



## **SPORT AS A SOCIO-CULTURAL PHENOMENON: A VIEW FROM INSIDE**

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### **Abstract:**

The article examines sport as the most important sphere of life, covering physical culture, competitive activity and sociocultural functions. The influence of sport on the formation of behaviour patterns and patterns of life, as well as its role in economics and politics, is explored. Various concepts of sport, from its social significance to commercial activity and political influence, are examined in the context of contemporary scientific literature. The importance of clarifying the terminology of the social and human sciences about sport is emphasized as a key aspect in understanding its place and role in society.

**Keywords:** sport, physical culture, competitive activity, Olympic Games, sociocultural phenomenon, health, physical education.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Sport is a component of physical culture, direct competitive activity, organization and preparation for it through the educational, training and pre-competition process, the ultimate goal of which is to improve the physical, emotional, psychological, volitional and moral strengths and abilities of the individual to achieve record results in competitions of all kinds level.

Today, sport, as the most significant sociocultural and political phenomenon, is the most important and natural sphere of life of any society. Every year the number of people involved in sports activities and participating in competitions at the national and international level – European and world championships, Olympic Games, international competitions and tournaments – is growing and achieving not only record results, but also moral and material prestige.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

As a civilizational phenomenon of our time, sport, being included in the current lives of people, forms models and patterns of behavior, and performs leading sociocultural, political and socio-communicative functions.

Sport is directly related to work, leisure, play, art, culture, embodying in different periods of socio-historical development the principle of harmonious unity of the bodily (natural), sociocultural and morally aesthetic, which characterizes it as a mass





phenomenon that has neither racial nor ethnonational, no religious or class barriers or boundaries [20].

Currently, the main qualitative features of sport as an organically integral system are unchanged - competition and play.

Along with physical education, recreation, improving and maintaining health, striving for excellence in sports results, and obtaining moral satisfaction, sport is increasingly becoming an integral part of the world economy (commercial sports activities) and world politics (an instrument of political influence on society).

### **METHODOLOGY & EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS**

In this regard, in modern scientific literature there are many concepts of sport, among them:

- sport as a social or cultural phenomenon;
- sport as a social institution;
- sport as war, aggression;
- sport as a special type of economic (commercial) activity (business);
- sport as politics (ideology of the state);
- sport as a sphere of public life;
- sport as an object of state regulation;
- sport as a means of ethnonational identification;
- sport as an ambassador of peace;
- sport as crime;
- sport as health.

Hence the diversity of points of view on the nature, specificity, place and role of sport in the system of socio-cultural and political phenomena. Therefore, it is theoretically and methodologically important to clarify the terminological apparatus used by the social and human sciences of sports.

Various dictionaries interpret sport, on the one hand, as an integral part of physical culture, a method and means (sets of physical exercises - tourism, games, wrestling, gymnastics, etc.) of physical education for the preservation, development and strengthening of the body, and on the other hand, as a system of organizing, preparing and conducting competitions (certain activities of people that measure their physical and intellectual skills and abilities) [10, 11].

Specialized reference sources put forward its physical component as the core of the concept of sport, and the main attention is given to competitions in various physical exercises and their various combinations. At the same time, the Olympic Encyclopaedia emphasizes that, along with competitions and the company for their



organization, sport also includes preparation for them (training), special socio-cultural relations in this area of people's life and its socially important results for society [13], and the "Sport Accord" website (International Convention of Sports Federations) puts forward a number of specific characteristics of sport: an element of competition; exclusion from the rules of luck and chance, causing intentional harm and possible risk to the health of athletes and fans, ensuring their safety; eliminating the dominance of one company – a manufacturer of sports equipment and equipment [12].

This means that sport should be understood as an activity of people organized according to certain rules, consisting of a comparison of their physical and intellectual data, preparation for it (organizational, managerial and educational and training) and interpersonal connections and processes that develop during its course. In other words, sport is a unique type of physical and intellectual activity aimed at organizing, preparing and conducting competitions, the central element of which is the physical improvement of athletes.

Of course, an athlete is always focused on the result - a record achievement in the implementation of certain physical exercises and their systemic combinations, which can only be recorded through a sports competition. But now sport should be analysed not only as a sporting activity [3], but also its other forms should be identified and considered.

The game component of sports does not meet the requirements of modern times, since as a game, sports are characterized by competition between teams in certain types. The game is one of the models of competition that is not capable of capturing the entire system of phenomena inherent in specific disciplines, and even more so in sports as a whole. Thirdly, sport is a multifaceted entity, including administrative, civil, social, labour and other connections that arise among subjects participating in sports activities. In this sense, sport is defined as an object of state management. Finally, sport as a complex of various types and disciplines is by no means fully represented. We offer the following classification of sports:

- Olympic sport;
- mass sports;
- elite sport;
- professional sports;
- amateur sports;
- school sports;
- college sports;
- national sports.





