



Serious Leisure and Recreation Specialisation in Sportspeople. Contrast in Sportspeople With and Without Disabilities

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 riding a wave at Supertubes
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Abstract

The constant change in the population's sports demands has led to a decrease in sports licenses and an increase in more recreational sports practices. For this reason, it is essential to examine competitive sports practices via theories related to leisure and recreation. At this point, it is worth mentioning serious leisure and recreation specialisation, two theoretical constructs which have emerged to explain the new forms of leisure that emerged in the late 20th century and have been used in a host of studies to examine different sports practices. This decrease in sports licenses is worrying both sports federations and public administrations, so this type of practice must be studied from the sphere of leisure. This thesis aims to ascertain the relationship between these two constructs in federated sports through three fundamental objectives:

- To adapt to Spanish and verify the psychometric goodness of a measurement instrument related to serious leisure (SLIM, Serious Leisure Inventory and Measure) and an index classifying recreation specialisations (Specialization Recreation Index, SRI) in federated sportspeople without physical disabilities ($n=232$) and with physical disabilities ($n=138$) (Total= 370).
- To check whether the perceptions of serious leisure and recreation specialisation are different in these two types of sportspeople.
- To analyse the relationship between serious leisure and recreation specialisation in the two samples using the SLIM tool and the SRI index.

The main results are the following:

- Both tools show acceptable reliability and construct validity, although there is a debate as to the advisability of replicating validation studies with larger populations and a wider range of sports practices.
- Both groups have practically identical perceptions; having a disability or not does not influence the experience of sports practice.
- It is confirmed that sportspeople without a disability show higher degrees of specialisation and that there is a relationship between the concepts of serious leisure and recreation specialisation. This implies that within federated practices, which are viewed as serious leisure, there is a continuous specialisation among the sportspeople themselves.

It is concluded that despite the increase in the recreational component within the population's new sports habits, there is a continuous recreation specialisation in competitive sports. This kind of sport is viewed by its practitioners as their serious leisure. There are currently two instruments that enable both the specialisation profiles and the sportspeople's perception of serious leisure to be analysed.

Keywords: serious leisure, recreation specialisation, sportspeople, adaptation, psychometric assessment