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Original Article

SPORTS INVOLVEMENT OF GIRLS AND BOYS IN BASKETBALL

ENVOLVIMENTO ESPORTIVO DE MENINAS E MENINOS NO BASQUETEBOL

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RESUMO
O objetivo desse estudo foi analisar o envolvimento esportivo de meninas e meninos participantes do Programa Basquetebol Para Todos (Santa Catarina, Brasil). Participaram 80 praticantes de basquetebol que frequentavam o programa, no ano de 2016. Utilizou-se um questionário composto por questões fechadas, o qual foi analisado por meio de recursos estatísticos descritivos (frequência e percentual) e inferenciais (qui-quadrado, v-cramer, resíduos ajustados). Os resultados revelaram associação do sexo com o tempo de prática esportiva geral, evidenciando-se que as meninas possuíam menor tempo de experiência no esporte do que os meninos. Quanto à frequência semanal de treinamento, constatou-se que os participantes, com carga horária semanal de treino menor eram, consequentemente, os que treinavam com menor frequência (dias) durante a semana. Os meninos com menor tempo de participação no Programa e que participavam das atividades de iniciação esportiva tinham frequência semanal de treino menor, enquanto os meninos com maior tempo de experiência e que participavam das atividades voltadas à preparação competitiva treinavam mais vezes durante a semana. Conclui-se que as meninas possuíam menor tempo de prática esportiva e que a organização do Programa determina a frequência semanal de envolvimento dos meninos com o basquetebol.
Palavras-chave: Participação. Esporte. Criança. Adolescente.

ABSTRACT
The objective of this study was to analyze the sports involvement of girls and boys participating in the Basketball for All Program (Santa Catarina, Brazil). A total of 80 basketball players attending the program participated in 2016. A survey composed of closed-ended questions was used, which was analyzed by means of statistical resources, both descriptive (frequency and percentage) and inferential (chi-square, Cramér's V, adjusted residuals). Results revealed an association between sex and time of general sports practice, showing that girls had a shorter time of experience with basketball than boys did. As for weekly training frequency, the participants with fewer weekly training hours were consequently those who trained less often (days) during the week. Boys with a shorter time of participation in the Program and who engaged in sports initiation activities had a lower weekly training frequency, while those with a longer experience time and who engaged in activities aimed at competitive preparation would train more often during the week. In conclusion, the girls had a shorter sports practice time, and the organization of the Program determines the boys' weekly frequency of involvement in basketball.
Keywords: Participation. Sports. Children. Adolescents.

Introduction

Sports involvement demands a series of personal, physical, technical, psychological and social factors that contribute to an athlete's engagement and permanence in sports, besides enabling the construction of a long and successful career in this context[1]. Sports involvement is understood as one's commitment and dedication to sports, associated with a variety of aspects, such as weekly training length and frequency (physical, technical, tactical, psychological training) and competition, surrounding an athlete's life[2].

In Brazil, there are numerous public policies aimed at sports practice, which have been the target of public, private and outsourced organizations[3] whose main goal is to promote sports activities for young people outside school hours and are considered socio-sporting projects[4]. Such projects have a social nature and advocate that an athlete's involvement in sports encompasses more than a state of dedication, concentration or effort. In these

environments, performance is not related to elite sports, exaggerated competition or early specialization, but to the positive development of the participants, in accordance with their possibilities, skills, gender, as well as their sporting and personal evolution[5].

Sports initiation, a fundamental stage in training and the focus of most socio-sporting projects, is characterized as a period for seeking to develop the bases that will allow practitioners to achieve sport performance, in addition to a comprehensive development associated with health and quality of life. During this period, usually comprising childhood and youth, individuals must be allowed to search for the new, the challenging, the fascinating, having their imagination and creativity stimulated in sports and beyond[6].

In the context of Physical Education and Sports, the development of youths is characterized by the pre-puberty, puberty and post-puberty phases. In the transition from pre-puberty to puberty, there is an accelerated growth of the whole organism, causing physical changes that result in psychosocial transformations that affect one's motor activity, which should be taken into account by professionals in the development process, especially in sports[7] . When going through this whole process, young individuals need support to develop continue their activities[8]. With regard specifically to sports involvement, researchers have shown the importance of families1 and coaches, who play a fundamental role in the athlete's learning process and in helping them with the various training and competition requirements[1,9,10].

