

# NEW APPROACHES TO YOUTH IN THRILL SOCIETY: SPORT PARTICIPATION AS FUEL TO BOOST OUTLOOK ON FUTURE AND CONCEPTS ON SELF

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**Abstract:** The theory of “thrill-society” (Schulze 1992) conceptualizes that increased economic status that allows the focus of daily life to switch from providing for physical needs to searching for a meaningful life and self-fulfilment. Combined with the expansion of education, it causes a smooth transition from traditionally inherited social positions and class-based hierarchy in society to a higher degree of social mobility, increased individualisation and diversification of life styles. Noting that, the actualization of this concept in Hungarian society came into effect only along societal discrepancies; still, the uncertainties and insecurities that accompany the process of ‘thrill projects’ collection are substantial. The purpose of this study was to examine the role of sport participation in the lives of young people, how sport may assist young people in coping with the *insecurities* and *uncertainties* created in the societal scene that is characterised by the combination of Schulze’s “thrill-society” and the inheritance of political, economic and societal transition of Hungary. Specifically, this study aims to find differences between sport participants and non-participants in their perception of future on micro and macro level, their readiness to take risks and challenges, and their self-concept related to their own health, physical condition, and physical appearance. Stratified random sampling was applied to obtain an accurate representation of Hungarian youth population. Data were analysed by using cross tabulation, non-parametric and multidimensional statistical methods. The results showed that sport participants adopted a more positive image of the future, higher ability to assume risks and a more modern state of mind, as well as a more stable self-concept in comparison to non-participant youth. Also, it seems that the sporting contest may be as strong as socio-demographic positioning in the formulation of these life capabilities. It can be suggested that sport may assist youth with a stable and accountable value environment that reduces the variety of opportunities and provides resources to better deal with societal uncertainties; meanwhile it opens new avenues of personal freedom even in a “thrill society” that filled with deficits in transitioning societies.

**Key words:** thrill society, Schulze, sport participation, self-concept, uncertainties, insecurities, transitioning societies

## Introduction

Schulze (1992a, 1992b), when theorising German society, introduced Schulze’s theory is grounded on Beck’s (1983) societal discourse about the changes that the German society went through as a result of the post-war industrialisation and economic growth. With the maintenance of social inequalities, this process caused an economic and social lift-effect in all societal segments (Kapitány 2002). All of these combined with the expansion of education, caused a smooth transition from traditionally inherited social positions and class-based hierarchy of society to a higher degree of social mobility and increased individualisation and diversification of life styles. Class-based life style scenarios were altered; societal and personal life stories could be reconstructed to allow for new bibliographical paths in comparison to the traditionally

expected and inherited positions that existed in the past. In this way, the “need-society” that existed during the period of modern industrialism was replaced by a post-industrial “risk-society” (Beck 1983). These change, as Beck (1983) explained, resulted in the expiration of Bourdieu’s (1984) class-based theory of French society.

In the context of an emerging “thrill-society,” there was a simultaneous expansion of and access to the services and resources needed consumption, and this create possibilities for a more ‘colourful’ societal life and the construction of individual life-paths (Schulze 1992a, 1992b; Éber 2007; Éber 2008). The possibility for developing inner human qualities and abilities, a wider space of self-actualisation—as explained also by Maslow (1943), and the emerging need for inner ‘adventure experiences’ reduced the focus on materialistic security and fulfilling external expectations. This was

complemented by the field as postmodern values were given a high priority (Inglehart 1981, 1991, 1997; Schulze 1992a).

The dominant orientation that emerges in “thrill-society” is based on, the postmodern, adventurous and open personality of individuals and values representing ‘self-direction’, ‘stimulation’, ‘hedonism’ and ‘achievement,’ as outlined by Schwartz’s value dimensions (1994). Furthermore, increased importance was given to freedom of choice, change, construction and re-construction of personal identities, life and career projects, interpersonal relationships, political affiliations, and also the human body. However, these life scenarios depended on investing the least possible effort and time in return for immediate and total quality of ‘thrills’ and results. The happiness and enjoyment-centered nature of ‘thrill-society’ constitutes a rejection of industrial ‘need-society’ values emphasizing hard work, struggle, endurance, asceticism, and delayed gratification. Considering the full range of possible thrill-projects, Schulze (1992a, 1992b) noted that individuals increasingly faced *uncertainty* and *insecurity*, because “thrill-projects” also involved the risk of failure, exposure of imperfection, endless life solutions, and innumerable alternatives and possibilities that clearly placed the responsibility for success on the individual. The associated fear of failure led to the development of conches and unconches restriction techniques and strategies in order to reduce the infinite number of opportunities and the feeling of uncertainty and responsibility for success of individuals.

