

## YOUNG RESEARCHERS' SECTION

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### STAKEHOLDER ATTITUDES IN HUNGARIAN ATHLETICS – QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS?

In Hungary, sports seems to become rather appreciated in the political and social area. In this paper the complexity of sport service is going to be examined, which can be summarized in four dimensions related to several functions. The purpose is to reveal those effects concerning the values, which determine the operation of the particular sport / sport service. The area of investigation focuses on the attitude research of the concerned groups (stakeholders) in the Hungarian athletics. Besides the sports economy and stakeholder management, the comprehension of consumer (stakeholders in the athletics sports) preference mechanism has to be mentioned as well. The latter is an important question in marketing management, since the boundaries of consumer segments (Allenby-Rossi, 1998) can be determined based on the significant differences in preferences. In this paper it is examined how the sport functions, defined in the literature, appear in the athletics and what differences can be seen. *What kind of contexts characterize different functional areas (preference segments) and the connection of stakeholders in the athletics?* In the research part, it is investigated with the help of a questionnaire with attitude scales and factor and cluster analysis, whether those dimensions can be used to define the complex sport products, which are specified by the theory.

#### **Dimensions of the sport service**

The definitions of sport functions were known earlier as well, just the emphases shifted in different times. In the initial period, competition has come into view, considering social and historical aspects, it has been supplemented with numerous factors, primarily with social features and values, for today.

In the literature, Alosi (2007) defines five factors as the basic functions of sports, which is in line with the Hungarian Ist Act from 2004 (Sport Act). The role model function is interpreted by the author as a part of the educational function, notwithstanding in other sources, it is treated in the context of education, and it is still highlighted (Lyle, 2009).

*Health function:* physical activity offers an opportunity to consolidate the health of the population, and the healing of some diseases is an important tool in the prevention of cardiovascular and cancer diseases, and ultimately improves the quality of life, especially among the elderly. According to the Eurobarometer 2010 survey, 77% of the population proved to be inactive, as they did not move more than three times a month. 53% of the Hungarian never do regular exercise, which is only 37% on average in Europe.

*Educational function:* Active participation in sport, based on this function, serves the development of a balanced personality in all age groups. In competition, personal character can be developed and easily transposed into any area of life (Siedentop-Tannenhill, 2000).

*Social function:* Sport is a community-building tool that is a good for building a cohesive, interconnected society, fighting against impatience, violence, exclusion and racism, and reducing and preventing alcohol and drug consumption. Through sport, those people who are excluded from the labour market, get help for social integration, because we are able to accept others through sport (Woolger-Power, 1993).

An overlapping has been experienced in the interpretation of education and social function, thus the relationship between the two factors has been inspected, from an educational point of view. Woolger and Power (1993) present a detailed study on the different perceptions of socialization from the point of view of culture, society or the individual. Based on Geulen's (1989) thought pattern, the following statement can be formulated: Socialization is the development of personality based on its interactions with its physical and personal environments. This concept involves the assumption that environmental conditions are necessary and decisive in the genesis of personality, and these conditions are reflected in social mediation. This relationship has to be understood as a complex interaction in which the subject itself actively participates and develops itself into individual, and does not restrict the relationship between the educator and the educated, the transmission of certain contentions of consciousness or institutions.

Consequently, the concept carries the education and it is logically subordinated to the notion of socialization.

*Ideal function:* Living in a community already existed in the prehistoric times among people. According to Lyle (2009), the community is specified by four factors: common purpose, common interests, shared value system and the knowledge of their existence. In the social system, the individual and his personality are preserved, they can be evaluated by sport either because they can emerge in a given framework with their performance, which can result in respect and may become an example to members of the community. Interpretation of the role model directly gains ground for the athletes and Olympians, indirectly in the performance, sports and popularity of sports. Thanks to marketing (eg sport sponsorship, CSR activities) and media, this is becoming more and more important today.

*Cultural function:* sport provides additional opportunities for embeddedness, better understanding of the environment, better social integration, and more effective protection of the environment. International sport events (Olympics, World Cup) contribute greatly to the understanding and acceptance of differences between cultures.

*Recreation function:* Sport activities are valuable leisure activities and provide opportunities for individual and community entertainment. The sport focuses on improving and stabilizing our performance and sense of well-being, our ability to improve our physical and mental capacity.

The next step is to determine the dominant values within the “live” segments of the sport, how they are related to each aspect of the sport function. The phrase live sport is basically not an economic concept, primarily used in the practice of local government support practice. It means sport activity and activities related to sport events. There are two categories within the live sport. On the one hand, the elite sport, which is created by the elite and professional sports. Basically, it is characterized by outstanding sport performance. On the other hand, community sports where sport does not generate income for the athlete, and within the category we can make distinction between public sports (free-time sports without direct organizational background), leisure sports, competitive and recreational sports of education systems, and training of associations as well (Alosi 2007).

	<b>Live sport segments</b>	<b>Segment values</b>	<b>Dominant sport function</b>
Competitive sports	Professional sports	business, awareness, image, trade, politics	economic, business
	Elite sports	ideal, development of infrastructure public goods, local and international prestige	Ideal
Community sports	Junior, school-university sports	body culture, motion teaching, education, socialization	education and social
	Public and leisure sports	health promotion, preservation of working ability, training	Health

Table 1 Principal areas - value - functions of sports activities  
Source: own construct based on Gyömörei , 2012, Nádori-Bátonyi, 2003

*Table 1* shows that the social significance of sports plays a much stronger role in determining the function. In describing and interpreting functions, education and social function are referred to as separate categories, but derived from the segments' values, and as a result of the overlap between the two concepts, we look at the empirical research as one category as the socialization function. During the empirical research, athletics in the dominant sport functions is examined. However, the framework outlined above does not include the economic-business function of sport, but it is clear from the table that it is a decisive segment value. Sport economy deals with the production and distribution of sport goods and sport facilities, decision alternatives emerge in consumption and exchange, and the realization of social environment and consequences of the implementation of these decisions (Lera-Lopez-Rapun-Grarate, 2007). In recent decades, the economic importance of sports has been increased. On the one hand, the decline in state support required associations and clubs to deepen their knowledge in sport economics. On the other hand, health, body status and quality of life became major factors in modern societies, with increased leisure time sports became more and more popular for people as the entertaining function of sports and active recreation were appreciated.

According to another approach (Gratton and Taylor, 2002) - which, in my opinion, is a good supplement to the previous structure - the structure of sport economy can be depicted in a pyramid model, where the sport market is divided into a sport-specific way of distinguishing the professional and leisure sport market. Compared to the original figure found in the literature, some supplements were used. First, the names of each pyramid element were aligned to the conceptual framework used in the *Table 1* so that each segment can be clearly understood.

