

Title

Structural and individual factors of sports participation of youth – a comparison between German- and French-speaking municipalities in Switzerland

Authors

Christelle Hayoz¹, Claudia Klostermann¹, Torsten Schlesinger², Siegfried Nagel¹

¹ *Institute of Sport Science, University of Bern, Switzerland*

² *Institute of Human Movement Science, Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany*

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Abstract

Introduction

Sports participation differs considerably depending on the linguistic region in Switzerland. The German-speaking population shows a higher sports activity than French or Italian-speaking citizens (Lamprecht, Fischer, & Stamm, 2014). This study analyses how different structural conditions in the municipalities and sports-related orientations of individuals across the German and French-speaking regions of Switzerland correlate with sports participation of adolescents and young adults.

Methods

In order to identify possible structural factors, municipal sports leaders ($n = 36$) in German and French-speaking municipalities were surveyed. In addition, sports providers ($n = 294$) completed an online questionnaire about their sports offer. Individual factors pertaining to adolescents and young adults, were collected through an online survey of the 15- to 30-year-old population ($N = 4'039$, $M_{\text{age}} = 21.5$, $SD_{\text{age}} = 4.64$).

Results

Sports participation is significantly higher in German-speaking municipalities (84%) compared to French-speaking municipalities (76.2%) ($\chi^2(1, N = 4039) = 33.058, p < .001$). Moreover, adolescents and young adults of French-speaking municipalities are less satisfied with the local sports offer ($t(3058) = 6.386, p < .001$) and the sports infrastructure ($t(3218) = 7.104, p < .001$). Inhabitants of German-speaking municipalities give more importance to their body appearance ($t(3700) = 7.124, p < .05$) and are less ashamed for their bodies during sports activities ($t(3691) = -5.098, p < .05$).

Discussion/Conclusion

These findings show that structural conditions in municipalities as well as the youth's individual perception and individual sports-related orientations may be relevant for the sports participation of adolescents and young adults.

References

Lamprecht, M., Fischer, A., & Stamm, H. P. (2014). *Sport Schweiz 2014: Sportaktivität und Sportinteresse der Schweizer Bevölkerung* [Sports in Switzerland 2014: Sports activities and interest in sports among the Swiss population]. Magglingen: Bundesamt für Sport.