### **Transitioning society of Hungary**

The political and economic changes which emerged in Hungary at the beginning of the 1990s caused a series of fundamental societal changes (Gazsó and Laki 2004; Gábor and Balog 1989). As a result of these changes, a consumption-based market economy, life style and value system have been adopted in all segments of society (Pikó 2005; Gábor 2002). The changes began to create new societal norms, to restructure priorities given to basic human values; this unfinished transition of values, however, has fulfilled the measures of value crisis across the whole societal structure (Bauer 2002; Laki 2006; Füstös and Szalma 2009). In this complex and sensitive situation there was not enough attention given to youth generations which was fundamentally impacted during this transitional period. The increased democratisation of the country created possibilities for young people to experience new forms of autonomy in society, but is also made them more vulnerable in a normative context that was more open and ambiguous (Bauer and Szabó 2009).

The fundamental changes in intergenerational relations that young people experienced in America during the 60s and 70s (Mead 1978), and in Germany during the 70s and 80s (Beck 1983) were detectable in the Hungarian society as a second wave added to the country’s internal political and economic transition (Gábor 1992). In addition to the conquest of societal space for upbringing youth, adult generations went through an upgrading or underrating process based on their political or economic role in Hungary’s state-socialism and

in the transition process into the new era. Due to the delay of political jurisdiction by the new state, political conflicts have trickled down to families and the micro level of society, causing further detachment and independence among young people and the formulation of youth as a separate and identifiable life-stage segment of society. Also, traditional life-guiding structures disintegrated, which made it possible to seek achieved „pre-figurative” social positions in a context characterized by increased levels of personal autonomy. Parallel to this autonomy, however, the years spent in education have increased and entrance into the labour market has been delayed (Gábor 2006a). Furthermore, the time of establishing an independent life with marriage and family has also been postponed. The period of youth became the battlefield for possession of cultural capital, a process which has been determined by the personal level of parental economic, social, and cultural capital (Zinnecker 1986; Bourdieu 1983).

As stated, the trends that Western European youngsters experienced (Zinnecker 1986; Chisholm 1990; Beck 1983) also became detectable in the social position, life view, and lifestyle of Hungarian youth with *15 years delay*, following Hungary’s transition from state-socialism to pluralistic society (Gábor 1992). The influences characteristic among Hungary’s youth had its foundations in the individualisation processes experienced by German youth during the 1970s and 80s (Gábor 2006a), which began with a deepening of intergenerational conflicts and conquest of the societal space of youth and continued in the dissociation of trends and life-style habits (Beck 1983; Schulze 1992a, 1992b). The combination of the political, economic and societal changes during the transition in Hungary with young people’s characteristic period of life resulted in the complex interrelation of value systems, life circumstances, and everyday life activities of youth fuelled with *uncertainties* and *insecurities*. The capacity of society being inclusive and employ the younger generation was so low that it created a crisis-like situation. Introducing fees for educational enrolment deepened inequalities of cultural capital, and entrance into the labour market was also blocked and created unprecedented levels of youth unemployment (Gabor 2002; Gazso and Laki 2004). The youth stage of the life cycle was also characterised by a postmodern life view and value system (Inglehart 1997; Bauer 2002). The constrained opportunities and the barriers experienced by youth during this time of transition were reflected in their value system, life style, and leisure activities, and thus, in their patterns of sport participation.

Previous studies reported similarity in the value preferences characteristic to Schulze’s ‘thrill-society’ and those prioritised by young sport participants in Hungary; these preferences emphasized self-autonomy, preference for diverse and interesting life, creativity in dealing with challenges, and more intense interpersonal relations (Perényi 2010a; 2010b). During this transition in Hungary, participation in sports was one of the possible avenues that offered youth stability relative to their value preferences; thus sports provided young people with a site at which they could avoid the emerging materialism in economic decline which characterised this transition period—as described by Schwatz and Bardi (1997).

