

Motivation and Perception of Parental Support: A Study with Young Athletes of Individual and Team Sports

Motivación y Percepción del Apoyo de los Padres: Un Estudio con Jóvenes Atletas de Deportes Individuales y de Equipo

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Abstract. Parental support in relation to their children's sporting trajectory guides sporting development. This study aimed to analyze the perception of athletes about their parents' involvement and motivational orientation in relation to their participation in sports. A total of 319 athletes, aged between 7 and 18 years (13.3 ± 2.73), from different sports, participated in the research. The instruments Parental Involvement Sport Questionnaire (PISQ) and Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire (TEOSQ) were used. The results show that the athletes perceive parental participation most strongly in the dimension Directive Behavior (3.17 ± 1.54). Active Involvement showed a mean score of (3.80 ± 1.52), demonstrating that the participants consider their parents to «almost never» participate actively in the sports context. The data suggest that in team sports there is a greater perception of parental control over sporting behavior ($p=0.015$). Parental participation in team sports proved to be more active when compared to individual sports ($p<0.001$). In conclusion, the research points to the importance and influence that parental support, as well as the motivational guidance profile of athletes can have, in the segment, continuity, physical and emotional development, and even performance in sport.

Keywords: parental support, parental involvement, motivational guidance, sports initiation.

Resumen. El apoyo de los padres en relación con la trayectoria deportiva de sus hijos orienta el desarrollo deportivo. Este estudio tuvo como objetivo analizar la percepción de los deportistas sobre la implicación y orientación motivacional de sus padres en relación a su participación en el deporte. Participaron de la investigación un total de 319 atletas, con edades entre 7 y 18 años ($13,3 \pm 2,73$), de diferentes deportes. Se utilizaron los instrumentos Parental Involvement Sport Questionnaire (PISQ) y Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire (TEOSQ). Los resultados muestran que los deportistas perciben con mayor fuerza la participación de los padres en la dimensión Comportamiento directivo ($3,17 \pm 1,54$). La Participación Activa mostró una puntuación media de ($3,80 \pm 1,52$), demostrando que los participantes consideran que sus padres «casi nunca» participan activamente en el contexto deportivo. Los datos sugieren que en los deportes de equipo existe una mayor percepción de control parental sobre el comportamiento deportivo ($p=0,015$). La participación de los padres en deportes de equipo demostró ser más activa en comparación con los deportes individuales ($p<0,001$). En conclusión, la investigación apunta para la importancia e influencia que el apoyo de los padres, así como el perfil de orientación motivacional de los deportistas pueden tener, en el segmento, la continuidad, el desarrollo físico y emocional, e incluso el rendimiento deportivo.

Palabras clave: apoyo de los padres, implicación de los padres, orientación motivacional, iniciación deportiva.

Introduction

Motivation and involvement are concepts that generally appear undifferentiated in the literature. Although they are not synonymous, these concepts are interconnected and present themselves as part of the same construct. Involvement can be defined as effort, vigor, intensity, vitality, and enthusiasm (Skinner & Pitzer, 1961). Motivation in turn can be described as a

broader psychological process, characterized by three pillars: energy, purpose, and durability of action. It corresponds to an internal factor that initiates, directs, and integrates the behavior of an individual to a certain action or objective (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

According to the Achievement Goal Theory, variations in behavior in the same sport context seem not to be exactly the result of low or high motivation, but rather manifestations of different goal perceptions established in each context (Roberts & Treasure, 2012). Therefore, the goals that individuals set determine how they interpret and react to events, resulting in different

patterns of affect, cognition, and behavior. Nicholls (1984) refers to them by distinguishing two types, task involvement and ego involvement. Duda and Nicholls (1992) extended and applied these two definitions of involvement at different levels of analysis: a) state level (goal involvement); b) situational/contextual level (climate); and c) dispositional level (goal orientation). With regard to dispositional bias, goal orientation or motivational orientation is understood as a beacon for people to base their sense of success and accomplishment in a given activity on certain indicators (Cumming, Smith, Smoll, Standage & Grossbard, 2008; González, San José & González, 2021).

