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Set of activities to achieve motivation in soccer athlete's category 9-10 years

Conjunto de actividades para lograr la motivación, en atletas de fútbol categoría 9-10 años

Conjunto de atividades para atingir a motivação em atletas de futebol na faixa etária de 9 a 10 anos

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ABSTRACT

Motivation in physical activity and sports is one of the fields of interest, with the greatest number of publications currently developing strategies to facilitate intervention aimed at



achieving maximum levels of performance in competitive sports. This descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted using a pre-experiment experimental method and a quantitative case-control methodology with a pre- and post-test of the proposed solution to the problem. The objective was to implement a set of activities to achieve sports motivation in the 9-10 age group soccer team from the municipality of San Cristóbal, Artemisa province. The population and sample were the 22 athletes on the team, consisting of a study group and a control group. When applying the T-test to determine whether both groups differed significantly from each other with respect to their means, the main result was that the set of activities was effective in their purposes at the .01 level.

Keywords: physical activity, set of activities, motivation towards soccer

RESUMEN

La motivación en la actividad física y el deporte es uno de los campos de interés y con mayor número de publicaciones en la actualidad que desarrollan estrategias para facilitar la intervención destinada a alcanzar máximos niveles de rendimiento, en el deporte competitivo. Se realizó el presente estudio descriptivo de corte transversal, método experimental en su variante de preexperimento y una metodología cuantitativa de casos y control con prueba antes y después de aplicada la propuesta de solución al problema, con el objetivo de implementar un conjunto de actividades para lograr la motivación hacia el deporte en el equipo de fútbol categoría 9-10 años, del municipio San Cristóbal, provincia Artemisa. Se tomó como población y muestra a los 22 atletas del equipo, con un grupo estudio y uno control. Al aplicar la Prueba T, para determinar si ambos grupos difieren entre sí de manera significativa respecto a sus medias, se obtuvo como principal resultado que el conjunto de actividades resultó efectivo en sus propósitos al nivel de .01.

Palabras clave: actividad física, conjunto de actividades, motivación hacia el fútbol



RESUMO

A motivação na atividade física e no esporte é uma das áreas de interesse, com o maior número de publicações atualmente desenvolvendo estratégias para facilitar intervenções que visem atingir níveis máximos de desempenho em esportes competitivos. Este estudo descritivo, transversal, foi conduzido utilizando uma metodologia pré-experimental, caso-controle e quantitativa, com pré e pós-teste da solução proposta para o problema. O objetivo foi implementar um conjunto de atividades para fomentar a motivação esportiva na equipe de futebol da faixa etária de 9 a 10 anos do município de San Cristóbal, província de Artemisa. A população e a amostra foram os 22 atletas da equipe, compreendendo um grupo de estudo e um grupo de controle. Um teste t foi aplicado para determinar se ambos os grupos diferiam significativamente entre si em relação às suas médias. O principal resultado foi que o conjunto de atividades foi eficaz para atingir seus objetivos no nível .01.

Palavras-chave: atividade física, conjunto de atividades, motivação no futebol

INTRODUCTION

Motivation in physical activity and sports is one of the fields of interest and the one with the greatest number of publications today. The question often arises about the reason(s) that lead certain athletes to sacrifice a large part of their time and effort to sports practice, instead of opting for a more sedentary and, in principle, comfortable lifestyle.

Similarly, the discussion arises about the influence of motivation on athletic success, and to what extent an athlete can reach the highest level without the necessary motivation. In this sense, the growing professionalization of physical activity and sports practice has a significant impact on the dissemination of the sciences that study motivation, including sports psychology.

Therefore, motivation in sport becomes an object of growing interest, where motivational strategies are developed that facilitate intervention, to increase adherence to different sports



programs or if optimal psychological preparation is intended to achieve the highest levels of performance in competitive sport (Rodríguez, et al., 2020).