## RESULTS

However, such a division of sports is not entirely justified according to the following considerations:

1. Misinterpretation of mass and professional sports is typical not only for functionaries of sports activities (officials of sports federations, structures in the field of sports management, activists of sports societies and organizations), since mass sports are identified with physical culture, and professional sports - with business, commerce, entrepreneurship.
2. The gradation of sports into high-achievement sports and professional sports, which are interconnected by the private-general relationship (the first is higher than the second), raises doubts.
3. Left out of sight are already traditional sports: winter and summer, team and singles, non-Olympic and Paralympic, official and unofficial, demonstration, technical, intellectual and others, common in sports theory and practice. In other words, sports disciplines are designated that are managed by the state and which are accordingly covered by physical education and sports policy, especially in terms of its ideological, social and economic support.

In the scientific literature there are many classifications of sports on various grounds; here is the following gradation: 1) types of competitions in which sporting achievements depend on the motor abilities of the athlete (athletics, gymnastics, boxing, etc.); 2) sports that involve actions to control special technical equipment (motorcycle, airplane, yacht, etc.); 3) types in which motor activity is associated with hitting a target with a sporting weapon (rifle, bow); 4) sports in which the results of model design activities are compared (aircraft models, etc.); 5) sports associated with abstract-logical beating of an opponent (chess, checkers) [6, p. 110].

Based on the fact that sport is a rather complex socio-cultural and political phenomenon - a subsystem formation of the social sphere of society - we will distinguish between the concepts of "sport" and "non-sport", "sport" and "physical culture".

The life activity of man and society includes two main forms. The first is associated with motor (physical) activity and is characteristic of all types of human activity (sports, work, recreation, communication, sex, etc.). The second is an intellectual (mental) form of activity. Moreover, each type of sports exercises and their complexes represents a certain type of bodily-motor activity, however, not every bodily-motor practice can be considered a sport.

Sport is based on motor (physical) activity, purposefully carried out in the process of preparation (systematic training) and participation in competitions [19]. In this case,





by defining sport as a specific concept from the generic concept of bodily-motor activity, the following types of non-sports (or non-sports) life activities (experience, traditions) can be derived [12].

1) Physical culture - courses (programs) of educational complex, general civil and standard bodily-motor practice (physical training, physical recreation and physical rehabilitation).

2) Physical education is a pedagogical process associated with the development and improvement of bodily-motor skills and psychophysical characteristics, aimed at preparing young people for military, including work activities, directly or indirectly focused on military-ideological work (rescue services, terrorist, police, religious-sectarian, etc.).

3) Humanistic (“soft”) types of bodily and motor activity are adapted and used in organizing intellectual, spiritual and psychophysical free time and recreation for insufficiently or generally unprepared people, as well as persons with physical disabilities.

4) Extreme (“hard”) types of bodily and motor activity are aimed at extreme applied (ground, surface and underwater, mountain and air) forms of elite physical and psychophysical games and pleasures with quite a lot of danger and possible risk to life.

5) Fitness - courses, programs (commercial) for the body-motor organization of free time and recreation, mainly suitable for citizens seeking to maintain good physical shape.

In connection with the above-mentioned ideas of the non-sports (non-sports) field, sport acts as a system of strictly regulated types and disciplines, the result of regular educational and training cycles focused on the highest record results of competitive bodily-motor activity, accompanied by complex refereeing.

The competitive specificity of the concept of “sport” is also revealed when comparing it with the concept of “physical culture” and significantly distinguishes them, despite the peculiar parallels (closeness) in their interpretation. The most widespread and most often used in the literature is the definition of physical culture as a part of culture, a sphere of social activity aimed at preserving and strengthening health, developing a person’s psychophysical abilities in the process of conscious motor activity.

At the same time, the concept of “physical culture” includes classes on physical strengthening and preservation of health, organization of leisure, and often types of socio-physical communication (collective physically active events). And in the works of Soviet researchers, mastery of physical education was considered as a form of education and physical improvement of children and youth. In addition, scientists use





more significant theoretical and methodological approaches to studying the sphere of sports, while foreign researchers do not distinguish between the concepts of “physical culture” and “sport”, distinguishing only terminologically “non-competitive sports” and “competitive sports” [19].

## CONCLUSIONS

Only relying on the body of knowledge, norms and values formed by society can one optimally organize and carry out physical education and sports activities [5].

The main indicators of the development of physical culture in society are:

- state of physical health and improvement of physical qualities of people;
- the level of application of physical culture in education (training and upbringing), labour activity, the sphere of everyday life and recreation.

Thus, within the framework of the civilizational - sociocultural interpretation of sport, the concepts of “physical culture” and “sport” should be separated. As an integral component of physical culture (an element of the culture of society), sport is focused on achieving record results, developing and improving intellectual and physical abilities and skills, and maintaining personal health. But not all sports disciplines are considered part of physical education. Being its integral element, and even fulfilling general social tasks, sport acts as a complex independent socio-cultural phenomenon, which has its own unique structure and specificity [8], moreover, it becomes not so much a method and means of physical education, but rather a system for preparing and holding competitions for various groups of physical exercises.

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