From this theoretical perspective, individuals may exhibit behaviors, knowledge, and emotions according to certain subjective perceptions of their own performance in sport, and a task-oriented or ego-oriented profile is established (Duda, 2007). Individuals who are more task-oriented show a greater propensity to judge themselves based on their own performance (Nicholls, 1984; Duda & Nicholls, 1992). They are concerned with the mastery of the task in which they are involved, directing their efforts towards accomplishment, with learning and mastery of movement as important factors for them. In general, they are more persistent and optimistic and set goals appropriate to their capabilities, because they have themselves as a reference in the sport practice. They are more motivated by intrinsic factors, for example, those inherent to the sport activity itself, such as improvement in time and movement perfecting (Duda, 2007).

On the other hand, individuals who compare their own ability in relation to that of others are egocentric. In this context, a gain in technique alone does not indicate competence. To demonstrate high capability, one must either achieve more with equal effort or use less effort than others for equal performance (Nicholls, 1984; Duda & Nicholls, 1992). In ego-orientation, the individual compares his performance with that of others, and what matters is always the result and not the path until it is reached. They show less persistence when compared to task-oriented individuals. They show themselves as superior. Upon success, they attribute it to their own abilities, effort, and luck, and upon failure, they claim bad luck or inappropriate material or situations. Ego-oriented individuals are more motivated by extrinsic factors, such as receiving incentives, such as praise, applause, and awards (Duda, 2007).

Another relevant aspect for the athlete's development is the relationship between parental

support and motivation (Harwood, Barker & Anderson, 2015). The encouragement and constant accompaniment of parents are decisive in creating a favorable environment for their children to practice sports, and meet the specific interests and needs of the sports field (Latorre, Gasco, García, Martínez, Quevedo, Carmona, Rascón, Romero, López & Malo, 2009). Youngsters who are little encouraged by their parents tend not to commit effectively to the practice of sports. Parental support regarding their children's sports trajectory guides their sports development. It can be characterized by positive aspects, such as improving self-esteem, the perception of competence, the feeling of pleasure in practicing sports, and, mainly, interfering in the orientation as to behavior, duties, and the type of motivation in sports (Costa, Lopes, Dias & Cardozo, 2021).

However, it can also present negative effects and exaggerated, inappropriate, or inconsistent conduct on the part of parents, and can impair children's performance, resulting in an environment composed of extrinsic motivations and little involvement (Giannitsopoulou, Kosmidou & Zisi, 2010; Costa, Caregnato, López-Gil & Cavichioli, 2021).

Parents who do not engage in their children's sports activities may hinder their evolution due to precarious emotional, motivational, and financial investment. Nevertheless, the over-involved children end up having exaggerated behaviors, such as focusing on achieving success, and especially on valuing the result. This exacerbated concern often ignores the normal pace of development, besides underestimating the most important objectives that sport can provide, which is to favor a social, moral, affective, and physical formation (Cremades, Donlon & Poczwardowski, 2013).

It is also worth mentioning that recent studies have shown that there are differences in these aspects between team sports and individual sports. Individual sports athletes with low ego orientation show positive effort during competitions (Van De Pol, Kavussanu, & Ring, 2012). Trait anxiety and task orientation show a direct and positive relationship in individual sports (Castro-Sánchez, Zurita-Ortega, Chacon-Cuveros, López-Gutiérrez & Zafra-Santos, 2018). However, it is not known if perceived parental involvement and motivational orientation are affected in the same way between team and individual sports.

In summary, this study aims to analyze the perception of young athletes about their parents' involvement, as well as their motivational orientation towards their participation in team and individual sports. Consistent

with the propositions in the literature, the present study tests the first hypothesis that motivational orientation (task and ego) has distinct associations on perceived parental involvement. The second hypothesis is that young team sports athletes have a motivational orientation and perception of parental involvement different from individual sports athletes.

Method

The present research has a transversal experimental design. The sample is non-probabilistic and for convenience, consisted of 319 athletes, 209 male and 110 female, aged between 7 and 18 years ($M = 13.30$; $SD = 2.73$). The participants were athletes in the following sports: athletics ($n = 29$), basketball ($n = 27$), soccer ($n = 33$), handball ($n = 56$), judo ($n = 68$), swimming ($n = 36$), water polo ($n = 64$), and table tennis ($n = 6$). Participants were divided into two sport groups, classified as the Individual Modalities (IM) and Collective Modalities (MC) groups. The Individual Sports group ($n = 139$) included the following sports: athletics, judo, swimming, and table tennis. The group of Team Modalities ($n = 180$) was composed of basketball, soccer, handball, and water polo.

