

**Sport and maximisation of the subjective  
perception of wellbeing: A trend analysis of  
sporting practises at the start of the 21st century**

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## **Sport and maximisation of the subjective perception of wellbeing: A trend analysis of sporting practises at the start of the 21st century**

## **Deporte y maximización de la percepción subjetiva del bienestar: un análisis tendencial de las prácticas deportivas a principios del siglo XXI**

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### **Abstract**

We have seen a transformation in the development of sporting activities over recent decades. There are a number of social factors behind this. In this article, we report a longitudinal study of sporting activities in Spain between 1995 and 2014 among the population aged 18 and over, including both sexes, examining the social relationships that arise in sporting activities. Our analysis is based on national databases and analysis of trends in sporting activities. It demonstrates the main hypothesis of the study, which is that individual sporting activities have increased compared to group activities with family and friends. We also examine changes in sporting activities depending on the primary relations established in the sport, by sex, age, habitat, occupation, educational level, the form in which the sport is

practised, the degree of competition, frequency, the sports facilities used, the type of sport, hours of free time and the subjective sensation of happiness.

**Keywords:** Sport; Spain; Longitudinal study; Primary relationship; Sporting activity

### Resumen

En las últimas décadas, debido a factores sociales diversos, asistimos al desarrollo y a la transformación de las prácticas deportivas. En el presente artículo llevamos a cabo un estudio longitudinal de la práctica deportiva entre los años 1995 y 2014, en España, entre la población de 18 años y más, de ambos sexos, atendiendo a las relaciones sociales que se dan en la práctica deportiva. El análisis, obtenido a partir de bases de datos nacionales, ha demostrado la hipótesis principal de estudio en base al análisis de tendencias de práctica del deporte, puesto que la práctica del deporte individual ha aumentado frente a formas de prácticas colectivas junto a amigos o familia. Mostramos, también, las variaciones de la práctica deportiva dependiendo del tipo de relación primaria que se establece en el deporte según sexo, edad, hábitat, ocupación, formación, forma de hacer deporte, grado de competición, frecuencia, instalaciones deportivas utilizadas, tipo de deporte practicado, horas de tiempo libre y sensación subjetiva de felicidad.

**Palabras clave:** Deporte; España; Estudio longitudinal; Relación primaria; Hábitos deportivos.

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**Sumario:** 1. Introduction. 2. Individualism, primary groups and sport. 3. Methodology. 4. Analysis of the data. 5. Discussion of the data. 6. Conclusions. 7. Bibliography.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The changes that have taken place as a result of the transformation of the capitalist production system - with shorter working hours, the development of transport and modernisation of society - have facilitated an increase in sporting activity (Brohm, 1978) and individualist values.

We have also seen the emergence of post-materialist values in society. Inglehart (1998) argues that once the material conditions for survival have been met, people start to expand their objectives to achieving “post-materialist” objectives, seeking to maximise wellbeing and subjective feelings of happiness. Against this backdrop, sport has developed into an activity related to leisure, and maintaining and improving appearance, health, social relationships, quality of life and feelings of wellbeing and happiness (Moscoso and Moyano, 2009).

The process of individualisation and the current social-productive system have served to undermine primary relationships in our society. The modern form of cosmopolitan, urban life has fostered individuals drifting away from previous feelings of community (Simmel, 2000; Tönnies, 2009) and the constraints (Durkheim, 1982) of these on the identity and preferences of each person. But now that the modern person has gained autonomy in how they choose their identity, they long to return to the warmth of primary relationships and community (Bauman, 2002, 2010; Bejar, 2009).

Sport is an important tool for fostering mutual understanding and creating relationships of trust that lead to friendship. Friendship offers the individual a form of social identity and a range of social benefits deriving from relationships of trust.

In this study we undertake a longitudinal study of types of sporting activity, focusing on primary-relationship groups in sport. We perform longitudinal analysis focusing on the changes in social-demographic components, and objective and subjective aspects of sporting activity in each type of study between 2000 and 2014. The Spanish Sporting Habits survey (*Los Hábitos deportivos de los españoles*) identifies basic categories of primary relationships among groups of friends, fellow students, workmates and the family, in comparison to solo sports. We use this classification in our research, defining each of these categories of friends.

## 2. INDIVIDUALISM, PRIMARY GROUPS AND SPORT

Turning to the question of individualism, Puig (1998) talks of how the process of individualisation in our society has helped sport come to be seen as a facilitator of collective welfare, as it combines a focus on one's self with improving the entire gamut of group aspects. This assumes that people take charge of their own socialisation and arrange their activities in response to their own preferences. This fact is of fundamental importance, as many people decide to get involved in sporting activities for health and leisure, not because they want to compete in a rules-based activity (Pérez-Flores, 2015a).

This process of individualisation also has its negative aspects, such as the gradual disintegration of primary and communal relationships, as the productive system obliges individuals to live more impersonal lives (ephemeral commercial relationships, basically exchange) in which individuals miss out on primary relations (Garfinkel, 2006; Blau, 1964).

In traditional societies, interpersonal relationships were based on various primary groups (Cooley, 1902), of which the family was the group par excellence. There were also strong emotional links with others with close ties, but a certain distancing from outsiders. But post-industrial societies are characterised by a wide range of superficial, ephemeral relationships defined by exchange. These are therefore more egocentric relationships, rather than group or community relationships (Seoane, 1993).

Against this backdrop, individuals develop attitudes that evince concern for their external image and immediate gratification, characterised by wanting and continuous consumption of cultural goods and services: in other words, cultural and personal consumerism. Lasch (1979) has described these feelings as *narcissism*, and considers them common throughout much of modern society.

Cooley (1902) characterised primary groups as those that are decisive in shaping the behaviour of individuals, being defined by face-to-face relationship. These are the first groups with which the individual has a relationship, such as the family or their play group (Seoane, 1993). These relationships are based on empathy and affection, although they may also be based on fear and respect (Peschard and Castro, 1999).