Motivation is a very complex aspect of human behavior, in general, and of athletes in particular. It is experienced when one feels curiosity, anxiety, activation, mobilization, and restlessness in response to something interesting and fosters concentration and attention. Ultimately, when deemed possible or achievable, it leads to seeking a way to satisfy the generated need, perceptible or not, which guides one toward what is perceived and triggers a series of actions and operations, aimed at satisfying the restlessness, mobilized by the motivating objective.

In short, motivation is what makes an individual act and behave in a certain way. It is a combination of intellectual, physiological and psychological processes that decide, in a given situation, with what vigor one acts and in which direction one's energy is channeled (Pereyra, 2020).

It should be noted that, although sports motivation is approached from an integrative and personological theoretical perspective as an aspect of personality, and the athlete is considered a biopsychosocial being as the point of analysis, based on its status, it develops in close motivational, affective, and instrumental cognitive unity in its structure and functioning. An integrative analysis and study are only achieved if the positive aspects of the currents and theorists who have explored it over the course of history are taken into account.

It is then assumed, as a definition, that motivation in sport is a dynamic, mobilizing process that occurs in athletes as part of the experience and their own projection, which can be attributed to internal and external stimulations, which manifest as a driving force with different characteristics in each person, on multiple occasions, even with the same stimulation (Antón & Rodríguez, 2012).

According to Aguilar et al. (2019), three types of motivation are described: intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and amotivation or lack of motivation, which differ in their



degree of self-determination or autonomy. Intrinsically motivated behaviors represent the prototype of self-determined activities; in them, the perceived locus of causality is internal.

In the case of extrinsic motivation, theory argues, and research proves, that when behavior is followed by monetary reinforcements or contingent tangible reinforcements, these undermine intrinsic motivation and the locus of causality shifts from internal to external. In the absence of motivation (*amotivation*), feelings of self-determination are absent and there are no extrinsic or intrinsic reasons to support their relationship with behavior (Cañizares, 2024).

Motivation is an essential element in the sports context that exerts a significant influence on the initiation, maintenance, and/or abandonment of sports by its practitioners; it is also useful for evaluating performance, as well as the orientation and direction of the athlete's behavior. It is one of the fields of greatest interest, as the sports community is aware of its importance in enhancing and obtaining the maximum abilities and potential of an athlete (Chancusig, 2023).

The influence of motivation on sports performance is very high, and it plays a fundamental role in the learning and performance of athletes at all levels: grassroots, high performance, seniors, among others. Working on it is the job of coaches, the technical staff and the entire professional team that surrounds the athlete, and in turn the responsibility of the athlete himself with initiative, capacity, the use of the tools provided and a proactive attitude, to develop and maintain it (de Vargas and Mor, 2020).

Motivation in athletes is a complex factor to analyze and nurture. In sports, the coach is considered the primary motivator; he has a multidisciplinary team of professionals around him that provides the necessary support to optimize the situation, and they have closer and more permanent contact with the athlete and more accessible tools to motivate them.

According to Tello (2020), there are two main ways to achieve motivation in sports: conversations, discussions, team discussions, and individual dialogues with each athlete. The most effective form of motivation is considered to be a sincere and enthusiastic



commitment from the players to achieve a common goal. It should be noted that variety motivates players, so the coach must use a wide variety of motivational techniques.

For motivation to be effective, the player must feel unique and special, be able to manage it on a personal level, and clearly understand and accept the team's goals (Labrador & Ventola, 2023). Regarding the techniques used to increase motivation in the area of physical and sports activity, it is noteworthy that it tends to be treated as a relatively stable trait, rather than as a process.

It is evident that the initial motivation that drives an athlete to begin a sporting activity is different from the motivation that keeps them active, and even within that activity, where there are significant fluctuations over time. More attention should be paid to studying the dynamic process of motivation rather than its static components or determinants. Despite the emphasis of theories on the role that an individual's cognitive process plays in motivation, research aimed at increasing it makes little use of this aspect, and only assumes change in the desired direction (Moreno et al., 2013).

