



Attitudes and Opinions of Sports Coaches on the Presence and Interference of Politics in Sports

Original scientific paper

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Abstract

The goal of this research is to determine the attitudes and opinions of sports coaches about the presence and interference of politics in sports. The descriptive research method was selected for the problem selected from the quantitative approach. Through 11 questions of the survey, which was built specifically for this research, interesting and expected results were achieved. The survey questionnaire consisted of 3 questions related to socio-status characteristics and 11 questions related to determining the attitudes of sports coaches about the presence and interference of politics in sports. The questionnaire is closed type. Statistical processing of data was done with the program SPSS statistics 25 for the Windows. For the purposes of the research, data was collected and processed on a sample of 125 respondents, male, aged 24 to 62, sports coaches from 18 different sports, who perform their duties in 52 different sports clubs in Prizren. Based on the results of this research, it can be concluded that politics is present and interferes in sports. It is inevitable to say that the future of sports and athletes depends and will depend on political will.

Keywords: *Sport, sports coaches, sports clubs, politics, politicians.*

Sport and politics are two big phenomena and human activities that have as many differences as there are other similar segments, we would say that they are the dominant phenomena of modern society. As such, they manifest in various necessary ways and have various functions. As much as they have differences, they have as many

similarities. From the social and sociological aspect, how connected and mutually conditioned the two social components are. Sport is inherently political as it reflects the authoritative allocation of values (Dahl, 1957). Why do we say that, because the future of athletes depends on the future of political will? When we say how much it

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enables or gives hope for development, it encourages opportunities, that young people can engage in sports disciplines during their development. On the other hand, politics depends on sports institutions in creating the mood of young people, so that their cadres get general and social legality. (Memic, 2005). Sport represents a politically usable resource, including a character-building socializing agent, a vehicle for propaganda, the opportunity for prestige, a tool to deliver social change, and the opiate of the masses, diverting or distracting the energies of the population (Allison, 1986; Sage & Eitzen, 2013). We know that sport, by its structure, is a very complicated and complex kinesiological activity in which success depends on the influence of a large number of anthropological characters and abilities. Sport is an integral part of the social needs of the individual, it is a universal means of understanding and cooperation between people, with the aim of physical and spiritual education (Ibri, 2023). Sport is any physical and mental activity that a person performs according to an established set of rules, in order to compete with an opponent or an opposing team, with the application of a prescribed scoring system on the basis of which the winner is determined. Sport is a global phenomenon by nature, its language is universal, it unites people all over the planet, regardless of skin color, age and gender" (Jackson and Haigh, 2008). Sport represents one of the most advanced cases of globalisation, probably because there are less cultural and political obstacles to the development of trade and international power in sports than in other areas (Allison, 1986). Sports are all forms of physical and mental activity that, through unorganized or organized participation, aim to express or improve physical and mental fitness or achieve results in competitions of all levels. Sport is available to everyone regardless of age, physical ability, disability, national or ethnic affiliation, race or religion, gender, language, social origin, political affiliation, property status and other personal characteristics (Ibri, 2023). Sport and sports activity play a large role and represent a very significant factor in daily life and work of man. They become a need and complement changes in life which in this period of development of technology and science are increasing and make life faster, enabling on

the one hand, technical progress, and taking away, on the other hand, what basically constitutes a movement for a healthy life. Sport and sports activity, as an important component of sports and sports activities represent: factors of strengthening people's health; an important element for rest and recreation; and a basic tool for raising the working and defense conditions sobnosti citizens (Anastasovski, 2003). Through sport, people get to know each other more quickly, then develop their physical and moral qualities, because sport, as it is known, refines people. Athletes are mostly cosmopolitans, borders bother them. Through sports, they preserve the cultural heritage of the people and country they belong to. Therefore, sport has a collective role. (Mataja, 1984).

