

INFLUENCE OF THE FUTSAL SPORT ON THE SOCIAL STATUS OF FUTURE ECONOMISTS

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Introduction

Sport is a field of human activity that influences every citizen and has an enormous potential to gather people together, reaching them regardless of their sex, age or social belonging. (Belcheva et al., 2016). Physical and sport activities with correctly organized, methodological and information support have a positive effect on the process of socialization of the individual in the context of gaining social experience through entering the social environment, creating social links and through an active reproduction of the system of social relations and interrelations of the individual (Karpov et al., 2004).

Sport is a long-year educational-training process, building many qualities in those practicing it, such as will, tenacity, persistency, responsibility, self-confidence, discipline. It helps in maintaining good health and eases psychic tension. Grown-ups should practise a sport that best suits their character, temperament and physical qualities. From my experience as a trainer, I have made the observation and reached the conclusion that sport has a positive impact on children. Sport is important because it helps them become individuals of strong character, good breeding and clear purposes.

In this context the role of the trainer and sport teacher is very important. It is well known that trainers play a decisive role in the life of young sportsmen and have the potential to influence positively or negatively their sport experiences (Bruner et al., 2011). Students acquire a number of skills during sport practicing in the university (Kasabova, 2011), which increases their sport qualification and as a result improves their results in competitions (Ivanov et al., 2014).

Schools and universities are the places of active social contacts where skills and knowledge are acquired, and where the trainees are prepared for future realization on the labour market (Becheva et al., 2015, Stavrev, 2016). In the world of modern technologies and social media, there is no other area in life but sport that offers the exclusive possibility for close face-to-face contacts and for establishing social ties and forming social groups.

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Participation in a team, as well as obeying principles such as fair play and the rules of the game, showing respect to others, solidarity and discipline contribute to an active social life. Voluntariness in sport organizations opens up many possibilities for informal education that should be taken into consideration. Furthermore, sport provides attractive opportunities to the young people to integrate easier in social life and to establish contacts and get people closer in the different communities (Katsarski et al., 2014).

As a sport lecturer at UNWE and a trainer of the teams on futsal and football, throughout the years I managed to build a team – a community of motivated young people who together pursue their aims. Together we have trained, studied and improved our qualities and skills that have helped a great number of students find their realization and place in the social life of the country. As claimed by Atanasov (2018), "One of the factors of the successful building of an adequate readiness for professional realization is the physical working capacity. In the conditions of schools of higher education, the subject Physical culture and sport is of great significance for all the improvement, keeping and strengthening the health of young people. Last but not the least, the increased knowledge of sport as a means for physical fitness typically assists their future social manifestation."

The UNWE futsal team was launched as a project back in 2008, after I had gained two-year experience as a lecturer at UNWE. As a futsal contestant my ambition was to awaken students' interest in this sport, and gradually form a team that participates in the competitions and tournaments of BFU (Bulgarian Football Union). Throughout the years, a number of contestants have been included and excluded from the team. Yet with those showing interest and the desire to develop, we succeeded to build an efficient team that won many titles and cups at the national and international level.

In recent years FIFA, UEFA and all other continental football associations define futsal as the fastest developing sport in the world. On the Youths Olympic Games in Buenos Aires in 2018, futsal was a part of the Olympic programmes, and as a guarantee for the future development of the game, UEFA obliged all professional clubs in Greece to create and develop futsal teams by 2018 (GIOLDASIS, 2016).

How does this sport develop in this country? Futsal took a firm foothold in Bulgaria in 2003, starting a competition on circle system, and the country's champion enjoyed the opportunity to represent Bulgaria in the European club tournaments on futsal. The team of VIP Sofia became the first champion, participant in the championship league on futsal in Lithuania. In 2003 a permanent committee on futsal was established at BFU, a body defining the trends in the development of this sport that was then new for the country. Sofia and Varna have emerged as basic centers for development of futsal, and not accidentally all champions so far come from these two cities.

