

Original article. Practice of physical activity and sport, membership and intention of future practice, in group of teenagers from 12 to 16 years old. Vol. III, issue. 3; p. 419-435, september 2017. A Coruña. Spain ISSN 2386-8333

## **Practice of physical activity and sport, membership and intention of future practice, in group of teenagers from 12 to 16 years old**

## **Práctica de actividad física y deporte, asociacionismo e intención de práctica futura en un grupo de adolescentes de 12 a 16 años**

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This study is concerned to the project "Evaluation of motor competence in secondary school students in the Basque Autonomous Community"

Financed by the Department of Education, Linguistic Policy and Culture of the Basque Government (CTP09-P02)

**Editorial shedule:** Article received: 28/11/2016 Accepted: 19/03/2017 Published: 01/09/2017

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17979/sportis.2017.3.3.1899>

### **Abstract**

The aim of this study is to analyze the frequency of sport and physical activity practice among Secondary School adolescents, as well as the level of belonging to an organized club and the factors that will influence in the future practice. The sample is made up of 986 adolescents aged 12-16, from Basque Country. It is expected to find the criteria that have influence in the motivation of the adolescents to do and maintain physical and sport activity. The results indicate that the 84.4% of the adolescents perform physical and sport activity. The 58.4% of the sample perform physical and sport activity associated to a club. Additionally, it has been found a significant relationship between all the variables.

### **Key Words**

Club; associationism; sport; physical activity.

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<http://revistas.udc.es/>

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## Resumen

El presente estudio analiza la frecuencia de práctica físico-deportiva de adolescentes que cursan Enseñanza Secundaria Obligatoria, fijándose en el nivel de pertenencia a un club organizado y su intención de práctica futura. La muestra la componen 986 jóvenes vascos de entre 12 y 16 años. Se empleó una metodología cuantitativa de naturaleza descriptiva y correlacional. Entre los resultados obtenidos podemos destacar que el 84,4% de los sujetos analizados realiza práctica de actividad físico-deportiva; el 58,4% realiza su actividad físico-deportiva asociado a un club, siendo las relaciones entre ambas variables estadísticamente significativas. Se concluye que los adolescentes que realizan actividad físico-deportiva con mayor frecuencia son quienes están asociados a clubes, siendo este colectivo el que presenta mayor intención de práctica futura.

## Palabras clave

Club; asociacionismo; deporte; actividad física.

## Introduction

The benefits generated by regular physical and sport activities on the body's or psychological health are well known. However, a great number of adolescents perform lower levels of activities than those recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2010). This situation generates adolescents more and more sedentary and it increases social alerts because adolescence is crucial in the development of life-long habits (Castillo, Balaguer, Duda & García-Merita, 2004).

Nuviala, Munguía, Fernández, Ruiz and García (2009) in their study of occupational typology of Spanish adolescents, in which students ages 10 to 16 from Huelva, Sevilla and Zaragoza Provinces participated, highlighted that 79,1% performed one hour or less of physical and sport activities in their free time, the mean per weekday being 46 minutes. In this same line, The Superior Sports Council (SSC) published in October, 2011 a study entitled *Sports Habits of the Student Population in Spain*. In this study, a new physical and sports practice index was defined for the student population, following the (WHO 2010) recommendations, according to which, 35% of the student population was sedentary. In a more recent study, they evaluated the levels of practice in boys and girls, ages 6 to 12, concluding that 34,4% of the population studied did not perform any physical exercise.

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Original article. Practice of physical activity and sport, membership and intention of future practice, in group of teenagers from 12 to 16 years old. Vol. III, issue. 3; p. 419-435, september 2017. A Coruña. Spain ISSN 2386-8333 (Reverter et al., 2014). Also, the results are increasingly disturbing since the studies performed in the last few years have revealed that the practice of physical activity decreases with age (Arribas, 2005; Beltrán-Carrillo, Devís-Devís & Peiró-Velert, 2012; Isorna, Ruiz & Rial, 2013; Luis de Cos, 2014; Muñoz, 2015; Navas & Soriano, 2016; Ramos, Rivera, Moreno & Jiménez-Iglesias, 2012; Urrutia, 2014).