The aim of this study was to see if sport participation during this political and social transition in Hungary plays a role in the ways that young people understand and evaluate current conditions and envision the future. Further, does sport participation assist young people in a manner outlined in Schulze's "thrill-society" theory, as they cope with the *insecurities* and *uncertainties* faced in a society characterised by this type of change? And does sport serve as an accessible site at which individuals may gain assistance in meeting the challenge of living in a society where status choices are no longer ascribed and biographies are individually constructed? More specific questions are: In comparison with peers who do not participate regularly in sport activities, do participants

- see the future for themselves and their society in more positive terms?
- have a higher ability to assume risks as they cope with new challenges?
- develop more stable self-concepts related to their health, physical condition, and body when compared to non-participant youth?

Finally, do the differences between sub-groups remain along the categories of socio-demographic variables?

## Materials and methods

The results of this study are based on data from the National Youth Research of 2008 (Ifjúság2008). Stratified random sampling was used to obtain an accurate representation of Hungarian young people (N=8000). The sample was representative for age, gender, and place of residency of the youth population between the ages of 15-29. Data were collected through structured personal interviews.

The data were analysed for sport participant and non-participant subgroups using SPSS 16. Frequency tables were used to compare the distribution of responses given by sport participants and non-participants and chi square used to demonstrate differences between the subgroups. In case of measures on Likert scale Mann and Whitney U test was conducted on data received. Also, lineal regression analyses were used to identify relationship to socio-demographic variables and participation in sports. The variables were operationalized for the examined questions as follows:

Self-consideration of future on personal and societal level about

- the country's economic level in ten years' time,
- the standard of living for own family over ten years' time,
- personal opportunities over ten years' time.

Data were categorized by using a 7-point Likert-scale.

Self –consideration about ability of taking risk and personal fear

- as someone who trusts in his/her own future or someone who is afraid of his/her own future; and self-consideration as someone adventurous,
- as someone open to assume new situations and risks or someone who is hesitant to take risks.

Data were categorized by using a 7-point Likert-scale.

Self-satisfaction on the personal level related to

- physical fitness level,
- physical appearance,
- physical health.

Data were categorized by using a 5-point Likert-scale.

Data was collected on one of the four subsamples (N=2000) of this research, also designed to be identically representative as the whole sample.

Sport participation was measured based on the subjective response given to the question: „*Do you do sports or physical activities regularly outside of physical education classes?*”. Considering the large size of this dataset and that of sport club membership is very low in Hungary (0,5% in this present dataset), difference between amateur and competitive elite sport participants was not made in this study. Socio-demographic variables were entered in the model as continuous or dummy variables as listed in Table 4.

The distribution on sport participation showed 38% of the sample was a member of the sport participant subgroup, while 62% of the non-sport participant group.

## Results

The results presented on the prospect of the two, sport participant and non-participant, subgroups. As outlined, frequency tables demonstrate the differences of the two subgroups in consideration attached to the future in ten years' time on personal, family and on societal level; on attitudes of assuming or rejecting risks; and on self-consideration of physical condition, appearance and health. Results also demonstrate how socio-demographic variables have a role in formulating the examined destinations, and taking part in sport plays a strong role in shaping life views and self-satisfaction.

### *Consideration of future on micro and macro level*

The projection on the future by Hungarian youth, as a total population, was reported quite negative as 47% of the total population of this sample reported that the country's overall economic position will decline, 29% stated that it will have no change and only 24% believed in growth. Similar projection was given to the standard of living of people, as 48% of the respondents stated decline, and again less than one-fourth believes in growth. Interestingly, however, the positions on personal level showed a slightly more positive picture. A smaller proportion of youth (38 %) rejected improvements on personal situation, while 34% of the total sample projected no change, and 28% of youth believed in a better personal future (Bauer and Szabó 2009). During the period of 2000-2008 the proportion of those youth wanting to leave the country in order to work abroad, has grown from 11% to 70% (Máder 2011). Consequently, the discrepancies of societal transition in Hungary are well demonstrated by the growth of dissatisfaction about the future into fear about the future among youth in all examined levels.

In contradiction, dividing the youth population along the dimension of sport participation gives a different and interesting result. Data showed significant differences between the sport participant and non-sport participant sub-groups of this study in the consideration of the future on both micro and macro levels. Results about the “country’s economic position in 10 years’ time” showed that sport participants projects economic decline with 8 percentage points less than the non-sport participants; and it was also found that they also in bigger percentage believe in an economic increase (28.5). It must be noted, however, that in both subgroups the negative projections are represented by more subjects (39.2% on decline in comparison with 28.2% incline in the sport participant group). In consideration of people’s standard of living similarly to the results given in connection to the economic position there are more subjects in both subgroups who projected decline over incline. The sport participant and non-sport participant subgroups, however, showed significant differences ( $p < .000$ ). It was the consideration of economic position on the micro, personal and family, level where more subjects of the sport participant group projected positive changes (32.6%) than negative (29.3%), while non-sport participants did not follow this trend (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Distribution of consideration of future (%) by sport participants and non-participants N=(8076)

