aroused motive is proportional to the energy it produces: a person who has been hungry for an entire day will inevitably strive hard to satisfy his need for food.

- The ability to change the course of the goal: an individual who continues to strive for a certain goal may take another path if he feels that the current path will not lead him to the goal.
- Many students seek to practice recreational sports during their free time.
- Only a small number of students are members of sports clubs practicing competitive sports with financial returns.
- Despite the state providing resources to develop sports in our country, the lack of monitoring and follow-up has often hindered progress.
- Periodic awareness campaigns about the physical, mental, and psychological health benefits of sports would enhance individuals' motivation to engage in sports activities.

Conclusion

Sport is a physical activity undertaken by an individual to improve physical fitness and develop social, mental and psychological skills. Sports practice is not limited by gender (male or female) or age—sports are for everyone. For this reason, many countries have allocated significant funds to achieve the benefits of sports for society. It is an investment in human capital, as athletes enjoy physical, mental and psychological health that enables them to fulfill their duties towards society, whether in work or in the family. Nations need healthy individuals to perform their tasks in times of peace and war. Therefore, we must unite to promote the sports sector in our country and ensure its leadership at the regional and global levels.

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Received: 09.04.2025

Accepted: 26.07.2025