

ATTRIBUTES ASSOCIATED WITH ATHLETE TYPES IN HUNGARY

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ABSTRACT

We consider it important to examine how people think about different types of athletes, and what qualities they attach to them. Therefore we divided the athletes into five different types: hobby, professional individual, *professional team*, *non-physical*, and *e-sport* athletes. In our study, we examined the characteristics associated with athlete types, which is unique in the literature of sports consumption. The members of society perceive different types of athletes differently. Exploring the characteristics of these types can significantly help the companies daily work on the sport market to determine the various target segments and to position them appropriately. The study supports this understanding by presenting the results of a paper and pencil interview, which has a sample of 2000 people representing the 15-74 year old Hungarian population to explore the characteristics of athlete's types perceived by society, carried out in the framework of the EFOP-3.6.2-16-2017-003 project. By making a correspondence analysis, we found that the attributes associated with each athlete type are separated from each other. While some of the examined attributes are clearly related to a particular type, others do not show such a plausible relationship. Based on our findings, the type of *hobby athlete* was associated with the attributions of "free", and "humble". The attributions of "high esteem", "fast", "rich", and "successful" were connected to the type of professional individual athlete, while the type of *professional team athlete* was associated with "respect", "adventures", "interesting life" and "pay attention to others". Among the examined types, *non-physical athlete* was associated with the most attributions, which were "honest", "joy", "have a good time", "women", and "creativity". The type of *e-sport athlete* differed from the other types the most, which was associated closely with the attribute of "modern". We have assumed that further analysis of associations provides valuable information, for example focusing on specific segments of society during processing. However, the analysis of generations, gender, sporting habits, household income showed only minimal differences between associations in connection with athlete types.

KEY WORDS: sports consumption, sports marketing, athlete types, correspondence analysis.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays not only the role and importance of sport is appreciated, but athletes also receive increasing attention. The most relevant issue in this context is the interest in sport performance and sporting events which generates the demand for products, experiences, and the appeal of attractive athlete's personality and its image-transfer to brands (McCracken, 1989, Mayerhofer, 1995, Gross, 2014). It means the brand value of the professional athlete. According to the leading experts of brand equity the brand's value, and thus the financial value of the personal brand provides value which can be measured in money or in capital to the product or service provider (Kapferer, 2007). At the same time, brand equity is also linked to future consumer generated returns - a strong brand can deliver value to the consumer of that product or service (Aaker, 1996). This area, the endorsement, has led to many researches, with various authors and practitioners dealing with the advantages and disadvantages of the relationship between athletes and brands (Erfgen et al., 2015).

Whereas the professional value of a professional athlete is definitely proven, let's just think of the lists of those athletes who earn the most. It shows that, depending on the sport and the athlete, there is definitely an increase in the revenues from the sale of the personal brands compared to the revenue from sports performance. Thus, the question arises what qualities consumers appreciate in the case of athletes, but it also becomes interesting, which attributes people associate to which type of athlete.

Undoubtedly, *professional individual athletes* and *professional team athletes* are the most important to be involved in the examination of various types of athletes. Nevertheless the perceived characteristics of *hobby athletes*, *non-physical athletes*, and *e-sport athletes* are also worth of our attention. In this way, we examined these five types of athletes, assuming their connection to different attributes. *Hobby athletes* are essential because physical activity is becoming more and more widespread with a variety of motivations, with a growing range of products and services, creating and expanding markets that are particularly important. The character of *non-physical sports and athletes* is clearly distinguished even by the everyday judgement as they require other knowledge and skills than sports based on physical conditions. We have also included those who prefer technical sports in this category after we have not planned to extend the number of athlete types too much. Furthermore, there was a possibility of an extreme athlete category, which we also rejected to focus on more relevant athlete types. At the same time, we have treated the *e-sport athletes* separately, as this area poses new challenges to the athletes, bringing together the expectations of technical, physical and mental preparedness (Heinz - Ströh, 2017).

We do not claim that it is not possible to define the athlete types more precisely, but we have to start somewhere the examination into this direction after we have not identified a starting point in the literature. The case of the examined attributes may be the same, the range of selected attributes could have been expanded and changed, but we think these highlights are suitable for a first approximation.

Our study shows the results of a wide range, paper and pencil personal interview based sample of 2000 people, in addition to basic statistical processing, we conducted a correspondence analysis with a deeper explanation of the responses of various segments.

