THE LEVELS OF SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND INVOLVEMENT IN SPORTS ACTIVITIES IN TÂRGOVIȘTE MUNICIPALITY

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Abstract. *The purpose of the research was to highlight the correlations between the level of social behaviour and the level of involvement in sports activities for citizens living in the neighbourhoods of Târgoviște municipality. The study was carried out from October 2022 to February 2023 and involved a sample of 368 people from Târgoviște municipality, of which 84 men and 284 women. The research took place in the 12 neighbourhoods of Târgoviște municipality: Centre, Suseni, Matei Voievod, Micro 3, Micro 4, Micro 5, Micro 6, Micro 9, Micro 11, Micro 12, Aleea Trandafirilor and CFR (Micro 2 neighbourhood is included in Suseni, and Prepeleac area is included in Micro 11). As part of the research, a questionnaire was applied to find out respondents' opinions on their degree of involvement in both social life and sports activities. The research results showed the existence of a statistically significant correlation (r = 0.542; p < 0.001) between the level of social behaviour and the level of involvement in sports activities. The study reveals that men participate in sports activities in a significantly higher proportion than women. On the other hand, civic behaviour is at significantly lower levels among young people aged 19-30 and under 18 than among older people. In addition, significantly lower levels of civic/social behaviour were observed among those who did not participate in sports activities at all, compared to those who were involved in such activities.*

Keywords: *civic behaviour, citizens, sports activities.*

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Introduction

Social learning theory suggests the idea of social behaviour learned by observing and imitating the behaviour of others (Muro & Jeffrey, 2008; Postelnicu, 2021). Bandura, who created the concept of social learning theory, proposed five essential steps in order for learning to take place: observation, attention, retention, reproduction (imitation) and motivation (Bandura, 1971).

Socialisation is a process of social integration through communication (Zekiye & Ayşe, 2017; Zarshenas et al., 2014; Price, 2009), understanding and cooperation, with the role of interaction for active and conscious conflict resolution (Sadeghi et al., 2019). It is structured

into individual cognitive, affective and motivational constructs, as well as representations, behaviours and performance of sports groups (Sopa & Pomohaci, 2014; Clark, 1997).

According to Florea (2013), sport has its roots in the living being's joy of movement, which is often expressed through play, and play is a native social behavioural trait common to many beings in the animal kingdom; thus, movement, whatever its form of manifestation, is part of our biological nature and therefore a vital necessity.

Romania needs to have activities for community service, to increase interest in youth education and offer young people an alternative to the temptations of modern society in the age of computers and sedentary lifestyles or to the impulse of committing crimes. The formation of appropriate civic behaviour, the perpetuation and improvement of moral values, as well as the popularisation of grassroots sports activity represent an obligation of the members of a society (Coakley, 1990).

International psycho-social studies indicate sport as the primary form of social integration (Coakley, 1990; Tanis et al., 2004; Harshaw & Tindall, 2005).

Urban social life takes place within human communities that are significant in terms of the number of individuals belonging to them. The word *community* becomes, through its frequent adjectival use (community health care, community development, community education etc.), a means of describing a set of values, the social existence and the behaviours of individuals residing in the urban environment. At the same time, the community serves as a mediator between the state and civil society, as a means of normatively describing processes and phenomena in order to legitimise them in the sphere of political decision-making; from this perspective, the community appears as an agent of social change (Nițulescu, 2015).

In line with the above, the purpose of the research was to highlight possible correlations between the level of social behaviour and the level of involvement in sports activities for citizens living in the neighbourhoods of Târgoviște municipality.

Methodology

Participants

The study was carried out on a sample of 368 people, of which 84 men and 284 women, as shown in Table 1.

The research took place in the 12 neighbourhoods of Târgoviște municipality: Centre, Suseni, Matei Voievod, Micro 3, Micro 4, Micro 5, Micro 6, Micro 9, Micro 11, Micro 12, Aleea Trandafirilor and CFR (Micro 2 neighbourhood is included in Suseni, and Prepeleac area is included in Micro 11) (Figure 1).

