

Mapping the Needs of Different Groups of Athletes of the City of Zagreb and the Republic of Croatia During Crisis Situations (Covid – 19 and Earthquake) – Athlete Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This paper was created as part of the project “Trešnjevka Wrestlers for Civil Society Sports Organizations (SOCD) in Crisis Situations.” with a specific ambition – to pursue improving the capacity of civil society organizations to respond to the needs of the local community in crisis situations. For this purpose and as one of the project activities, the mapping of the needs of different groups of athletes and sports workers of the City of Zagreb and the Republic of Croatia during the crises of Covid – 19 and the earthquake is carried out. This research used a qualitative approach that includes focus group pre-research. To ensure broad coverage of the researched topic and for the purpose of heterogeneity, research deliberately focused on 17 different groups of sport. The structure of pre-research participants who were selected intentionally from 17 sports resulted in a total of 17 athletes. All respondents are athletes and adults who have consented to participate in the survey. Qualitative research was conducted through pre-questionnaires and semi-structured interviews and the survey was guided from February to April 2022. Each athlete belonging to a defined sports community (club or federation) was examined separately. Respondents were introduced to the aim of the research and general questions asked and were also informed about the confidentiality of the answers. Collected data materials were processed by comparative analysis. Alternate observation of the responses, similarities and differences among them, and according to the superior aspect of the research (improving the capacity of civil society organizations to provide an effective response to the needs of the local community in crisis situations) along with the intensity of life quality for athletes managing sport during the pandemic, led to the following question: What needs have been identified by different groups of athletes of the City of Zagreb and the Republic of Croatia during crises (Covid – 19 and earthquakes)? The most frequent declarations are associated with impaired training continuity or suspension of training due to epidemiological measures and earthquake-damaged infrastructure, cancellation of the competitions and a decrease in motivation.

Keywords: occurrences, crisis situations, athletes, needs assessment, quality of life

INTRODUCTION

Croatian athletes have faced many obstacles in training consistency, physical improvement, and achieving sports success regarding recent occurrences in Croatia during the past two years. The beginning of Covid – 19 pandemic in February 2020 conjoined with two earthquakes (5.5, and 5 according to the Richter scale) that happened on the same day in the capital city Zagreb with one hour difference (PMF, 2020) along with its manifestations generated whole spread crisis in Croatia. The capital was damaged, and the following vibrations in Zagreb and its surrounding caused by earthquakes became a regular circumstance daily. The same year, on December 28, an earthquake of magnitude five according to the Richter scale hit Petrinja, and several stronger earthquakes followed on the same day; on December 29, one of the strongest earthquakes in the Croatian history, of magnitude 6.2, occurred in the same area (PMF, 2020). The first coronavirus case was recorded on February 25, 2020, and this date denotes the spread of the pandemic to the Republic of Croatia (HZJZ, 2020). According to Oxford University research in 2020, the Republic of Croatia was one of the countries with the strictest restrictions and measures to reduce further virus infections. (Oxford University, 2020). In less than a month, educational institutions, for instance, kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, and high school and university institutions in endangered areas started closing due to large daily migrations of citizens exposed and exposed others to virus infections. By March 2020, all schools in the Republic of Croatia were closed. Considering that educational institutions and their assets are one of the prominent carriers of social events regarding sports competitions, cultural manifestations, and similar gatherings, they were all controlled or canceled, and sanctions for violating the epidemic measures were strict. (Official Gazette, 2020) Those mentioned above led to socio-economic consequences. All the measures implemented to control the pandemic caused socio-economic repercussions, which were primarily reflected in cultural and sports events while sports competitions were either canceled or held without the presence of spectators. According to the aforesaid circumstances, Croatian citizens had to be constantly prepared for various forms of intervention, which is why the period from 2020 to 2022 is a justified period of general crisis in the Republic of Croatia. A crisis is, by definition, a situation whose occurrence is unforeseen and that is highly threatening to priorities and time and space limiting for urgent decision responses. Furthermore, crises represent narrowed fundamentals of the social system. Therefore, they can be lethal to overall aspects of life, causing malfunctions to significant assets and values on different fronts of the human organization, along with its uncertain impact on moral values and physical and mental health (Koutsoukis, Nikitas-Spiros & Farantos, Georgios, 2015). The crisis is interpreted by initiating factors. Concerning the circumstances, it originates from, it can be categorized as followed by internal or external forces (Koutsoukis, Nikitas-Spiros & Farantos, Georgios, 2015). Therefore, crises in Croatia were externally evoked by the Covid-19 pandemic and earthquakes, which initiated internal social malfunctions in everyday life, especially the quality of life of athletes anticipated in sports organizations. Sport-oriented quality of life for every active athlete is associated with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in the Theory of human motivation. A. H. Maslow (1943) claimed that motivated behaviors should be inferred as a connection through which many basic needs may be reciprocally expressed or satisfied.