The increase of overweight and obesity and the associated deceases worry educators and physical education and health professionals. Spain is on top of the European list for obesity indexes (around 15%) and in overweight (35%), thus becoming a priority the need for an educational study that generates knowledge on how to establish in the present adolescent society an active and healthy lifestyle (Hernandez et al., 2008), and thus provide educators and professionals tools to promote a healthy life style in teenagers.

Physical and sport practices in children and adolescents is a pastime with great personal implications, since, besides favoring the maintenance of good physical and mental health, it offers great opportunities to communicate and interact with others (Brustad & Arruza, 2002). This study has been proposed for the adolescent stage, that as it has been pointed out, is the fundamental stage in the acquisition of life-long habits that will remain throughout adult life (Balaguer, 2002). However, those physical, psychological, cognitive as well as evolutionary changes experienced by adolescents may influence their sport's behavior, reaching at times, the abandonment of these practices (Caro, 2010; Luis de Cos, 2014; Nuviala, Tamayo & Nuviala, 2012; Ramos, Ponce de León & Sanz, 2010; Ruiz & Piéron, 2009). Amongst the characteristics for physical and sport practices performed by adolescents, stands out the fact that they are performed with their group of friends. Their peers play part in the sports experience of the adolescent, turning them into social agents that influence their physical and sport activities (Arribas, Arruza & Gil de Montes, 2006; Gutiérrez & Escartí, 2006; Luis de Cos, Arribas, Luis de Cos, Azpillaga & Gutiérrez, 2013). Clubs or sport associations often constitute the core to which adolescents are drawn to, among other reasons, because it assures them sharing and maintaining their hobby with their peers. Likewise, adolescents spotlight, at the time they determine the frequency that they perform their practices, associationism, understood as membership of an organized club (Isorna, Rial & Vaquero-Cristóbal, 2014; Jiménez-Torres, Godoy-Izquierdo & Godoy, 2012; Martínez et al.,

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2012; Navas & Soriano, 2016). In a study performed in Extremadura, Spain, those surveyed pointed out that the reasons they considered for becoming members of a club or sports association were: *teaching you correctly 9,7%, allows you to relate to others 8,4%, achieve continuity 9,7%, my parents belonged 0,6%, there I find friends 12,3%, I like their organization 5,8%, access to quality installations 29% and I can practice with thoughtfulness 24,5%*. (Domínguez, García & Escalante, 2011). As it can be noted, the highest percentages concentrate in relating with people and being with friends, and in guaranteeing to maintain the activity (seriousness, installations and regularity). Likewise, García, Rodríguez, Pérez (2013); Yuste, (2005), affirm that associationism in adolescents entails a significant increase in their habitual levels of physical activity, especially in those that participate in an active manner in federated competitions.

Spain has numerous clubs and sport associations, a number that has increased in the last 25 years more than 100% (Dominguez, 2016), however, the affiliation to a club is not very high (García Ferrando, 2006). A study performed to students of the Murcia Region, Spain, show that only 32,8% of said students participate in federated sports competitions (García et.al., 2013). In another study performed in Extremadura, Spain, the data is similar. In this Autonomous Community, 15% of those surveyed belong to a club or sports association and 10,9% have or have had a federative license (Domínguez et al., 2011). The data from the past few years indicate an increase in the number of persons that express they prefer to perform physical activity on their own, even though it is true that the associationism percentages have increased, they are still low. Arribas (2005) in his study on physical and sports practices, showed that it exists a higher percentage of adolescents that prefer to practice physical activity in the “free sports” format. The cause for this low percentage of participants in associations could be, as exposed by Nuviala and Nuviala (2005), that the competitive format delimits, in the majority of cases, the orientation towards sports performance. However, sports associationism is a variable to be taken into consideration when predicting future conducts related to physical and sports practices (Yuste, 2005), as revealed in the results of a study about physical and sports practices habits of the school population in Murcia, Spain, in which the federated students generally had higher levels of physical and

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sports practices than those that did not perform any competitive practice (García, Rodríguez, Pérez, Rosa & López, 2015).