Sport is an effective means of politics, nowadays it is used as a powerful instrument for sanctioning, as well as a powerful tool for establishing communication between people, nations and states. While in ancient times, especially in ancient Greece, sports games were a powerful means of achieving peace. (Yalouris, 1986). Whether politics refers to the state, the system, or society more generally, it is "the constrained use of social power" where actors use a variety of tactics to promote their interests and to manipulate, manoeuvre and modify the preferences of others. To act politically requires control over a range of resources, including expertise, money, organizational capacity, and moral authority (Houlihan, 2003). Politics and sports are two very complex and multifaceted phenomena. (Anastasovski, 2003). Numerous scientists from the field of social sciences, claim that issues related to the study of sports can be considered as phenomena determined primarily by social factors and the consequences associated with them that result from playing sports (Coakley and Dunning, 2003; Houlihan, 2003; Coakley, 2007; Tomlinson, 2007; Giulianotti, 2008). Seen as a whole, the phenomenon of sport is extremely multifaceted, i.e. we can deal with it from a kinesiology point of view, but at the same time we can observe it as a wider social and humanistic phenomenon (Mataja, 1984). When talking about politics, as the term of this paper, the level of complexity of the discussion is similar to that of sports. We can offer as many definitions of politics as there are different forms of government

and their views on what politics is, which again, logically, leads us to the problem of the search for consensus on which aspects of social life should be understood as political (McLean, 1996).

Politics can generally be defined as "the art and science of governing". Politics is accordingly understood as: The mechanism of the struggle for power that includes the study of concepts of power, interests, conflicts, values and ethics, issues of the common good and all phenomena resulting from the implementation of such concepts, such as ideology, nationalism and the electoral process. (McLean 1996). The understanding of politics as a tool of government is most vividly described by the definition of politics as a struggle for power, which in democratic systems should take place within legally defined boundaries (Bibic, 1997). At the same time, their goal is the realization of the public interest and the solution of community problems, which are why the government adopts and implements it in the first place. all these activities (Howlet et al., 2009; Hill, 2003; Fink-Hafner, 2007). It should be noted that the interference of politics (in developed democracies) in sport is usually unobtrusive or at least imperceptible due to the very nature of sport (Mester, 1995). On the other hand, in totalitarian regimes, sport is an important aspect of the ideological operation of the system, which offers an opportunity to solve certain problems or represents a mobilization force in favor of supporting the system (Girginov, 2004). Sports and politics and their mutual connection are indisputable facts. Everyone who pays even superficial attention to social phenomena is aware of this connection. The interest of politics is its inclusion in the field of sports (especially top competitive sports), and the interest of sport is the inclusion of politics in the benefit of sports. We could safely assume that this influence exists and that it is in the context of the connection with the ever-present global idea of sports (e.g. in the works of Allison (2006), Anastasovski (2003), Robertson (2007), Giulianotti (2008) and Houlihan (2010)), and it is potentially large and desirable. The objectives of this paper are to determine the attitudes of sports coaches regarding the intervention of politics in sports.

Subject and Goal of Research

The problem of this research is the meaning presence and interference of politics in sports. The subject of this research is the attitudes and opinions of sports coaches about the importance of the presence and interference of politics in sports. The aim of the research is to determine the attitudes of sports coaches about the presence and interference of politics in sports. In order to better achieve the general goal, the following and partial goals were set:

- Determine whether politics helps and contributes to the development of sports?
- Determine whether politics is present and interference in sports?
- Determine whether politics helps and contributes to the development of sports?
- Determine whether sport can do without politics?
- Determine whether politics is present in sports clubs?
- Determine whether sports clubs have their own political orientations and preferences?
- Determine if sports clubs ask for help or favors from politicians?
- Determine whether sports clubs have a politician in their club?
- Determine whether if any of the politicians asked for any favors from coaches?
- Determine whether sport is an instrument of politics?
- Determine whether believe that the future of sports and athletes depends on political will.
- Based on the general and partial goals of this research, and on the basis of previous research, general and individual hypotheses can be justified.
- The general hypothesis is:
- H0: Sports coaches' attitudes about the presence and interference of politics in sports are positive.
- Individual hypotheses are as follows:
- H1: Sports coaches believe that politics helps and contributes to the development of sports,
- H2: Sports coaches believe that sport can do without politics
- H3: Sports coaches believe that politics is present in sports clubs
- H4: Sports coaches believe that clubs have their own political orientations and

- preferences
- H5: Sports coaches believe that clubs ask for help or favors from politicians
 - H6: Sports coaches believe that sports clubs have a politician in their club
 - H7: Sports coaches believe that politicians seek favors from them
 - H8: Sports coaches believe that sport is an instrument of politics
 - H9: Sports coaches believe that politicians are noticed at sports events
 - H10: Sports coaches believe that the future of sports and athletes depends on political will.