Furthermore, "human needs arrange themselves in hierarchies of pre-potency. That is to say, the appearance of one need usually rests on the prior satisfaction of another, more prepotent need," as Maslow said (1943). Athletes long to fulfill the need for self-esteem, which is directly connected to sports achievement that leads to other aspects of described need, respect for others. However, under the circumstances of crises such as pandemics and frequent earthquakes, contentment with the pre-potent need for Safety and satisfaction is considered questionable, not to mention the fact that "practically everything looks less important than safety, even sometimes the physiological needs which are being satisfied, is now underestimated." (Maslow, 1943).

The requirements analysis establishes the characteristics required for the athlete, the sport, or both. The demands of the sport are frequently determined first since this enables the coach to determine what skills the athlete needs to excel in that sport. A needs analysis is sometimes divided into three sections: a sport-specific needs analysis, an athlete-oriented analysis, and a comparison study. In order to understand the demands of the sport in emergency conditions, we gathered the components and concentrated on comparison in this study. The in-depth analysis provides us with sport-specific needs at all levels that are essential for understanding and planning a holistic and practical approach or program in terms of the demands of the sport in uncertain times. Even though athletes are not considered a high-risk population, their health and performance could be directly affected in the event of being infected. Therefore, it is essential to have this information and to define solid (but allowing flexibility as new data becomes apparent) protocols to know if they can follow their training programs safely. In general, professional athletes are younger and have fewer comorbidities than the rest of the population, hence a lower risk of severe outcomes due to Covid-19. However, as they are part of the general population, they must follow the same prevention strategies to avoid spreading the virus and flatten the curve, so healthcare systems do not collapse. The same applies to those surrounding the athletes like coaches, physical trainers, team managers, team physicians, physical therapists, equipment managers, and other people working in the club facilities that are generally older and probably have more risk factors and comorbidities, but also to their coexisting relatives (Mann et al., 2020). Sports competition and regular training regimens were abruptly stopped by the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, which led to considerable uncertainty about whether and how to properly resume sports. In order to maintain optimal levels of health and physical performance for all staff members during the current social distance requirements and the upcoming return of competition, despite ongoing hazards, concrete solutions distributed to performance staff, coaches, and athletes are necessary. Therefore, we aim for a thorough understanding of an athlete through the use of subjective and objective assessment provided in a conceptual model that relies on a few crucial components of the development and strategy approach, such as a thorough comprehension of the specific needs of the athlete, in-depth knowledge of the specific demands of the sport, integration of this information to identify the most important pedagogical and psychological factors that will affect performance, and the development of the most effective competitive preparation strategies for the specific athlete and its sport. The applied setting of this research goes beyond Taylor's (1994) definitions of motivation as the ability to persist at an activity in the face of boredom, fatigue, pain, and the desire to do other things; confidence is defined as how strongly athletes believe in their ability to

learn or execute a skill, compete at a certain level, or succeed in competition; intensity is the degree of physiological activation athletes experience instantly prior to and during competition, and the positive or negative valence occurred upon their physiological state; concentration as the ability to focus on performance-relevant aspects of the attentional field. As the conceptual model indicates, the purpose of assessment is to fully understand the athlete, thereby enabling consultants to provide effective interventions to respond to the athlete's specific needs. Acquiring an understanding of the athletes' needs assessments can be achieved in two general ways: a subjective and an objective assessment. Each means of assessment has strengths and limitations that must be considered in determining the value of the information that is obtained. As the conceptual model suggests, every sport has unique physical, technical, and logistical demands which require special preparation by participating athletes. These factors should be determined in line with specific circumstances like Covid-19 and earthquakes. Assimilation of the diversified reports commences with comparing the athlete's needs and the predominant demands of the sport.