Table 1. *Data on the age of participants*

	Age	Frequency	Percentage
Valid	14-18 years	48	13.0
	19-30 years	132	35.9
	31-45 years	98	26.6
	46-60 years	71	19.3
	Over 60 years	19	5.2
	Total	368	100.0

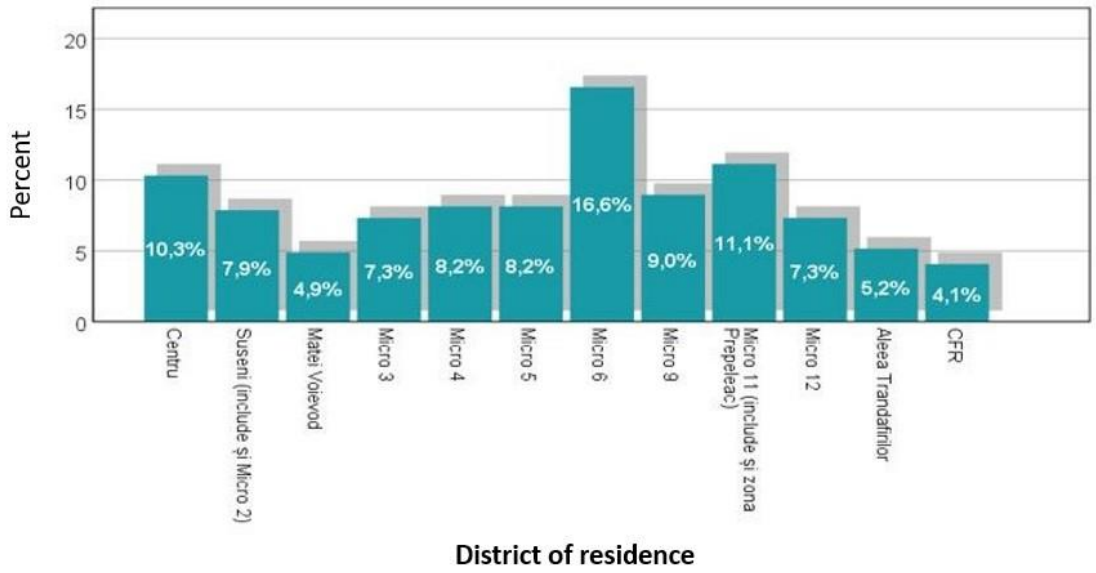

Figure 1. Distribution of participants by neighbourhood of residence

Instruments

As part of the research, a questionnaire was applied to find out respondents' opinions on their degree of involvement in both social life and sports activities.

This survey consisted of closed- and open-ended questions. The results of the questionnaire helped to identify social involvement, civic attitude and the degree of participation in physical activities for people in the target group.

The questionnaire addressed to the target group was divided as follows: social involvement and civic attitude (12 items) – from problems identified in the neighbourhood to reactions manifested in certain situations; sports activity (10 items) – from participation in a physical activity to involvement in sports projects.

The questions regarding social involvement and civic attitude were the following: 1) Are you aware of the problems arising in your neighbourhood?; 2) Do you participate in the cleaning and sanitation activities carried out in the neighbourhood where you live?; 3) Do you volunteer in activities organised for community service?; 4) How many people in your neighbourhood can you nominate? (give their names); 5) With how many people in your neighbourhood do you have friendly, supportive or leisure relationships?; 6) Are you proud to live in your neighbourhood?; 7) Do you intend to change your current residence in the near future?; 8) Which of the following actions can influence the way people get involved in civic activities? (Answer options, from 1 to 5, where 1 is the most important activity, 5 is the least important activity); 9) What do you think are the reasons why people practise social involvement? (give grades from 1 - most important to 7 - least important); 10) What causes would you support in your neighbourhood? (the item requires the existence of 10 answer options, the participants must rank them from 1 - the most important to 10 - the least important); 11) Do you react when someone is in a degrading situation?; 12) Do you intervene in an ongoing conflict? For questions 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 11 and 12, the response options were: always (a) - 3 points, rarely (b) - 2 points, never (c) - 1 point; for questions 4 and 5, the

numerical response options ranged from 1 to 10; for questions 8, 9 and 10, the response options were presented above.