Reviewing the bibliography induces to think about the need to know the current reality and to take it into consideration, to search for a way in which to intervene for the benefit of future active and healthy adults. This reflection, gave rise to this study, whose purpose is to inquire about the relationship between associationism and physical activity and sports practices with the purpose of understanding if said variables would promote a higher practice in the near future of adolescents. The derived objectives are:

- Analyze and describe the frequency of practices, associationism and the intent of future practices.
- Study the relationship between associationism, frequency of physical and sport practices and the intention of future practices.

## **Materials & method**

The design of this study is “ex post facto”, of descriptive, correlational and multivariate nature.

### ***Participants***

986 subjects from 14 different Secondary Schools from the Autonomous Community at Basque Country, Spain (ACBC).

The selection criteria used was purely convenience. The selected centers were located in towns with over 4000 inhabitants and we respected that our sample was balanced with respect to sex and center type (concerted and public).

### ***Instruments and variables***

The questionnaire used in this study comes from researches performed by the investigation group IKERKI 05/30 with the purpose of analyzing the physical exercise and sports habits within the young population in the ACBC territorial realm. Said questionnaire was one of the instruments used in the project I+D+I titled “Evaluation of motor proficiency in students of Secondary School in the Basque Autonomous Community” Code CTP09-P02.

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The instrument used is a questionnaire titled, “Questionnaire HBS” (Wold, 1989). The variables used in this work is part of a much broader study that consists of 11 items.

As far as the variables, to measure the frequency of physical and sport practices it posed this concrete question, “With which frequency do you participate sports, games or gymnastics outside of school?”, giving as options 4 possible answers: 1. Never, 2. Less than once a week, 3. Every week, 4. Every day.

With respect to associationism, and with the intention of knowing if they practiced their sports modality in a team belonging to a club, the surveyed teenagers answered through this question: “Are you a member of any sport’s club?”, being able to choose between: 1. No, 2. Yes, but do not participate, 3. Yes, I am training in a sport’s team.

Lastly, to identify their intention of future sport’s practice we posed another direct question with 4 options, where the students had to express their opinion if they believed that when they were 20 years old they would participate in some sport or would take part in physical activities or sports. For this, the surveyed teens had to choose between: 1. Definitely no, 2. Probably no, 3. Probably yes, 4. Definitely yes.

### **Procedure**

To be able to carry out this investigation permission was obtained from competent education authorities, as well as informing in detail the mothers / fathers of the participating students for this study, confirming they are voluntarily participating and the confidentiality of the answers and all the data that the girls and boys would facilitate to us.

The itinerary used to obtain the data, started with the previous selection of the centers. Once the appointments were confirmed, the collaborators traveled to the centers to perform the data gathering. A brief introduction was made, explaining the study’s objectives and clarifying any doubts raised by the students participating in the study, as well as the collaborating professors. Next, the questionnaires were filled out, taking about 45 minutes. In the case where the randomly selected school centers did not offer their collaboration, those were substituted by using convenience criteria, always respecting the selection criteria. Once the data gathering was finished, certificates were issued to the directors of the centers, confirming their participation in this project.

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## Data analysis

Once the data was obtained, its debugging was performed and then proceeded to its analysis using the statistical program SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for PC, version 22.0.

Firstly, a descriptive analysis was performed of the different variables of the sample, using central trend measures. Secondly, the results were analyzed through inferential analysis. Since the study is correlational and that a large sample was available, a correlation non-parametric analysis was used with the purpose of recognizing the incidence of one variable over the others.