Dunphy (1972) subsequently defined the primary group as a small group that exists during sufficient time to establish robust emotional ties among its members, with a set of rudimentary and functionally differentiated roles, in addition to their own sub-culture, a group self image, and an informal system of rules controlling the activities of its members.

Today, the concept of a primary group is practically interchangeable with concepts such as stable primary relationships (referring mainly to dyadic relationships, such as those between intimate friends) or with support networks and networks of personal contacts.

This brings us to one of the other concepts addressed in our research: friendship. A number of works dating back to the first half of the 20th century analyse and conceptualise the characteristics of friendship (Kurth, 1970, 1977; Suttles, 1970; Silver, 1989; Pahl, 2003). These works highlight the emotional value of friendship relationships, compared to their instrumental values. There have been a number of important works in Spain, such as Cucó (1995) and Requena (1994), who identified both emotional and instrumental components in friendship relations.

We consider that there is not just one single type of friendship; rather, there are a multitude of forms that are highly conditioned by the historic development of a culture at a particular time. Alberoni (2006) offers four dimensions, depending on the degree of trust involved, considering acquaintances, colleagues and classmates, neighbours and the circle of trust. However, we consider that a friendship can pass through several of the phases described, and may even comprise several of these, as, for example, it is possible to establish relationships of trust with neighbours and work colleagues that develop into friendship (Pahl, 2003).

Turning to groups of friends, Hallinan's work (1979) on the dyads of friends demonstrated that the more symmetrical a pair of friends, the more lasting and stable is their relationship. This is consistent with the works of Allan (1979) and Willmott (1987), who found that the working class have fewer friends than the middle class, and have different models of sociability.

There are significant differences between relationships with colleagues and classmates and models of friendship, being a voluntary relationship in most cases. However, colleagues and classmates differ from friends because of the social context in which these relationships are established. Colleagues and classmates are more limited by the context that defines their relationship, which also sets limits, unlike groups of friends, who can continue their relationship in other contexts. The relationship of colleagues, for example, is framed by the work relationship, forming the basis for establishing ties of friendship. These differences result in relationships between colleagues being weaker than those between friends, because, as a general rule, relationships between colleagues and classmates tend to break down when the context that defined them ceases. Requena argues that colleagues and classmates are “an inferior form or, it might be better to say, a preliminary to friendship” (Requena, 1994 p. 19).

Family relationships meanwhile are based on a form of institutionalised relationship, where the individuals usually show a positive interest in the relationship. In other words, they have a certain moral obligation to maintain the connection. This is the glaring difference to friendship, as friendship is based more on a consensus of values than a moral obligation. From the perspective proposed by Wolf (1966), friendship performs different functions to family relationships, enabling individuals to escape from the harsh pressures of social conditions. Leyton (1974) argues that friendship is, in addition to being a luxury, an alternative to family relationships. On this point, we have to delimit friendship and consider whether it opposes family relationships, or whether it supplements them. Campbell (1964) studied the friendship model of nomadic Greek shepherds, the *sarakatsani*, who have a kind of family-based friendship, in a type of “exclusive family”. In this regard, Pahl (2003) suggested that, in these post-modern times, family relationships are starting to develop into something akin to what used to be described as relationships of friendship and, in turn, the latter are starting to seem like family relationships.

Primary relationships of friendship are developing into some of the most important, valued and useful for individuals in our post-modern society. Friends provide an important support function, giving individuals identity, establishing values and, ultimately, providing a source of support in all areas where individuals might need this, including financially and in other ways (Zakus et al, 2009).

Sport is an important inter-relational resource in contemporary society, also meeting the needs of individuals for socialisation and fostering micro-group relations that remain stable over time, structured around different degrees of normative support. Involvement in sport provides a balanced outlet for emotions, offering an ideal environment for developing intimate primary relationships based on affection and empathy (Elias and Dunning, 1992). In this regard, sport not only offers physical advantages, but also a wide range of other benefits, such as improving and maintaining physical fitness, an opportunity for catharsis and fighting stress, and an excellent opportunity for developing primary relationships.

As with social capital (Putnam, 2002), sport fosters mutual understanding and cooperation, making it fertile ground for fostering the creation of social capital. However, if we consider that the main characteristic of social capital is to be found in the relationships formed between the actors involved, then these are the relationships we should study, and in sport these are reduced to primary relationships.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

We applied a quantitative methodology drawing on a range of studies of sport by the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS - Sociological Research Centre), which are set out in Table 1, which also provides details of the year of each study, the size and characteristics of the sample, the sampling error and the study number of each survey.

The data was extracted from the following CIS barometers and opinion surveys on sporting activity in Spain: “Spanish sporting habits I” (1995), “Spanish sporting habits II” (2000), “Spanish sporting habits III” (2005), “Spanish sporting habits IV” (2010) and the June Barometer (2014). With regard to the scope of the research, the databases extract information on the Spanish population of both genders and, depending on the year, by age starting from 15 to 18. We based our longitudinal comparison on research into the population aged 18 and over.

Table 1. Technical details of the CIS studies used

Study	Year	Sample	Scope	Sampling error
Spanish sporting habits I (Study 2198)	1995	4,271 interviews	Spanish population of both genders aged 16 and over	±1.58%
Spanish sporting habits II (Study 2397)	2000	5,189 interviews	Spanish population of both genders aged 15 and over	±1.4%
Spanish sporting habits III (Study 2599)	2005	8,493 interviews	Spanish population of both genders aged 15 and over	±1.11%
Spanish sporting habits IV (Study 2833)	2010	8,925 interviews	Spanish population of both genders aged 15 and over	±1.06%
June Barometer (Study 3029)	2014	2,485 interviews	Spanish population of both genders aged 18 and over	±2%

Source: CIS (1995, 2000, 2005, 2010 and 2014).