METHODS

The research used a qualitative approach that included focus groups which served as a source to establish needed interventions in present and future times of crisis situations. Qualitative studies use non-quantitative methods used to provide new perspectives which can contribute to sport-orientated studies with the use of interviews and focus groups. (Tong, Sainsbury & Craig, 2007). To achieve the purpose of this qualitative research, to understand the experiences of individuals in context of training and competing during Covid-19 and earthquakes, 17 different groups of sport were chosen deliberately which provided adequate heterogeneity for analysis of the researched topic. In the class of all the 17 groups of sports, each sport was represented by a sport club or sport organization which complied to participate in the survey. Intentionally selected athletes from 17 different sports resulted in a total of 17 athlete participants. All respondents are competition active and professional athletes who are competing for sports clubs which are registered in national sports federations as a part of Croatian Olympic Committee. All the participants are registered as active athletes in international sports federations and adults who have consented to participate in the survey which was guided from February to April 2022. Each athlete was interviewed separately, on account of belonging to a defined sports community. Respondents were familiar with questions (appendix 1) asked and were also informed about the confidentiality of the answers. The research was carried by scientists and students selected from the fields of pedagogy and kinesiology who have experience in conducting this type of research. Collected data materials were processed by comparative analysis. We used MAXQDA program for Qualitative and Mixed Methods Data Analysis, 2020. Conducted answers, its content and data were observed and compared in pursuit of mapping the needs of different groups of athletes of the City of Zagreb and the Republic of Croatia during crisis situations from athletes' perspective by studying intensity of equalities, similarities and differences amid them. Questions asked served the purpose of identifying the needs of different groups of athletes during the time of crisis regarding sport oriented quality of life.

RESULTS

Qualitative research established on a focus group constituted of 17 athletes from different sports permitted to collect, analyze and describe the thoughts on occurrences in crisis situations and needs assessments from athletes perspective. Obtained results for each sport separately are shown in table 1. sorted by alphabetical order. They are observed with two-point perspectives: direct perspective refers to sport occurrences in crisis situations that made a direct impact on athletes training process and indirect perspective refers to other occurrences in sport organizations athletes are a part of that indirectly affected athletes training process.

Further analysis provided understanding the needs assessment that are crucial for providing the best plan and program applicable for demands of macro/micro cycles at all sport levels in uncertain and sudden situations.

Table 1. Occurrences in crisis situation and needs assessments from athletes' perspective

GROUP OF SPORT	Sport occurrences in crisis situation (direct)	Other occurrences in sport organizations (indirect)	Comparison based on need assessments
<i>artistic gymnastics</i>	The training hall was impaired due to the earthquake and due to safety reasons, indoor training was impossible. All training sessions were held on open sports fields or online (recorded exercises/training).	Health and social care were well organized through frequent disinfection of the premises. Protocols regarding evacuation plans had been formed and all the athletes were educated about what to do in the event of an emergency.	Athletes are in need of better organization of group training. They propose working in small groups for efficient training programs and creating more groups for different athletes.
<i>basketball</i>	The implementation of training processes was prevented due to the impossibility of entering school sports halls. Outdoor courts were used when the weather permitted. Competitions were reduced because of numerous cancellations.	The earthquake did not affect any athletes' activities. Athletes were free of paying membership fees.	Urgent necessity of providing a plan of work in emergency situations.
<i>boxing</i>	Athletes were engaged in organized training sessions on outdoor fields. Regular cooperation with a sport psychologist helped the athletes through hard times of motivation. Implementation of trips to the Croatian highlands and mountains under the guidance of mountain guides was a common part of the training cycle. The work with the athletes did not suffer due to the motivation and dedication of the trainers. All competitions were prohibited.	Material conditions of the training space meet all the basic requirements for athletes to be provided with the best practice and training experience in accordance with epidemiological measures.	Special needs assessments were not stated.