The questions related to physical activity were as follows: 1) Do you participate in sports activities? (Answer options: Yes, always – 3 points, Yes, occasionally – 2 points, No – 1 point); 2) In what types of sports activities do you participate? (Answer options: individual or team sports); 3) I practice sports activities (Answer options: in specially arranged spaces or on the street); 4) If the local administration or an NGO (Non-Governmental Organisation) organised sports activities in your neighbourhood or your city/town, you would participate as: (Answer options: Supporter – 3 points, Active participant – 4 points, Sponsor – 2 points, I wouldn't be interested in participating – 1 point); 5) What are the reasons why you play sports? (there are eight answer options that participants can choose from); 6) I practice sport activities (Answer options: daily – 4 points, weekly – 3 points, monthly – 2 points, none – 1 point); 7) What sports activities would you like to see organised in your neighbourhood? (there are eight answer options/ sports disciplines that participants can choose from); 8) How much time would you spend on these activities if they were in line with what you wanted? (Answer options: 30 minutes a day – 5 points, 1-2 hours per week – 2 points, 3-6 hours per week – 3 points, more than 6 hours per week – 4 points, not the case, I do not want sports activities – 1 point); 9) If sports activities were organised in your neighbourhood, as well as inter-neighbourhood competitions, would you get involved in their development? (Answer options: in all projects – 5 points, to a large extent – 4 points, to a small extent – 3 points, occasionally – 2 points, I am not interested in such projects – 1 point); 10) Would you involve your family/ friends in such sports projects? (Answer options: in all projects – 5 points, to a large extent – 4 points, to a small extent – 3 points, occasionally – 2 points, I am not interested in such projects – 1 point). The sum of items 1, 4, 6, 8, 9 and 10 was used to calculate the score.

Procedure

The questionnaire was applied face-to-face to respondents from the 12 neighbourhoods of Târgoviște municipality between October 2022 and February 2023.

Statistical analysis

Data were processed using descriptive statistical analysis, One-Way ANOVA, Bonferroni post-hoc test and Pearson correlation coefficient.

Results

Correlation between the level of social behaviour (resulting from the questionnaire score) and the level of involvement in sports activities

To determine the relationship between civic/social behaviour and the level of involvement in sports activities, the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was used.

The presence of a statistically significant correlation is observed (r = 0.542; p < 0.001). Thus, a high level of involvement in sports activities is accompanied by a higher level of civic/social behaviour.

The r-test value is interpretable by itself, expressing the intensity of the association between variables. In the descriptive model proposed by Hopkins (2000) regarding the interpretation of correlation coefficient values, a value of r between 0.3 and 0.5 indicates a moderate correlation between variables, while values above 0.5 show strong correlations between variables (Table 2, Figure 2).

Table 2. *Correlation between the level of civic behaviour and the level of involvement in sports activities*

Correlations

		Civic/social behaviour	Level of involvement in sports activities
Civic/social behaviour	Pearson Correlation	1	.542**
	P		.000
	N	368	368
Level of involvement in sports activities	Pearson Correlation	.542**	1
	P	.000	
	N	368	368