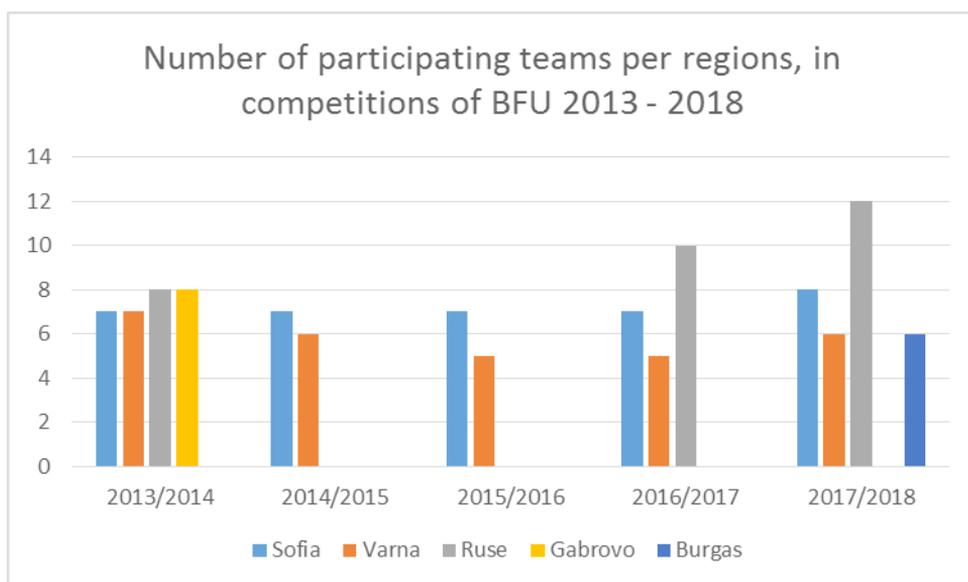


Fig. 1. Number of participant teams in competitions and tournaments of BFU, in the period 2013 – 2018

Figure 1 shows in what competitive environment our contestants from UNWE achieved their results. Throughout the years, the number of the participant teams at the national level ranged within 12 to 32 teams in the last championships. UNWE has invariably been among the first three of the National futsal championship in the recent six years and also it won six titles in a row in the Sofia futsal League, among teams such as Levski, CSKA, Locomotive and other sport clubs.

In this article we consider the possibilities granted to the contestants of futsal team of UNWE with regard to the improvement of their social status and role in society.

I believe that the role of sport as a means for having a healthy lifestyle, especially in the universities, should be guided in another direction for the creation of wide circle of contacts, generating motivation and responsibility for achieving the tasks set, focusing on achievements. Higher education is a possibility for young and talented people to communicate and develop in a homogeneous environment of similar interests, to establish contacts that could contribute to their future realization on the labour market.

Purpose

The aim of this article is to expose the role of sport, in particular futsal in UNWE, as a possibility for social and professional prosperity.

Tasks

1. Carrying out of a survey among the contestants from futsal team in UNWE;
2. Processing and analysis of the results;
3. Revealing the interrelation between practicing of futsal in UNWE and possibilities for social, professional and personal growth.

Methods of investigation

For solving of the tasks set we have used the following methods:

1. Investigation, analysis and summary of literature sources;
2. Survey – online inquiry carried out with contestants in May 2018, taking advantage of Google Forms.

Results from the investigation

Analysis

The role of sport in society is extremely important in many areas. According to an investigation of EU from 2014, almost 60% of citizens often participate in various sport activities, and are members in more than 700,000 clubs and various associations and federations, a big part of them being amateurs. Professional sportsmen are also of great importance and have largely supported the social role of sport. Apart from guaranteeing the healthy lifestyle of the people, sport also plays an educational, social and cultural role. (Davidov, Peeva, 1985).

Research connected with manifestations of asocial behavior among the grown-ups and possibilities for efficient socialization and development of the potential of the respondents exposes the role of physical culture as a main factor for the mental, physical and motor development of young people. Furthermore, sport is a factor for the support of their efficient integration towards human values and prevention of the pernicious influence of the negative tendencies in society such as addiction, alcohol, excessive usage of new technologies, waste of time, among other (Momchilova, Drumeva 2013). The same conclusions are drawn by Karpov and Atanasov (Karpov et al., 2006, Atanasov, 2018).