In this context, it is possible to ponder that the methods and the support to which young people are exposed throughout their training period will possibly shape their behaviors and attitudes towards the achievements and defeats over their lives. Thus, it becomes essential for the development of successful sports careers to have youths motivated and supported by activities that provide them an opportunity to develop physically, psychologically, personally and socially, in addition to developing skills and abilities for sports and for life[11].

Around the world, basketball is played and watched by thousands of people, including children and adolescents undergoing sports training, and this training is carried out in clubs, schools, universities, projects and other bodies that foster sports[12]. In such environments, the concern is about the motor, personal and social development of young athletes[13]. However, despite this importance and the increase in studies related to the sports involvement of young individuals[14-16], there are only a few ones in the literature that seek to analyze sports involvement, especially of basketball athletes, by considering the perception of players of both sexes concerning variables such as weekly training frequency, sports practice time, the benefits and harms of this practice, as well as the social encouragement towards sports engagemenet[17].

Regarding the results found with practitioners of different sports besides basketball, researchers who have been studying these variables have found that males present a higher weekly training frequency[18] and a longer time participating in sports projects[19] compared to females. Additionally, depending on the reality (Brazil or other countries) and the competitive level investigated (participation and competitive elite), differences have been found as to the perception of family support and encouragement towards sports between the sexes[18,20].

In light of the foregoing, and seeking to broaden the reflection around the involvement of young men and women in sports practice, especially of those training to be basketball athletes through social projects, this study aimed to analyze the sports involvement of girls and boys participating in the Basketball for All Program [*Programa Basquete para Todos*] (PBT), namely the extension project, time of general sports practice and sports practice in the PBT, weekly training frequency and weekly training hours, perception of benefits and harms that come with playing basketball, as well as perception of encouragement from family and coaches, considering the sex of the participants. Moreover, it sought to analyze sports involvement, taking into account the girls' and the boys' weekly training frequency. To do so,

the following hypothesis was formulated: girls have a shorter sports experience and weekly training time (frequency and hours) than boys do.

Methods

Characterization

The present empirical investigation is part of the Research Project "Sports Practice and School Performance: The View of Students in the Basketball for All Program (PBT)" [*Prática esportiva e rendimento escolar: a visão dos alunos do Programa Basquetebol Para Todos (PBT)*] and is characterized as a descriptive study, with an associative, comparative and cross-sectional strategy[21], using a quantitative data approach[22].

Context and Participants

The PBT is an extension program composed of three projects: Sports Initiation Project [*Projeto de Iniciação Esportiva*] (PIESP), Baby Basketball and Citizenship Institute [*Instituto Baby Basquetebol Cidadania*] (IBBC) and Integration through Adapted Sports/Basketball. The program aims to encourage the community to play basketball, charging no fees, towards promoting the cognitive, motor and social development of young people through sports. Furthermore, it seeks to provide activities for sports initiation, formation and training, with participation in national and international competitions.

The study population comprised 80 children and adolescents attending the PIESP and IBBC projects in 2016. Because they only competed in the adult category, the participants in the Integration through Adapted Sports/Basketball Project did not participate in this investigation. The sample was characterized as non-probabilistic (all participants were invited and agreed to participate in the study) and consisted of 80 participants from the PIESP and the IBBC, with 55 (68.8%) boys and 25 (31.2%) girls, 25 of which (28% girls and 32.7% boys) were between eight and ten years old and participating in the PIESP (project involving recreational activities aimed at sparking children's interest in basketball), whereas 55 (72% of girls and 67.3% of boys), aged 11 to 13 years old, belonged to the teams that competed in state championships held by the Santa Catarina Basketball Federation [*Federação Catarinense de Basketball*] (FCB), in the under-12 and under-13 categories, through the IBBC project.