Inclusion criteria required practicing at least one sport and having participated in one sport competition. In addition, participation in official competitions (regional, national, or international championships) was considered, as well as any internal competition event promoted by clubs and sports projects in which the athletes were involved. Participants reported training 4.32 ± 1.78 days per week, with an average duration of 1.97 ± 0.82 hours per session.

For the procedures, initially the research project was submitted and approved by the Research Ethics Committee (CAAE 2.491.777). The athletes under the age of 18 who agreed to participate in the research had previously sent their parents the Informed Consent Form and signed the Informed Consent Form. The conditions for participating in the research were the return of the Informed Consent Form duly signed by the parents or guardians. The athletes above 18 years of age who agreed to participate in the research only signed the Informed Consent Form.

Subsequently, an authorization request was made to the coaches, managers, or directors of clubs and sports projects in the municipality. The professionals responsible for the teams were provided with detailed information on the project, the objectives, and the methodology

employed in the study. The choice of modalities took into consideration the expressiveness of the sport in the municipality where the research was carried out. Among the sites that authorized the collection were private clubs and associations and social projects. The number of subjects of each modality was subject to the adhesion of athletes linked to the invited teams and the permission of those responsible (for minors under 18) to participate in the research.

The questionnaires were applied at the training sites, before or after training, according to the possibility of each site. The athletes were randomly selected and submitted to a brief interview in order to verify compliance with the inclusion criteria. Subjects who met the inclusion criteria were instructed to complete the demographic form and the two questionnaires. The researchers provided the forms and pens for completion. The questionnaires were applied by the researchers themselves. The instructions and information for filling out the questionnaires were standardized and given to all participants collectively.

The instruments used were: Lee and Mclean's Parental Involvement Sport Questionnaire – PISQ (Lee & Maclean, 1997) was used in its version translated and adapted into Brazilian Portuguese by Aroni (2010) - PISQp. This instrument aims to evaluate the perception that athletes have about their parents' behavior regarding their sports participation. It consists of 18 items distributed in three factors: Directive Behavior (factor 1), indicated according to the degree to which parents control their children's behavior in sports, consisting of eight items: Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5, Q7, Q9, and Q10. For example: «After a competition, your parents say what they think you need to improve.» Praise and Understanding (factor 2), which measures parents' support and empathy shown to their children, comprised eight items: Q6, Q8, Q11, Q12, Q13, Q14, Q17, and Q18. For example: «After the test, your parents praise your effort.» Active Involvement (factor 3), indicated according to the degree to which parents actively participate in the sport context, composed of two items, Q15 and Q16. For example, «Your parents volunteer to help in competitions as members of the organizing committee.» Responses were made on a Likert-type scale, from 1 (Always) to 5 (Never).

The Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire (TEOSQ) was developed by Duda (2007) and translated, adapted, and validated by Hirota (2017) into a two-factor scale that allows identifying the motivational orientation, whether it is directed towards the task goal

or the ego goal. Task (factor 1), questions regarding task orientation, consisting of seven items: Q2, Q5, Q7, Q8, Q10, Q12, and Q13. For example: «I practice/play better when I put more effort into training.» Ego (factor 2), questions regarding ego orientation, composed of six items: Q1, Q3, Q4, Q6, Q9, and Q11. For example: «I am the best at sports/coaching/practice.» The answers were given on a Likert scale, from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always).

A Demographic Evaluation Form was also filled out to collect data through open and closed questions about the variables: age, gender, time of competitive participation, and sport modality.

To evidence the internal consistency of the questions of the Instruments, Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (α) was calculated separately on each factor of the instruments and their total results. Reliability was evaluated following the one proposed by George and Mallery (2019): unacceptable ($0 < \alpha < 0.51$); poor ($0.51 < \alpha < 0.6$); questionable ($0.61 < \alpha < 0.7$); acceptable ($0.71 < \alpha < 0.8$); good ($0.81 < \alpha < 0.9$); and excellent ($0.91 < \alpha$). An exploratory analysis was performed to verify the normality of the data using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test with statistical significance set at $p > 0.05$.