As shown in *Figure 1*, the formal sport market (professional sports and recreational sports) can be directly related to the indicated sub-markets: market of paying audience, market of broadcasting rights, merchandising goods market, volunteer market and sponsorship market. I have made additions to relationships, for instance, the merchandising market - although it rather exists in professional sports -, which is frequently seen in recreational sports and at events that makes up the two, and it can increase the engagement and loyalty of active participants.

The same conclusion has been found regarding the addition of links to sponsorship as many companies appear as sponsors in recreational sports. Sport goods and sport services at the bottom of the pyramid can be regarded as a derivative market because their demand and supply largely depends on the size of the sport market. The levels of the pyramid are governed and regulated by government and sport management units.

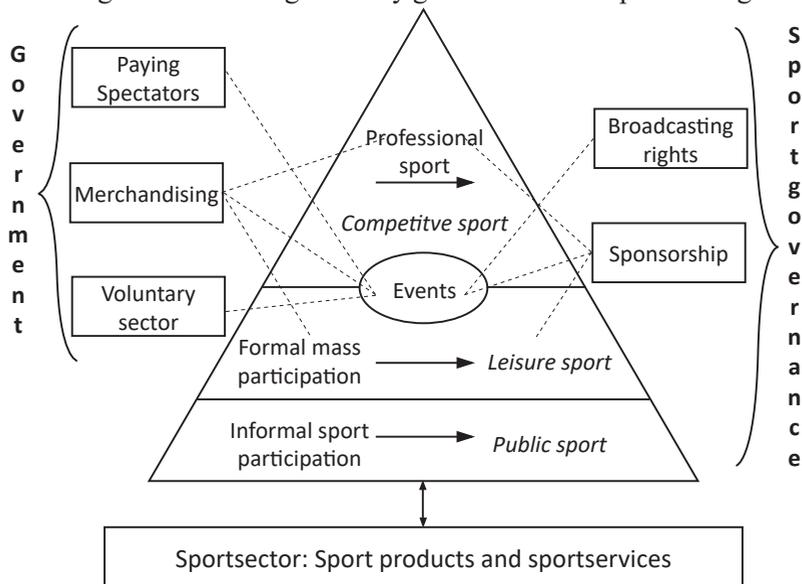


Figure 1 Structure of the sport economy  
 Source: own construct based on Gratton and Taylor, 2002

For a more detailed presentation of the full sport industry, *Figure 1* should be supplemented in regard to sport products and sport services. This is presented in the sporting model of *Figure 2*. Compared to the original model, the figure has been modified in some points. In the original model, “Leisure” appeared as a separate category, elements of which were provided by the fitness club and other services. Additionally, events and occasions category present items such as facility building and operation, which cannot be interpreted as a category component. In the outlined solution the “Other Service” group has been defined, which contains those factors that could not be categorized into anyone of the models. The group of business services stands the closest to this, yet I had to note that the components included in other services are not always business-related.

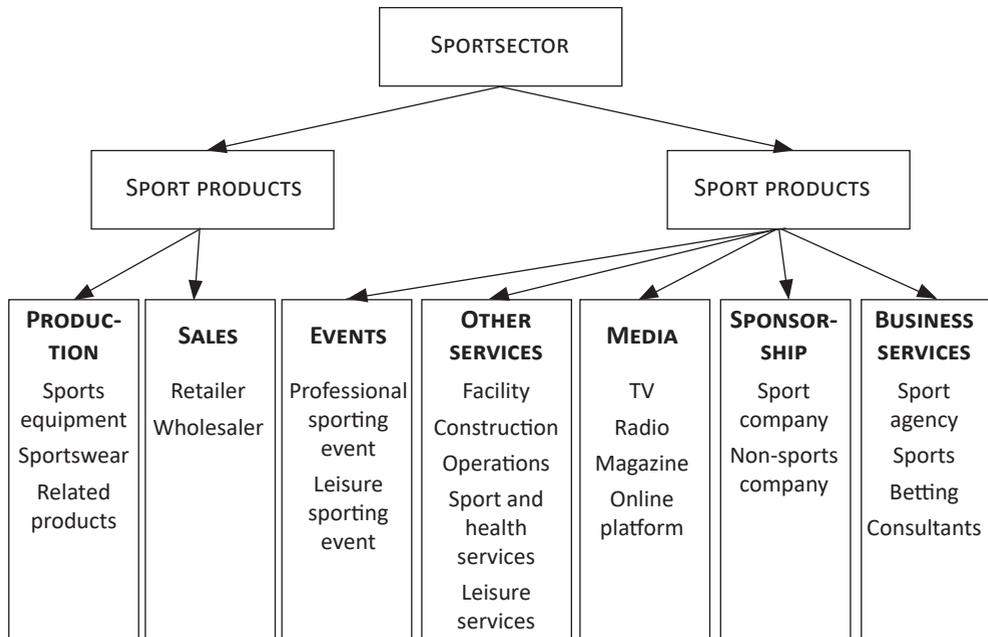


Figure 2 Gratton-Taylor's sports industry model  
Source: own construct based on Gratton-Taylor, 2000

### **Participants in sport services**

In our concept, stakeholder related theory is applied (Freeman, 1984), in which stakeholder decisions are the basis for the change. The stakeholder theory is one of the most significant management theory (Stieb, 2009), which is widely used in the field of sport industry as well (Covell, 2004, 2005; Heffernan és O'Brien, 2010; Mason és Slack, 1997). Continuous environmental change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which is exponentially increasing, has an impact on the sports industry, too (Katzell-Austin, 1992). In case of every smaller and larger sport clubs, there are many economic and social players in the environment, and those elements (people, groups of stakeholders, organizations, other companies, sometimes countries) will be major, which are capable to establish a lasting relationship (Mendelow, 1981) and will be able to influence the organization's goals (Freeman, 1984; Friedman et al., 2000, 2004). This kind of approach is a consequence of a process requiring a cultural change, which can be considered as a new concept in the Hungarian sport environment. Incorporating stakeholder interests and values is a serious challenge for our age. In the field of sport, not only management and business which matter can be impacted by the activity of stakeholders, but also those additional factors needs to be considered like a healthier and more decent living space. The condition of business success depends on how the particular company or, in the present case, a sports club is able to successfully manage its stakeholders. Corporate Social Responsibility recognised that nowadays it is no longer allowed to examine directly only the company itself. Stakeholders may have an impact on operation of the organization, investment willingness, money and other resources, as the organization is located in a social economy matrix. Reactions and interactions, as well as the organizational change around stakeholders, can vary considerably (Lewis, 2007). These do not only interact with each other in business but also with other factors. All in all, therefore, stakeholders are the persons or groups affected or affected by the operation of the company, whether they know about it or not (Preston-Sapienza, 1990).