	sp	nsp	total sample
country’s economic position in 10 years			
decline	39.5	47.5	44.5
no change	27.0	27.5	27.5
increase	28.2	20.0	23.1
missing	5.3	4.8	5.0
$\chi^2 = 87,127; p < .000; R = -.081$			
standard of living of people			
decline	40.2	49.0	45.7
no change	28.3	28.1	28.1
increase	26.9	18.8	21.9
missing	4.6	4.1	4.3
$\chi^2 = 94,579; p < .000; R = .086$			
economic situation of personal level			
decline	29.3	41.3	36.8
no change	33.1	31.5	32.0
increase	<b>32.6</b>	22.6	26.4
missing	5.0	4.6	4.8
$\chi^2 = 1,521; p < .000; R = -.114$			

sp: sport participant; nsp: non-sport participant

Source: Computed by the author

In summary it can be suggested by the results that participation in regular sporting activities may add to a more positive life consideration in both macro and micro levels, as all three models showed significant differences between the two sub-groups. On the micro level, however, it should be emphasized that subjects in the sport participant group were

the only who in larger proportion projected their situation on positive way rather than by a negative life view. It seems that a physical active, self-efficient life view may also have substantial effects on a person’s outlook on the positioning of self.

### Views on future and risks

During the past decade following the country’s political, economic and societal transitions youth has experienced life situations that were unexpected and sudden, such as unemployment, economic decline, but also instability of living conditions and shrinking opportunities. This also had an effect on how youth positioned itself about forming a degree of belief on its future. It seems that youth in general does not see the future overwhelmingly positive, which is connected to the facts that fear about the future also has a negative mark on the willingness and readiness of taking risks. Again, the answer to the question whether sport may serve as a protective tool provided some interesting answers. It can be seen that youth taking part in sport (22.4%) with a higher percentage point surely believes in the future than those who do not participate at all (13.9). Similarly, there are in higher percentage those from the sport participant group who assumes risks and more adventurous. Results of chi square reports that there is a significant difference in the normal distributions of answers between the two subgroups (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Distribution of self-conception (%) of sport participants and non-participants about beliefs related to future and risks (N=8076)

	trust in future					scared of future	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
sp	22.4	21.0	16.2	18.7	8.9	7.1	5.1
nsp	13.9	17.7	18.3	17.9	11.2	11.4	9.1
$\chi^2 = 1.893 \quad R = .136 \quad p < .000$							
	assuming risks					no risk taking	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
sp	16.7	18.9	17.9	22.8	10.6	7.1	5.3
nsp	9.7	16.0	16.1	15.6	14.1	10.2	7.7
$\chi^2 = 1.558 \quad R = .123 \quad p < .000$							

Source: Computed by the author

The results of the Mann and Whitney test showed that in both of the measured dimensions the two subgroups showed significant differences (Table 3). The mean ranks presented in Table 3. show that youth that are completely outside of the reach of sports and physical activities has a significantly more negative view in the projections related to the future, while those who participate in regular sporting activities are having more positive projections. It could be that the environment that sport is played, the feel of belonging to a sporting group on the macro level or to the community of one sport or sport as a whole provides a platform for more security and hope. Hope and effort are dimensions of sport in general of course; as trying one’s own self, own abilities

may also provide inner strengths as well to fight obstacles of life also outside of sports. In relation to the evaluation of the results gained from answers related to risk it can be stated that sport participants are significantly easier take risks, they are more open to assume risks, do not fear risks, they are more adventurous in comparison to the non-participant sub-group. This also could be explained by that sport participation and its environments in general create riskful situations on several platforms; consequently in the sporting environment risk taking is detrimental. A sport participant in any level needs to face risks not only in the win/loss sporting terms, but also in time, costs, benefits, efforts, and also in possible injury.

**Table 3.** Differences of sport participants and non-sport participants in relation to future and risk, results of Mann and Whitney U test (N=6650)

	sp	nsp	p
fear of future	3060,45	3504,95*	.000
assuming risk	3608,41*	3150,95	.000

values refer to mean ranks;  $p < .000$   
Source: Computed by the author

In summary it can be stated that the previously found results in relation to social learning (Bandura 1997), the sporting environment may influence not only the value orientation of participants (Perényi 2010), but it also may assist in shaping a more positive life view, a more positive outlook on the future's prospective. It may also prepare youth to get close experiences with risks, and help them to develop an attitude that empowers them to face such risks and learn to be ready to fight them.