The statistical analyses of the results were first performed using the Shapiro Wilk normality test, with $p > 0.05$. It was followed by descriptive statistics calculations (mean, median, standard deviation, confidence interval), F-test for comparison of variances, nonparametric Mann-Whitney test, used for comparison between TEOSQ (task and ego), and PISQ (directive behavior, praise, and understanding, and active involvement) dimensions, and between the individual and group modalities. Besides the tests mentioned, Spearman's Linear Correlation Coefficient (r_s) was also used to check for correlation between the two dimensions of the TEOSQ and the three dimensions of the PISQ. The degree of the correlation coefficient was qualitatively evaluated according to the proposal of Callegari-Jacques (2009), as follows: weak (between 0.00 and 0.30); regular (between 0.30 and 0.60); strong (between 0.60 and 0.90); and very strong (between 0.90 and 1.00). All data analyses were done with SPSS data editor, version 25. A significance level of $p < 0.05$ was adopted in all statistical tests.

Results

Initially the internal consistency of the TEOSQ instrument was performed, and it was established

separately by modality, and the coefficient was analyzed by dimension, ego, and task. The internal consistency result regarding ego-orientation was above 0.7 in all disciplines, and in swimming and table tennis, the values were above 0.8, considered as high reliability. In ego-orientation, the revealed Alpha (observing the average of the sports) was 0.7; however, two modalities presented values above 0.8, athletics and handball, and two presented values around 0.6, basketball and table tennis. Similarly, in the results referring to the internal consistency of the PISQ instrument, in an analysis of its three dimensions, the Directive Behavior presented an Alpha of 0.81, and the Praise and Understanding factor resulted in 0.82, indicating high reliability. However, the third dimension evaluated, Active Involvement, obtained a notably lower Alpha value of 0.45. A total result of Alpha of 0.86 was observed for the instrument; thus, the results found here are considered acceptable and consistent.

The presence of parents (father, mother, both, or none) in children's competitions and training was investigated according to the perception of the young athletes interviewed. The results show that the participants reported that both of them (38%) are more present during training sessions and competitions. However, the mother (27%) compared to the father (12%) is more involved in training and competitions. Moreover, 23% of the respondents reported not receiving any support from either parent.

Tables 1 and 2 present the descriptive statistics results obtained in each of the subscales of the TEOSQ and PISQ instruments among the athletes analyzed in each of their respective sports. The TEOSQ (table 1) showed that in all modalities there was, on average, a greater predominance in the presentation of the Task-oriented motivational orientation profile (4.42 ± 0.29) than the Ego-oriented (2.44 ± 0.28).

Table 1
Descriptive statistics (mean, median, and score) referring to the type of Motivational Orientation (Task and Ego) of each sport modality

Category	Sport	N	Age (\pm SD)	Mean (\pm SD)	Median	Score
Task						
Individual	Athletics	29	15.10 (\pm 2.23)	4.27 (\pm 0.71)	4	29.93
	Judo	68	13.10 (\pm 2.66)	4.48 (\pm 0.82)	5	31.39
	Swimming	36	13.50 (\pm 2.82)	4.42 (\pm 0.86)	5	31.00
	Table tennis	6	14.30 (\pm 2.50)	3.45 (\pm 1.41)	3	24.16
Collective	Basketball	27	15.80 (\pm 1.31)	4.59 (\pm 0.73)	5	32.18
	Soccer	33	11.00 (\pm 1.70)	4.71 (\pm 0.66)	5	32.96
	Handball	56	13.90 (\pm 2.07)	4.35 (\pm 0.93)	5	30.91
	Water polo	64	12.00 (\pm 2.78)	4.31 (\pm 0.98)	5	30.23
Total		319	13.30 (\pm 2.73)	4.42 (\pm 0.29)	5	31.79
Ego						
Individual	Athletics	29	15.10 (\pm 2.23)	2.31 (\pm 1.09)	2	13.86
	Judo	68	13.10 (\pm 2.66)	2.61 (\pm 1.08)	3	15.67
	Swimming	36	13.50 (\pm 2.82)	2.46 (\pm 1.07)	3	14.77
	Table tennis	6	14.30 (\pm 2.50)	1.97 (\pm 0.71)	2	11.83
Collective	Basketball	27	15.80 (\pm 1.31)	2.45 (\pm 1.24)	2	14.70
	Soccer	33	11.00 (\pm 1.70)	2.58 (\pm 1.35)	2,5	15.48
	Handball	56	13.9 (\pm 2.07)	2.34 (\pm 1.35)	2	13.94
	Water polo	64	12.00 (\pm 2.78)	2.37 (\pm 1.15)	2	14.26
Total		319	13.30 (\pm 2.73)	2.44 (\pm 0.28)	5	19.47