<i>cycling</i>	There were no difficulties in implementing training activities. All training workshops were conducted outdoors.	Safety protection and health hygiene standards are high, and athletes use their own equipment. The pandemic and earthquakes did not have a negative impact because of the specifics of the sport.	Athletes need to familiarize themselves with the protocol for emergency and crisis situations.
<i>dance</i>	The training was held regularly according to the guidelines of the headquarters and athletes are well informed about safety conditions.	Specific protocols of the sports organization about entering the hall and prescribed training time needed to be obeyed. The health and hygiene conditions are at a very high level and in accordance with the staff's recommendations. The earthquake had no impact.	The necessity of forming a protocol for work in emergency situations.
<i>figure skating</i>	The training was taken normally in accordance with recommendations. Athletes were traveling to competitions abroad. Additional activities regarding athletes were held online.	Infrastructure was difficult to access, especially after impairment caused by the earthquake which prevented athletes from using one ice rink.	Athletes have a great need for normalization and continuity of training along with the protocol for working in emergency situations.
	Health and hygiene conditions at a high level.	As ice is not treated as a „closed space“, there were not too many difficulties in the organization.	
<i>football</i>	The training was held on outdoor fields or in sports halls when pandemic restrictions got restrained.	The pandemic affected restricting and canceling activities of the football sports communities. The earthquake did not affect at all.	A work plan in emergency situations.
<i>handball</i>	Competitions were not sustained during the pandemic and later competitions were held only with prior COVID testing of players who do not have COVID certificates.	The negative impact of pandemic was display in the termination of the competition while the earthquake did not affect negatively on training and competing cycle.	Athletes found the necessity for the normal functioning of the sport community as the most important. Furthermore, they lack a plan and education of behaving in emergency situations because superiors guarantee a quick and efficient resolution of any crisis situation.

<i>judo</i>	<p>All regular competitions were canceled, and only national championships were held according to prescribed measures. Athletes conduct training in accordance with epidemiological measures and become engaged in outdoor activities in summer and winter camps and hiking.</p>	<p>Hygiene of the participants is the main focus to provide safe training conditions and especially important is the cleanliness of the material conditions before and after the training. Coaches inform athletes about safety protocols in case of crisis situations and teach them how to follow the evacuation plan.</p>	<p>Special needs assessments were not stated.</p>
<i>rhythmic gymnastics</i>	<p>Organization of regular training processes and competitions was impossible in Croatia and abroad for most of the crisis due to restrictive measures. The training was adapted to a small space so it could be also done at home. The regular program of training preparations needed to take place outside the club premises. Participation in competitions was absent or decreased and was limited to Croatia only.</p>	<p>The space where they were supposed to conduct training meets all hygiene standards and equipment is regularly cleaned and maintained. Athletes are obliged to take care of their equipment.</p> <p>Other conditions in the sports hall are in accordance with athletes' needs. Through online training, the level of motivation was maintained.</p>	<p>A necessity in forming a plan and program for conducting training in crisis situations.</p>
<i>rowing</i>	<p>The training was held outdoors and athletes were competing only in the Republic of Croatia. International competitions were not organized.</p>	<p>The Pandemic affected work to some extent, but the earthquake did not.</p> <p>Athletes are familiar with emergency protocols, and they follow health and hygiene instructions in accordance with pandemic measurements.</p>	<p>Specific needs assessments were not stated.</p>
<i>swimming</i>	<p>Competitions were canceled and training was conducted mainly for categorized athletes, while younger athletes were deprived of the training process.</p>	<p>Protocols for working and behaving in crisis and emergency situations in swimming pools exist and athletes are familiar with them. Athlete's health and hygiene conditions are frequently controlled.</p>	<p>The pandemic significantly complicated the work and implementation of the training process while it mainly depended on resolutions of the country authorities regarding the use of swimming pools.</p>