To this end, both sports managers and teachers must draw on the resources provided by applied sciences, especially sports psychology. Therefore, it is necessary to implement actions that contribute to motivating these athletes to participate in sports and achieve their proposed goals. Therefore, the research aimed to implement a set of activities to foster sports motivation in the 9-10 age group soccer team from the municipality of San Cristóbal, Artemisa province.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order to fulfill the proposed research tasks, a descriptive cross-sectional study was adopted as a research perspective, with an experimental research design in its pre-experiment variant, and a quantitative case-control methodology with testing before and after applying the proposed solution to the problem.



The experiment was conducted with the 9-10 age group soccer team from the municipality of San Cristóbal. The sample population consisted of the team's 22 athletes. A study group and a control group were formed, each with 11 athletes.

Conceptualization of the variable. Motivation in sport is a dynamic, mobilizing process that occurs in athletes as part of their experience and their own projection, which can be attributed to internal (intrinsic motivation) and external (extrinsic motivation) stimuli; it manifests itself as a driving force with different characteristics in each person on multiple occasions, even when faced with the same stimulation (Cantón, 1997).

The dimensions and indicators of the variable, as well as its measurement scale were determined, in correspondence with the sports motivation scale (sms / emd) (Balaguer et al., 2007), applied to make the initial and final diagnosis.

The variable was evaluated in three dimensions:

1. Intrinsic motivation
2. Extrinsic motivation
3. Lack of motivation

Indicators of dimension 1:

- Intrinsic motivation toward knowledge (to know)
- Intrinsic motivation to stimulating experiences (to experience stimulation)
- Intrinsic achievement motivation (to get things done)

Scale for measuring the indicators. Intrinsic motivation was considered present when average values between 6 and 7 points were obtained for each indicator's items:

- IM to knowledge (to know): items 2, 4, 27, 23
- IM to stimulating experiences (to experience stimulation): items 1, 13, 18, 25
- IM to achievement (to get things): items 8, 12, 15, 20

Indicators of dimension 2:



- Identified regulation
- Introjected regulation
- External regulation

Scale for measuring the indicators. Extrinsic motivation was considered when average values between 6 and 7 points were obtained across the items in each indicator:

- Identified regulation: items 7, 11, 17, 24
- Introjected regulation: items 9, 14, 21, 26
- External regulation: items 6, 10, 16, 22

Indicators of dimension 3:

- Lack of motivation

Scale for measuring the indicator. Lack of motivation was considered when the average score for the indicator item was between 6 and 7.

Lack of motivation: items 3, 5, 19, 28

To evaluate the variable, the arithmetic mean of the values of the items belonging to the same indicator was used. Motivation toward sport was considered present when scores between 6 and 7 points were obtained in dimensions 1 and 2, and absent when scores between 6 and 7 points were obtained in dimension 3.

The dialectical materialist method was adopted as the guiding approach to the general research approach. Theoretical methods were used to reveal relationships not directly observable in the object of research. They were used in the formulation of the problem and scientific questions, and in the analysis of the results:

Historical-logical: due to the need to review all previous knowledge and the most current approaches to motivation towards sport.



Analysis and synthesis: for the assessment of the most general aspects addressed in the study of motivation toward sports as an element of preparation and a deeper understanding of its specificities in soccer.

Modeling: enabled the design of a set of activities to improve motivation toward sports in the 9-10 age group soccer team.

Document analysis: review of the athlete's preparation plans, which, due to their level of information, had an impact on the search for alternative solutions to the set of activities developed to improve sports motivation in the 9-10-year-old soccer team.

Empirical methods revealed and explained the characteristics of the objects directly linked to the practice, among which the following were used:

Psychological tests: To carry out the initial and final diagnosis of the research, the Sports Motivation Scale (sms / emd) was used (Balaguer, et al., 2007).