Methods

The research was conducted with the coaches of sports clubs operating in Prizren, obtaining consent advance of the sport klubs in which the research was conducted. The descriptive research method was selected for the problem selected from the quantitative approach. Respondents were previously acquainted with the the aim and method of research, where the survey of examination was presented in detail. All respondents joined the research voluntarily. Before the implementation of the research, the questionnaire multiplying and the respondents were informed that the research will be conducted at the scheduled time. The research was conducted individually with each respondent in the suitable environments of sport clubs where they were engaged sports coaches. The questionnaire was anonymous.

Sample of Respondents

For the purposes of the research, data was collected and processed on a sample of 125 respondents, male, aged 24 to 62, sports coaches from 18 different sports, who

perform their duties in 52 different sports clubs in Prizren.

Measuring Instruments

In this research, a survey was used, which was built exclusively for the needs of this research. The instrument on the basis of which this research was carried out was reduced to two groups of questions, where the first group of questions refers to personal data (education, age and work experience) and the second group of questions refer to the current subject of research, attitudes and opinions of sports coaches on the interference of politics in sports. The survey questionnaire consisted of 3 questions related to socio-status characteristics and 11 questions related to determining the attitudes of sports coaches about the presence and interference of politics in sports. The questionnaire is closed type. Statistical processing of data was done with the program SPSS statistics 25 for the Windows.

Results and Discussion

A total of 125 respondents, participated in the research. All respondents were male and are currently employed in 52 sports clubs in Prizren. Sport coaches with the highest degree of education (master's degree) are 6, with university degrees are 27, and with secondary school, are 19 coaches. Based on this, we can conclude that in this research there are more educated coaches and they participate with 61.6%, while coaches with high school education participate with 38.4%. The first task of this research was to determine what attitudes the respondents have if politics is present and there is interference in sport. The results of the research are given in table 1.

Table 1.

Analysis of respondents' answers on whether politics is present and interferes in sports?

| Valid | Answers | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| | Yes | 106 | 84.80% |
| | No | 12 | 9.60% |
| | I have no opinion | 7 | 5.60% |
| | Total | 125 | 100.00% |

Based on the obtained results, which are shown in table 1, it can be seen that the majority of respondents, 106 or 84.8% of the total sample, answered that politics is present and interferes in sports, 12 respondents or 9.6% answered that politics is not present and there is no interference in sports, while 7 respondents or 5.6% of them answered that they had no opinion about it.

Therefore, based on the received answers to the question, it can be concluded that the fact that politics is present and interferes in sports when it should be outside of sports is disappointing. Question two, referred to the statement of respondents (sports coaches) on whether the policy helps and contributes to the development of sports. The results of the research are given in table 2.

Table 2.

Analysis of respondents' answers, does politics help and contribute to the development of sports?

| Valid | Answers | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| | Yes | 92 | 73.60% |
| | No | 24 | 19.20% |
| | I have no opinion | 9 | 7.20% |
| | Total | 125 | 100.00% |

Based on the obtained results, which are shown in table 2, we can say that most of the respondents, 92 or 73.6% of the total sample, answered that politics helps and contributes to the development of sports, 24 respondents or 19.2% answered that politics does not help and does not contribute to the development of sports, while 9 respondents or 7.2 % of them answered that they have no opinion about whether politics helps and

contributes to the development of sports. Therefore, based on the received answers to the question, it can be concluded that although politics is present in sports, it helps and contributes to the development of sports, of course for their own interests. Question three, referred to the respondent's (coach's) statement on whether sport can do without politics. The results of the research are given in table 3.

Table 3.