## Results

### *Descriptive analysis of the frequency of physical or sport practices, associationism and the intention of future practices.*

To give a reply to the objective raised in this investigation, in this paragraph, reference is made to the results related to the Physical and sport practice performed by Basque adolescents. For this, we asked them how many days they practiced any sport's modality. The results obtained indicate that 60% of the adolescents surveyed performed Physical and sport practices every week and 23,4% every day, versus 8,5% of the adolescents that stated they "never" performed any physical or sport practices and 8,1% that practiced less than one time per week. (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Frequency of Physical and sport practice

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Other of the aspects considered interesting is knowing the implication with the practice through associationism. As it can be observed in figure 2, more than half of the students surveyed (58,4%) said they practice their sports modality within a club.

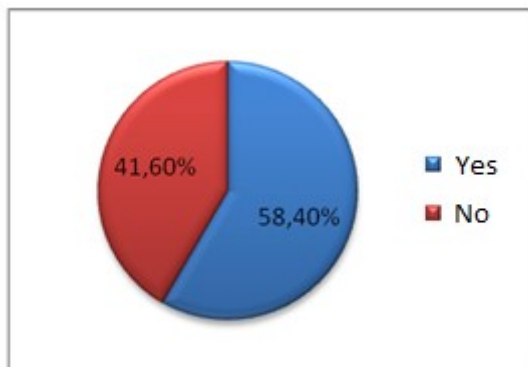


Figure 2: Percentages of associationism

Finding out to which extent the surveyed adolescents foresee their future in relation to physical and sport practices could contribute interesting information. The adolescents were asked their intention to continue practicing physical or sport activities. The results showed that 37,6% had intentions of continuing to practice, versus 1,9% of the surveyed that confirmed they did not have any intentions of continuing to practice physical and sport activities. However, it exists a group of surveyed that did not have a clear position, where 53,3% of those said they would continue with their sports modality.

With the intention of describing and learn in greater depth the physical and sport practices of adolescents, the frequency of practice was related to associationism and with their intention of future practices.

Table 1: Analysis of associationism and levels of physical and sports practices

		Never		Less than one time per week		Every week		Every day	
		N	(84)	N	(80)	N	(588)	N	(227)
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Associationism</b>	<b>No</b>	84	20,6	71	17,4	229	56,1	24	5,9
	<b>Yes</b>	0	0	9	1,6	359	62,9	203	35,6

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As it can be observed in Table 1, adolescents that perform physical and sport practices within a club, have a higher frequency of practice than those that are not associated to a club. 35% train every day of the week and 62,9% every week. However, of those that do not perform physical and sport practices in a club only 5,9% train on a daily basis.

The results reveal that within the practicing adolescents that train every day of the week, 89,4% are affiliated to a sport's club and 10,6% practice their sport modality outside of a club (Figure 3).

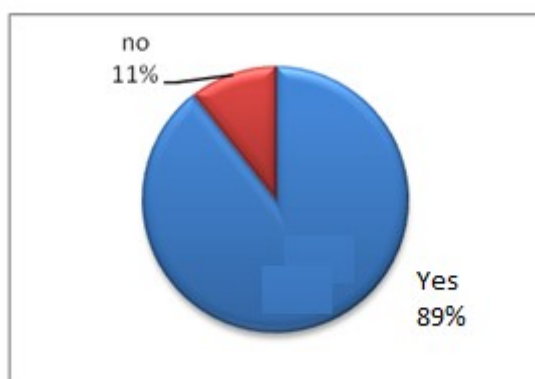


Figure 3: Description of the adolescents that perform physical and sport practices every day and associationism

As far as the relationship between levels of physical and sport practices and their intention to practice, the data revealed that between those that have the intention of continuing their training, 37% perform physical and sport practices every day of the week and 57,8% every week. However, amongst those that have no intention of practicing physical and sport activities their practice frequency is lower. 52,6% did not perform any physical and sport activity and 26,3% less than one time per week (Table 2)