Instrument

For information collection, an anonymous and individual questionnaire was applied; it was made up of 16 closed-ended questions and designed specifically for the development of the research project. In this study, the following information contained in the instrument was analyzed: personal characteristics (sex) and sport-related characteristics (age, extension project in which the athlete was participating, time practicing sports and time participating in the PBT, training frequency in the PBT and outside the program, weekly training length in the PBT, benefits and harms of being involved in basketball, encouragement from parents and coaches towards playing basketball).

The instrument was subjected to a content validation process, which counted with the collaboration of 10 professors who taught subjects in Undergraduate Physical Education Courses and were researchers linked to Research Laboratories in the Sport Pedagogy field in Brazil; its indexes stood at 84.5% for language clarity, 93.6% for practical relevance, and 92.0% for theoretical relevance, characterizing it as a scientifically valid instrument[23].

Procedures

First, contact was made with the PBT Coordinator and, subsequently, with the PIESP and IBBC (female and male) coaches, who were explained the research objectives and procedures, and asked for authorization so that the study could be conducted. After authorization, the research project was submitted to the UDESC's Ethics Committee on Research Involving Human Beings, being approved under legal opinion 1.580.434/2016.

The PBT participants were informed about the objectives of the investigation and assured that their participation was voluntary and that their answers would be treated confidentially. Thus, after the Free and Informed Assent and Consent Forms were signed by the participants and by their parents/legal guardians (respectively), information collection was performed at the stands of the CEFID-UDESC multi-sport courts, within the first 30 minutes of the training sessions, on days and at times previously scheduled with the coaches.

The questionnaire was completed individually by the participants, which took approximately 25 minutes. The main researcher was present when the instrument was applied in order to answer any questions that could arise during the information collection.

Statistical Analysis

Data tabulation was performed on Microsoft Excel, while the analysis was run with the aid of the SPSS software, version 20.0. For data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistical resources were used. To investigate associations between the sports involvement variables (extension project, time of general and basketball practice, weekly training hours, weekly training frequency, benefits and harms of playing basketball, encouragement from parents and coaches towards playing basketball) and sex (boys and girls) of the study, the Chi-square inferential test, or Fisher's exact test, was applied, and Adjusted Residuals (AR>| 1.96 |) were determined to identify significant associations. Cramer's V coefficient was used to identify the strength of statistically significant associations between categorical variables. For all tests, a 95% confidence level ($p<0.05$) was adopted.

Results

The sports involvement analysis, considering the sex of the athletes participating in the PBT (Table 1), indicated sample homogeneity in terms of the extension project in which they participated, weekly training frequency and hours, time participating in the program, time participating in sports activities outside the PBT, benefits and harms arising from playing basketball, and encouragement from parents and coaches towards playing basketball. However, it revealed association with time of general sports practice ($p<0.001$; $v=0.405$), showing that the girls had a shorter time of experience with the sport than the boys did. Thus, significant positive association was found for time of general sports practice among girls with up to two years of practice, and among boys with practice time of two to four years and above four years.