taekwondo	Regular training process, as well as planning and programming the form of athletes is hardly maintainable due to the frequent postponement or cancellation of competitions. Athletes are encouraged to use other types of physical activity (outdoor activities) as a substitute for regular training.	Athletes are maintaining communication with their coaches and colleagues whereby they emphasize the importance of psychophysical development during the pandemic.	The lack of competitions excitedly initiated a decrease in athletes' motivation levels and a large number of them gave up training.
track and field	Common outdoor training continued to be implemented.	Pandemic and earthquake did not affect athletes training progress. They have existing protocols for crisis situations.	Specific needs assessments are not stated as track and field enable continuity of training process in terms of described situations.
volleyball	Athletes were separated to train in smaller groups following strict measures. In periods when pandemic has diminished training continued to be carried out in a normal volume as well as competitions, only without spectators. Training sessions were held on outdoor courts during indoor work bans.	Sport halls, equipment and athletes' hands were frequently disinfected before, after and during practice and they were all wearing masks. The earthquake resulted in a reduced number of spaces due to the impaired halls.	Athletes find necessity in normal functioning of the sports community regarding training and competition process and in activity plans for them to easily adapt to the situation and act within its capabilities.
water polo	Regular training programs were not held and all the athletes partly trained following online instructions. Competitions were modified to pandemic restrictions.	Protocols are currently being developed so that athletes can be educated on how to react to crisis situations in the future.	Urgent necessity in forming work protocols in urgent situations and adapting training processes by occurrences in crisis situations.
wrestling	All athletes were provided with online training and individual contact access was provided to top athletes.	Earthquakes did not impair infrastructure and the regular training for top athletes could be easily provided.	Since there is no written preparedness plan for work in crisis situations there is an urgent need in forming protocols and educating athletes about procedures during pandemic and natural catastrophes.

The listed results have scientific contributions and practical implications as they can provide specific information on how given circumstances affected athletes' quality of life. They can present essential matters for athletes, coaches and sports organizations in creating and implying training principles in training processes during crisis situations.

Differences amid given types of sports are predominantly seen whether the sport is oriented indoors or outdoors. Indoor sports were facing strict measures regarding work bans while outdoor sports continued regular training implementation as the crisis situation did not affect them.

Separate observations of sport organizations regarding the place of sports activity implementation, determine a 40.37 % decrease in the number of active members in clubs with indoor activities as opposed to a 12 % increase in active members in sports clubs with outdoor activities (Iličić, 2021). Survey provided by Washif, J. A., Sandbakk, Ø., Seiler et al. (2022) conducted on athletes from 142 countries contributed to important outcomes in relation to the effects of lockdown during training practices among athletes. Results displayed that more than 50 % of training processes were body-weight exercises while sport-specific and technical skills training was mostly practiced in parasports, combat and precision sports. Cardiorespiratory training was also regulated among 50 % to 75 % of participants. Study demonstrated a considerable decline in training volume and limited understanding of training knowledge among male and female athletes. Washif, J. et al. (2022) concluded that team sports were more affected by changes than individual sports during the lockdown and that athletes should be provided with specific training and educational resources for the individual implementation of home-based training. Comparable situation was studied among Filipino athletes during a lockdown, where significant reductions in training frequency and duration were recognized among middle-level athletes while professional athletes were less affected by the lockdown athletes. The study accentuates the challenges experienced by athletes during a lockdown, which has importance in forming adequate support for lockdown-affected athletes (Cayaban Pagaduan, Haddad & Chamari, 2022). Furthermore, research that interviewed athletes from countries that had similar COVID-19 contagion levels, concluded that those athletes were more oriented to home training and athletes from individual sports had more support from their coaches than athletes from team sports. That study demonstrated the importance of participation in sports competitions for professional athletes to retain current levels of an active lifestyle and due to quarantine athletes considered home training and e-training as useful sources during the lockdown. (Izzicupo et al., 2021). Jukic, I. Calleja-González, J., Cos, F. et al. (2020) propose recommendations for athletes to approach and achieve the ideal situation during restricted measures of lockdown: "The athlete's living space should be equipped with cardio and resistance training equipment (portable bicycle or rowing ergometer). Some forms of body mass resistance circuit-based training could promote aerobic adaptation. Sports skills training should be organized based on the athlete's needs. Personalized conditioning training should be carried out with an emphasis on neuromuscular performance. Athletes should also be educated about nutrition (Vitamin D and proteins) and hydration. Strategies should be developed to control body composition. Mental fatigue should be anticipated and controlled. Adequate methods of recovery should be provided. Daily monitoring should be established." What is more, studies regarding human health acknowledge the importance of regular exercise, playing sports, and participating in physical activities as one of the means for preserving human health (Dašić, Gregorić & Kos Kavran, 2021).