Table 2
Descriptive statistics (mean, median, and score) regarding the perception of parental support in each sport modality

Category	Sport	N	Age (±SD)	Mean (±SD)	Median	Score	
Directive Behavior	Individual	Athletics	29	15.10 (±2.23)	3.04 (±1.37)	3	24.34
		Judo	68	13.10 (±2.66)	3.12 (±1.53)	3	25.02
		Swimming	36	13.50 (±2.82)	3.01 (±1.55)	3	24.08
		Table tennis	6	14.30 (±2.50)	3.43 (±1.51)	4	27.51
	Collective	Basketball	27	15.80 (±1.31)	3.31 (±1.40)	3	26.51
		Soccer	33	11.00 (±1.70)	3.31 (±1.61)	3	53.00
		Handball	56	13.90 (±2.07)	3.37 (±1.53)	3	32.80
		Water polo	64	12.00 (±2.78)	3.06 (±1.70)	3	24.50
		Total	319	13.30 (±2.73)	3.17 (±1.54)	3	33.71
		Praise and understanding	Individual	Athletics	29	15.10 (±2.23)	2.34 (±1.18)
Judo	68			13.10 (±2.66)	2.06 (±1.30)	2	16.55
Swimming	36			13.50 (±2.82)	2.15 (±1.34)	2	17.27
Table tennis	6			14.30 (±2.50)	2.60 (±1.56)	2	20.84
Collective	Basketball		27	15.80 (±1.31)	2.50 (±1.42)	2	20.00
	Soccer		33	11.00 (±1.70)	2.07 (±1.36)	1	21.28
	Handball		56	13.90 (±2.07)	2.42 (±1.42)	2	23.57
	Water polo		64	12.00 (±2.78)	2.37 (±1.65)	1	19.00
	Total		319	13.30 (±2.73)	2.26 (±1.45)	2	24.07
	Active Involvement		Individual	Athletics	29	15.10 (±2.23)	3.84 (±1.22)
Judo		68		13.10 (±2.66)	3.76 (±1.55)	5	7.52
Swimming		36		13.50 (±2.82)	3.94 (±1.39)	5	7.88
Table tennis		6		14.30 (±2.50)	4.01 (±1.43)	5	8.03
Collective		Basketball	27	15.80 (±1.31)	3.81 (±1.56)	5	7.62
		Soccer	33	11.00 (±1.70)	3.69 (±1.72)	5	7.39
		Handball	56	13.90 (±2.07)	3.61 (±1.57)	4	7.32
		Water polo	64	12.00 (±2.78)	2.83 (±1.74)	3	5.66
		Total	319	13.30 (±2.73)	3.80 (±1.52)	5	10.09

Next, Table 2 shows the athletes' perceptions of their parents' participation in their sporting life according to the PISQ instrument, displayed separately by sport. In the sample in question, it was possible to observe that young athletes perceive parental participation, in all modalities, with greater emphasis on the Directing Behavior dimension (3.17 ± 1.54), followed by the Praise and Understanding dimension (2.26 ± 1.45). Nevertheless, in the Active Involvement dimension, a mean score of 3.80 ± 1.52 was noted, demonstrating that the young athletes consider that their parents «almost never» actively participate in their sport context.

To perform the comparative analysis (Table 3) it was decided to separate the sample into two groups of sports, classified as Individual Sports (IS) and Collective Sports (CS).