**. The correlation is significant at a significance level of 0.01.

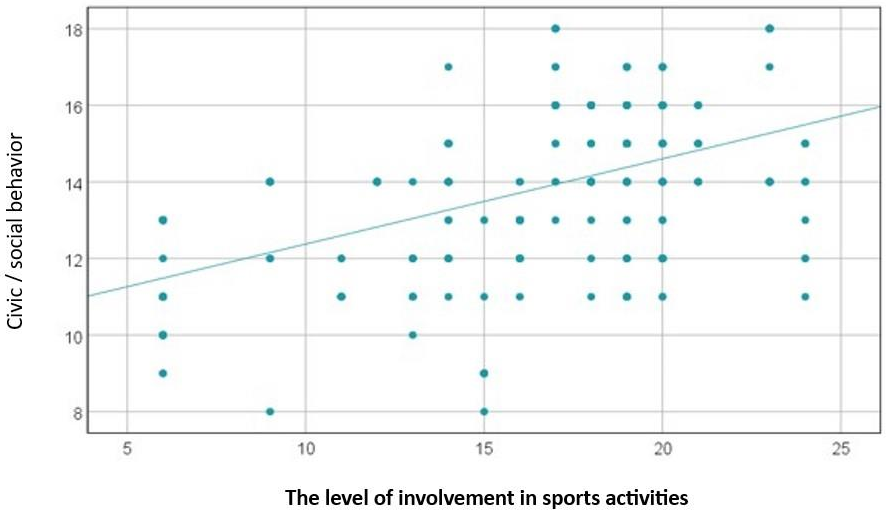

Figure 2. Representation of the correlation between civic behaviour and involvement in sports activities

Relationship between the level of formal education and the level of involvement in sports activities

In terms of involvement in sports activities, there are no significantly different levels determined by the education levels of the surveyed participants (F = 1.231, p = 0.293) (Table 3).

Table 3. *Relationship between the level of formal education and the level of involvement in sports activities*

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	p
primary or lower secondary education	58	15.66	5.689	0,293
upper secondary education (high school and post-high school)	103	15.33	3.874	
higher education	207	16.29	5.766	
Total	368	15.92	5.296	

Relationship between age and civic behaviour

Civic behaviour is at significantly different levels that are determined by the age of the surveyed participants (F = 4.088; p = 0.003).

To verify between which age groups there are significant differences in civic behaviour, the Bonferroni post-hoc test was applied. The obtained results show that people aged 19-30 years have significantly lower levels of civic behaviour than people in the age groups ranging from 31 to 45 and over 60 years (Tables 4-6, Figure 3).

Table 4. *Civic/social behaviour*

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p
Intergroup	74.918	4	18.729	4.088	.003
Intragroup	1662.995	363	4.581		
Total	1737.913	367			

Table 5. *Multiple comparisons*

Bonferroni						
		Difference in	Standard	p	95% Confidence interval	
(I) Age	(J) Age	means (I-J)	error		Lower bound	Upper bound
Under 18 years	19-30 years	.366	.361	1.000	-.65	1.38
	31-45 years	-.580	.377	1.000	-1.65	.48
	46-60 years	-.254	.400	1.000	-1.38	.88
	Over 60 years	-1.174	.580	.437	-2.81	.46
19-30 years	14-18 years	-.366	.361	1.000	-1.38	.65
	31-45 years	-.946*	.285	.010	-1.75	-.14
	46-60 years	-.620	.315	.498	-1.51	.27
	Over 60 years	-1.540*	.525	.036	-3.02	-.06
31-45 years	14-18 years	.580	.377	1.000	-.48	1.65
	19-30 years	.946*	.285	.010	.14	1.75
	46-60 years	.326	.334	1.000	-.62	1.27
	Over 60 years	-.594	.537	1.000	-2.11	.92
46-60 years	14-18 years	.254	.400	1.000	-.88	1.38
	19-30 years	.620	.315	.498	-.27	1.51
	31-45 years	-.326	.334	1.000	-1.27	.62
	Over 60 years	-.920	.553	.970	-2.48	.64
Over 60 years	14-18 years	1.174	.580	.437	-.46	2.81
	19-30 years	1.540*	.525	.036	.06	3.02
	31-45 years	.594	.537	1.000	-.92	2.11
	46-60 years	.920	.553	.970	-.64	2.48

*. The difference in means is significant at an alpha level of 0.05. Dependent variable: Civic/social behaviour

Table 6. *Relationship between age and civic behaviour*

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	p
14-18 years	48	13.56	2.133	
19-30 years	132	13.20	2.149	
31-45 years	98	14.14	2.154	0.003
46-60 years	71	13.82	2.160	
Over 60 years	19	14.74	1.939	
Total	368	13.70	2.176	