DISCUSSION

In the presence of the pandemic, all forms of sport-organized activities have been canceled or held according to restrictive measures. As training halls have been closed due to pandemic proceedings or earthquake impairment most of the training process needed to be transferred outdoors or online which caused organizational problems for different sports requirements. Most difficulties

originated in managing crisis occurrences as the pandemic significantly entangled the work of sports organizations and the application of the training process as daily activities mainly depended on resolutions of the authorities. Athletes have expressed the urgent necessity of providing protocols in emergency situations and the need for education regarding specific behaviors during crisis situations, but the most important need assessment is providing adapted training processes in terms of given circumstances. For some athletes, especially ones engaged in indoor activities with specific demands of space and equipment, this modified training lifestyle, distant from regular training forms, leads to specific deficits in the quality and quantity of training (Tayech et al., 2020). In cases where the training process was allowed in sports facilities, the use of training space and equipment, changing rooms and showers, as well as the hygiene of athletes was strictly controlled and under official requirements. (Steinacker, 2020). Cancellation of competitions and team sport matches threatened athletes' mental health and motivation and according to Drewesa et al. (2021) competing without the support of spectators does not have a pre-implied positive impact on the athletes. Jagustin (2021) also confirmed changes in the psychological state of athletes because many professional athletes struggled with anxiety, and self-doubt and reported depression. In addition, as the normal course of the season was disrupted by the pandemic, athletes exposed themselves to an increased risk of injury when returning to usual training and competitions. It is important that athletes maintain stable physical and mental conditions to be prepared for the resumption of regular planning and programming cycles (Tayech et al., 2020). Observing the influence of physical activity on mental health, it is considered that the psychological effects of the pandemic can intimidate a quick return to the previous state of training, therefore practical recommendation on the given statement is training at home to help avoid psychological problems in dealing with the quarantine situation during COVID-19 pandemic (Haddad, Abbes, Mujika & Chamari, 2021). According to Tayech et al. (2020) it is possible if athletes try to perform the technical movements of their sport. Knowing that each sport has specific requirements it is limited in many cases, however it is not recommended that training during home confinement is limited only to strength, power, and muscle endurance but extended to general physical preparation and stretching exercises amongst other isolation-limited activities (Tayech et al., 2020). What was necessary was a change in the planning and programming of training and competition activities (Jagustin, 2021). The effects of precarity, fear and insecurity also results in a shift of pedagogical affects. The participants especially struggled with education that does not include the significance of physical encounters with their colleagues. The new assemblage of sport also included encounters with digital technologies, which allowed for particular openings and closings for a re-alignment into the shifted trainings. Sport has been claimed to be socially constructed, that is, defined by what is said, written and done in its name (Kirk, 2010), so consequently the pedagogical encounters involve unpredictable relationships. When questioning whether online training is acceptable for regular training processes, the results of the research showed that virtual training contaminates the psychosomatic status of athletes and it is only partly an applicable reinstatement for the proper training process (Miocic, Androja & Bilic, 2020). It is strongly suggested to exercise during the isolation period depending on the equipment availability and with guidance and monitoring by a strength and conditioning coach and physiologist (Torsdahl & Asif, 2020). Preparation for resumption includes education of the

athletes and other personnel, assessment of the sport environment and agreement on training scheduling to accommodate all needs that might be left behind. Preventative measures should assure that sport participation at all levels and abilities makes an important contribution to the physical, psychological, and emotional well-being of individuals. At a population level, benefits of sport include direct economic benefits; healthcare benefits; educational benefits; and contribution to social capital through connectivity, resilience and creating stronger, cohesive communities (Hughes et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