A comparative analysis with the Mann-Whitney test between individual (IS) and team (CS) sports indicated a statistically significant

Table 3
Descriptive statistics regarding the dimensions of TEOSQ and PISQ and comparative test by individual and team sports. P value relative to the Mann-Whitney test

Variable	Category	Median	CI95%	PValue
Ego	Individual	2.33	(-0.09-0.15)	0.655
	Collective	2.33		
Task	Individual	4.57	(-0.16-0.09)	0.588
	Collective	4.57		
Directive Behavior	Individual	3.38	(0.03-0.28)	0.015*
	Collective	3.00		
Praise and Understanding	Individual	2.00	(-0.11-0.14)	0.787
	Collective	2.06		
Active Involvement	Individual	4.50	(0.11-0.35)	<0.001*
	Collective	3.50		

* Statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$)

difference between the IS and CS regarding the PISQ dimensions, Directive Behavior ($p=0.015$), and Active Involvement ($p<0.001$). Data suggest that members of team sports report a greater perception of parental control over their sporting behavior. It is also possible to affirm that parents of young athletes in team sports participate more actively in the sporting context of their children compared to individual sports.

A Spearman's linear correlation test was applied to verify the correlations between the TEOSQ and PISQ dimensions. The relationship between the variables can be analyzed in Table 4. The association of the variables Directive Behavior and Praise and Understanding ($r=0.434$), Directive Behavior and Active Involvement ($r=0.476$), as well as Praise and Understanding and Active Involvement ($r=0.480$) in the Individual Modalities showed a regular positive association between them.

Other positive regular associations were also found in the Collective Modalities, such as Directive Behavior and Praise and Understanding ($r=0.392$); Praise and Understanding and Active Involvement ($r=0.407$) also showed positive regular association. Only the association between Task and Praise and Understanding ($r=-0.437$), and Directive Behavior and Ego ($r=-0.347$), both from Collective Modalities, showed negative regular association. All associations mentioned as regular showed statistical significance $p<0.05$.

Table 4
Spearman's Linear Correlation between TEOSQ (task and ego) and PISQ (directive behavior, praise and understanding, and active involvement) dimensions

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Task ¹	1	$r=-0.118$	$r=-0.005$	$r=-0.233^{**}$	$r=-0.075$	$r=0.090$	$r=0.064$	$r=0.137$	$r=-0.036$	$r=0.049$
Ego ¹		1	$r=-0.124$	$r=0.053$	$r=-0.137$	$r=-0.077$	$r=0.099$	$r=-0.085$	$r=-0.126$	$r=-0.039$
Directive Behavior ¹			1	$r=0.434^{**}$	$r=0.476^{**}$	$r=0.038$	$r=-0.022$	$r=-0.063$	$r=-0.061$	$r=-0.023$
Praise and Understanding ¹				1	$r=0.480^{**}$	$r=-0.134$	$r=0.061$	$r=-0.149$	$r=-0.142$	$r=-0.305^{**}$
Active Involvement ¹					1	$r=0.042$	$r=-0.062$	$r=-0.159$	$r=-0.053$	$r=0.014$
Task ²						1	$r=0.056$	$r=-0.111$	$r=-0.437^{**}$	$r=0.028$
Ego ²							1	$r=-0.347^{**}$	$r=-0.160^{*}$	$r=-0.092$
Directive Behavior ²								1	$r=0.392^{**}$	$r=0.282^{**}$
Praise and Understanding ²									1	$r=0.407^{**}$
Active Involvement ²										1

Note: ¹Individual; ²Collective.
** $p<0.01$ * $p<0.05$

Discussion

This research aimed to analyze the perception of young athletes about their parents' involvement, as well as their motivational orientation in different sport modalities. The results indicate that the level of parental involvement found in this research corroborates the findings of Nakashima et al. (2018), who emphasize that the presence of parents in the sporting context, added to the personal aspects of the athletes themselves, can result in determining factors for the performance and

success in the sporting career, making this participation, a relevant aspect for the development and segment of children in sport. Moreover, it is a consensus in the literature that the family assumes the most influential role in the development of a child (Brofenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Horn & Horn, 2007).

The results on the perception of the participants in terms of the involvement of their parents in sports practices indicate that the dimension Directive Behavior stood out and can be considered positive in the levels observed. This perception is justified because the control of parents over their behavior expressed in these results signals support and understanding of feelings, emotions, and experiences in sports activity (Amado, Sánchez-Oliva, González-Ponce, Pulido-González & Sánchez-Miguel, 2015). In this sense, the research by Momesso et al. (2016) shows that this parental control over their children's behavior in sports can help in observing possible mistakes, as well as reinforcing the successes to encourage and improve execution and performance.