The following techniques were used to produce the data: frequency analysis, bivariate analysis, longitudinal analysis, Anova analysis and exploratory factor analysis. The SPSS program was used to extract the data, with the tables being edited in Excel.

The main objective of the research was to perform a longitudinal study of sporting activity between 1995 and 2014, focusing on the social relationships that arise in sporting activity.

The second objective was to study changes in sporting activities depending on the primary relations established in the sport by sex, age, habitat, occupation, educational level, the form in which the sport is practised, the degree of competition, frequency, the sports facilities used, the type of sport, hours of free time and the subjective sensation of happiness.

The dependent variable in the study is the type of primary relationship established by people involved in sporting activity: friends, colleagues and classmates, family and those who sometimes are involved in sporting activity on their own and sometimes with others, who were classified as “*depends*”. In order to ensure that the data is statistically representative and, therefore, that reliable statistical inferences can be made for the study population, our analysis focuses on the categories with the greatest statistical weight: “*solo*”, “*friends*” and “*depends*”, and also includes “*family*”. Due to its low statistical weight in the 2014 barometer data, we only include the “*colleagues or classmates*” category as a benchmark and do not analyse it in this article.

Our starting hypothesis was that individual sporting activities had increased compared to group activities.

The second hypothesis we tested was whether the effects of regular sporting activity are linked to improvements in subjective perceptions of happiness.

#### 4. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Table 2 shows the distribution of Spanish sporting habits in terms of the primary-relationship groups in which sporting activity takes place. The 2014 study data shows that sporting activity usually takes place with a group of *friends* (42.6), followed by *solo* sporting activities (29.1). We also found a substantial group who sometimes undertake sporting activity *solo and sometimes in groups* (16.2), with smaller proportions taking part in sport with *family members* (8.8) or *colleagues or classmates* (3.4).

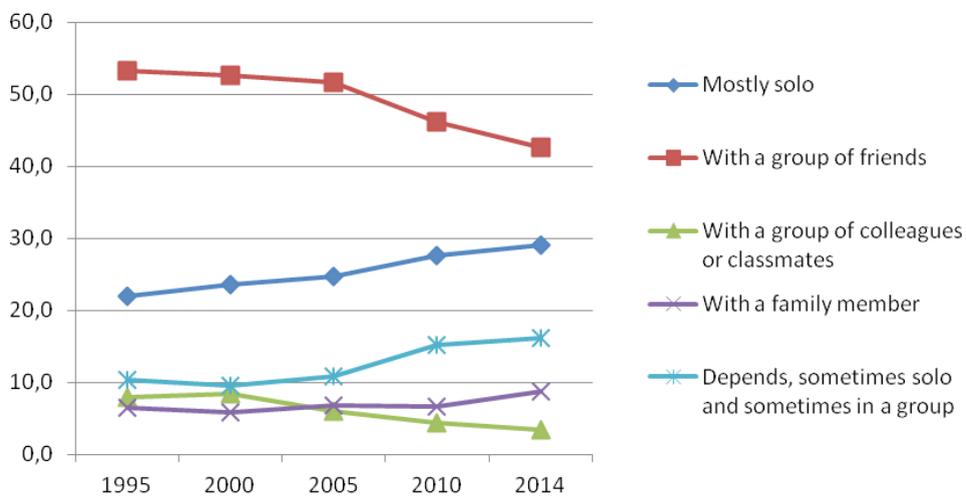
Table 2. Changes in Spanish sporting habits by primary-relationship groups.

	1995	2000	2005	2010	2014	Increase
Usually solo	22	23.5	24.7	27.7	29.1	<b>+7.1</b>
With a group of friends	53.3	52.6	51.6	46.1	42.6	<b>-10.7</b>
With a group of colleagues or classmates	7.9	8.5	6	4.3	3.4	<b>-4.5</b>
With a family member	6.6	5.9	6.9	6.7	8.8	<b>+2.2</b>
Depends, sometimes solo and sometimes in a group	10.3	9.5	10.8	15.2	16.2	<b>+5.9</b>
N	1148	1876	3076	3423	922	

Source: CIS (1995, 2000, 2005, 2010 and 2014)

The data presented in table 2 shows that the percentage of Spaniards who say they do sport “*solo*” increased throughout the study period (+7.1). Correspondingly, the percentage of interviewees saying they were involved in sporting activity with a group of “*friends*” has been falling (-10.7). There was also a significant reduction in sport with work or study “*colleagues or classmates*” between 1995 and 2014 (-4.5). There were however increases in those who play sport with a member of their “*family*” (+2.2) sometimes “*solo and sometimes in groups*” (+5.5) during the period analysed.

Chart 1. Changes in Spanish sporting habits by primary-relationship groups.



Source: CIS (1995, 2000, 2005, 2010 and 2014).

We will now consider longitudinal analysis of changes in the socio-demographic composition of each form of primary relationship in sport between 2000 and 2014.

Table 3 shows people involved in *solo* sport. It shows that there was an increase among men (+5) between 2000 and 2014, particularly those aged over 56 (+8), with a decrease in the group aged 31 to 45 (-2.6).

Moving on to analysis of Spanish sporting habits with *friends*, we find that this fell more among men (-10.3) than women, and that it fell in all age groups, with the largest fall among those aged 18 to 30 (-8.2).

Turning to those who do sport with members of their *family*, we find that this has increased among men (+3.6) and people aged 46 to 55 (+3.5). The number aged over 56 involved in sporting activity fell slightly (-0.4).

Among those who sometimes do sport on their own and sometimes with others (*depends*), the largest increase was among women (+9.4) and the 31 to 45 age group (+10.4).

Table 3: Changes in sporting activity among primary-relationship groups by gender and age. % (2000, 2005, 2010 and 2014).