Analysis of respondents' answers about whether sport can do without politics?

| Valid | Answers | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| | Yes | 85 | 68.10% |
| | No | 24 | 19.20% |
| | I have no opinion | 16 | 12.70% |
| | Total | 125 | 100.00% |

Based on the obtained results, which are shown in table 3, it can be seen that the majority of respondents, 85 or 68.1% of the total sample, answered that sport can do without politics, 24 respondents or 19.2% answered that sport cannot do without politics, while 16 respondents or 12.7% answered that they have no opinion on whether sport can do without politics.

Therefore, based on the received answers to the question, it can be concluded that, although politics is present in sport, and it helps and contributes to the development of sport, sport can do without politics. Question four, referred to the statement of respondents (sports coaches) about whether politics is present in sports clubs. The results of the research are given in table 4.

Table 4.*Analysis of respondents' answers, is politics present in sports clubs?*

| Valid | Answers | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| | Yes | 86 | 68.80% |
| | No | 32 | 25.60% |
| | I have no opinion | 7 | 5.60% |
| | Total | 125 | 100.00% |

Based on the obtained results, which are shown in table 4, we can say that most of the respondents, 86 or 68.8% of the total sample, answered that politics is present in sports clubs, 32 respondents or 25.6% answered that there is no politics in sports clubs, while 7 respondents or 5.6% of them answered that they have no opinion about whether politics is present in sports clubs.

Therefore, based on the received answers to the question, it can be concluded that the fact that politics in clubs is very present, when such a thing should not happen. Question five, referred to the statements of respondents about whether the clubs have different political orientations. The results of the research are given in table 5.

Table 5.*Analysis of respondents' answers about whether the clubs have their own political orientations and preferences?*

| Valid | Answers | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| | Yes | 78 | 62.40% |
| | No | 36 | 28.80% |
| | I have no opinion | 11 | 8.80% |
| | Total | 125 | 100.00% |

Based on the obtained results, which are shown in table 5, it can be seen that the majority of respondents, 78 or 62.4% of the total sample, answered that clubs have their own political affiliations, 36 respondents or 28.8% answered that clubs do not have their own political affiliations, while 11 respondents or 8.8% answered that they have no opinion about whether the clubs have their

own political orientations. Therefore, based on the answers to the question, it can be stated that politics is very present in the clubs and that the clubs have their own political orientations, although this should not be the case. Question sixth, referred to the statement of respondents about whether clubs seek help or favors from politicians. The results of the research are given in table 6.

Table 6.*Analysis of respondents' on whether clubs seek help or favors from politicians?*

| Valid | Answers | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| | Yes | 102 | 81.60% |
| | No | 19 | 15.20% |
| | I have no opinion | 4 | 3.20% |
| | Total | 125 | 100.00% |

Based on the obtained results, which are shown in table 6, we can say that most of the respondents, 102 or 81.6% of the total sample, answered that clubs ask for help or favors from politicians, 19 respondents or 15.2% answered that clubs do not ask for help or favors from politicians, while only 4 respondents or 3.2% of them answered that they do not have an opinion on whether the

clubs ask for help or favors from politicians. So, based on the answers to the question, it can be stated that the clubs sometimes turn to political charms for help. Question seventh, referred to the statement of respondents about whether clubs have any politicians in their club. The results of the research are given in table 7.

Table 7.

Analysis of respondents' answers about whether the clubs have any of the politicians in their club?

| Valid | Answers | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| | Yes | 26 | 20.80% |
| | No | 81 | 64.80% |
| | I have no opinion | 18 | 14.40% |
| | Total | 125 | 100.00% |

Based on the obtained results, which are shown in table 7, it can be seen that the majority of respondents, 81 or 64.8% of the total sample, answered that the clubs do not have any politicians in their club, 26 respondents or 20.8% answered that the clubs have one of the politicians in their club, while 18 respondents or 14.4% of they answered that they do not have an opinion on whether the clubs have any of the politicians in their club. Based on the answers received,

it can be stated that the clubs do not officially have any politicians in their ranks, and this is a consequence of the club's fear of being punished by international bodies, but unofficially respondents claim that political charms are present and have a great influence in the club. Question eight, referred to the statement of the respondents about whether any of the politicians demanded a favor from the clubs. The results of the research are given in table 8.