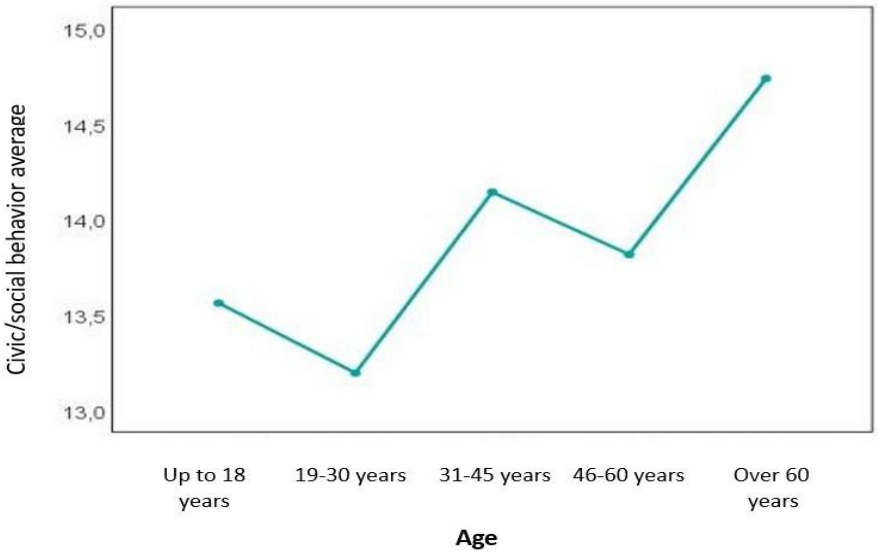

Figure 3. Representation of the relationship between age and civic behaviour

Relationship between age and the level of involvement in sports activities

The level of involvement in sports activities is significantly lower among people aged 19-30 and those under 18; people over 60 years of age also have lower levels of involvement in sports activities (Table 11, Figure 4).

The levels of involvement in sports activities are significantly different depending on the age of respondents ($F = 2.553$, $p = 0.039$).

To verify between which age groups there are significant differences in the level of involvement in sport activities, the Bonferroni post-hoc test was applied. The obtained results show that people aged 19-30 have significantly lower levels of involvement in sports activities than people in the 31-45 age group (Tables 7-9).

Table 7. *Level of involvement in sports activities*

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p
Intergroup	281.627	4	70.407	2.553	.039
Intragroup	10012.243	363	27.582		
Total	10293.870	367			

Table 8. *Multiple comparisons (Bonferroni post-hoc analysis)*

(I) Age	(J) Age	Difference in means (I-J)	Standard error	p	95% Confidence interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Under 18 years	19-30 years	.129	.885	1.000	-2.37	2.63
	31-45 years	-1.782	.925	.548	-4.40	.83
	46-60 years	-1.566	.981	1.000	-4.34	1.21
	Over 60 years	-.518	1.423	1.000	-4.54	3.50
19-30 years	14-18 years	-.129	.885	1.000	-2.63	2.37
	31-45 years	-1.911*	.700	.047	-3.89	.07
	46-60 years	-1.695	.773	.290	-3.88	.49
	Over 60 years	-.646	1.289	1.000	-4.29	2.99
31-45 years	14-18 years	1.782	.925	.548	-.83	4.40
	19-30 years	1.911*	.700	.047	-.07	3.89
	46-60 years	.217	.818	1.000	-2.10	2.53
	Over 60 years	1.265	1.316	1.000	-2.45	4.98
46-60 years	14-18 years	1.566	.981	1.000	-1.21	4.34
	19-30 years	1.695	.773	.290	-.49	3.88
	31-45 years	-.217	.818	1.000	-2.53	2.10
	Over 60 years	1.048	1.357	1.000	-2.78	4.88
Over 60 years	14-18 years	.518	1.423	1.000	-3.50	4.54
	19-30 years	.646	1.289	1.000	-2.99	4.29
	31-45 years	-1.265	1.316	1.000	-4.98	2.45
	46-60 years	-1.048	1.357	1.000	-4.88	2.78

*. The difference in means is significant at an alpha level of 0.05. Dependent variable: Involvement in sports activities

Table 9. *Relationship between age and the level of involvement in sports activities*

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	p
14-18 years	48	15.17	5.770	
19-30 years	132	15.04	5.483	
31-45 years	98	16.95	4.744	0.039
46-60 years	71	16.73	4.902	
Over 60 years	19	15.68	5.982	
Total	368	15.92	5.296	