		Solo	Friends	Colleagues or classmates	Family	Depends	N
<b>Gender</b>							
Men	2000	22.3	55.9	7.8	3.5	10.5	1171
	2005	22.7	56.2	5.8	4.8	10.5	1852
	2010	25.9	50.3	4.2	4.2	15.4	2083
	2014	28.1	45.6	3.8	7.1	15.4	551
	<b>Increase</b>	<b>+5.8</b>	<b>-10.3</b>	<b>-4</b>	<b>+3.6</b>	<b>+4.9</b>	
Women	2000	25.5	47	9.7	9.9	7.9	705
	2005	27.9	44.6	6.3	10	11.2	1223
	2010	30.5	39.5	4.5	10.5	15	1336
	2014	30.5	38.3	2.6	11.3	17.3	371
	<b>Increase</b>	<b>+5</b>	<b>-8.7</b>	<b>-7.1</b>	<b>+1.4</b>	<b>+9.4</b>	
<b>Age</b>							
18-30	2000	21.6	57.6	7.9	3.3	9.6	705
	2005	21.5	57.4	6.1	4.3	10.7	1055
	2010	21.8	52.4	4.9	3.5	17.4	1007
	2014	22	49.4	4.3	5.9	18.4	255
	<b>Increase</b>	<b>+0.4</b>	<b>-8.2</b>	<b>-3.6</b>	<b>+2.6</b>	<b>+8.8</b>	
31-45	2000	32.3	41.8	6.3	9.9	9.7	505
	2005	28.9	45.8	4	8.1	13.2	996
	2010	32.2	42	3.4	9	13.4	1194
	2014	29.7	36.8	3.2	10.2	20.1	353
	<b>Increase</b>	<b>-2.6</b>	<b>-5</b>	<b>-3.1</b>	<b>+ 0.3</b>	<b>+10.4</b>	

46-55	2000	28.9	48	4	6.7	12.4	225
	2005	29.6	43.2	4.2	11.9	11.1	361
	2010	33	41.8	1.5	7.9	15.8	443
	2014	33.3	42.9	0.7	10.2	12.9	147
<b>Increase</b>		<b>+4.4</b>	<b>-5.1</b>	<b>-3.3</b>	<b>+3.5</b>	<b>+0.5</b>	
>56	2000	26.7	49.4	3.4	9.4	11.1	180
	2005	33	46.8	1.8	10.4	8	376
	2010	30.9	43.7	1.1	8.7	15.6	563
	2014	34.7	44.3	4.8	9	7.2	167
<b>Increase</b>		<b>+8</b>	<b>-5.1</b>	<b>+1.5</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>-3.9</b>	

Source: CIS (2000, 2005, 2010 and 2014)

Turning to the longitudinal study of Spanish sporting habits by place of residence, as shown in table 4, we find that the largest increase in people doing sport on their own is in rural areas (+13.8), compared to people involved in sport with friends, which fell in all types of locations, but with the largest fall in urban areas (-12.6). Sport with family members mainly increased in industrialised rural (“rururban”) locations (+4), with the largest increase in metropolitan areas (+11.9).

Table 4: Changes in sporting activity among primary-relationship groups by location, % (2000, 2005, 2010 and 2014).

Habitat*		Solo	Friends	Colleagues or classmates	Family	Depends	N
Rural	2000	18.1	52.6	7.7	6.9	14.7	116
	2005	16.2	66.5	4.3	4.9	8.1	185
	2010	23	52.4	3.2	7	14.4	27
	2014	31.9	40.4	4.3	8.5	14.9	47
	<b>Increase</b>		<b>+13.8</b>	<b>-12.2</b>	<b>-3.4</b>	<b>+1.6</b>	<b>+0.2</b>
Rururban	2000	21.9	55.3	8.6	5.2	9	657
	2005	22.6	53.4	6.6	6.8	10.6	1182
	2010	25.2	50	4.5	7.5	12.8	175
	2014	26.3	48.6	1.4	9.2	14.5	346
	<b>Increase</b>		<b>+4.4</b>	<b>-6.7</b>	<b>-7.2</b>	<b>+4</b>	<b>+5.5</b>
Urban	2000	24.3	50.5	8.5	5.6	11.1	641
	2005	25	50.3	6.3	7.2	11.2	1104
	2010	29.4	41.3	4.1	7.4	17.8	221
	2014	31.5	37.9	4.4	9.5	16.7	359
	<b>Increase</b>		<b>+7.2</b>	<b>-12.6</b>	<b>-4.1</b>	<b>+3.9</b>	<b>+5.6</b>

Metropolitan	2000	26.1	51.5	8.4	7.1	6.9	464
	2005	30.9	46	4.8	7.1	11.2	605
	2010	31.1	45.2	4.7	3.5	15.5	98
	2014	28.8	41.2	4.7	6.5	18.8	170
<b>Increase</b>		<b>+2.7</b>	<b>-10.3</b>	<b>-3.7</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	<b>+11.9</b>	

Source: CIS (2014). Habitat: Rural (< 2,000 inhabitants), Rururban (2,001-50,000 inhabitants), Urban (50,001-400,000 inhabitants), Metropolitan (> 400,000 inhabitants). \*\* Significant relationship for <0.001.

Table 5 displays longitudinal differences by education level and occupation of people involved in sporting activities.

Solo sporting activity increased considerably among people with primary education (+10.6), those involved in domestic tasks (+13.1) and students (+11.7), with a decrease among the retired and pensioners (-5.8). The trend among those who do sports with *friends* was most sharply downward among students (-13) and people with primary education (-12.4). Meanwhile, among those who do sporting activity with members of their *family*, this activity increased among those with primary education (+4.6), and the retired and pensioners +(4.2). There was a significant increase in the *depends* category among the unemployed (+11.6) and students (+10.6).

Table 5. Changes in sporting activity among primary-relationship groups by education and occupation, % (2000, 2005, 2010 and 2014).