Table 1. Sports involvement, considering the basketball athletes' sex

Variables	Total (n%)	Sex (n%)		p-value
		Female	Male	
Extension project				
PIESP (8 to 10 years)	25 (31.2%)	7 (28.0%)	18 (32.7%)	0.191
IBBC (11 to 13 years)	55 (68.8%)	18 (72.0%)	37 (67.3%)	
Time of general sports practice				
Up to 2 years	40 (50.0%)	20 (80.0%)(+)	20 (36.4%)	**0.001(v=0.405)**
From to 2 to 4 years	18 (22.5%)	2 (8.0%)	16 (29.1%)(+)	
Above 4 years	22 (27.5%)	3 (12.0%)	19 (34.5%)(+)	
Time participating in the PBT				
Up to 2 years	61 (76.2%)	23 (92.0%)	38 (69.1%)	0.076
From to 2 to 4 years	16 (20.0%)	2 (8.0%)	14 (25.5%)	
Above 4 years	3 (3.8%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (5.5%)	
Weekly training frequency in the PBT				
Up to twice	41 (51.2%)	12 (48.0%)	29 (52.7%)	0.695
3 times or more	39 (48.8%)	13 (52.0%)	26 (47.3%)	
Weekly training hours in the PBT				
Up to 3 hours	40 (51.3%)	12 (48.0%)	28 (52.8%)	0.690
Above 3 hours	38 (48.7%)	13 (52.0%)	25 (47.2%)	
Training outside the PBT				
No	44 (55.0%)	16 (64.0%)	28 (50.9%)	0.275
Yes	36 (45.0%)	9 (36.0%)	27 (49.1%)	
Benefits of playing basketball				
Commitment	19 (23.8%)	4 (16.0%)	15 (27.3%)	0.756
Concentration	43 (53.8%)	13 (52.0%)	30 (54.5%)	
Stress reduction	11 (13.8%)	5 (20.0%)	6 (10.9%)	
Creativity	2 (2.5%)	1 (4.0%)	1 (1.8%)	
None	2 (2.5%)	1 (4.0%)	1 (1.8%)	
Other	3 (3.8%)	1 (4.0%)	2 (3.6%)	
Harms of playing basketball				
Missing school	10 (12.5%)	2 (8.0%)	8 (14.5%)	0.630
Tiredness	4 (5.0%)	2 (8.0%)	2 (3.6%)	
None	65 (81.2%)	21 (84.0%)	44 (80.0%)	
Other	1 (1.2%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.8%)	
Encouragement from parents				
Great encouragement	74 (92.5%)	25 (100.0%)	49 (89.1%)	0.086
Little encouragement	6 (7.5%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (10.9%)	
Encouragement from coaches				
Great encouragement	76 (95.0)	24 (96.0%)	52 (94.5%)	0.782
Little encouragement	4 (5.0%)	1 (4.0%)	3 (5.5%)	

Legend: Residual analysis: (+) Positive significant association; (-) Negative significant association; V = Cramér's V; PIESP - Sports Initiation Project; IBBC - Basketball and Citizenship Baby Institute; PBT - Basketball Program for All
Source: The authors

The relationship between the weekly training frequency in the PBT and the sports involvement of the girls participating in the program evidenced association ($p<0.001$; $v=0.763$) only with weekly training hours, showing a significant positive association for the athletes who had a training frequency of up to twice and up to three hours a week, and for athletes with a frequency of three times a week and dedication above three hours (Table 2). Besides, girls with fewer hours participating in the program during the week (up to three

hours) also had a lower weekly training frequency, while those who dedicated more hours during the week to training (over three hours) consequently attended training more often during the week.

Table 2. Sports involvement, considering the girls' weekly training frequency

Variables	Weekly training frequency (n%)		p-value
	Up to twice	3 times or more	
Extension project			
PIESP (8 to 10 years)	5 (71.4%)	2 (28.6%)	0.225
IBBC (11 to 13 years)	8 (44.4%)	10 (55.6%)	
Time of general sports practice			
Up to 2 years	10 (50.0%)	10 (50.0%)	
From to 2 to 4 years	1 (50.0%	1 (50.0%)	0.863
Above 4 years	2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)	
Time participating in the PBT			
Up to 2 years	12 (52.2%)	11 (47.8%)	
From to 2 to 4 years	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)	0.953
Above 4 years	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
Weekly training hours			
Up to 3 hours	11 (91.7%)(+)	1 (8.3%)	**<0.001(v=0.763)**
Above 3 hours	2 (15.4%)	11 (84.6%)(+)	
Training outside the PBT			
No	7 (43.8%)	9 (56.2%)	0.271
Yes	6 (66.7%)	3 (33.3%)	
Benefits of playing basketball			
Commitment	2 (50.0%)	2 (50.0%)	
Concentration	8 (61.5%)	5 (38.5%)	
Stress reduction	2 (40.0%)	3 (60.0%)	0.570
Creativity	0 (0.0%)	1 (100.0%)	
None	0 (0.0%)	1 (100.0%)	
Other	1 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
Harms of playing basketball			
Missing school	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)	
Tiredness	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)	0.996
None	11 (52.4%)	10 (47.6%)	
Encouragement from parents			
Great encouragement	13 (52.0%)	12 (48.0%)	0.327
Little encouragement	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
Encouragement from coaches			
Great encouragement	13 (54.2%)	11 (45.8%)	0.288
Little encouragement	0 (0.0%)	1 (100.0%)	