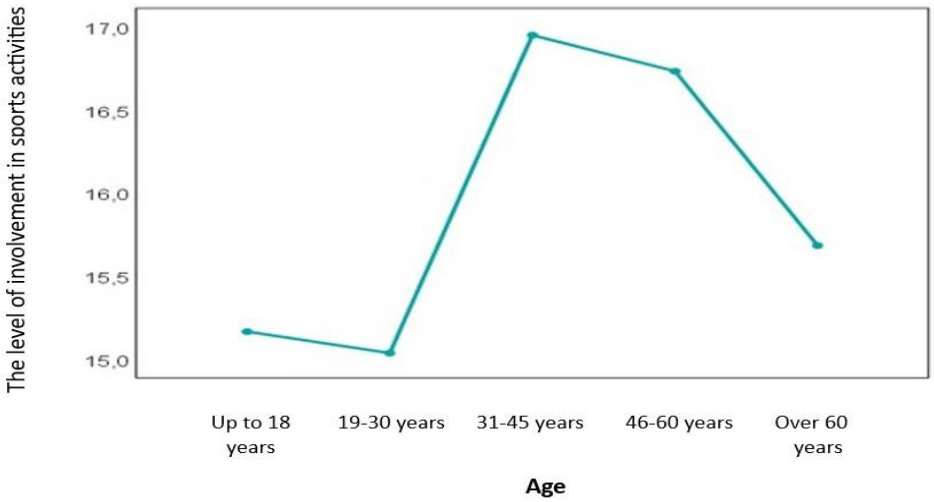

Figure 4. Representation of the relationship between age and the level of involvement in sports activities

Relationship between those who participate/do not participate in independent sport activities and civic/social behaviour

A significantly lower level of civic/social behaviour (m = 11.95) is observed among those who do not participate in sports activities at all, compared to those who participate in such activities (Table 10, Figure 5).

Civic behaviour is at significantly different levels that are determined by the frequency of participation in sports activities (F = 21.500; p < 0.001). The Bonferroni post-hoc test results show that people who do not participate in sports activities at all have significantly lower levels of civic/social behaviour than people who participate in sports activities, regardless of the frequency of involvement (Tables 10-12).

Table 10. *Civic/social behaviour*

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p
Intergroup	261.596	3	87.199	21.500	.000
Intragroup	1476.317	364	4.056		
Total	1737.913	367			

Table 11. *Multiple comparisons (frequency of sports activities)*

(I) I participate in sports activities	(J) I participate in sports activities	Difference in means (I-J)	Standard error	p	95% Confidence interval	
					Lower bound	Lower bound
Daily	weekly	.430	.324	1.000	-.43	1.29
	monthly	.706	.338	.226	-.19	1.60
	not at all	2.574*	.371	.000	1.59	3.56
Weekly	daily	-.430	.324	1.000	-1.29	.43
	monthly	.276	.258	1.000	-.41	.96
	not at all	2.144*	.300	.000	1.35	2.94
Monthly	daily	-.706	.338	.226	-1.60	.19
	weekly	-.276	.258	1.000	-.96	.41
	not at all	1.868*	.315	.000	1.03	2.70
not at all	daily	-2.574*	.371	.000	-3.56	-1.59
	weekly	-2.144*	.300	.000	-2.94	-1.35
	monthly	-1.868*	.315	.000	-2.70	-1.03

*. The difference in means is significant at a significance level of 0.05. Dependent variable: Frequency of sports activities

Table 12. *Relationship between civic behaviour and the frequency of sports activities*

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	p
daily	53	14.53	2.215	< 0.001
weekly	142	14.10	1.723	
monthly	107	13.82	2.498	
not at all	66	11.95	1.472	
Total	368	13.70	2.176	