		Solo	Friends	Colleagues or classmates	Family	Depends	N
<b>Education</b>							
Primary	2000	18.2	57.1	8.8	6.7	9.2	697
	2005	19.5	60.3	6.7	4.9	8.6	406
	2010	24.6	50.4	4.3	6.2	14.5	484
	2014	28.8	45	4.9	11.3	10	80
<b>Increase</b>		<b>+10.6</b>	<b>-12.1</b>	<b>-3.9</b>	<b>+4.6</b>	<b>+0.8</b>	
Secondary	2000	24.4	52.4	10	4	9.2	741
	2005	22.6	54.2	6.8	7.1	9.3	1543
	2010	25.7	47.7	5.4	6.8	14.4	2015
	2014	28.4	44	3.5	8	16.1	461
<b>Increase</b>		<b>+4</b>	<b>-8.4</b>	<b>-6.5</b>	<b>+4</b>	<b>+6.9</b>	
University	2000	28.9	46.7	5.6	7.7	11.1	415
	2005	29.7	44.7	4.8	7.1	13.7	1095
	2010	34.1	38.8	2.3	6.8	18	871
	2014	29.4	40.4	2.9	9.2	18.1	371
<b>Increase</b>		<b>+0.5</b>	<b>-6.3</b>	<b>-2.7</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>+7</b>	

<b>Occupation</b>							
Work							
2000	28	47.8	6.1	6.8	11.3	1017	
2005	27.1	47.7	4.9	7.6	12.7	1824	
2010	30	43.3	3.3	6.7	16.7	1821	
2014	29.4	40.3	3.3	10.3	16.7	486	
<b>Increase</b>	<b>+1.4</b>	<b>-7.5</b>	<b>-2.8</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>+5.4</b>		
Retired and pensioners							
2000	40.4	43.4	1	5.1	10.1	99	
2005	36.9	44.2	2.9	8.8	7.2	249	
2010	34.1	42.8	1.7	8.9	12.5	369	
2014	34.6	43.9	4.7	9.3	7.5	107	
<b>Increase</b>	<b>-5.8</b>	<b>+0.5</b>	<b>+3.7</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>-2.6</b>		
Unemployed							
2000	27.5	52.5	5	7.5	7.5	120	
2005	23.9	56.8	2.6	6.4	10.3	234	
2010	26.8	50.1	3	7.9	12.2	597	
2014	27.6	44.9	2.2	6.2	19.1	225	
<b>Increase</b>	<b>+0.1</b>	<b>-7.6</b>	<b>-2.8</b>	<b>-1.3</b>	<b>+11.6</b>		
Student							
2000	11.2	64.4	16.3	1.6	6.5	489	
2005	10.6	64.7	14.5	2.4	7.8	539	
2010	13.3	55.2	15.1	0.7	15.7	415	
2014	22.9	51.4	7.2	1.4	17.1	70	
<b>Increase</b>	<b>+11.7</b>	<b>-13</b>	<b>-9.1</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>10.6</b>		
Home							
2000	18.2	51.7	8.4	13.3	8.4	143	
2005	25.4	55.5	1.4	11	6.7	209	
2010	26	48	1	10.3	14.7	204	
2014	31.3	40.6	0	15.6	12.5	32	
<b>Increase</b>	<b>+13.1</b>	<b>-11.1</b>	<b>-8.4</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>4.1</b>		

Source: CIS (2000, 2005, 2010 and 2014)

Table 6 shows the main reasons given by people for doing sports over the period 2000 to 2014. The largest increase in the reason for people doing physical exercise on their own was physical exercise (+8). There was also a large increase so as to spend time with friends among the people who do sport with friends (+13.3) and also in the *depends* category (+8.5). The largest increase in the reason for doing sport among those who do it with their family was to keep fit and improve their health (+6.6).

Table 6: Changes in sporting activity among primary-relationship groups by main reason for doing sport, % (2000, 2005, 2010 and 2014).

	Solo	Friends	Colleagues or classmates	Family	Depends	N
<b>Reasons for doing sport</b>						
For fun and as a pastime						
2000	17.4	60.5	7.5	5	9.6	832
2005	18.6	58.6	5.8	5.7	11.3	1438
2010	15.5	63.1	4.4	5.7	11.3	795
2014	16.5	55.1	3.8	9.2	15.4	272
<b>Increase</b>	<b>-0.9</b>	<b>-5.4</b>	<b>-3.7</b>	<b>+4.2</b>	<b>+5.8</b>	
To meet friends						
2000	12.6	69.5	10.5	2.1	5.3	190
2005	9.5	76.2	5.5	5.1	3.7	273
2010	5.5	77	6	1.2	10.3	165
2014	3.4	82.8	0	0	13.8	29
<b>Increase</b>	<b>-9.2</b>	<b>+13.3</b>	<b>-10.5</b>	<b>-2.1</b>	<b>+8.5</b>	
To do physical exercise						
2000	30.8	42.3	8.1	7.4	11.4	555
2005	35	38	5.2	9.2	12.6	911
2010	35.3	37.5	3.8	6.8	16.6	1184
2014	38.8	34.5	2.5	8.7	15.5	322
<b>Increase</b>	<b>+8</b>	<b>-7.8</b>	<b>-5.6</b>	<b>+1.3</b>	<b>+4.1</b>	
Because they like sport						
2000	27.3	50	8.7	6.7	7.3	150
2005	27.4	46.6	8.7	6.7	10.6	208
2010	22.1	49.8	3.5	4.2	20.4	456
2014	20.8	52.1	1	7.3	18.8	96
<b>Increase</b>	<b>-6.5</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>-7.7</b>	<b>+0.6</b>	<b>+11.5</b>	
To keep fit and improve health						
2000	43.4	26.3	11.9	6.6	11.8	76
2005	46.8	35.5	2.3	7.3	8.1	124
2010	36.9	33.2	2.1	12.3	15.5	521
2014	37.7	30.2	1.9	13.2	17	106
<b>Increase</b>	<b>-5.7</b>	<b>+3.9</b>	<b>-10</b>	<b>+6.6</b>	<b>+5.2</b>	

Source: CIS (2000, 2005, 2010, and 2014).