Legend: Residual analysis: (+) Positive significant association; (-) Negative significant association; V = Cramér's V; PIESP - Sports Initiation Project; IBBC - Basketball and Citizenship Baby Institute; PBT - Basketball Program for All
Source: The authors

The boys' weekly training frequency in the PBT and sports involvement were associated with the extension project in which they were participating (p=0.043; v = 0.272), with time participating in the PBT (p=0.025; v=0.367) and with weekly training hours (p<0.001; v=0.509) dedicated to basketball (Table 3). The results showed that the boys in the PIESP who had a shorter participation time in the program and who trained less often in the week were the ones who had the lowest weekly training frequency. On the other hand, the boys in the IBBC who had a longer participation time and trained more hours during the week were consequently the ones who attended training more often in the week. Significant positive association was found for the athletes attending the PIESP up to twice a week and those attending the IBBC three times a week or more. This association was also found among the athletes who were training for up to two years and had a weekly frequency of up to twice, and among those training for two to four years and who had a weekly frequency of three times or

more. Finally, positive association was observed for boys training up to three hours, up to twice a week, and for boys training over three hours and three times or more in a week.

Table 3. Sports involvement, considering the boys' weekly training frequency

Variables	Weekly training frequency (n%)		p-value
	Up to twice	3 times or more	
Extension project			
PIESP (8 to 10 years)	13 (44.8%)(+)	5 (19.2%)	**0.043(v=0.272)**
IBBC (11 to 13 years)	16 (55.2%)	21 (80.8%)(+)	
Practice time			
Up to 2 years	14 (48.3%)	6 (23.1%)	
From to 2 to 4 years	7 (24.1%)	9 (34.6%)	0.152
Above 4 years	8 (27.6%)	11 (42.3%)	
Time participating in the PBT			
Up to 2 years	24 (82.8%)(+)	14 (53.8%)	
From to 2 to 4 years	3 (10.3%)	11 (42.3%)(+)	**0.025(v=0.367)**
Above 4 years	2 (6.9%)	1 (3.8%)	
Weekly hours of dedication			
Up to 3 hours	21 (77.8%)(+)	7 (26.9%)	**<0.001(v=0.509)**
Above 3 hours	6 (22.2%)	19 (73.1%)(+)	
Training outside the PBT			
No	13 (44.8%)	15 (57.7%)	0.341
Yes	16 (55.2%)	11 (42.3%)	
Benefits of playing basketball			
Commitment	7 (24.1%)	8 (30.8%)	
Concentration	17 (58.6%)	13 (50.0%)	
Stress reduction	4 (13.8%)	2 (7.7%)	0.683
Creativity	0 (0.0%)	1 (3.8%)	
None	0 (0.0%)	1 (3.8%)	
Other	1 (3.4%)	1 (3.8%)	
Harms of playing basketball			
Missing school	2 (6.9%)	6 (23.1%)	
Tiredness	0 (0.0%)	2 (7.7%)	0.097
None	26 (89.7%)	18 (69.2%)	
Other	1(3.4%)	0(0.0%)	
Encouragement from parents			
Great encouragement	26 (89.7%)	23 (88.5%)	0.887
Little encouragement	3 (10.3%)	3 (11.5%)	
Encouragement from coaches			
Great encouragement	27 (93.1%)	25 (96.2%)	0.619
Little encouragement	2 (6.9%)	1 (3.8%)	

Legend: Residual analysis: (+) Positive significant association; (-) Negative significant association; V = Cramér's V; PIESP - Sports Initiation Project; IBBC - Basketball and Citizenship Baby Institute; PBT - Basketball Program for All
Source: The authors

Discussion

The objective of this investigation was to analyze the sports involvement of girls and boys participating in the PBT. The information obtained did not show significant differences for most of the variables analyzed. However, the results revealed a larger number of boys playing basketball in the PBT than that of girls, and that boys had more general sports experience than girls did.