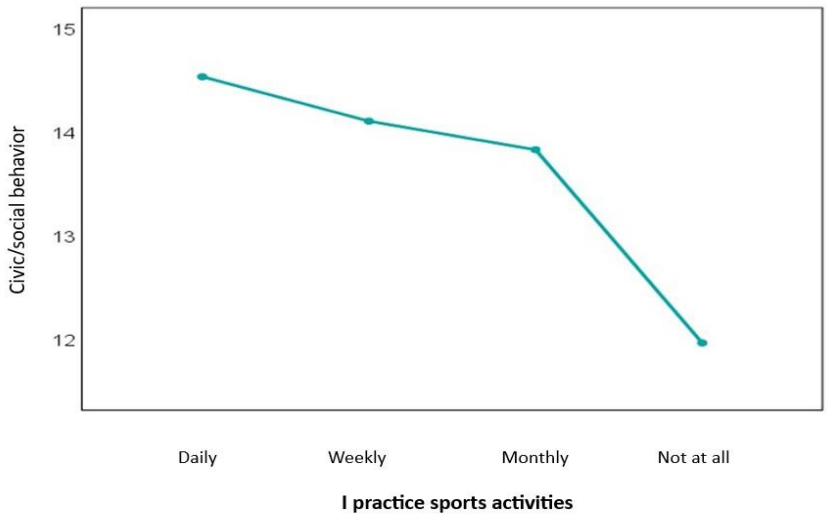

Figure 5. Representation of the relationship between civic behaviour and the frequency of sports activities

Discussion and Conclusion

In the research, the most important actions that can influence the way people get involved in civic activities are the following: better communication of local and neighbourhood projects (specified by 94% of respondents), involvement of certified and dedicated people in this type of activities (38.6%), additional funding (32.6%), local community pressure (32.3%) and involvement of sports personalities (17.9%). Better communication of local and neighbourhood projects is the key action influencing how people engage in civic activities, regardless of gender. Then, the order of the other actions differs according to the gender of respondents. For men, this is followed by local community pressure, additional funding, the involvement of certified and dedicated people in this type of activities, and the involvement of sports personalities. For women, this is followed by the involvement of certified and dedicated people in this type of activities, additional funding, local community pressure and the involvement of sports personalities.

The hierarchy of the reasons for which people practise social involvement is the following: pressure from family and friends, desire for affirmation, responsibility towards public institutions, desire to arouse in others a sense of belonging to society, family education, interests in the area and legal regulations. A study conducted in Romania demonstrates that people do not practice social involvement due to several factors: lack of time, limited information about volunteering opportunities and difficulty finding a cause to believe in (nONGuvernamental, 2013). The results of the statistical analysis show that family education for practising social involvement is significantly more important for women than for men ($p = 0.005$). Legal regulations and the desire for affirmation related to the practice of social involvement are significantly more important for men than for women. Age is a factor that significantly differentiates, in some cases, the importance of the reasons why people practice social involvement. Thus, pressure from family and friends, legal regulations, interests in the area and the desire for affirmation are significantly more important for people in the age

groups ranging from 46 to 60 and over 60 years, compared to the other younger age groups. Responsibility towards public institutions, pressure from family and friends, legal regulations, interests in the area and the desire for affirmation are significantly more important for people with higher education than for those with other levels of education.

The majority of respondents in this study claim to react when somebody is in a degrading situation: 35.5% always react and 59.2% only sometimes react. However, 5.2% say they never react when someone is in a degrading situation. Most people who never react when someone is in a degrading situation are in the 19-30 age group. Among those with upper secondary education, 14.6% declare they would never react, and this percentage is significantly higher than in the case of people with primary and lower secondary or higher education. Regarding intervention in an ongoing conflict, participants responded as follows: 28.5% always, 53.3% sometimes and 18.2% never. Among those with upper secondary education, 26.2% declare they would never intervene, and this percentage is higher than in the case of people with primary and lower secondary or higher education. Millican et al. (2021) emphasise and reinforce the idea that it is generally the responsibility of higher education to cultivate the skills and values of citizens, to recognize and respond to conflict in a constructive manner.