### **Attitudes on physical being**

Uncertainties and insecurities of "thrill" society that is mainly provided by extended opportunities, but also related to human identity and the body itself (Bourdieu 1993; Bauman 1995), complemented by the economic, political and societal transition of a society gives a unique and complex reality for youth to live in Hungary. All these challenges hidden in daily activities, responsibilities and opportunities must be faced, and the coping processes dominantly dependent upon the individuals' own personal abilities. Whether sport participation has a role in developing these coping strategies and provides individuals with assistance in constructing their own identity and self has been addressed by numerous researches ending with diverse results (Besnier and Brownell 2012; Donnelly and Young 1988; Helstein 2007). Most of these researches outline connections between the activity, sport, and the development identity and self-including the body. This present study also found significant relationship between sport participation and the level of satisfaction with physical condition, appearance and health. As the results showed young individuals who take part in regular physical exercise and sport by higher proportion will develop satisfaction with themselves in terms of their bodily strength as oppose to the non-sport participants. This may create a base for a bigger chance for sport participants to encounter satisfaction with their physical appearance as well. The combination of good physical strength and appealing

appearance may also create a general feeling of good health. As it is demonstrated in Table 4 significant difference was found between sport participants and non-sport participants in all three examined detentions of self.

**Table 4.** Differences of sport participants and non-sport participants in relation to physical condition level, appearance, and health, results of Mann and Whitney U test (N=1865)

	sp	nsp	p
physical condition	1054.36*	832.01	.000
physical appearance	1011.03*	865.54	.000
health	1020.12*	858.51	.000

values refer to mean ranks;  $p < .000$   
Source: Computed by the author

### **In societal space**

Social stratification is a characteristic to sport participation (Moens and Scheerder 2004; Perényi 2011; Gál 2008). Consequently, subjects positioned on different places of the societal hierarchy have different access to sport, and also develop diverse sporting habits in terms of tastes, choices, and circumstances. The question was whether sport participation as a platform for human interaction, and exchange surface of socialization processes in comparison to core socio-demographic variables would have a noticeable relation in shaping people believes, self-concept and self-satisfaction, as previous studies found in relation to human values (Perenyi 2010; Kavalir 2004; Mielke and Bahlke 1995).

The used linear regression modelling (Tenenbaum & Driscoll 2005; Székelyi & Barna 2005) examined these possible effects of sport involvement variables along with cultural and economic (SES) capital as well as age and gender variables, on the formulation of all the three main examined areas of this study. Variables of the three main areas, consideration of future, relation to risk taking and fear, and satisfaction of self, were entered into the model as dependent variables, which were measured as continuous variables; while socio-demographic variables and the 'sport participation' variable were entered as independent variables as continuous or dummy variables. In all three research dimensions the model showed that the independent variables contributed significantly to the explanation of the total variance of the dependent variables.

The results in Table 5. present the Beta ( $\beta$ ) values, which give information about the direction and degree to what the socio-demographic and sport participation variables influence the formation of the three groups of dimensions of the dependent variables.

The model used in this study demonstrated that also projection, understanding and self-concept on micro and macro levels are socially stratified. The model also showed that sport participation took substantial role even among fundamental socio-demographic variable in formulating youths' consideration and self-evaluations. In the consideration of the future on micro and macro level economic status and sport participation showed the strongest relation. Formulating a positive attitude about the future and being open to assume

**Table 5.** Effect of independent variables on value PCs in linear regression (N=8076)

	gender	age	educa- tion	SES	sport part.
<i>consideration of future:</i>					
country	-.007	-.029	-.008*	-.053*	-.065*
standard of living	.015	.035	.083*	.059*	.067*
family	.014	.052*	.107*	.077*	.090*
<i>beliefs related to future and risks:</i>					
trust/fear of future	.052*	.112*	-.085*	.150*	.084*
assuming/rejecting risk	-.084*	-.090*	-.051*	-.072*	-.085*
<i>self-consideration, self-satisfaction:</i>					
physical condition	-.140*	-.031	-.049	-.024	-.182*
physical appearance	-.100*	-.022	-.020	-.079*	-.123*
health	-.041	-.088*	-.300	-.115*	-.123*

p < .000 Values represent Beta ( $\beta$ ).