Observation: To corroborate the problems existing within the 9-10 age group soccer team in the municipality of San Cristóbal, Artemisa province. Three observations were conducted during the team's training sessions, with one observer.

As statistical techniques, descriptive statistics (percentage analysis) and inferential statistics (T test) were used.

RESULTS

In the initial stage, the Sports Motivation Scale (SMS/EMD) was applied to operationalize motivation in three dimensions: intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and lack of motivation, to the study group and the control group, and the following results were obtained:

Study group



Table 1. Distribution of athletes, according to the dimensions of the variable

Dimensions	Number of subjects	%
Intrinsic motivation	1	9.09
Extrinsic motivation	3	27.3
Lack of motivation	7	63.6
Total	11	100

As can be seen in the table, in the initial phase of the study group, 63.6% of subjects presented a lack of motivation; 27.3% presented extrinsic motivation; and only one subject presented intrinsic motivation, which represented 9.09% of the study sample.

Table 2. Distribution of athletes, according to the indicators of dimension 1 (Intrinsic motivation)

Indicators	Number of subjects	%
IM to know	0	0
IM to experience stimulation	1	9.09
IM to get things	0	0

Source: Sports Motivation Scale

Table 2 shows that intrinsic motivation was associated with experiencing stimulation in 9.09% of cases. For extrinsic motivation (Table 3), the most prominent indicator was internalized regulation, representing 18.18% of the subjects, and external regulation, representing 9.09% of the subjects.



Table 3. *Distribution of athletes, according to the indicators of dimension 2 (Extrinsic motivation) for the study group*

Indicators	Number of subjects	%
Identified Regulation	0	0
Introjected Regulation	2	18.18
External Regulation	1	9.09
Total	3	27.3

Source: Sports motivation scale.

In the case of the indicator lack of motivation (Table No. 4), it was found that it was present in 7 of the 11 subjects, which represented 63.6% of the sample, since they reported having good reasons to practice this sport, although they wondered if they should continue, since they considered themselves not capable of being successful, not being clear that this was their sport or why they practiced it, but they did not achieve their objectives.

Table 4. *Sample distribution, according to the indicators of dimension 3 (Absence of Motivation).*

Indicators	Number of subjects				%
	Present	%	Do not present	%	
Lack of motivation	7	63.6	4	36.4	
Total	11				100

Source: Sports motivation scale.

In general, the application of the sports motivation scale to the study group yielded the following results (Table No. 5):



Table 5. Results of the application of the sports motivation scale to the study group.

Subjects	Intrinsic motivation	Extrinsic motivation	Lack of motivation
1	5	2	6
2	4	7	3
3	2	6	4
4	6	1	4
5	4	2	6
6	5	3	6
7	5	2	7
8	3	5	6
9	2	2	7
10	5	4	7
11	5	6	4
Average	4	4	6
Mode	5	2	6

Source: Sports Motivation Scale

As shown in table no. 5, intrinsic motivation obtained average scores of 4 points, as did extrinsic motivation, so it was considered that the presence of these in the study group was not the most frequent, since the arguments that typified the responses of their indicators had little relation to them.

For lack of motivation, the average score was 6 points, making it the most common, as the arguments that typified the responses to their indicator were completely consistent with their responses. In this regard, the athletes reported having no good reasons for practicing this sport, were hesitant about continuing, expressed inability to succeed, were unsure of their choice, and had doubts about not achieving their goals; these are all causal factors in this problem.

Control group



Table 6. Sample distribution, according to the dimensions of the variable.

Dimensions	Number of subjects	%
Intrinsic motivation	1	9.09
Extrinsic motivation	2	18.18
Lack of motivation	8	72.7
Total	11	100

Source: Sports motivation scale.

As observed in Table 6, the control group behaved similarly to the study group at this stage. In this case, 72.7% of the subjects presented a lack of motivation; 18.18% presented extrinsic motivation; and only one subject, intrinsic motivation representing 9.09%, attributed this to the fact that these athletes felt unable to succeed in this sport, unsure of their choice and practice, and failing to achieve their goals.