Such evidence can be explained by matters concerning the predisposition of males to competition and to sports involvement at younger ages compared to girls[24,25], as well as by the girls' short participation time, specifically in the PBT, which started only in 2016. Despite attending the PIESP, the girls did not use to participate in sports competitions as the boys did,

which may have resulted in the former being involved in other projects, schools or basketball clubs in the region upon reaching a competitive age.

The internal organization of the PBT itself allowed understanding the indicatives of weekly training frequency and hours, since the sports initiation activities for children aged 8 to 10 years old developed by the PIESP took place only once or twice a week, lasting one or two hours at most, depending on their age. Upon joining the training activities proposed by the IBBC, most of the young participants who already had more time participating in the program would then have more days and time available during the week for the training sessions, which were aimed at preparation for sports competitions (federated).

In this context, the results referring to the association, as for sex, between the weekly training frequency and sports involvement of the basketball players showed that both girls and boys with lower weekly training frequency consequently trained fewer hours during the week. The boys who had a shorter participation time in the PBT and who attended the PIESP had a lower weekly frequency compared to their peers with a longer participation time and attending the IBBC.

From this perspective, it is possible to state that participation in federated competitions requires more demanding, systematic and intense training, due to the preparation and the search for results in competitions. Thus, the practitioner, upon starting this process, tends to become more intensely involved and, as a consequence, increases the amount of weekly training, compared to those in an early sports training process.

This greater involvement may be related to the way that sports programs are developed, having as reference the age and the type of activity to be carried out at each training stage of youths in sports[26]. One of them is the Developmental Model of Sport Participation (DMSP), which proposes three sport training stages for young people: diversification (up to 12 years old), specialization (from 13 to 15 years old) and investment (16 to 18 years old)[26-28]. These stages are based on changes in the type and number of sports practiced and in the respective volume of practice, which lead to different implications for the long-term development of athletes[29].

In the diversification years, in which part of the study participants are, children are encouraged to experience different types of sports so that they are exposed to a range of experiences and motor skills before committing to a specific sporting activity[30]. During this period, activities are predominantly characterized by playfulness and have, as main purpose, fun and pleasure in moving[26], while in the specialization, years athletes experience a balance between structured and unstructured activities, in addition to being a key moment when youths choose a specific sport for specialization[28,29].

Considering this context, it can be said that the PBT, by offering both projects (PIESP and IBBC), shares the ideas of the DMSP, since it proposes a reduced amount of training and provides more playful activities for children up to approximately 10 years old, allowing more time for practitioners to participate in other sports activities and experiences, despite starting a more systematic proposal for training and a heavier competition routine from the age of 11.

Such aspects are in line with the idea that, in the first years of an athlete's involvement in sports activities, a playful introduction to sports should be provided, along with the diversification of positive learning practices and contexts[11,27]. Moreover, for those who are predisposed to involvement in competitions and comfortable with the sport they have chosen, the PBT provides more time and volume of weekly training to those seeking specialization in basketball.

When it comes to the benefits and harms associated with sports practice, within the PBT context, no correlation was found between sex and weekly training frequency, which can be explained by the small amount of days and hours meant for training. However, focus and commitment towards other activities are highlighted as benefits derived from playing

basketball. Similarly, research has reported the benefits of involvement in sports activities for the intellectual performance[28], discipline, dedication, responsibility[31] and self-esteem[32] of athletes of different ages and in different modalities.

The participants did not point out any harms related to playing basketball that would affect their dedication to other daily activities. This information is close to that obtained by Zenha, Resende and Gomes[33], who reported that high-performance athletes hardly perceive any negative aspect concerning their dedication to sports. However, it differs from results found by studies with athletes of an age similar to that of the participants in the present research, all practitioners of different sports in Paraná[31], and with female basketball athletes from Santa Catarina[34], which evidenced that dedication to sports results in less time for school and in academic failure, in addition to physical tiredness and difficulty reconciling sports practice with other daily activities. Such hindrances end up negatively affecting time for leisure, time with the family and the establishment of other affective relationships, such as dating and friendships.