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Table 2: Analysis of the intention to practice and levels of physical and sport practices

	Never		Less than one time per week		Every week		Every day	
	N	(84)	N	(80)	N	(590)	N	(229)
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Intentionalism</b>								
<b>Yes</b>	8	2,2	11	3	213	57,8	136	37
<b>Maybe yes</b>	39	7,4	57	10,9	339	64,6	90	17,1
<b>Maybe no</b>	27	38	7	9,9	34	47,9	3	4,2
<b>No</b>	10	52,6	5	26,3	4	21,1	0	0

The results demonstrate that amongst adolescents that practice physical and sport activities every day of the week, 59,4% have intention of continuing to train and 39,3% probably will also continue.

### ***Relationship between associationism, practice frequency and intention of future practice.***

With the intention of digging deeper into the existing relationship between the frequency of physical practice and sport activity of surveyed adolescents and associationism and their intention of future practices previously described, bivariate correlations have been made *Rho Spearman*.

Table 3: Relationship between physical and sport activities of adolescents, their practice intentions and associationism

	Associationism	Intention of practice
<b>Associationism</b>	-	.353**
<b>Practice frequency</b>	.516**	.414**

$p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .000$ .

The results demonstrate that relating the variables frequency of physical and sport practices and associationism, a positive and significant relationship was found, that is to say,

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adolescents that perform sport activities in a club, perform said practice more frequently ( $p < .01$ ). In the same manner, in the cases where the adolescents perform physical and sport activities more frequently, possess a higher intention of practice ( $p < .01$ ). Likewise, a positive and significant relationship was found between associationism and their practice intentions ( $p < .01$ ), this is to say, that adolescents associated to a club possess a higher index of future practices.

## Discussion

This study has analyzed practice frequencies, associationism and the intention of future practices and the relationships established between the different variables. The data obtained demonstrate the high level of practices in the Autonomous Community at Basque Country following previous lines of work performed in other communities such as Seville (Sports Observatory in Seville, 2007), La Rioja (Ramos et al., 2010), and the one performed by Ruiz and Piéron (2009) at Almería, Granada and Murcia Provinces. However, a study performed by CSD (2011) for all of Spain was also reviewed, which proclaimed a bit lower participation rate (65%).

Doing a comparison with studies performed within Gipuzkoa's Historical Territory and similar populations it was substantiated that the number of participants in the present investigation is close to 80% and coincide with the results shown in the study done by Luis de Cos (2014).

As indicated by Hellín (2003) the physical and sport practice habits are more widespread amongst the younger population, declining gradually with age. This tendency is consistent with the data found in several studies performed in Spain (Caro, 2010; CSD, 2011; Nuviala et al., 2009; Ramos et al., 2010; Reverter et al., 2014; Ruiz & García, 2009), indicating a clear regression of the levels of practice parallel to the increase in age, that becomes very significant in the adolescent period. In comparing the present study with a study performed in the same CAV (Arribas, 2005) with adolescents ages 15 to 18 years old, the results presented are coherent with the tendency of the studies being reviewed.

The parameters studied for the characterization of physical and sports activity of adolescents, namely associationism, gives clues to find out how physical and sport practices

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in adolescents are now and how they are evolving. The analysis performed shows that the membership to a sports club is higher than the membership presented by adolescents in other Spanish Provinces such as Extremadura (Domínguez et al., 2011) or Murcia (García et al., 2013). These differences could be justified by sport's organizational system for school ages at Basque Autonomous Communities since two variables exist: sport's performance and participation.