Characterization of the proposed solution to the problem:

The diverse and varied set of activities designed to serve a common purpose was dynamic and flexible, and communication was carried out gradually and in stages. It was characterized by its variation and its appropriate combination with other types of activities. At the same time, techniques were employed to increase motivation in sports, as a tool for achieving victories and an instrument for achieving personal challenges and self-improvement, both in sports and in any other area of life. The set of activities was developed in three stages: planning, guidance, and execution.

Stage 1: In this stage, the objective of the set of activities presented was specified:

Objective: To motivate 9- and 10-year-old athletes from the municipality of San Cristóbal to play soccer. The activities were structured as follows: title, objective, method, procedure, control form, and a brief description of the activity.



Stage 2: In this stage, the way to carry out these activities was proposed, with the following steps:

1. Adapt the implementation of the group of activities to the context in which it was carried out.
2. To motivate athletes involved in the implementation of activities to create a favorable environment.

Once the above guidelines were adopted, the set of activities was implemented in practice.

Stage 3: Execution of activities. Example of an activity:

Activity No. 1

Title: Video-debate

Objective: To assess the importance of soccer practice for health, in order to promote widespread participation.

Method: reflection and debate.

Procedure: oral exposition.

Brief description of the activity: The coach gave an introduction to what was observed in a video, including aspects that served as the basis for discussion. He explained the importance of soccer for the health and for the community sport results.

The first part focused on the benefits of playing sports, with a series of skills to be acquired and a match between two world-class teams. This approach provided participants with a favorable environment for observation and understanding. The coach encouraged participatory debate and the importance of widespread soccer practice, where the experiences they had played a decisive role.



Control form: questions and answers. The questions were prepared in advance to focus the discussion on the proposed topic; each answer provided a new starting point for a new intervention. At the end, the goal-setting technique was applied, with the athletes setting team goals. The following conditions were used:

- Setting positive goals.
- The goals should be challenging and stimulating, but always realistic and achievable.
- The objectives should be formulated in a clear manner and understood by the athletes.
- The objectives were set according to the athletes' abilities and capacities.

This motivational technique involved a shift in the way success is understood, where success was not limited to winning, but rather to achieving the goals set. After implementing the set of activities to boost motivation for soccer in the 9-10-year-old group, the following results were obtained:

Study group

Table 7. Sample distribution according to the dimensions of the variable.

Dimensions	Number of subjects	%
Intrinsic motivation	4	36.4
Extrinsic motivation	5	45.4
Lack of motivation	2	18.18
Total	11	100

Source: Sports motivation scale.

Control group



Table 8. Sample distribution according to the dimensions of the variable.

Dimensions	Number of subjects	%
Intrinsic motivation	1	9.09
Extrinsic motivation	2	18.18
Lack of motivation	8	72.7
Total	11	100

Source: Sports motivation scale.

Tables 7 and 8 show intrinsic motivation in 36.4% of cases, extrinsic motivation in 45.4%, and only two subjects, representing 18.18%, presented no motivation. In the control group, however, there were no changes in motivation for sport; it remained absent in 72.7% of cases.

DISCUSSION

In the initial stage of this research, it was found that, with regard to intrinsic motivation, subjects turned to soccer for the satisfaction (enjoyment) they derived from doing something exciting, for the thrill of being immersed in the performance and practice of the sport; with regard to extrinsic motivation, the elements that drove them were the assumption of external beliefs or behaviors, without understanding the reason for their choice.

It's worth noting that in most cases, a lack of motivation for sports was prominent; these results were explained by the fact that at school age, interest in sports is specifically oriented toward motor experience.

Motivation in sports performance presupposes certain behavioral models for children incorporated during the training process, based on the unity between cognitive-affective processes, emphasizing predominantly positive emotional and mental experiences.