The basic question is who can be considered as a stakeholder in this area. According to Starik (1994), four factors can be distinguished: firstly a relationship should exist between the person concerned and the organization, which can be direct (championship, player union) or indirect (player agent, player observer); secondly, those who are associated with decisive interests (population, supporters); thirdly, who can enforce their interests against the sports organization. Furthermore, other forms can also exist, such as the team owner or nonnatural persons who may affect the operation of the sport / branch of sport / organization.

Stoldt and his fellow researchers (2012) divided the community system of relationship in sports into eight factors: consumer, government, donor, media, investor, community, employee and industrial relations. The study of Gruning and Hunt (1984) has highlighted the decisive relevance of the connection between community relationships and stakeholders. Functional connections are essential for the organization to produce products or services. There are the workforce and resources (athletes, coaches, alliances, suppliers - sports tool manufacturers) on the input side of the functional connection, while consumers (supporters, family members), retailers and distributors (eg. media partners) appear on the output side. In case of normative relationships, these groups have an influence on the interests, values and goals of the organization (competitors, professional associations and expert institutions). In connection with “creating relationships”, those are involved, who have control and authority over the organization and can provide resources for the autonomous functioning of the organization (presidency, government regulators, and shareholders). Those are involved in the “scattered” relationships that do not have a common interaction with the organization, but may have an impact on it, particularly in vulnerable times (media, community activities).

### **Research questions and hypotheses**

In connection with the questions, an important aspect was to focus on the sport, within that on athletics, which is only partially explored by the science in Hungary.

The formulated research questions were:

- 1. What are the functional areas (preference segments) that characterize this sport service?*
- 2. What are the relationships between the individual functional areas (preference segments) and stakeholder relationships?*

In the theoretical review, it was shown that it is important, not only in business, to deal with the attitudes and preferences of stakeholder groups, as the sport has a similar effect on the different groups involved. By answering the first research question, the areas in which the sport service is defined in the sports economy is trying be to examined, in this case the Hungarian athletics. With the second research question, the relationship between the individual functional sports dimensions and the specific stakeholder groups are examined, whether there is a robust difference between the particular groups. I have examined my assumptions related to the questions with qualitative methods.

*H/I. 3 basic stakeholder groups can be defined in Hungarian athletics: 'direct' (economic leaders, coaches, sportsmen); 'supportive' (government, local government, media, sponsor, association); 'indirect' (teams, educational institutions).*

In the case of the first hypothesis the theory of Clarkson (1995) can be implemented, in which primary (direct) and secondary (indirect) concerned parties appear. Primary parties are in connections with the company, they define the operation fundamentally as compared to the secondary parties which have no such dependent relationship, the lack of which would make the operation of the company questionable. The support category is needed to be considered as separated one as the business paradigm changing mentioned in the theoretical overview can be identified as minor in our country, the supportive mainly approach the social and political paradigms in athletics. The instrumental stakeholder approach of Mitchell and partners (1997) can be interpreted more effectively in this context because they consider its power-legitimization-urgency in the same time and identify three groups accordingly. In case of latent concerned group (indirect), there is only one dominant feature.

The second group is the expecting concerned group (direct), where already two features appear at the same time (e.g. They have urgent demands but have no power to endorse. In general, they depend on other groups. In case of sport clubs, these are sportsmen who want to realize their earnings, but the final decision is made by the management which considers the whole operation.).

Finally, the third and most important group represents those who have power-legitimization-urgency, meaning they have enough power to realize their demands which are urgent and legitimate. Decision makers must consider this issue inevitably, they are identified as determined (sport supportive) concerned group.

*H/II. In preference system individual segments can be identified by sport functions. There are 4 defining functions: medical, socializing, role model and business dimension.*

The second hypothesis investigates the existence of theoretical sport functions created. In connection, the center of the investigation is that whether which functions appear in athletics in an identical way.

### **The qualitative method and framework of the research**

The empirical research based on the individual sport functions represents athletics as a sport and service through different dimensions. The definition of preferences and attitudes, in connection with sport functions, is not reasonable to place under statistical analysis in a discreet manner, at first. According to Veres et al. (2014), thoughts are created individually, but opinion development is already largely influenced by the opinion of others and the environmental impacts (mass media, social media). Qualitative methods are particularly suitable for exploring these mechanism of action; they can model their views, attitudes, and image-forming. The aim of our qualitative research is to reveal the attitudes of stakeholders involved in the activities, which want to be investigated, and which will provide later on the basis for quantitative research through attitudes that can be mapped out of the results.

In the case of a minifocus group, it can be supposed that all participants will actively participate as they have high level of concerned factor about athletics (insider or directly concerned group). It was concerned during the selection process that the homogeneity of the group is crucial, thus the group creation was based on status, function of a certain club. This created the insider concerned group, where mini-focus group interviews were made by 3–4 people per group (between October 2016 and December 2017):

- managers (department leaders, board members, chairman)
- coaches (section managers, coaches)
- athletes

For the analysis of qualitative data, Atlas.ti 7 analytical software was used. By the help of this, it was able to explore consistence, opinion and connections. During the process, codes to analytical parts (different opinions) were assigned. These codes showed the existence of contextual samples and finally hierarchical group has been created based on these. Based on the answers during the interviews, the opinions were grouped (most emphasized opinions about the sport functions) and color codes were used to identify which concerned group they belong to. The software includes graphical show which helps to represent the quotes related to certain codes. This method significantly helped the transparency and interpretation of the results (Muhr, 1991).

Based on the literature, mini-focus group interviews were conducted, in which managers, coaches and athletes have been interviewed. Respondents were asked to express their views and experiences in connection with functions of sport, which can be used to map the sport services they want to look at. The interview was put in a predetermined set of questions within the dimensions raised, and the people concerned were free to tell how they see the overall situation of the current Hungarian athletics.

Mini-focus group interviews took place along a specific guideline, yet it was thought to be important to share their opinions, feelings and related stories on the topic, which made the expressed attitude understandable. It can be mentioned as an advantage, that it was suitable for colliding and evaluating the opinions and experiences of those who were involved. It has made it possible to express attitudes, feelings and preferences as the core line of the conversation; exploring the causes, goals and wider connections. Of course, for each interview, there were problematic areas that we discussed in more detail. The reason of this can be searched in it, that what type of relationship the given stakeholder group is currently concerned with the athletics in.

In Hungary, according to the official source of the Hungarian Athletics Association (masz.hu), there are 161 athletics clubs today, which in itself represents a significant number, of course, there are sports associations for which the number of athletes is low. In the qualitative interviews, those clubs were selected, which are said to be determinate in today's Hungarian athletics. The success of earlier years has been taken into account and the intention that geographically far-off clubs form the subjects of the mini-focus group interview.