Table 8.

Analysis of the interviewer's answers about whether any of the politicians demanded any favor from the club?

| Valid | Answers | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| | Yes | 42 | 33.60% |
| | No | 67 | 53.70% |
| | I have no opinion | 16 | 12.70% |
| | Total | 125 | 100.00% |

Based on the obtained results, which are shown in table 8, we can say that most of the respondents, 67 or 53.7% of the total sample, answered that the politicians no sought a favor from the club, 42 respondents or 33.6% answered that there were cases when the politicians sought a favor from clubs, while 16 respondents or 12.7% of them answered that they had no opinion on the matter (they do not remember) that there

were cases when some of the politicians demanded a favor from the clubs. So, based on the answers, it can be stated that there are cases when some of the politicians ask for favor from the clubs. Question nine, referred to the statement of respondents about whether sports coaches consider sport to be an instrument of politics. The results of the research given in table 9.

Table 9.*Analysis of respondents' on whether coaches consider sport to be an instrument of politics?*

| Valid | Answers | Frequency | Valid Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------------|
| | Yes | 112 | 89.70% |
| | No | 9 | 7.10% |
| | I have no opinion | 4 | 3.20% |
| | Total | 125 | 100.00% |

Based on the obtained results, which are shown in table 9, it can be seen that the majority of respondents 112 or 89.7% of the total sample, answered that sport is an instrument of politics, 9 respondents or 7.1% answered that sport is not an instrument of politics, while only 4 respondents or 3.2% of them answered that they have no opinion

on whether sport is an instrument of policy. Therefore, based on the received answers, it can be stated that sport is an instrument in the hands of politicians and politicians. Question ten, referred to the statement of respondents about whether politicians are noticed at sports events. The results of the research are given in table 10.

Table 10.*Analysis of respondents' answers about whether politicians attend sports events?*

| Valid | Answers | Frequency | Valid Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------------|
| | Yes | 98 | 64.80% |
| | No | 14 | 20.80% |
| | I have no opinion | 9 | 14.40% |
| | Total | 125 | 100.00% |

Based on the obtained results, which are shown in table 10, we can say that most of the respondents, 98 or 78.4% of the total sample, answered that politicians notice sports events, 17 respondents or 13.5% answered that politicians do not notice sports events, while 10 respondents or 8.1% answered that they have no opinion whether politicians notice sports events. Therefore, based on the received answers to

the question, it can be stated that sport it is a significant element of people's social life, and an effective tool of politics, it is used as a powerful instrument of influence, and as a powerful tool for establishing communication between people. Question eleventh, referred to the statement of respondents (sports coaches) about whether the future of sports and athletes depends on political will. The results of the research are given in table 10.

Table 11.*Analysis of respondents' answers about whether the future of sports and athletes depends on political will.*

| Valid | Answers | Frequency | Valid Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------------|
| | Yes | 103 | 82.40% |
| | No | 16 | 12.80% |
| | I have no opinion | 7 | 4.80% |
| | Total | 125 | 100.00% |

Based on the obtained results, which are shown in table 11, we can say that most of the respondents, 103 or 82.4% of the total sample, answered that the future of sports and athletes depends on political will. Respondents 16 of them or 12.8% answered that the future of sports and athletes not depends on political will, while 6 respondents or 4.8% answered that they have no opinion whether the future of sports and athletes depends on political will. Therefore, based on the received answers, it can be stated that sport it is a significant element of people's social life, and an effective tool of politics.