Athletes' lives were abnormally disrupted due to the quarantine of COVID-19 pandemic and the impairment of the sport organization properties. The major physical and psychological impact on athletes' careers caused by sports restraints modified specific lifestyles that together with the constant threat of infection and its outcomes affected their health in ways of impaired physical performance, increased risk of injuries and mostly, quality of life in general. Organization of regular training processes and competitions in the country and abroad was significantly challenging and demanding. Sports competitions were canceled or postponed and in the beginning, all activities outside of basic activities were left to individuals but with gradual adaptations to the current situation, training was taken online or outdoors. Only for the athletes who usually conduct their activities outdoors, the pandemic and the earthquake did not have a significant impact. By mapping the needs of athletes engaged in different groups of sports during crisis situations and observing direct and indirect occurrences they were facing in times of crisis it can be concluded that some sports organizations did better and some less well during periods of crisis. In new conditions, athletes have become aware of the importance of normal functioning of the sports community regarding training and competition process, the importance of creating activity plans for them to easily adapt to the situation and act within its capabilities, forming a work protocol in emergency situations and familiarize themselves with the protocol and behaving in emergency situations. As experienced athletes, they have their own ideas about adapting training processes to occurrences in crisis situations. Crisis situations, if unexpected, are in many ways challenging for athletes and all sports communities but with quick coordination of the needs and responses, they can be easily directed to being ordinary. It is necessary to determine the real picture of the situation because generalization, in this case, is not possible with regard to a random sample, although it allows insight into the differences in recognized needs according to different sports. The above conclusions are not an indicator of a new theory. Nevertheless, results and conclusions can help complete the starting points for selecting models of new theories regarding training processes during crisis situations and belonging recommendations.

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APPENDIX 1 – FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. How is your community (club, association) currently responding (at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic and the earthquake), to the following actions of the club

- a. the main activity of the club (or association) at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic and the earthquake: organize regular training processes, a regular program of competitions in the country and abroad, a regular program of training preparations outside the club...
- b. activities of the club (or association) in free time (outside the basic activities of the club) during the COVID-19 pandemic and the earthquake: for example, activities in free time (excursions, cultural and recreational activities, access to nature, etc.)
- c. involvement in club (or association) activities during the COVID-19 pandemic and earthquake: availability of information on human rights, involvement in the community (club or association) planning, participation in community (club or association) projects, opportunities for activities for people with disabilities and similar.
- d. activities of the community (club or association) related to safety and protection in their work during the COVID-19 pandemic and earthquake: is there knowledge and protocols on how to act in the event of an emergency (Covid-19 pandemic, earthquake, flood, fire, etc.); how safe is the community (club/association), do members know whom they can turn to for help when they are in danger, safety from abuse, respect regardless of race, religion, origin or physical condition, access to justice, knowledge about the safe use of the Internet;
- e. activities related to community (club/association) care for the health and social care during the COVID-19 pandemic and earthquake: access to a healthy environment (health and hygiene conditions of training equipment and space, etc.), availability and accessibility of health and social services in crisis situations, the degree of participation in the creation of programs and services related to health and social care.
- f. activities related to the education of people in the community (club or association) during the COVID-19 pandemic and earthquake: access to regular education (schools, colleges...), participation in financing/co-financing of activities related to education, access to learning activities that are not in regular education (e.g. free workshops, instructions, access to libraries...);
- g. activities related to the availability of sports infrastructure and the provision of financial resources for the regular functioning of the community (club/association) during the COVID-19 pandemic and earthquake: access to the affordable rental of halls, access to drinking water and electricity, heating, air quality, adequate living space and training space, access to financing for adequate training conditions for the poor and other vulnerable groups), membership fees and donations.

2. How much has the Covid-19 pandemic affected your community in terms of work before and during the pandemic? How much did the earthquake affect your community in terms of work before and during the pandemic?

3. In relation to similar sports communities (clubs or associations), what could be or already are the advantages of your community (club/association) in responding to needs during a) the Covid-19 pandemic and b) an earthquake?
4. Does your community (clubs or associations) have any experience in responding to the needs of members in crisis situations? What have been your experiences with it so far?
5. Describe in more detail how you involve colleagues from the sports community (club/association) in the activities of the community (club/association) during the Covid-19 pandemic and earthquakes? How do you involve other colleagues outside the sports community (club/association) in the time of the Covid-19 pandemic and the earthquake?
6. Does your community (club/association) have a written preparedness plan for working in any emergency/crisis situations?
7. How do you/your community (club/union) define needs during the Covid-19 pandemic and earthquake? And how do you define community?

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