### **Viewpoint of effectiveness**

*Table 2* shows the results of the absolute point race (resupply, adolescence, short-range and hurdler branch, middle and long-distance running disciplines, walking disciplines, jumping disciplines, throwing disciplines) in the 2010–2012 period, and those domestic and international competitions were marked by the Association where points can be obtained. In this timeframe, it is also clearly obvious that the leading athletic clubs were the same.

	<b>2010</b>		<b>2011</b>		<b>2012</b>
1.	Bp. Honvéd SE	1.	VEDAC	1.	VEDAC
2.	VEDAC	2.	Bp. Honvéd SE	2.	Bp. Honvéd SE
3.	Buda-Cash Békéscsabai AC	3.	Buda-Cash Békéscsaba	3.	Dobó SE
4.	Gödöllői EAC	4.	Dobó SE	4.	Buda-Cash Békéscsabai AC
5.	Dobó SE	5.	KSI SE	5.	Gödöllői EAC
6.	KSI SE	6.	DSC-SI	6.	DSC-SI
7.	DSC-SI	7.	Gödöllői EAC	7.	KARC
8.	Ikarus BSE	8.	Nyírsuli	8.	Nyírsuli
9.	TSC-Geotech	9.	TSC-Geotech	9.	TSC-Geotech
10.	Szolnoki MÁV-SE + SI	10.	ARAK	10.	ARAK
12.	ARAK	18.	BEAC	12.	IKARUS BSE
19.	BEAC	19.	IKARUS BSE	18.	BEAC
53.	AC Bonyhád	47.	AC Bonyhád	28.	AC Bonyhád

Table 2 Scoreboard of the Hungarian athletic points competition  
in the period between 2010–2012

Source: own construct based on atletika.hu

Over the last three years, the athletics competition system has been transformed, so in absolute numbers it is difficult to express the success of each club, since the classic competition for points has been eliminated. The basis for the comparison is specified by the annual prized two-round (semifinal-final) team championships (each athletic club has the opportunity to associate with another - up to two - athletic clubs in a neighboring region), based on 42 events.

	2014		2015		2016
1.	GEAC-BEAC- IKARUS BSE	1.	Bp. Honvéd-UTE	1.	DSC-SI - NYSC
2.	Bp. Honvéd – UTE	2.	GEAC-BEAC- IKARUS BSE	2.	GEAC-IKARUS BSE
3.	DSC-SI – Nyírsuli	3.	DSC-SI – NYSC	3.	Bp. Honvéd - KSI SE
4.	VEDAC - Pápai SE	4.	Békéscsabai AC - SZVSE - Békési DAC	4.	UTE - MTK
5.	Dobó SE - Haladás VSE - Zalasám ZAC	5.	VEDAC - Pápai SE	5.	Békéscsabai AC - SZVSE
8.	TSC-Geotech - Arak - Győri AC	6.	TSC-Geotech - Arak - Győri AC	7.	TSC-Geotech - Arak
10.	Dunakeszi VSE- Csepeli DAC - Reménység Vác	9.	Favorit AC - DOVASE - Bonyhád AC	8.	VEDAC - Pápai SE
12.	DOVASE-Szekszárdi AK SE- AC Bonyhád	11.	Dobó SE	11.	Favorit AC - AC Bonyhád

Table 3 Scoreboard of the Hungarian athletic team championship points  
competition in the period between 2014–2016

Source: own construct based on atletika.hu

### Geographical frame

*Charts 3 and 4* clearly show how many athletics clubs in the particular regions currently operate in Hungary, and how much of these are related to the population.



Figure 3 Distribution of Hungarian athletic clubs by area  
Source: own construct

Name of the region	Number of clubs	Population	Population/ Number of clubs
Budapest	29	1,757,618	60,607
Bács-Kiskun	7	513,687	73,383
Baranya	8	371,110	46,388
Békés	3	351,148	117,049
Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén	7	667,594	95,370
Csongrád	4	406,205	106,543
Fejér	5	417,651	83,530
Győr-Moson-Sopron	4	452,638	113,159

Table 4 Hungarian athletic clubs as a function of population size  
Source: own construct

<b>Name of the region</b>	<b>Number of clubs</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Population/ Number of clubs</b>
Hajdú-Bihar	6	537,268	89,544
Heves	4	301,296	75,324
Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok	7	379,897	54,271
Komárom-Esztergom	5	299,110	59,822
Nógrád	6	195,923	32,653
Pest	15	1,226,115	81,741
Somogy	4	312,084	78,021
Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg	3	562,357	187,452
Tolna	6	225,936	37,656
Vas	6	253,997	42,332
Veszprém	5	346,647	69,329
Zala	4	277,290	69,322

Table 4 Hungarian athletic clubs as a function of population size  
 Source: own construct

The athletic clubs participating in the mini-focus group interviews:

- Alba Régia Atlétikai Klub (ARAK)
- Atlétikai Club Bonyhád (Bonyhád AC)
- Budapesti Egyetemi Atlétikai Club (BEAC)
- Debreceni Sportcentrum Közhasznú Nonprofit Kft. (DSC-SI)
- Ikarus BSE atlétika szakosztály
- Veszprémi Egyetemi és Diák Atlétikai Club (VEDAC)

### The results of the research

The circle of respondents included the internal stakeholders in the first round, where the participants of the interview were the management of the club, the coaches and the outstanding athletes of the particular sport organization. One important question from the research point of view was to identify those stakeholder groups that affect the functioning of the sport. During the interviews, the relationship network could be divided into three main categories. Those belong to the first category, who have a direct impact on the daily work of the associations and are involved in its activities. The interviewees identified five groups in this category - by quotation frequency -: coaches, athletes (*“Primarily athletes and coaches who work in some kind of employment ...”*); family (*“Another huge circle of supporters with whom they are in constant contact, the contestants and their family members”*); management (*“We are also in daily contact with athletes and colleagues and management”*); as well as civilian workers (*“... and those who are engaged in civilian work, primarily in business administration.”*).

Those belongs to the second category, who do not have a direct impact on club operations, yet they have a prominent role in the mechanism. On the one hand, friends who have a decisive role with their opinion and support in younger age groups (*“I’m mostly building on friends who are also athletes, support me, give me advice.”*). On the other hand, partners associations and educational institutions are included here, who provide base of athletes (*“We are also in contact with schools where we occasionally attend a class or workout. In the context of a specific program (ARAK-active), every spring we assess the status of children in different playful competition and try to select them from there.”*), or they offer an opportunity for a successful career for athletes to run it smoothly (*“Talking about athletes from Győr and Fehérvár, there is also a cooperation agreement between the two clubs, as they learn and work in Pest”*). As well as the medical background which treats athletes in a preventative and curative manner (*“In case of an injury, a natural therapist, but a dietitian, human innocent, and also massage therapists helped my work”*).