Investigation of the English Football Association (FA, 2015) shows the enormous interest in playing football in the country – more than 11 million citizens of over five years of age say that they participate in some kind of football. Of course, there is female football, futsal, youth football leagues, among many other. The clubs are 119,000 in number, and the leagues on football in England – 1,200. On the island, many of the clubs in the National league of futsal are university teams. Universities grant their students the unique possibility to practise futsal and to participate in top-level competitions.

The futsal team of UNWE was structured in a similar fashion. Back in 2008, we laid the foundation of a student team of futsal, which was composed of boys with completed football careers, and futsal provided them the alternative opportunity to practice their favourite sport in a competitive environment. Twenty-six boys played with the team, and those who are still playing were 16 in number when the survey was carried out in 2018.

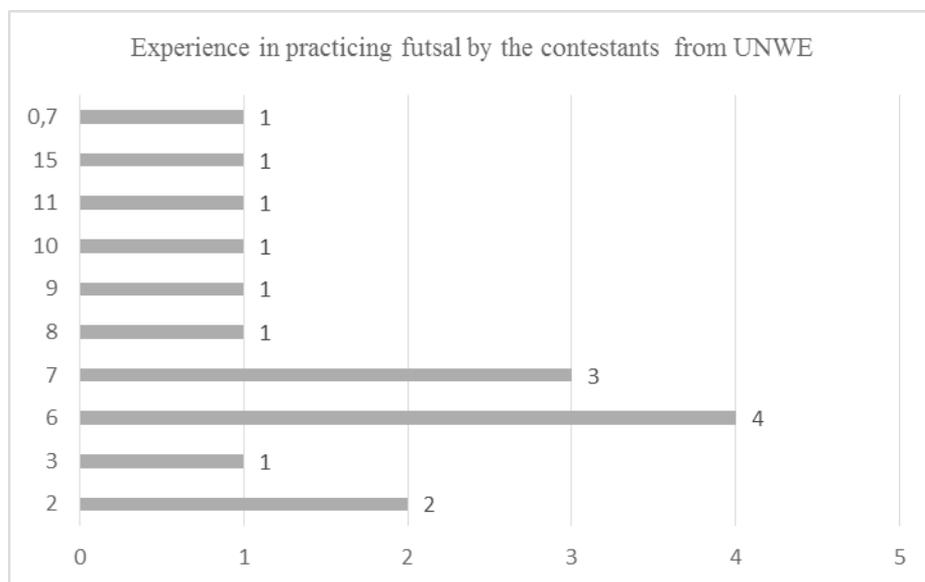


Fig. 2. Experience of contestants on futsal from UNWE

Figure 1 offers the results from the answers to the question *Since when have you practiced futsal?* It is apparent that there are three clearly defined groups of contestants. Contestants with experience of up to three years are in the first group. These are students from the new generation, with whom the team is renewed. Contestants with experience of between five and eight years comprise the second group, to which belong the core of eight contestants we started work with in the period 2008 – 2010. In the third group consisting of four contestants are those with over eight years of futsal experience. We see that the team is a body of young boys with not so big experience and a sufficient number of contestants with a relatively long experience in futsal.

Experience corresponds to the level of practicing football and futsal too. Some 25% of contestants, those with the longest experience have practiced football and futsal on a professional level. Nearly 75% of the respondents have practiced football and futsal on an amateur level.