Ranges on the socio-demographic variables: gender: 1) men, 2) women, dummy; age: 1) number of years, ascending; gender: education: number of years finished in educational institutions, ascending; SES: scores received from self-evaluation of status, ascending; ascending; sport participation: 1) non-participant, 2) sport participant

Source: Computed by the author

risks demonstrated connections to all the examined variables. Connections of the satisfaction about the self were more visible in case of gender, SES and the sport participation variable.

## Discussion and conclusion

Sport participation among Hungarian youth carried a double mark on its trends. On one hand, the characteristics emerging from the class-based hierarchy of modern industrial society, as outlined by Bourdieu (1984), were tangible as societal inequalities in access to sport were reinforced and reproduced over Hungary's traditional years (Gál 2008, Perényi 2008 2010a). On the other hand, the diminished class-based trends of post-modern society allowed for individual diversity of sporting habits across hierarchical categories and for the development of new types of activities and methods of participation (Perényi 2010c). The modern and the post-modern characteristics of societal change parallel influenced the life scenarios of Hungarian youth. This phenomenon combined with a predominantly postmodern value priority, similar to characteristics in Schulze's "thrill society," created a more diverse sporting scene with expanded opportunities to participate.

Although previous research has found similarity in the value dominance of Schulze's "thrill society" (1992a, 1992b) and the value priorities expressed by young sport participants, this study found that the uncertainties and insecurities that were suggested as a threat in Schulze's "thrill-projects" were *not* a characteristic of sport participants in Hungary. The results of this study suggest that when compared to non-participant youth, sport participants adopted a more positive

view for one's personal future and the future of society, also had a higher ability to assume risks and act in more adventurous ways in response to life's challenges, had a more stable self-concept representing their physical condition, their appearance, and their health.

It seems that the environment of sport, its system of rules, its norms and value priorities provide stability in the lives of young sport participants. The accountability and regularity of sporting contests teaches youth to adopt and comply with new rules and regulations. It gives both participants and their parents meaningful activities, goals, and regularity in organising leisure activities. It requires self-enhancement and autonomous decisions. The investment in time and effort necessary to become a member of a team and learn the movements of a sport reduces the available opportunities post-modern society; thus sport *may* function as a strategy to narrow the "everything is possible" theme characteristic in a "thrill-society".

At the same time, sport participation may create new opportunities to construct and experience the self on physical, cognitive, and psychological levels. Sport provides meaningful challenges and new resources to satisfactory "thrill projects". It provides the excitement of unforeseen outcomes, the challenge of overcoming personal boundaries. In contradiction, sports in the drama of winning and losing, provides the opportunity of the 'next time' and teaches persistence and gives the opportunity for personal development. By doing so it also reduces the risks associated with "thrill-projects"; thus it reduces the feeling of *uncertainties*. Sport also exchanges *insecurities* for the feeling abilities, the attitudes of "what if's" and "I can try's". Participating in sport, however, does not narrow the freedom of constructing the self, instead, it provides new avenues for personal freedom that may also create a life-view that is used in other areas of personal life.

The feeling of belonging to a club, team, informal group, reduces the loneliness often experienced in post-modern conditions, and provides platforms and opportunities for social interaction. It widens the social space around youth, provides opportunities for building inter-personal relationships and, in team sports; it reduces the degree of responsibility of decision-making at the same time that it teaches the responsibilities associated with team membership. Hankiss (2005) outlines the symbolism of the temporary but complete "rest" for the devastated post-modern consumer in the micro-environment created around a tennis match.

The individualisation of the sporting scene is also reflected in the change from preferring club-based organised sport to preferring individually conducted informal sporting activities. Also, diversification is noticeable as new alternatives for sporting and physical activities had replaced traditional sport forms. The number of participants in activities such as yoga, walking, roller-blading, mountain-biking, and home-exercising increased in statistically measurable terms in nation-wide representative samples as well. This shows that the need of Hungarian sport consumers for democratisation has passed the structural and organisational developments of the sport sphere; thus, youth require wider opportunities that may satisfy a postmodern hunger for "thrills".

It seems that sport loses its instrumental value content and gains goal/performance orientations in the process of thrill-projects (but it still *may* assist youth by providing a stable and predictable value environment that reduces the overwhelming variety of options and provides resources to deal more effectively with societal *uncertainties*; meanwhile it opens new avenues of personal freedom.

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