Finally, the support organizations were classified into a separate category, providing some kind of material support to athletic associations. The political dependence on Hungarian sports in general, and thus the athletics, is the dominant role of local governments (*“The department is fundamentally supported by the local government, the budget may be 20 million HUF”*) and the Hungarian Athletics Association or the Hungarian Olympic Committee (*“Supports of Hungarian Athletics Association and Hungarian Olympic Committee in the form of Sport XXI. or performance grants ...”*), which most of the respondents mention with a fairly high frequency.

They provide the basic conditions for the operation in financial and competitive terms for achieving a given goal. The sponsoring site is clearly seen as a weakness by all groups of respondents (“It’s a big step forward for the outstanding athlete to find a sponsor like Nike.”); the reasons for this will be further analyzed in the economic dimension. Instead of the sponsors, the sport is still characterized by protectors who have previously linked to athletics in some way or are in personal contact with the leadership of the association and therefore support a club or athlete. (“There are onefold grants, from businesses that have some personal attachment to athletics” / “Financial support can be obtained through personal contacts.”). Within the support, also the value of the news appeared, that is, the role of the media and how much they deal with the sport and how they do it (“The press needs news, primarily for local news and the club needs publishing their results to our sponsors, athletes and their families to see and get to know about the work of the club.”).

Figure 4 illustrates the relationship system revealed by qualitative analyzes. The stakeholders are flagged in white: direct, indirect, supportive relationship. The darkness of the colors represents the frequency of mention, whose quantified results by respondent groups are shown in Table 5.

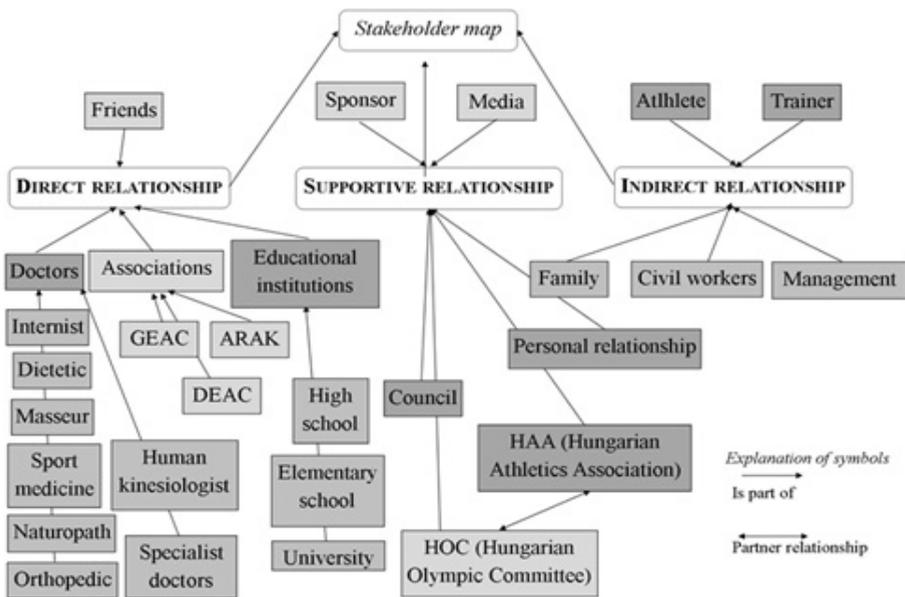


Figure 4 An explored system of relationships based on qualitative research  
 Source: own construct

CONNECTION NETWORK					
variable groups	name of variable	frequency of athlete	frequency of coach	frequency of manager	frequency of SUM
Direct	Coaches	4	5	6	15
Direct	Athlete	0	4	9	13
Direct	Family	2	2	2	6
Direct	Management	2	3	4	9
Direct	Civil workers	0	0	2	2
Direct	Educational institutions	0	6	5	11
Direct	Associations	0	0	6	6
Direct	Doctors	4	4	3	11
Direct	Friends	2	0	0	2
Supporter	Council	0	3	12	15
Supporter	Hungarian Athletics Association	0	5	9	14
Supporter	Personal relationship	0	2	9	11
Supporter	Hungarian Olympic Committee	0	3	4	7
Supporter	Sponsor	0	3	3	6
Supporter	Media	0	1	3	4

Table 5 Frequency distribution of the contact network variables among internal stakeholders, Source: own construct

### Health function

Beginning with the basic functions of the sport, first thing that needs to deal with, is the health function and its projections. During the problem is being processed, the interviewees have covered several areas: the coach and athlete's philosophy (attitudes), the factors influencing the health of active sports, and the performance as a key element of the competition spirit, nutrition and health education by sport.

The first question referred to the healthiness of the sport. Each group approached the question from different points of view, but it can be stated as a basic principle that professional and amateur sports must be distinguished. According to most of the professional athletes, there is a level (when they are already competitive) when it can no longer be called healthy (“... so it’s good to play, but who compete in sport, they will have more harm than an average person ...”). There were differences between, where exactly this boundary is located in the groups and within the group, (“... it can be healthy until you want to win a national championship ...” / “... it can only be valid until the general age at childhood ...”). Most of the coaches are more subtle, they have essentially linked the two concepts with success (“*The balance between the strain and the rest can be found, as long as the competitor does not reach the international level.*” / “*Where we are talking about serious results no longer so much.*”). The leaders indirectly expressed their opinion that this factor is best determined by the coach’s philosophy, so they approached the question directly through the influencing factors. Many determinants have emerged from interviews, which influences health and can be classified into several categories as a result of the effect, and, in most cases, they are often related to each other.

The most distinguishable effect was the **aptitude of the athlete**, which included the genetic substance (“*Which determines the injury is partly genetics, as well as, how much the athlete is mentally concentrated on the training*”) and as a result of this, body part (“*It depends on habitude as well, that there those, who achieve their athlete career without any health damage and lives perfectly at the age of 35, while others have another genetics.*”). Another category of factors affecting health is the **persons** (coach, family, doctor, philosophy of the athlete).