2. ATTRIBUTES ASSOCIATED WITH ATHLETE TYPES

2.1. The role of sport

Nowadays from the economic point of view, the role of sport is unquestionable. It has become a profitable market economy segment that is an integral part of the entertainment industry. Members of the population in Europe spend a large part of their leisure time on sport related services, thus in some sectors of sport companies make significant investments (Salgado-Barandela, 2017).

The economic contribution of sport is demonstrated by the fact that in 2012, according to the strict Vilnius definition of sport, 1,49% of the total employment of the European Union (3.138.350 people) was based on sport-related services. Based on the broad Vilnius definition of sport, the same value was 2,12% of total employment (4.460.888 people) due to the direct effects of sport. However, taking into account the indirect effects due to the multiplier effect, according to the narrow definition, 2,42% of the total employment (5.085.137 people) of the European Union do sports linked jobs professionally. The same value, based on the broad definition is 3,51% (7.378.671 people) due to the indirect effects (SpEA, 2012).

In addition to employment, the economic importance of sport is demonstrated by the contribution of the sport industry to GDP. According to the narrow Vilnius definition of sport in 2012, 1,13% of the European Union's GDP (€112,18 billion) was provided by sport. This value, in the broad Vilnius definition of sport reached 1,76% (€173,86 billion). If we consider the indirect effects too, sport contributed to the 1,88% of the European Union GDP (€186,2 billion) according to the narrow definition, while it contributed to the 2,98% (€294,35 billion) according to the broad definition (SpEA, 2012).

To be able to contribute to the economy to such extent, it is essential that sport becomes business. It happens when needs for doing sport activities, or for spectating sport events are perceived as consumer demands, which are satisfied by professionally-run, profit-oriented sports related companies. The starting point for this is the popularity of a particular sport, which can be measured through the number of spectators. The base of this process is the popularity of a particular sport, which can be measured through the number of spectators. At a certain level the increase in the number of spectators triggers the interest of the media, which brings the interest of the companies to approach the market. As a result, profit-oriented actors such as sport agencies, leagues and professional event organizers appear on the market of a given sport and start to develop products and services (Walker-Enz, 2006). Actually, such sporting goods and services

provide people the opportunity to consume in connection with sports, which generates revenue for the profit-oriented actors and thus contributes to the whole economy. For this reason, sport consumption is essential for understanding the economic significance of sport.

2.4 The role of athletes in the sport economy

The athletes should be given high priority among the actors in the sports economy, as on the one hand they are the most important demand segment and on the other hand their role as an exemplary personality can increase today's market size. In this case, the impact of both professional and *hobby athletes* can be interpreted. However, the case of professional athletes is different because of their wide awareness and media appearance. In case of professional athletes, we meet the practice of personal branding, i.e. athletes become brands, which goes beyond a successful sports career by opening new earning possibilities and visibility prospects (Huber – Meyer, 2008). The phenomenon is becoming more and more determinative, so it is not surprising that many researchers started to deal with it, either the name of personality marketing (Ewert, 1993), or self-marketing (Törőcsik, 2017), or the effect of stars (Pringle, 2005), highlighting visibility (Kotler et al., 2006) or with the introduction of the category of self-branding (Royston-Lee - Purkiss, 2012). Analyzing success is very close to this topic, more and more authors are publishing about it, so the examination of success has revealed a number of remarkable rules (Gladwell, 2009, Barabási, 2018).

In the process of *endorsement*, the brand and the personal brand are linked, the brand owner pays for the celebrity to use his face, reputation and the visibility which generates attention. The biggest advantage is that the celebrity who appears next to the brand will trigger the *priming effect* (Meyer - Schvandeveltdt, 1971). This means, that the celebrity prepares, *preloads* the processing of the next stimulus, which is the brand's advertisement, message, so the attention is given. Basically, it is an advantageous deal for both parties, ideally, both sides close the transaction with profit. Personal brands are able to carry very clear messages and fill the brand personality of otherwise lifeless brands simply with content, characteristics, and emotions (Pringle – Binet, 2005).

However, there is an increasing impact of influencers, even micro-influencers, and experienced representatives of sports, who affect the choice of destinations, special equipment, training places, and trainers by their blogs. This draws attention to the growing importance of *hobby athletes*, especially for the representatives of non-mainstream sports.