However, this dimension showed higher and significant results in individual sports. Moreover, it was also found in the individual modality, significant results for the active involvement of parents, which, unlike the other dimensions, shows little involvement of parents in the sporting context. Individual sports have specific characteristics of their categories, providing positive aspects in the face of competitiveness, such as the athletes' intrinsic motivation, ability to overcome adversities, responsibility over their own performance and consequent strengthening of self-confidence (Schubert, Januário, Casonatto & Sonoo, 2016; Freire, Souza Neto, Santos, Tavares, Oliveira & Nascimento Junior, 2020). Although it is believed that the results for parental directive behavior are positive, the little parental involvement in their children's sports practice and competitions may be a disadvantageous aspect, since this dimension is directly related to motivational support and encouragement even when the young athlete does not obtain good results (Lee & Maclean, 1997).

Furthermore, it was observed that in both individual and team sports, there was a predominance of the Task-focused motivational orientation profile. It is known that according to Achievement Goal Theory, this motivational orientation profile can be considered desirable, because it is characterized by better reactions to disappointment, have less frustration when other athletes outperform, choose moderately difficult or real challenges, do not fear failure, and hold themselves to

their own standards (Weinberg & Gould, 2017).

Young athletes or those initiating in sports commonly present unstable performances, frequently experiencing situations of failure. Therefore, the motivational orientation profile found in the sample of this research can be considered advantageous, because it is believed that there is consistency in the establishment of realistic standards and a self-referenced success model that allows individuals to learn from experiences of failure as well, demonstrating control and resilience (Duda, 2007; Nerland & Sather, 2016).

Based on the results presented, it is known that the influence of parents can be meaningful in the development of motivation in young athletes (Sánchez-Miguel, Leo, Sánchez-Oliva, Amado & García-Calvo, 2013). Thus, the correlations between parental support and the orientation of the motivational profile in both sport modalities indicate that directive behavior was positively associated with the dimensions Praise and Understanding and Active Involvement in both modalities. Therefore, it is believed that when parents employ directive behaviors, especially in order to support their children athletes, as well as empathic behaviors characterized by the dimensions Praise and Understanding and Active Involvement in the sport environment, there is a greater propensity for athletes to show motivational orientation towards the task and to obtain better development in the sport (Danioni, Barni & Rosnati, 2017).

Previously, some authors (Amado, Sánchez-Oliva & González-Ponce, 2015; Vasconcelos & Gomes, 2015; Amorose, Anderson-Butcher, Newman, Fraina & Iachini, 2016; Kolayı°, Sarı & Çelik, 2017) using methods and theoretical foundations different from those adopted in the present study, have highlighted the role of parents as the most important influence on their children's motivation in sport. However, with regard to investigations into parental influence on sport in light of achievement goal theory, there is still a gap in scientific productions and, therefore, an opportunity for future studies. In addition, the use of direct evaluations and analysis of the parents' behavior is a limitation of the study and an incentive for future research, understanding, therefore, their relationship and perception regarding their children athletes and the sports context.

Conclusions

It is concluded through the present research and its findings that the motivation of young athletes and those

in training may be related to and even depend on their parents' support. A percentage of 23% of the participants of this study reported that they do not count on the participation or support of their parents for the practice of sports. It can be inferred that the subjects of the sample studied present a balanced perception of success, because they set their personal goals observing their own performance, and achieve improvement of results due to effort and dedication. In addition, it is essential to promote parental involvement as well as supportive parental behaviors, especially at this stage of development. It is also important that parents engaged in the sport context of their children express directive behaviors, over all, without emphasis on victory, competitiveness, or pressure in training and encouragement of rivalry.

This study extends to programs and research with athlete populations in sport initiation, which are of great importance for the professionals inserted in this area, since they will enable the identification of strategies that will allow delineating intervention programs aimed at motivating and adhering to the sport practice and, thus, providing physical and psychological well-being to young athletes. Finally, this research demonstrates the importance and influence that parental support and the motivational guidance profile of young athletes can have on the segment, continuity, and physical and emotional development, as well as performance in sport.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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