With respect to the degree of participation in sports activities, almost one-fifth of respondents (17.9%) say they do not take part in sports activities, while 11.7% say they always take part in such activities. The vast majority of respondents (70.4%) claim to do sports activities occasionally. Men participate in sports activities in a significantly higher proportion compared to women. The 2017 Eurobarometer surveys (European Commission, 2018) attest to this, showing that men are more likely than women to exercise: 44% of men do so with some regularity, compared to 36% of women; in contrast, 40% of men never exercise or play sports, compared to 52% of women. People aged 31-45 years always participate in sports activities in a significantly higher percentage than people in the other age groups. Slightly more than half of the respondents (59%) say they participate in individual sports activities, 8.2% play team sports, while 14.9% take part in both individual sports activities and team sports. If men prefer individual and mixed activities to a greater extent than women, women prefer team activities to a greater extent than men. The results of a study conducted at European level (European Commission, 2022) contradict the above statement, in the sense that women are more likely than men to engage in sport or other physical activity at home; in contrast, men prefer to engage in sport or other physical activity at a sports club. People aged 31-45 years play individual sports in a higher percentage than people in the other age groups. Among those with upper secondary education, 73.8% participate in individual sports activities, and this percentage is higher than in the case of those with primary and lower secondary or higher education.

Most sports activities (64.1%) are performed in specially designed spaces and only 17.9% are performed in the street. The study carried out by Małgorzata (2017) has revealed that the reason why the vast majority of people prefer specially arranged places is the quality of the public space – its architecture, equipment, design, level of accessibility and openness to the different needs of residents. Men prefer specially designed spaces to a greater extent than women. Young people participate in sports activities to a lesser extent. People aged 31-45 and 46-60 years perform sports activities in specially arranged spaces to a greater extent than

the other age groups. Among those with upper secondary education, only 53.4% perform sports activities in specially designed spaces, and this percentage is lower than in the case of those with primary and lower secondary or higher education.

If the local administration or an NGO organised sports activities in their neighbourhoods or cities/towns, half of the respondents (49.7%) would be active participants, 26.4% would participate only as supporters, and 23.9% would not be interested in participating. Men would be active participants to a greater extent than women, while women would participate as supporters to a fairly large extent. This argument is also put forward at European level, where men are more likely than women to engage in voluntary work supporting sports activities; on the other hand, most women do not intend to engage in such activities (European Commission, 2022). People with ages between 46 and 60 years would actively participate in sports activities organised by the local administration or NGOs to a greater extent than people in the other age groups. Apart from the 17.9% who do not participate in sports activities at all, 14.4% do it daily, 38.6% do it weekly and 29.1% do it monthly. People aged between 31 and 45 years participate daily in sports activities to a significantly higher extent than those in the other age groups. Among the sports activities that respondents would like to see organised in their neighbourhoods, they mentioned: movement games (58.7%), volleyball (32.1%), gymnastics (29.6%), handball (20.9%), football (14.7%) and karate (11.7%). 14.9% of respondents are not interested in seeing sports activities organised in their neighbourhoods. 43.5% of the surveyed participants would get involved to a great extent in organising neighbourhood sports activities and inter-neighbourhood competitions, while 3% would always get involved. Neighbourhood development benefits quality of life and encourages people to be physically active: “improved quality of life and health benefits from physical activity can be achieved through interventions in the neighborhood environments” (Liu et al., 2021).

A statistically significant association is found between the gender of respondents and their involvement in sports activities organised in the neighbourhoods where they live. Men would get involved in sports activities organised in their neighbourhoods to a greater extent than women. The reason why women are not too involved in sports activities organised in their neighbourhoods is insecurity, in the sense that women who reported low crime rates in their neighbourhoods were more physically active by about one hour, compared to women who reported high crime rates in their neighbourhoods (Sallis et al., 2007).

Regarding the degree of correlation, the results of the study highlight that a high level of involvement in sports activities is accompanied by a higher level of civic/social behaviour. There is a moderate to strong correlation between civic/social behaviour and the level of involvement in sports activities. Also, civic behaviour is at significantly lower levels among young people aged 19-30 and under 18 than among older people. The level of involvement in sports activities is significantly lower for people aged 19-30 and those under 18. A significantly lower level of civic/social behaviour is observed among those who do not participate in sports activities at all, compared to those who participate in sports activities. By engaging in sports activities, a community can promote social cohesion between its citizens and contribute to the formation of a stronger sense of community and belonging (Thibodeau, 2020).

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