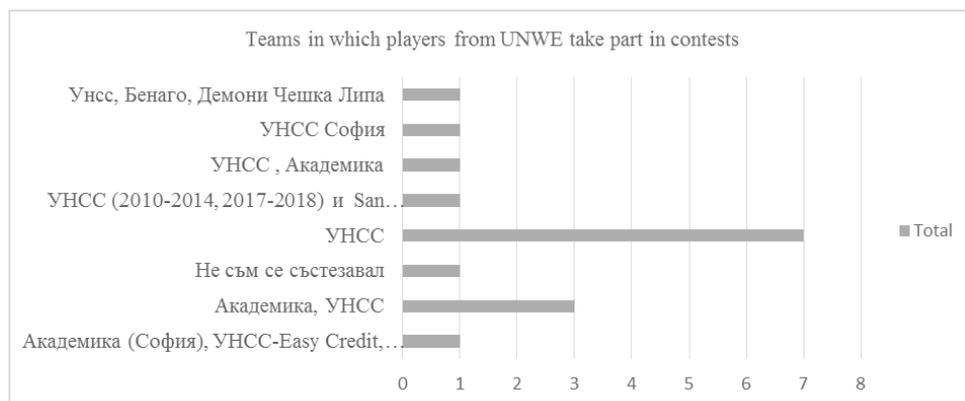


Fig. 3. Teams in which payers from UNWE take part in contests

Figure 2 shows the teams in which players from UNWE have taken part in contests. What draws our attention is that 50% of the respondents have played for one club only – that of UNWE. This fact exposes the good atmosphere and unity of the team. It is also apparent that there is no fluctuation, which is a precondition for the ever improving performance of the team. What is more, the trainer thus provided with the opportunity to develop his players over the years so that the young people acquire skills and capabilities and increase their level in futsal. The reason that played a key role for students from UNWE to practice futsal in the university is revealed in figure 3. What makes impression is that 63% of the respondents practice futsal because of the trainer in the university. This reveals the important role of the sport teacher in selecting and motivating students from the UNWE for system sport exercise. Some 31% of the respondents say they practice futsal because of friends. Once again the role of the university as creating possibilities for communication play a key role for joining the team.

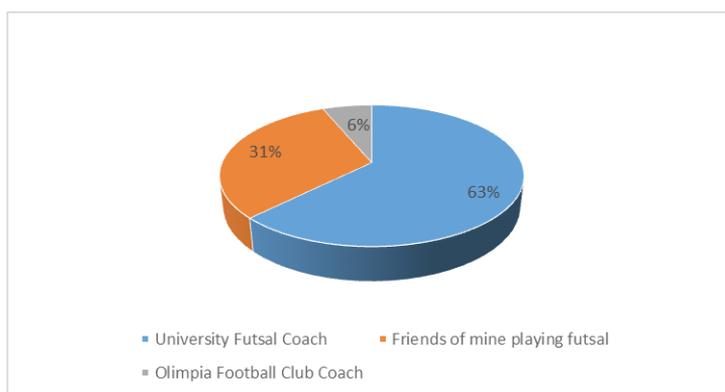


Fig. 3. Who played a main role in your decision to practice futsal?

The opinion of the respondents with regard to the role of futsal and their participation in the UNWE team for their professional growth and realization is shown on Fig. 4

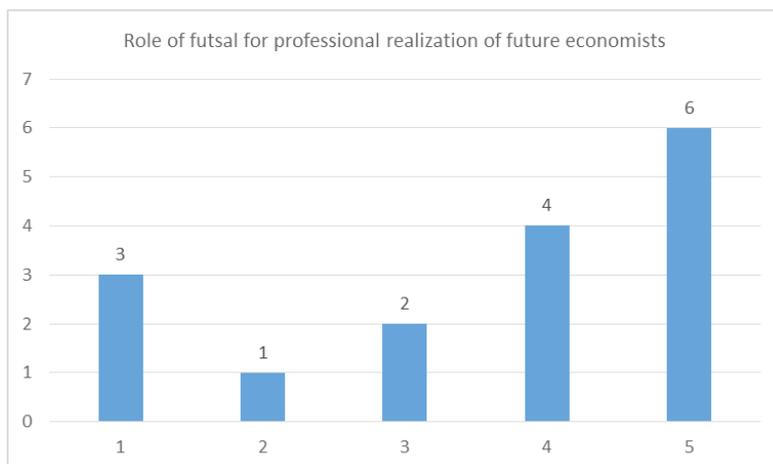


Fig. 4. Role of futsal in the professional realization of future economists

The respondents have been given a choice to select from a range from 1 to 5, where 1 is equivalent to No, it has not helped me at all, while 5 is equivalent to Yes, it helped me a lot to realize myself in the professional sphere. It is evident that 75% of the inquired ones deem their participation in the team of UNWE as a possibility for realization in their professional field. For 12.5% of respondents their participation in the team has played a moderate role in their realization, while for nearly 63% the participation in the team has played a very important role for their professional realization. This is also due to the fact that in the recent 15 years there has been a boom in the development of mini-football leagues, especially in the capital, where many small and big companies participate with teams. Moreover, during job interviews in some companies, there is a requirement for football experience. With this situation, it is very easy for the companies to offer a job to established contestants who normally take part in tournaments and competitions. The same holds for the contestants from the team of UNWE as well. With a small part of the respondents (about 25%) the opinion is that futsal has not played any role in their professional realization. Of course, on a closer look at these answers, it becomes evident that they are given by the contestants with little experience of up to 3 years in 75% of the cases.