We also experience more and more frequently that *parasocial relationships* are formed between famous athletes and their fans. Caring the *parasocial relationship* which is built on a targeted way – mainly on social media platforms - makes the athlete a “friend” for fans, so the athlete can have a strong influencing effect, for example in brand selection (Yuan et al., 2016). If all this leads to the joining of the fans, it can multiply the effect induced by the athlete. All of these relationships are highly diverse and even psychologically complicated in the case of e-sports, for example in the connection between the avatar and the athlete behind it, in defining identity (Loyer, 2015).

In total, exciting processes take place between athletes and business, examination of all these processes and the actors involved in it are therefore actual.

2.3 Research methodology

In May-June 2018, we made a paper and pencil personal interview with 2000 people in order to examine the behaviour and opinion of the Hungarian population on several issues related to sports consumption. Our study was representative for the 15-74 year old Hungarian population by gender, age groups (10 year intervals), and region of residence. With our quantitative research, our purpose is to give a valid picture of Hungarian sports consumption habits and attitudes. In our survey special focus was given to sporting habits, sports consumption characteristics, the link between sport and tourism, and the motivation factors behind sport. We used IBM SPSS Statistics 24 and Microsoft Excel 2013 software to process and analyse the results.

In connection with this study, we asked our respondents to use 20 characteristics for describing 5 types of athletes defined by us, on the basis of which attribute is appropriate to describe which athlete type. Our 20 examined attributes were “creativity”, “richness, money”, “male”, “appreciation”, “female”, “try new things”, “young”, “pay attention to others”, “humble, modest”, “traditional”, “free”, “slow”, “successful”, “fast”, “adventures, interesting life”, “respect”, “honest”, “modern”, “have a good time”, and “joy “. As we described previously, we examined 5 types of athletes in our study, involving *hobby athletes*, *individual professional athletes*, *professional team athletes*, *non-physical athletes*, and *e-sport athletes*. We added an additional category to our 5 athlete types, labeled as *none of them*. If a respondent was not able

to associate a particular attribute with any type of athlete, he / she could indicate it with the answer *none of them*. The results of our paper and pencil personal interview were first analysed on the basis of the frequency of the answers. Then a correspondence analysis was performed on the data to determine which attributes belong to which athlete types the most.

In order to gain more information and to find out the differences between the perceptions of different types of athletes among the population, we examined the significant differences (in the statistical sense) which can be found in the frequency of responses (at 1% significance level) in the dimensions of genders, generations, sporting habits, and cheering habits. After that, the sample was divided into several groups based on each of these criteria we made correspondence analysis, in order to find further differences between different groups of the population. For the gender approach, we divided the sample into men and women, for the generation approach into young generation, middle generation, and old generation, for the sporting habits approach into those who do sports regularly, and those who do not do sports regularly and finally for the cheering habits approach into those who are sport team fans and those who are not sport team fans. In the case of generations, we considered that those who are younger than 30 years old are members of the young generation, those who are between 30 and 59 years old are members of the middle generation and those who are older than 59 years are the members of old generation.

2.3 Results

In our research, we would like to gain information about which characteristics our respondents connects to different types of athletes. For this purpose, we asked 5 different athlete types and 20 different attributes to evaluate which attribute is typical for which type of athlete (allowing more choices for every attribute). First, we created a frequency table of the answers of the respondents (Table 1), from which we identified which characteristics of the athletes were mentioned by the respondents in the highest proportion. We also identified which of the attributes are associated with just one type or more types of athletes

In the case of *hobby athletes*, "have a good time", "joy", "free", and "female" were mentioned at the highest rate. Our respondents could connect the terms "richness, money," "successful" and "appreciation" the least to this type. In case of *individual professional athletes* the "successful", "richness, money", "male", and "appreciation" characteristics had the highest mention rate. In connection with this type "slow" attribute was clearly identified as the least typical one. For *professional team athletes*, "successful", "pay attention to others", "male" and "richness, money" attributes were the most characteristic. Our respondents connected in the lowest rate the attribute "slow" to this type, like in the case of *professional individual athletes*.

Compared to the previously analysed three types, respondents were able to connect characteristics in a lower rate generally to *non-physical* and *e-sport athlete* types. The *non-physical athlete* type was characterized by "creativity", "male", "female", and "joy", while for *e-sport athlete* type clearly the "modern" attribute was determinative. For the type of *non-physical athletes*, respondents connected "adventures, interesting life", "pay attention to others," and "richness, money," the least. In the case of *e-athletes* "humble, modest", and "traditional" attributes were mentioned in the lowest ratio. In addition to the athlete types, we also gave our respondents the opportunity to choose a category called *none of them* if they cannot link a characteristic to any of the given athlete types. It turned out to be clear that half of our respondents (52.2%) could not connect the "slow" attribute to any of the given athlete types. 24.14% of them could not connect "humble, modest" and 22.38% of them could not link "traditional" qualities to any of the types of athletes we examined. The other 17 attributes were linked to the *none of them* category in a lower rate, so the other attributes were connected better to at least one of the athlete types.