Table 7 displays data on the longitudinal study of use of different locations for sporting activity with regard to the type of primary relationship. We can observe an increase in membership of private gyms among people with *solo* and mixed (*depends*) sporting activity (+6.5 and +11), compared to a significant decrease in people involved in sporting activities with friends in such facilities (-14.4). There was a slight increase in involvement in sporting activity in the home among the group who take part in such activities with family members.

Table 7: Sports facilities.

2000-2010	Solo	Friends	Colleagues or classmates	Family	Depends	N
Public facilities (municipal or other)						
2000	18.8	58	9	6	8.2	1006
2010	18.8	55.2	5	5.6	15.4	1765
<b>Difference</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-2.8</b>	<b>-4</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>+7.2</b>	
Private club facilities						
2000	16.8	54.9	8.2	6.7	13.4	328
2010	20.9	52.9	4	4.9	17.3	611
<b>Difference</b>	<b>+4.1</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-4.2</b>	<b>-1.8</b>	<b>+3.9</b>	
Facilities in a school						
2000	10.4	52.6	30.2	1.6	5.2	192
2010	7.8	45.5	29.9	0.6	16.2	167
<b>Difference</b>	<b>-2.6</b>	<b>-7.1</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>+11</b>	
In public places (parks, street, the country, sea, lake, reservoir, river, mountains, etc.)						
2000	27.9	47.3	3.7	8	13.1	716
2010	29.6	40.2	2.6	8.7	18.9	1560
<b>Difference</b>	<b>+1.7</b>	<b>-7.1</b>	<b>-1.1</b>	<b>+0.7</b>	<b>+5.8</b>	
At home						
2000	57.9	20	2.8	8.6	10.7	140
2010	45.2	20.6	3	10.6	20.6	378
<b>Difference</b>	<b>-12.7</b>	<b>+0.6</b>	<b>+0.2</b>	<b>+2</b>	<b>+9.9</b>	
In a private gym						
2000	20.8	55.2	5.2	3.9	14.9	154
2010	27.3	40.8	3	3	25.9	429
<b>Difference</b>	<b>+6.5</b>	<b>-14.4</b>	<b>-2.2</b>	<b>-0.9</b>	<b>+11</b>	

Source: CIS (2000, 2010).

We applied a data reduction technique - exploratory factor analysis - to study the most popular sports among the different types of sportsmen and women. This enabled us to group sports by common factors as a way of tackling the problems of statistically representing the wide range of sporting activities available. We used a database from 2010 to give us the largest sample size and ensure the highest statistical validity of the results. We included disciplines for which there were more than 300 cases in the analysis and removed the variables with the lowest factor loads.

The resulting model presents three factors that in total explain 43.65% of the variance, with the first factor explaining 16.8%, the second 14.3% and the third 12.5%. The first factor is racket and ball sports (basketball, football, paddle and tennis). The second factor is leisure activities and sports that compete against the

environment (recreational cycling, mountaineering and recreational swimming). The third factor is activities for health and aesthetic purposes (gyms, aerobics, spinning, body power, pilates and keep fit).

Table 8: Sporting discipline factors.

	1	2	3
Basketball	0.65	0.03	-0.13
Recreational cycling	0.18	0.66	-0.07
Soccer	0.69	0.06	-0.14
Gyms, intensive physical activity in sports centres (aerobics, spinning, body power)	0.09	0.01	0.67
Gyms, gentle physical activity in sports centres (pilates, keep fit)	-0.08	0.08	0.67
Mountaineering, trekking, hiking	-0.06	0.71	-0.01
Recreational swimming	0.04	0.56	0.27
Paddle tennis	0.53	-0.04	0.31
Tennis	0.53	0.08	0.15

Source: CIS (2010), Spanish sporting habits IV. Extraction method: Analysis of main components, rotation method: Varimax, Bartlett's sphericity test: =0.000, Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin sampling adequacy measurement: 0.624.

Three Anova analyses are applied in table 9 to observe the differences in measurements between the types of sporting participants in the three sports groupings (factors) obtained in the above factor analysis. This analysis reveals significant intergroup differences. For example, people who undertake sporting activities on their own mainly take part in activities competing against the environment (0.7), with physical fitness, aesthetic and health activities in second place (0.5). Most people who take part in sports with friends are involved in ball and racket sports (0.8). Meanwhile, people who do sports with their family members mainly take part in recreational sports (1.1), while those in the *depends* category are also involved in recreational sports and competing against the environment (1).

Table 9: Average Spanish sporting participation by type of sports.

	<b>Factor 1: Ball and racket sports</b>	<b>Factor 2: Recreational sports competing against the environment</b>	<b>Factor 3: Physical fitness, aesthetic and health sports</b>
	Average	Average	Average
SOLO	-0.1	0.7	0.5
FRIENDS	0.8	0.3	0.3
COLLEAGUES	1	0.4	0.2
FAMILY	0.0	1.1	0.4
DEPENDS	0.5	1	0.6
Total	0.5	0.6	0.4

Source: CIS (2010).

Table 10 offers comparative analysis of average hours of free time available to each type of person involved in sporting activity, discounting their work, family and home obligations and needs for sleep. The Anova analysis reveals significant differences between the sporting and non-sporting population, and between the genders and in relation to the type of sport.

People who are not involved in any sporting activity have average spare time of over 4.5 hours per day, whereas those who do sports have an average of 3.8 hours free per day. The people who do sporting activity with the most free time are those involved in sporting activities with *colleagues or classmates*, who average 4.3 hours, and the *friends* group with 4.1 hours, compared to those doing activities with *family members* or on their own, who average 3.5 and 3.6 hours of free time per day.