Boys who replied positively gained realization in different professional directions. One of the contestants was employed in a bet company, two contestants are a part of a big IT company, where the company has the tradition to participate

in a number of tournaments and competitions in football. There is yet another contestant who thanks to his interests in futsal has re-qualified and gained a trainer's license. At present he works in the field of juvenile football. Another contestant of ours is a part of a big company for live scouting, thanks to his interests in the field of sport.

As for the question of how practicing futsal has impacted the social status of the contestants from UNWE, the results are definite. Almost 80% of the respondents believe that futsal has helped them improve their social status to a great extent, while about 20% argue that practicing futsal in the university has moderately helped the improvement of their social status. For 14% of the respondents, the improved social status is manifested in better health and increased self-esteem. For almost 29%, most of the social contacts are due to the improved social status. For 57%, the improved social status is associated with the leader's role in society, financial stability, good health and many social contacts. I deem that practicing futsal in UNWE grants the following – increased self-esteem, leader's role in society, especially to those contesting for company football teams, financial benefits – when there are monetary awards for the prize ranking of the contestants. An serious achievement of our students is the presence of eight contestants from the team in the national futsal team of Bulgaria. This success is a reason for pride, to all having credit for this – from Rector's management to each one contestant from the UNWE team.

Conclusion

Based on the survey carried out, we can draw the following conclusions:

- In contemporary society with the technological advancement and the boom of social media, the time for systemic sport training is decreasing. As a result, there arise multiple problems of modern society – obesity, a deteriorated health status, a low capacity for work and low self-esteem;
- The practicing of sport in the schools of higher education opens up the opportunity for making multiple social contacts, for participation in teams and for the general pursuit of aims, as well as teamwork and mutual aid;
- As in Russia (Kolosov, Kornev, 2018), the development of futsal can possibly be encouraged through promotional programs and campaigns at schools and universities. At present, the game in the universities can develop thanks to the enthusiasm of a limited circle of lecturers with interest such as Ignatov (2012), (Staikov, Ignatov, 2017);
- The practicing of futsal in the team of UNWE proved to play a key role in the professional realization of the team contestants. Nearly 75% of all respondents confirm the assumption that futsal has contributed to their realization;

- In the recent five years, eight contestants from UNWE team have been a part of the country's national futsal team. Five of them are regularly selected in all initiatives of the national team;
- Some 60% of the respondents believe that futsal practicing in UNWE has helped the improvement of their social status, manifested in the bigger number of social contacts, better health condition and increased self-esteem, with regard to their leader's role in society and their financial prosperity;
- Futsal is an extremely dynamic and attractive sport, still underdeveloped in our country. The role of the universities in the development of the game should be increased (Vision, Footsal, 2017). All schools of higher education have the necessary equipment in place that allows for the development of futsal. Furthermore, the fact that a smaller number of contestants is needed for participation in competitions should not be ignored. What is more, futsal is not dependent on weather conditions, and this could play a key role in its development.

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Abstract

Sport is long-year educational-training process, building many qualities in those practicing it, such as will, tenacity, persistency, responsibility, self-confidence, discipline. It helps maintaining good health and discharges the psychic tension. School and universities are the places for attractive contacts, forming of knowledge and skills and preparation of the persons under education for future realization at the labour market.

In the world of modern technologies and social nets, there is no other area in life except sport activity giving exclusive possibility for close, tet a tet association, for building of social contacts and forming up of social groups.

In this article we consider the possibilities the sport really grants to the contestants from the UNWE team, for improvement of their social status and role in the society.

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Higher education is a possibility for young people to associate together and develop in a homogeneous environment, of similar interests, to create contacts, allowing them to realize on the labour market in future.

60% of the inquired persons deem that futsal practicing in UNWE has helped for improvement of their social status, manifested in the bigger number of social contacts, better health condition and increased self-confidence, leader's role in the society and financial prosperity

Key words: futsal, influence, social status, professional realization, inquiry investigation

JEL: Z20, Z22, I25, O15