Conclusion

The main goal of the research was to determine the coaches' views on the presence and interference of politics in sports. Based on the analysis of the results obtained through the responses of the respondents (sports coaches), in the table 1, it can be concluded that the that the general hypothesis H0, has been confirmed. Majority of respondents 73.6% of the total sample ohad a positive attitude about the presences and interference of politics in sports, and only 26.4 have a different opinion. Even hypothesis H1, which reads: sports coaches believe that politics helps and contributes to the development of sports, it can be said that it's proved. Based on the results obtained, in the table 2, it can be seen that most respondents 84.8% of the total sample, answered that politics helps and contributes to the development of sports, and only 15.2% have a different opinion. Hypothesis H2 which reads: sports coaches believe that sport can do without politics, it's proved. Based on the results obtained, in the table 3, it can be seen that the majority of respondents 68.1% of the total sample) answered that sport can do without politics, and only 31.9% have a different opinion. Hypothesis H3, which reads: sports coaches believe that politics is present in sports clubs, it's proved. Based on the results obtained, in the table 4, it can be seen that the majority of respondents 68.1% of the total sample, and only 31.9% have a different opinion. Hypothesis H4, which reads: coaches believe that sports clubs have their own political orientations, it's proved. Based on the results obtained, in the table 5, it can be seen that

the majority of respondents 62.4% of the total sample, answered that clubs have their own political affiliations, and only 37.6% have a different opinion. Hypothesis H5, which reads: coaches believe that sports clubs seek help or favors from politicians, it's proved. Based on the results obtained, in the table 6, it can be seen that the majority of respondents 81.6% of the total sample, answered that clubs ask for help or favors from politicians, and only 18.4% have a different opinion. Therefore, on the basis of the received answers, it can be stated that the clubs sometimes turn to political charms for help. Hypothesis H6, which reads: coaches believe that sports clubs have a politician in their club, it's not proved. Based on the results obtained, in the table 7, it can be seen that the majority of respondents 64.8% of the total sample, answered that sports clubs do not have a politician in their club, and only 35.2% have a different opinion. Based on the answers received, it can be stated that the clubs do not officially have any politicians in their ranks, and this is a consequence of the club's fear of being punished by international bodies, while unofficially respondents claim that politicians are present and have great influence in the club. Hypothesis H7, which reads: coaches believe that politicians seek favors from them clubs regarding sports, it's not proved. Based on the results obtained, in the table 8, it can be seen that the majority of respondents 53.7% of the total sample, answered that none of the politicians sought a favor from from them clubs, in relation to sports, and 46.3% have a different opinion. Hypothesis H8, which reads: sports coaches believe that sport is an instrument of politics, it's proved. Based on the results obtained, in the table 9, it can be seen that the vast majority of respondents 89.7% of the total sample, answered that sport is an instrument of politics, and only 10.3% have a different opinion. Therefore, based on the received answers to the question, it can be stated that sport is an instrument of politics and that sport cannot do without politics, this has been proven by many other researchers. Hypothesis H9 which reads: sports coaches believe that politicians are noticed at sports events it's proved. Based on the results obtained, in the table 10, it can be seen that the majority of respondents 78.4% of the total sample, answered that politicians are noticed at sports events, and only 321.6%

have a different opinion. Hypothesis H10, which reads: sports coaches believe that the future of sports and athletes depends on political will, it's proved. Based on the results obtained, in the table 11, it can be seen that the majority of respondents 82.4% of the total sample, answered that the future of sports and athletes depends on political will. and only 17.6%, have a different opinion. Therefore, based on the results of the research, we can say that sport, is a significant element of people's social life and an effective tool of politics, is used as a powerful instrument of influence and as a powerful tool for establishing communication between people and nations, the future of sports and athletes certainly depends and will depend on political. These conclusions are also in accordance with other researchers, such as: (Dahl, 1957; Mataja, 1984; Allison, 1986; Mester, 1995; McLean 1996; Anastasovski, 2003; Hulihan, 2003; Girginov, 2004; Memiq, 2005; Allison 2006; Robertson (2007), Giulianiotti, 2008; Jackson and Haigh, 2008; Houlihan 2010; Sage & Eitzen, 2013), and many others, who prove that sport is a tool powerful of influence on the broad masses, a tool used to reflect the image and to increase the influence and authority of politics on the people. The interest of politics is its inclusion in the field of sports, and the interest of sports is the inclusion of politics in the benefit of sports. Sport there is also other purposes humanian and socials, offers pleasure, interest, adrenaline, health, friendship, etc., therefore it is loved by masses of people.

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