Beyond the characterization of training stages, as well as amount and type of practice, it becomes important to emphasize the fundamental role of psychosocial influences along the athlete's development process[28,35]. In this sense, social relationships represent a powerful influence on the quality of sports experiences, assigning parents, coaches and friends a central role in this process, due to the direct relationship they establish with the athlete[11,27,28,36].

About the perception of the PBT participants, no differences were found as to sex and weekly training frequency in relation to encouragement from parents and coaches towards basketball practice, which reinforces that the amount of training that the young players were attending per week depended more on the number of sessions provided by the extension projects (PIESP and IBBC) than on the incentive of social agents. Although the literature points out that parental encouragement for children to play sports is a strong factor that generates pleasure and satisfaction35, investigations about family support have revealed different results.

At the international level, a study carried out in France with elite female gymnasts found that family support (development of self-referenced goals and commitment, positive failure management and ability to deal with anxiety and fear) had an influence throughout one's career, whereas said influence was only apparent, among male gymnasts, in their early sports experiences[20]. Encouragement in early sports experiences from parents was also seen in a study with elite Israeli athletes in different modalities[37]. In its turn, in the Brazilian context, a research involving young people engaging in different sports activities found that the perception of family support is lower for girls than for boys[18].

Particularly about Brazilian women's basketball, a study conducted out by Folle, Nascimento, Neves, Maciel and Dallegrave[38] reported that family encouragement and involvement, especially from parents, proved to be essential in the athletes' sports training. For them, the presence of their families in sports competitions and the provision of support was of paramount importance for them to keep playing basketball.

In addition to the role assigned to family members in making youths involved in sports, it is also necessary to highlight the importance given to social agents directly present in sports, such as coaches[26]. Studies have suggested that these characters can influence the involvement and performance of athletes by adopting positive conduct styles, such as behaviors of leadership and autonomy support[39].

With respect to the results of this study, both the girls and the boys participating in the PBT perceive a great encouragement from their coaches. Similarly, a study conducted with Brazilian female basketball athletes revealed that they value the interpersonal relationship established with their coaches, who provided them emotional support (encouragement and

motivation) and information (tips and advice), which are deemed essential for their development as athletes[40].

In short, the results of this study allowed understanding and reflecting that the PBT has a greater presence of male practitioners, that boys have a longer sports practice time than girls do, and that the organization (availability of days and time) of the extension projects are decisive in the weekly frequency and in the involvement of its participants.

The limitations for the development of this study included some methodological decisions adopted, such as the choice of a cross-sectional and quantitative study, the use of a closed-ended questionnaire and the fact that the perception of other social agents (parents and coaches) important for the sports involvement of the young PBT participants was not investigated. For greater research contributions to the theme investigated, it is necessary to expand the research with the incorporation of qualitative studies that allow practitioners to broaden their answers and the meaning attributed to their involvement in basketball practice. Furthermore, the incorporation of interviews or focus groups with the coaches and family members of athletes, in order to collect information on how they perceive their contributions to the insertion and permanence of young people in sports, is of importance as well.

Conclusions

The information obtained about the involvement of boys and girls in basketball evidenced that the girls had a shorter time of general sports practice and that the organization of the Program itself determined the boys' weekly frequency of involvement in basketball. Additionally, the girls with fewer hours of participation in the Program during the week were also found to have a lower weekly training frequency, while those who dedicated more weekly hours to training consequently attended training more often.

When it comes to the involvement of boys, those who participated in the PIESP, had a shorter time of participation in the Program and trained fewer times a week were the ones who presented a lower weekly training frequency, while the boys who participated in the IBBC, had a longer time of participation and trained more hours during the week were consequently those who attended the training sessions more often on a weekly basis. The study is believed to contribute to projects and schools for sports training and initiation, as well as to the work of coaches and family members, pointing to the need to maximize the participation of young people in sports contexts and enable the construction of an environment favorable to positive development by means of sports.

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