Interest in a particular sport comes, in most cases, from the influence of external motivational agents such as teachers, parents, closest peers, and the mass media; then,



children and adolescents try to seek athletic improvement, which is evident in the performance and the importance of positive mobilizing and inhibiting reinforcements that contribute to athletic development (Escamilla et al., 2020).

In sports confrontations that take place through competition, the experiences of success and failure are also decisive in motivation in and for the activity. Students are indeed interested in overcoming the situation they face; the needs for acceptance, security, and love in the sport itself are fundamental to other needs that affirm them in their general lives.

The need for prestige reflects the desire for performance, social comparison, and competitiveness. When the desire for comparison is awakened, athletes are seen measuring their own performance against the progress of others. At all times, and whenever the opportunity arises, they are willing to compete. They soon learn to experience victories and defeats, to overcome the states that generate the latter, and to develop a growing tolerance for frustration, as long as the demands are not too high and the risk of failure increases. They then lose the willingness to measure and compare themselves.

When other needs of these athletes cannot be met through training, their training is compromised; therefore, it is important to highlight the existence of reasons that can lead beginners to abandon sports, such as the monotony of training, the obligation to exert effort, passive behavior, long-term goals without immediate, operational objectives, and being subject to selection rules based on the performance of other athletes. These results are consistent with research such as that conducted by Labrador and Ventola (2023).

As could be seen in the tables, after implementing the set of designed activities, there was a considerable increase in motivation, whether intrinsic or extrinsic, in the study group. This was derived from the fact that both in the initiation and specialization of sports, as well as in the later stages of evolution of sports mastery, the teaching methods and styles, as well as athletic improvement, had to be directed towards seeking the development of independence and creativity of beginners in sports activity.



From this perspective, it is necessary to move beyond higher and more active teaching to foster a process of searching for clues, inquiries, and discoveries, based on the approach of open tasks, where the coach acts as a guide in the learning process, enabling athletes to reflect and recognize solutions to the problems posed. The pedagogical purpose lies in the relationships established between techniques, which determine the structure of the activity; similar results were found by Hernández et al. (2019).

Active teaching methods promote the development of group activity and enhance the use of the cognitive and affective potential of participants. The participatory methods selected and used must always be harmoniously related to the specific characteristics of the group and the demands of the sport being worked on, the proposed objectives, the content, and the available resources (materials and space).

In sport, traditional and active methods coexist. The former work on the basis of reproduction by imitation to achieve an efficient result, under a prism where the way of proceeding rests on the guiding thought of the coach, and practitioners are not the center of the teaching-learning process, since the essential concern is the result, aimed at the search for success and social recognition, which does not encourage improving abilities and executive competence or the deployment of developmental efforts; the search for difficulty and negative results is avoided; and the technique or technical gestures learned are adapted to situations of explanation and demonstration, repetition and correction of errors, according to Rodríguez et al. (2020) .

When applying the T-test to determine whether both groups differed significantly from each other with respect to their means, it was determined that there were significant differences between them at the .01 level, with a 99% probability of the groups differing significantly from each other with respect to the variable studied. Therefore, it was inferred that the set of activities proposed and applied to the study group was responsible for the differences found between them in the variable motivation towards sport, results similar to those of Romero et al. (2019).



CONCLUSIONS

The theoretical frameworks that supported sports motivation provided sufficient elements for the development of the research. Sports motivation was not present among the athletes on the 9-10 age group soccer team from the municipality of San Cristóbal, Artemisa province.

In general, the study group after being under the influence of the proposed set of activities considerably improved the indicators of motivation towards sport, this was not the case in the control group where the difficulties continued, so it was demonstrated that the implementation of the set of activities proposed to achieve motivation in sport in soccer athletes category 9-10 years of the San Cristóbal municipality turned out to be effective.

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Conflict of interest statement:

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest.

Author's contribution:

The author is responsible for writing the work and analyzing the documents.



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