The defining role of the family is mostly important in terms of nutrition (“*The family is a decisive factor in what and how the athlete feeds*”). Within this category, this element was formulated in the most shaded, as the group of interviewed approached the role of coach from several sides, which were linked to the philosophy of sports in several places. The first, which affects both the health and the performance of the athlete, is the qualification of trainer. Coaches have highlighted this importance (“*I have a bad habit that I like to take part in courses too, but there are not many training courses in athletics, moreover they are absolutely missing in Hungary.*”). The problem is well represented in the previous quotation: there are no special sports forums and native-language publications that will allow the concerned group to become more educated. In many cases, it depends on the proactivity of the trainer (“*I also buy books, mostly English publications.*”) and the community where it is possible to work (“*The primary source of information collecting is talking to colleagues working in this field...*”). This could lead to an additional problem, thanks

to the underdevelopment of the sport (*especially with regard to coach wages*), generation gaps of clubs have emerged, which in many cases hindered bidirectional communication. Professional work, that is closely related to the previous variable, since the adequacy of the qualification greatly determines the level of professional work the coach can do. The lack or inadequacy of this can cause one of the biggest problems by athletes, which is the burnout that has been repeatedly aroused by both athletes and leaders during the interviews (*"... there are coaches who should not be on the pitch, as they do not do well for the athlete and the child either professionally. Talented children may be discouraged if they are not trained or trained too early to get results and burn out. " / In this area, it should not be allowed thinking in the short term that many people are doing, obviously not intentionally, but they burn out the children."*). The most common level that contains all of the elements that have appeared so far is the philosophy or the mentality of the trainer. This cannot be separated from any of the factors that have emerged so far, since it has an effect on them (*"For 90% of injuries the coach is responsible for; the remaining 10% the mistaker might be the athlete, when he does not do what the coach asks and goes his own way"*). Doctors also appear to be influencing factors in this dimension, although in the frequency of mentioning even in professional athletes they appear on periphery (*"The truth is that control of blood results must be constant there."*). Their influence on health is indirect because they have a control function in the process. Finally, the mind of the athlete must be mentioned within this category. This factor cannot be evaluated on its own, as it can be related to athletic awareness, whose one of the main directions formulated by nutrition (*"I eat consciously, I suppose, though I do not make it a maniac. I do not separate all the details into portions, but if I can, I'll take care of it."*). Besides the control of the preparation (*"At an amateur level this can happen if he or the coach is an idiot."*) and how well the goals are consistent with the abilities of the athlete are important. (*"... if someone has the skills to predestine themselves as a national champion, but he has set the Olympics as a goal, then it depends on the professional work of his colleagues to see if health damage occurs"*).

With regard to professional sport, the dimension also gave rise to the assessment of **performance**. Essentially, the role of sports in health preservation becomes separated at that point (*"Sport is linked to health but racing sport works with limit loads"*), according to athletes and coaches as well, as the limit loads no longer supports internal equilibrium, but overloads athlete for better performance.

An additional link can be explored with both nutrition (“... *who feeds healthily, is not aware of how much the performance could fall with improper nutrition*”) and talent (“... *it can be said that a talented child is not harmed, endure, bares out pressure and do not need special tools and nutrition ...*”). However, it should also be taken into account, that in many cases the external environment may overwrite the relationships described above (“*While at home environment, the load was completely different ...*”).

The role of **nutritional supplements** and the related opinions within nutrition was an inavoidable topic. The skepticism regarding to nutritional supplements was mostly expressed from leaders’ point of view (“*A significant portion of nutritional supplements does not develop. It is not as remarkable as it is supposed.*”), they believe that its efficiency and effectiveness are very difficult to judge, they rather consider it as a trend or business than a necessary supplement, and it is also believed as a potential source of danger (“*It has become fashionable in the recent years, but it also has great dangers, these products are marked by too many ...*” / “*The another thing is that it is not known enough, what these drugs contain, and how the body reacts to whom who use it, will it be acceptable or not by the body.*”). This was confirmed by some answer of athletes (“*I’ve taken a lot of nutritional supplements, especially protein. It presents during the whole year. I’ve taken nutrition supplement since my Junior ages, although there was no serious concept behind it.*”). On the other hand, coaches and athletes consider it crucial above a certain level (“...*when we are talking about professional sport and competitive sport, it may be mentioned*”), which has several reasons. On the one hand, nutritionally poor meals should be completed (“*there is not much nutrition in today’s meals*”), in addition it can shorten the time of regeneration (“*Mostly I’m taking regeneration supplements*”), besides it is easier for athletes to bear the load (“*Basically, I’ve started using it for 2 years, because of the higher loads. Since I train more times and I run more than 100 km a day, so it is indispensable.*”).

The caution of opinions and attitudes to nutritional supplements is due to the fact that many people in the public are confused with the concept of dietary supplements and doping. This may also be due to the fact that the various products are continuously being tested, thus classification is changing from time to time. The topic of doping has emerged mostly among managers, where it was completely rejected (“*There are a few adult competitors who may think about doping opportunities, but we have a strong conviction in this field, there was no, and we don’t even want to help athletes with these tools.*”).

I find it important to mention that, nevertheless, athletics is excessively one of the most sensitive to doping among sports. One trainer approached this topic from the another side, he thinks there is a group in athletics who does his best to improve his performance (“... *so he sacrifices everything, perhaps even turn to doping does not even know what effect it has on his health*”).

Beside the influencing factors, two interest categories have also appeared in this dimension. One is the acquisition of the new basic forms of movement (“... *learn movement patterns that can be base of other sports later on*”), which must be competed due to harder pressure in a higher level (“*There is many kind of physiotherapy thing, for compensate all the moving system and the pressure, and do not have deformities that can cause problems in civil life and sports.*”). In addition to this learning value, a healthy athlete appears as an importance (“... *the main value is a healthy athlete and not the result*”), influenced by health determinants; performance, participants, environment, talents, sport level.

<i>Professional and amateur sport</i>	“Who compete in sport, they will have more harm than an average person”
<i>Health – efficiency</i>	“The balance between the strain and the rest can be found, as long as the competitor does not reach the international level.”
<b>Influential factor - persons</b>	
<i>Ability of athlete</i>	“Which determines the injury is partly genetics, as well as, how much the athlete is mentally concentrated on the training”
<i>Attitude of athlete</i>	“I eat consciously, though I do not separate all the details into portions, but I take care of it.”
<i>Family-nutrition</i>	“The family is a decisive factor in what and how the athlete feeds”
<i>Qualification of trainer / professional work</i>	“I like to take part in courses too, but there are not many training courses in athletics”
	“For 90% of injuries the coach is responsible for, the remaining 10% the mistaker might be the athlete, when he does not do what the coach asks.”
➤ <i>Burn-out</i>	“... trained too early to get results and burn out”

<b>Influential factors – performance</b>	
<i>Health – performance</i>	“Sport is linked to health but racing sport works with limit loads”
<i>Nutrition</i>	“... who feeds healthily, is not aware of how much the performance could fall with improper nutrition”
<i>Talent</i>	“... a talented child is not harmed, endure, bares out pressure and do not need special tools and nutrition ... ”
<i>External environment</i>	“While at home environment, the load was completely different ...”
<i>Role of nutrition supplements</i>	“It is not as remarkable as it is supposed.”
	“Is not known enough, what these drugs contain, and how the body reacts to whom who use it.”
	“I train more times and I run more than 100 km a day, so it is indispensable.”
<i>Doping</i>	“There is no, and we don’t even want to help athletes with these tools.”
	“... so he sacrifices everything, perhaps even turn to doping.”
<i>Healthy athlete</i>	“... the main value is a healthy athlete and not the result.”