Further examining the frequency of mentioning (Table 1), it turned out that respondents were able to match the characteristics generally to the *individual professional athletes* and *professional team athletes* in the highest proportion. Based on the associations, these two types are very similar to each other because of the minimal differences in the frequency of associations compared to the other 3 athlete types. In addition to the similarity of these two types of athletes, we also identified a notable difference in the "pay attention to others" attribute, where the linking ratio was significantly higher in the case of *professional team athlete* type. The perception of *hobby* and *non-physical athletes* is also similar in terms of linking ratios, however not as much as in the case of *professional team* and *individual athletes*. In their case, there is a significant difference between the "free", the "have a good time" and the "joy" attributes, which were mentioned by respondents in a much higher proportion for *hobby athletes*. Exploring the characteristics, the type of *e-sport athletes* differs the most from all other types we examined. In their case, there was a generally low mentioning rate, almost for all the attributes, which may be due to the novelty of this athlete type, because currently it is less known among members of the population. This idea can be proven by the fact that "modern" was clearly the most mentioned attribute to this athlete type.

Table 1. Relationship between attributes and athlete types (n=2000)

„What do you think, which type of athlete have these characteristics?“

Attribute	Hobby athlete	Professional individual athlete	Professional team athlete	Non-physical athlete	E-sport athlete	None of them
Creativity	33,29%	40,14%	37,21%	39,43%	20,80%	8,57%
Richness, money	9,24%	74,07%	56,99%	17,07%	12,27%	6,61%
Male	41,74%	70,68%	61,28%	39,05%	32,31%	10,72%
Appreciation	16,10%	71,32%	52,86%	25,39%	10,12%	8,00%
Female	50,23%	62,32%	55,17%	38,92%	25,64%	11,13%
Try new things	42,60%	37,36%	28,18%	26,57%	30,69%	8,35%
Young	44,83%	60,73%	51,80%	33,56%	34,30%	9,51%
Pay attention to others	26,49%	27,12%	67,90%	16,50%	9,99%	8,03%
Humble, modest	34,31%	26,09%	29,16%	22,03%	6,65%	24,14%
Traditional	31,22%	29,63%	34,72%	19,55%	4,92%	22,38%
Free	56,49%	35,56%	24,29%	25,98%	19,78%	11,75%
Slow	19,61%	6,68%	4,35%	21,14%	7,63%	52,20%
Successful	10,97%	81,15%	62,58%	24,06%	10,87%	5,86%
Fast	18,88%	69,23%	56,58%	18,64%	15,39%	10,04%
Adventures, interesting life	27,18%	59,07%	50,99%	15,37%	10,92%	10,74%
Respect	28,22%	64,76%	54,60%	30,10%	13,49%	9,13%
Honest	48,36%	50,17%	46,37%	35,74%	21,03%	12,05%
Modern	25,78%	33,41%	27,57%	28,53%	45,97%	9,84%
Have a good time	61,94%	56,16%	49,45%	35,15%	29,19%	5,87%
Joy	61,79%	61,47%	54,95%	38,47%	30,19%	6,26%

Source: Authors

After the frequency analysis in order to determine which of the attributes connects to which athlete types the most, we have carried out a correspondence analysis. The plot of our correspondence analysis is shown in Figure 1. The validity of the correspondence analysis was tested by Chi-square test with a significance level of 0.00, which is within the limit of 0.01, so it can be stated that the value of the inertia differs significantly from 0 and the two examined parameters related. Based on the perceptual map (Figure 1), the different types of athletes and the associated attributes can be grouped, but the “slow” and “traditional” attributes could not be connected to any of the established groups. The groups we have stated are circled on the perceptual map (Figure 1).