Gender is another significant difference, in both the sporting and non-sporting populations. In both cases, men have more hours of free time than women, which means that we can state that differences in free time between the genders may be an important explanatory variable for the differences in the ratios of women and men involved in sport. In other words, it is probable that more men than women do sport, as they have more hours of free time per day, on average.

Table 10. Average free time by type of sporting activity.

<b>Free time on a working day (hours)</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Standard dev.</b>
Total population	4.3	2385	3.4
Non-sporting population	4.5	1427	3.7
Men	5.7	596	4.2
Women	3.7	831	3
Sporting population	3.8	898	2.8
Men	4.3	569	3.1
Women	3.2	389	2.4
Usually solo	3.6	264	2.8
With a group of friends	4.1	381	2.8
With a group of colleagues or classmates	4.3	31	3.4
With a family member	3.5	78	3.2
Depends, sometimes solo and sometimes in a group	3.4	144	2.5

Source: CIS (2014).

Finally, table 11 displays two Anova analyses relating to the variable “happiness”. The first analyses the difference in measures of the feeling of happiness between the sporting and non-sporting populations. The analysis reveals significant differences in the subjective feelings of happiness experienced by these two populations, with the sporting population being subjectively happier (7.5) than the non-sporting population (7).

Focusing our analysis on subjective differences in the feelings of happiness among the various types of people who do sporting activity, the Anova analysis does not reveal any major differences, although there are differences in the averages for the different types of people who do sporting activity, we cannot conclude that some feel happier than others depending on the type of primary relationship established in the sport.

Table 11. Average subjective feeling of happiness.

	<b>Average</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Stand. Dev.</b>
Engages in sport	7.5	976	1.5
Does not engage in sport	7	1476	1.9
Total population.	7.2	2452	1.8
Usually solo	7.5	265	1.6
With a group of friends	7.5	393	1.5
With a group of colleagues or classmates	8	31	1
With a family member	7.8	78	1.7
Depends, sometimes solo and sometimes in a group	7.4	149	1.5

Source: CIS (2014).

## DISCUSSION OF THE DATA

Based on the data analysed, we can conclude that the main hypothesis of the study of trends in sporting activity has been demonstrated, as individual sporting activities have increased compared to group activities with family and friends. The data analysed shows that sport with groups of friends has declined, while individual sporting activity has increased.

These results agree with those from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport's 2015 survey of Spanish Sporting Habits (Various authors, 2015), which found that individual sports were the most popular among Spanish people who do sporting activity. This report found that, in 2015, 58% of people who do sporting activity said they were inclined towards individual sports, compared to 14.2% who preferred group sports and 27.7% who had no preference between individual and group sporting activities.

However, it should be noted that, as found in a study by the Consejo Superior de Deportes (Sports Council), while individual sporting activities were the most popular among people who do sporting activity, the highest level of activity still took place with groups of friends. This shows that some forms of individual sports - such as running, swimming, cycling, mountaineering, walking and keep fit activities - are done among groups of friends.

In other words, today individual sports are being done with *friends*; but collective sport activities have to be done with friends, family and colleagues or classmates. This means an increase in the individualisation of sporting activity in all senses, both in the people who do sport on their own, and in the growth of individual sporting activities performed in groups (such as spinning, etc.). In this regard, as García Ferrando (2001) argues, we need to take a very broad view of sport - considering it as a complex array of physical and recreational activities - to analyse it as a phenomenon. The democratisation of sport, the rise of individualism and new IT, the market for sporting goods and the value placed on health, aesthetics and leisure have fostered the emergence of a huge range of new activities considered to be sports, from Californian neo-sports (Laraña, 1986, 1987; Lagardera and Martínez, 1998) to new sporting practices relating to aesthetics and health (Moscoso and Pérez, Pérez-Flores, 2012; Pérez-Flores, 2015b; Pérez-Flores and Muñoz-Sánchez, 2017). These have largely been designed and fostered by private gyms, as a way of attracting more members and keeping existing members for longer, by making sporting activity less routine (Elías and Dunning, 1992), and regularly creating new physical fitness activities, with or without musical accompaniment. Many of these activities are a type of “happening”, involving individual physical activities carried out in a group, simulating traditional sporting activities, such as spinning (cycling), indoor walking (cross-country skiing), aero-boxing (boxing), running on treadmills (athletics) and simulating rowing using static machines. They also include the constant emergence of new activities involving the reinvention and adaptation of classic sports to remove the element of organised competition to adapt them to the new requirements of the private gym market, which favours competing against oneself in group activities. This transforms the main source of frustration in sport - the focus on the results of the competition - transforming it into competition against oneself, supported by a trainer/motivator and belonging to a group who are competing to improve their own physical capacity and capabilities, not against each other.

Furthermore, a particular sport can be performed in different ways, depending on the degree of formality and its rules and regulations, and how the competition is organised. Thus, some activities - such as swimming, athletics and cycling - can be done for aesthetic and health reasons, for leisure or as part of a regulated competition, being carried out in different ways depending on their social significance and use (Pérez-Flores, 2015b).

Modern sporting disciplines have adapted to the needs of the market in response to modernity, the extension of individualism, the new needs of the aesthetics and health market promoted by the sports industry, the new multi-function gyms and the proliferation of leisure sporting activities, just as individuals adapt physical exercise and sport to their own needs, social capital and structure of opportunities.

The diffuse logic of post-modernism has fostered the establishment of new forms of sporting activity within the field of leisure and health. This has enabled

a blurring of the classification of their forms, in relation to their level of formality and the way that they are organised. The creativity of post-modern logic makes it possible to design new disciplines and transform classic sporting activities into leisure and recreation activities, adapting their rules so that they become a form of social relationship behind a façade of sporting activity (Pérez-Flores, 2015b).

In Spain, the classic competitive forms of traditional sports have mainly been done by groups of friends or colleagues or classmates, associated with some kind of sports federation or association. In this regard, having leisure time and doing sporting activities are usually highly valued in a system of life where there is little free time or capital available for recreational or leisure activities.