Table 6 Revealed alternatives of health dimensions  
Source: own construct

### Socializing function

The second function, that is the subject of the test, is lifestyle. Based on the qualitative results, the highest frequency was given to **community strength** and its positive effects especially in the case of the leaders and coaches (“*We try to convince the child is a member of the community here*”). In the case of athletes, negative aspects of this factor also emerged, as in many cases, conflicts of interest may hurt performance. (*If I train alone, then more attention is given... working in a group sometimes creates a conflict of interests that can make the community morale worse.* “).

The other variable, closely related to the community, is the **effect of group work**, which has also appeared as a separate variable in a positive sense (*“They work together; they suffer together; they compete together and are in good friendships, who are on the pitch opponents”*). As a result, athletes are often get into a **conflict situation**, which can also have a positive impact on their lives in the long run, even if the coach manages them properly. (*“There was a little girl from Pécs, who has soon overtaken the age group, who were there worked with them for 3-4 years. And they were overwhelmed by them in a year. Jealousy, vanity, these must be mentioned because they are difficult to accept. On the other hand, there is the conflict that the outstanding athlete does not feel the proper attention.”*). In terms of frequency, as a secondary value in this area, the **success experienced** in a group-level has been appeared despite the fact that it is a personal sport. It is important for them to help each other during the workout or even race (*“... last year I helped them to run in the level of European Championship”*).

The next major factor group could be related to learning, the direct element of which was connected to sport, the learning of movement patterns (*“learn some forms of movement that could later be based on other sports”*), indirectly the impact of sport on learning, which is not positive because *“... it would bring extra to the nervous system ..., but for those who have less time for sports, and no time for slack”*. For the variables mentioned, additional background variables can be found in this interview: **timing** and **design** (*“The day won’t be broken, adjust to a strict agenda”*); **task orientation** (*“They know what to do at what time”*), **concentration** (*“I noticed that my ability to concentrate getting better, my brain working better, my brain working better, I can understand things better ...”*). Due to the differences in efficiency in the performing sport, roles are quite differentiated within the group. According to the opinion of coaches it is positive in childhood (*“There are norms in the group, which need to be consolidated and taken over by the newly attached child”*). At the level of athletes and coaches, which is a higher level, conflicts are generated (*“Two piper can not fit in one inn”*). There were two external variables related to learning which has appeared, on the one hand, the opinions in connection with the **education system**, where it appeared to be a major factor (*“In many cases the university does not even support my athlete work because they do not let me go to a training camp or competition”*). At a professional level, compatibility can be seen in the type of training by the athletes (*“Very training-depending how much it is compatible, as there are training areas where it is only possible to do with a very drawn schedule (medical), and then you’re mentally exhausted too.”*). Leaders and more coaches also

have similar opinions (*“Here in Hungary, higher education seem to be as a passive viewer, there are some positive attempts, but this is mostly person-dependent”*). The other determining factor, which has emerged in all three stakeholder groups, is parental attitudes, which in many cases can not be stated as positive effect in sports (*“It is often the case that a parent does not allow a child to workout because they have got a bad mark or write have to write a test, must go to a private lesson. “/” This requires a parental intelligence, and foresight. “)*).

<i>Community power / the effect of group work</i>	<i>“We try to convince the child is a member of the community here.”</i>
	<i>“...working in a group sometimes creates a conflict of interests that can make the community morale worse.”</i>
	<i>“... last year I helped them to run in the level of European Championship.”</i>
<i>Roles</i>	<i>“There are norms in the group, which need to be consolidated and taken over by the newly attached child.”</i>
	<i>“Two piper can not fit in one inn.”</i>
<i>The impact of sport on learning</i>	<i>“The day won’t be broken, adjust to a strict agenda.”</i>
	<i>“...my ability to concentrate getting better, my brain working better, I can understand things better ...”</i>
➤ <i>Education system</i>	<i>“Higher education seem to be as a passive viewer, there are some positive attempts, but this is mostly person-dependent.”</i>
	<i>“In many cases the university does not even support my athlete work because they do not let me go to a training camp or competition.”</i>
➤ <i>Parental attitudes</i>	<i>“It is often the case that a parent does not allow a child to workout because they have got a bad mark or have to write a test, must go to a private lesson.”</i>
	<i>“This requires a parental intelligence, and foresight.”</i>

Table 7 Revealed variables of socialization function

Source: own construct

### Ideal function

The question of this dimension is, what each stakeholder group reckon as sporting goods and sport values, what variables can be separated, and how it can be measured. The biggest difference between the groups was experienced in this area. The most commonly mentioned variable referred to **absolute success** in each group (*“If one or more athletes will get to the Olympics, then they have to perform well and make an individual peak, and it’s a huge thing in itself. To be an Olympics Icon is a life-long story.”*), since this is the basis for judging the sport and the club. (*„The measure of success is how the professional work is acknowledged, the mapping out of this is in the form of grants by the HAA.”*). However, the performance orientation of athlete is balanced by the **individual development** of the athlete, mentioned in a tight connection by the coaches and leaders. (*“... as you proceed in your sport career, everyone have to achieve the result which is appropriate for the skills.”* / *“Give everyone a goal that’s accessible, personalized.”*) In this respect, two intertwined pairs of attitudes can be identified, on the one hand, it is needed to be professional athletes in the meaning of absolute comprehension, thus individual skills are determinative, so that everyone have to prepare personalized goals. The factors above, are largely determined by **professional work**, which is mostly lived as success by leaders (*“It’s a social engagement and a hobby. The success for me is to be an operative structure that can be insertable in the right professional content.”*).

During the interviews, additional discovered variables support these sports values (background variables). On the one hand, **building the mass base** appeared (*“The biggest success is if there are many ...”*), for which it is essential to provide an **open environment** (*“Providing an open environment for everyone to tell their problems or if they have a thought speak it out.”*). On the other hand, the **respect for traditions** are also represents an added value (*“Here by BEAC tradition has a prominent role, we preserve it and pass on it ...”*) and the willingness to **renew** it (*“At the departmental level it is a success if we can function well professionally and we can rejuvenate continuously in order to react to the new conditions ...”*).