The results of this study highlight that the students associated to a club or sport's association possess much higher levels of physical and sport practice. Likewise, it has been verified that associationism is significantly related with the frequency of practice. These results coincide with those obtained in similar studies (Domínguez, 2016; Domínguez, et al., 2011; García et al., 2013), where federated practices, because of their structure oriented towards improvement and performance, predisposes to a higher involvement in your sport tasks. However, the results of this study demonstrate low indices in relationship to the number of adolescents that practice their sport associated with a club or federation, coinciding with the rest of the Provinces where similar studies have been performed (Domínguez, 2016; Domínguez et al., 2011; García et al., 2013). This data could be due, as pointed out by Nuviala and Nuviala (2005), that the competitive format delimits that adolescents become part of organized clubs, since, in the majority of cases, they are oriented towards sport's performance. Another cause that could justify the low percentage of associationism could be the selective criteria that eliminates the less competitive (Yuste, 2005). García et al. (2013), in the same line, pointed out that the absence of non-competitive activity with the clubs or associations provoked a progressive abandonment of those that do not feel they are sufficiently competent.

Adolescents associated to a club turn out to be those that present a higher frequency of physical and sport practices (89,4% practice sports every day). Supported by the study of García et al. (2013), in which this tendency coincides, it can be deducted that it exists a positive influence between being associated and the frequency of physical and sport practices. This data could be explained by the temporal, selective and disciplinary requirements peculiar to structured sports (Arribas, 2005).

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In the same manner, in the present study, it is confirmed that the frequency of practice by students is significantly related with their intention of future practice, at the same time, associationism also is significantly related to their intent to practice. This data is in accord with the results obtained by Yuste (2005), in which he concluded that sport's associationism is a variable to take into account when predicting future conducts related with physical and sport practices. Other researchers, pointed out in their studies, that the explanation of this tendency could be defined by federated sports practice in itself, which predisposes subjects to continue practicing and endeavoring. (García et al., 2013; Gutiérrez, 2000).

In sight of the results obtained it is considered recommendable to take into account associationism in initiatives that promote actions directed to maintaining or increasing the levels of physical activity practices in adolescents. Numerous studies point out the importance of social environment in physical and sport activities (Luis de Cos, 2014; Ramos et al., 2010; Ruiz & Piéron, 2009) in which adolescents share this time with their peers. Sport associations or clubs could satisfy this need. However, the data demonstrates that it is not a priority amongst adolescents in CAV to be associated to a club. The causes point out that clubs offer a competitive format excessively tied to performance and consequently to motor competence. This aspect, delimits to a few, access to this type of practice.

Therefore, taking into account the data contributed in this investigation and others with similar results, to which we have made reference to, it would be appropriate for clubs and sport associations to take into account the possibility of diversifying their type of physical and sport practices, attending to the different forms and needs to be able to understand sports.

## Conclusions

Habits for physical and sport practices in students within the Basque Autonomous Community could be defined as active since the majority of adolescents between ages 12 to 16 years old declare to perform physical and sport activities, being that 23,3% perform physical and sport activities daily. Likewise, it is observed that more than half practice their sports modality linked to a club or sport's association.

With respect to the intention of future practice, it was observed that only 1,9% definitely said they will not continue performing physical and sport activities and even

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though, there are many that remain undecided, almost 40% affirm that they will continue with their practices.

As to the relationship between the variables, it was observed that it exists a positive and significant relationship between associationism and practice frequency, that is to say, adolescents that perform sport activities associated to a sports club demonstrate higher indexes of physical and sports practices. Likewise, those that perform their sport's modality with higher frequency declare to have the intention to continue their practices, thus being a positive and significant relationship.

In the same manner, associationism has a positive and significant relationship with intent to practice, and this way, adolescents that are associated to a club show a greater amount of intent to continue to be linked to their physical and sport practices.

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For cite this paper you must use this reference: Luis-deCos, I.; Luis-deCos, G.; Arribas-Galarraga, S. (2017). Practice of physical activity and sport, membership and intention of future practice, in group of teenagers from 12 to 16 years old. *Sportis Sci J*, 3 (3), 419-435.

DOI:<https://doi.org/10.17979/sportis.2017.3.3.1899>

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