In addition, sporting activity in Spain was for a long time limited to a small part of the population, only becoming democratised throughout all layers of society following the introduction of the welfare state. Sport has spread as an activity for health and leisure among all layers of society in four decades in Spain. Sporting activity is highly valued by the public, and sporting habits having evolved considerably in Spain as a result. The appearance and spread of sports for health, aesthetics and leisure have fostered the development of sport throughout the country (Moscoso and Moyano, 2009).

As we have seen, these days, most people have little free time, with those involved in sporting activities having less than the population as a whole. Sport has therefore evolved through practices that reduce its costs, mainly the cost of the free time needed to do them. This has resulted in growth of individual sporting activities, whether free or in association with others, where the person organises or chooses their own timetables and locations to do the activity, without being dependent on the schedules or circumstances of their group of friends. This has led to sport and physical exercise at home and in gyms, which offer a wide range of timetables and physical activities for aesthetics and health, enabling people to do individual sports collectively, feeling all of the benefits of belonging to a group with face-to-face relations.

Our results are consistent with those in other studies. According to the results of the study “*Deporte, salud y calidad de vida*” (Moscoso and Moyano, 2009), the most highly valued leisure activities among the Spanish public include walking, being with the family, spending time with friends/partners, reading and sport. Physical exercise and sport are thus leisure activities that combine four of the five most highly popular leisure activities for the Spanish public. This also shows the influence of sport on the subjective perception of the health and wellbeing of the population involved in sport. Our results and those obtained by Moscoso and Moyano’s 2009 study both point to the conclusion that the population that plays sports has higher subjective perceptions of wellbeing and happiness than the population that is not involved in sport. Therefore, sport appears to be an important factor for maximising feelings of wellbeing in the public in our post-modern society.

The same study (Moscoso and Moyano, 2009) presented the results of qualitative research among the Spanish population showing that physical activity produces improvements in the work performance of employees involved in sporting activity, in addition to the benefits for health and quality of life. The data obtained in our research shows that most people involved in sporting activities are in employment. Because people in employment have less free time, we can conclude that they must greatly appreciate sport because of the benefits it provides.

Improvements in appearance and health lead to improvements in self esteem (Moscoso and Moyano, 2009), so that even people who do sports on their own obtain highly desirable social benefits. Sport is an important source of sociability and social bonds. It creates a meeting place, even for those who do it on their own without any form of association. Despite the strong upward trend in sporting activity on an individual basis, it is no surprise that sport with friends continues to be the preferred format for Spaniards.

Sporting activity has adapted to the way we live today, with the development of formats that save on the time needed to organise and carry out the activity. We have witnessed a decrease in sport with friends and colleagues or classmates, with an increase in individual sports and activities with the family, as these go a long way to reducing the costs of Spanish sporting habits. Despite the strong trend in Spanish sporting habits towards individual activities, sport with friends remains the preferred option for the Spanish.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results obtained, the largest increase has been in sports performed individually, followed by people who sometimes perform sports individually and sometimes in groups, and sports with family members, to the detriment of Spanish sporting activity with groups of friends and colleagues or classmates. However, despite this increase in individual sport, sport with friends continues to be the most widespread format in Spain.

Looking in detail at trends among people who take part in sport on their own, we observe that the increase is mainly among men aged over 55 who are resident in urban areas and have primary education, and are occupied in domestic tasks. The trend towards increased sporting activity in private gyms rather than at home is also evident in this segment. They are usually involved in leisure activities and sports that compete against the environment (recreational cycling, mountaineering and recreational swimming).

With regard to the trend among people who do sport with a *group of friends*, the largest decrease in activity has been among men aged 18 to 30 who live in urban areas and have primary education, and are unemployed. There has been a slight

increase among retired people. Meeting friends is the reason for sporting activity that has increased most strongly, compared to sport as a form of physical exercise which was the biggest faller among this group. There was also a substantial decrease in Spanish sporting activity with friends in private gyms, migrating to competitive sports with balls and racquets (basketball, soccer, paddle tennis and tennis).

The trends in sport with family members are towards an increase among men aged between 46 and 55 living in rururban areas, people with primary education, and people who have retired or are pensioners. The reason cited for sporting activity that has increased most strongly among this group is to keep fit and get fitter. The only location with a slight increase was in public places (parks, the street, the country, sea, lakes, reservoirs, rivers, mountains, etc.), with leisure activities and sports that compete against the environment (recreational cycling, mountaineering and recreational swimming) being the most popular among this group.

The trends among those who do sporting activities sometimes *solo and sometimes in groups* show the largest relative increase was among women, people aged between 31 and 45, those living in metropolitan areas and people with primary education and unemployed. The main reason for the increase among this group is that they like sport. The largest increases in the location of sporting activity have been in colleges and private gyms, with the most popular sports being recreational activities (recreational cycling, mountaineering and recreational swimming)

In general, it is noteworthy that women have less free time than men. This is the case both for women who do sports and for the study population as a whole. This lack of free time due to doing more domestic tasks may be an explanatory factor for why sport is less common among women than among men.

Finally, it was observed that most of the people who do sports included in the study were in employment, but had less free time each day than people who do not do any sports. The costs of Spanish sporting habits in terms of free time are offset by the benefits of physical activity and sport. As shown by our results, the sporting population is subjectively happier than the non-sporting population, with sport therefore being an important element for maximising feelings of wellbeing.

Regular sporting activity is related to a healthy lifestyle, as it bestows a range of benefits in terms of improved physical fitness, health, appearance and social relations. Having a healthy lifestyle and improving health and appearance have a direct impact on the social desirability of people who do sporting activity. Sport is thus highly appreciated as a core activity for improving quality of life. These benefits in terms of improved physical fitness, perceptions of personal image and identity, and social relationships are directly related to improvements in quality of life and maximisation of feelings of wellbeing, and thus result in an increase in subjective perceptions of happiness.

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