<i>Absolute success</i>	“If one or more athletes will get to the Olympics, then they have to perform well.”
	“The measure of success is how the professional work is acknowledged, the mapping out of this is in the form of grants by the MASZ.”
<i>Self-development</i>	“Give everyone a goal that's accessible, personalized.”
	“... as you proceed in your sport career, everyone have to achieve the result which is appropriate for the skills.”
<i>Professional work</i>	“The success for me is to be an operative structure that can be insertable in the right professional content.”
➤ <i>Mass base</i>	“The biggest success is if there are many ...”
➤ <i>Open environment</i>	“Providing an open environment for everyone to tell their problems or if they have a thought speak it out.”
➤ <i>Traditions</i>	“Here by BEAC tradition has a prominent role, we preserve it and pass on it ...”
➤ <i>Rejuvenation</i>	“At the departmental level it is a success if we can function well professionally and we can rejuvenate continuously in order to react to the new conditions ...”

Table 8 Revealed variants of the dimension of sport success  
 Source: own construct

### Business value

Financing is always a basic question in sport. From sport value and the aspects of it, it can be derived that at this time athletics cannot be function without **state aid** (“*State engagement is better compared to previous years, it would work really difficult without*”), besides the role of social participation is also indispensable. (“*Anyone who is not obsessed with stupidity and madness, leaves it. We have to go against many things.*”)

During the interviews, stakeholders started from the basic idea that athletics could work on a business basis (*“athletics is vendible a sport”*), but only in the far future, since many segments should change positively; coach training, compulsory physical education, social judgment of the sport, spreading in public awareness, infrastructure development. There are many positive examples in Western Europe where the sport has been rebuilt from nothing, but several factors need to be met, which according to the content analysis were the following. The number of athletes who achieved **peak performance** (*“It could be vendible, but it would require more Hungarian athletes who are in the top 8 in the World Cup”*), **traceability of competition** should be simplified (*“There are very few official IAAF competitions that can be easily understandable, for non-skilled people.”*) and special attention should be paid to the crowd came from running as a hobby, by sport clubs (*“Street racing yes, there are thousands of people there, thus it has a business value”*) ensure a remunerative market. As long as there is no shift along these variables, sustainability is attributed to municipality engagement (*“The philosophy that is represented is vendible because it is supported by the local government.”*), as well as it is ensured by local businesses through **personal contact** (*“There is the possibility to find people who are sympathize with the sport”*). As long as there is no **market for this** (*“,an internal market can be created with the increase of an athlete’s base”*), so many sponsors cannot be involved, but local media as support organizations can appear. The majority of the managers and some coaches realise that the hobby running could give the success of the athletic business, it would be possible to extend the athletics, attract crowd runners, which work well abroad (*“It’s a common habit in Denmark to get joggers into the club, but it also requires culture as well”*). We have not been there yet to be a community-building force.

The strongest negative attitude associated with business value, which is appeared in the responses, is the **doping sensitivity** of sport, which is critical in connection with sport (*“In Hungary our throwing events can be world-class, but those are very susceptible to doping, so that sponsors are very cautious in this area”*).

By the preparation of mini-focus group interviews in connection with business value, contrary to my preliminary expectations, other sectors of the sport (*eg. sports media, manufacturers and traders of sport equipments, sport health*) appeared in a negligible extent. One of the possible reasons for this, is that the interviewees approached the topic basically in an introverted way, they mentioned those factors that appear in their own narrow environment (see: affected person revealed by contact network).

<i>State support</i>	“State engagement is better compared to previous years, it would work really difficult without...”
<i>Personal relationships / municipality engagement</i>	“The philosophy that is represented is vendible, because it is supported by the local government.”
	“... there is the possibility to find people who sympathize with the sport.”
<i>Social engagement</i>	“Anyone who is not obsessed with stupidity and madness, leaves it. We have to go against many things...”
<i>Business-based operation</i>	“The sport faculty is vendible, but in numerous factors positive change need to be occurred.”
➤ <i>Peak power</i>	“It could be vendible, but it would require more Hungarian athletes who are in the top 8 in the World Cup”
➤ <i>Competition traceability</i>	“There are very few official IAAF competitions that can be easily understandable, for non-skilled people.”
➤ <i>Lack of market</i>	“...an internal market can be created with the increase of an athlete's base”
➤ <i>Appreciation of running as a hobby</i>	“Street racing yes, there are thousands of people there, thus it has a business value.”
➤ <i>Doping sensitivity</i>	“In Hungary our throwing events can be world-class, but those are very susceptible to doping, so that sponsors are very cautious in this area.”

Table 9 The variables of the business value dimension  
 Source: own construct

### Summary

By identifying the stakeholder groups presenting in the Hungarian athletics, transparent network of contacts and operational processes come to conclusion in this field. In this article, with the attitudes of managers, coaches and athletes are being dealt. In the exploratory research mini-focus group interviews with athletes, trainers and leaders of several outstanding athletics clubs in Hungary were conducted.

Qualitative research has provided an opportunity to outline the relationship network (stakeholder map). The results showed that there were three significant sub-groups of stakeholders in the Hungarian athletics from the sports clubs point of view. In connection with the sport service, athletics, coaches and club leaders are involved directly, while indirect contacts are being disseminated (formal - in the form of cooperation agreement - and in an informal way) with other sport clubs, educational institutions and doctors which is able to improve the effectiveness and the basis of athletes. Supporters are primarily concerned with those who provide financial backing support (primarily by association and local government) to clubs and have their expectations and attentiveness in this regard. In the group of supporters, primarily those are concerned, who provide financial background support (primarily by association and local government) for clubs and, in this regard, have their expectations and interest validation. **In our research through the interviews the attitudes connected to sport functions have been revealed, which draws the attention to the specialties of this sport.** The results show that each of the examined areas has its corner points, but many other variables are also displayed:

*Medical dimension:* the difference between official sportsman and the amateur, the connection between health and efficiency, the sportsman skill and attitude, the expertise of the coach, the factors influencing performance (relationship of family and nutrition, role of nutritional supplements, doping, talent), external environmental factors.

*Socializing dimension:* the effect of community power and team work, the roles within the group, the effect of sport on learning (assessable skills, education systems, parental attitude).

*Role model (success) dimension:* absolute and relative sportsman efficiency, professional work (building of mass base, supplying open environment, traditions, openness for new).

*Business dimension:* support from federal and local government, personal contacts, social roles, the influential factors in case of business connection (maximum performance, championship administration, lack of market, the evaluation of hobby running, sensitiveness to doping).

The results obtained would provide an opportunity to get measurable athletics as a complex sports service through attitude-scales. It is possible to set up a preference sequence within the group and between them, whose incremental utility evolve in the synergistic affect between the groups. The many years of experience gained in Hungarian athletics shows that making processes more efficient is not just a matter of money. Structures have to change, but the circle of affected people need to know, as well as their attitudes and preferences.

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