The type of *e-sport athlete* is clearly distinguished from the other types on the correspondence map and is clearly associated with the “modern” attribute for the respondents. All the other characteristics and athlete types are far away from it. In the case of a *hobby athlete* type, the connection is evident to “free” and “humble, modest” attributes, these qualities are the closest to this type of athlete. *Professional team athletes* are linked to the characteristics of “pay attention to others”, “adventures, interesting life” and “respect”, they form a group on the perceptual map. For respondents, the type of *individual professional athlete* is characterized by a higher rate of “fast”, “appreciation”, “successful” and “richness, money” compared to the average of the sample. From the examined athlete types, most associations are related to the type of *non-physical athletes* on the correspondence map. Respondents connected the attributes “have a good time”, “joy”, “honest”, “female”, and “creativity” in a proportion above the average to this type.

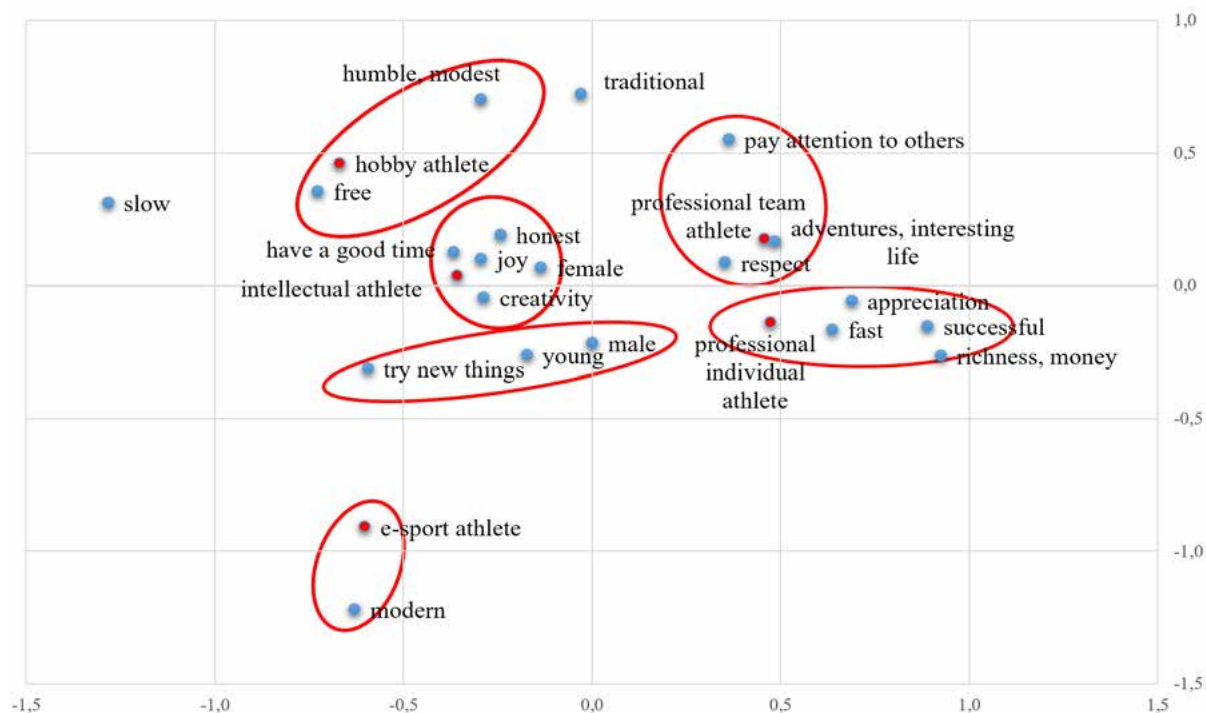
“Try new things”, “young”, and “male” attributes are close to each other in association, so they form a group, but none of our tested athletes can be connected to this group. We haven’t examined the athlete type related to extreme sports, this result may be warning of the lack of this type.

Analyzing the similarity of athlete types by the correspondence map, we came to the same conclusion as in the analysis of the frequency of answers. The *individual professional athlete* type and the *professional team athlete* type are very close

to each other on the perceptual map, making them the most similar among the athlete types based on the associations. The types of *non-physical athletes* and *hobby athletes* are also close to each other on the correspondence map, though not as much as the previous two examined groups, thus confirming the results obtained from the analysis of frequency analysis. So *non-physical athletes* and *hobby athletes* are more similar to each other than to any of the other 3 types. Based on the correspondence map, the type of *e-sport athletes*, like in the frequency analysis results, does not show similarity with any other examined athlete type, it stays far from the other types.

Figure 1. Correspondence map – Relationship between attributes and athlete types(n=2000)

„What do you think, which type of athlete have these characteristics?“



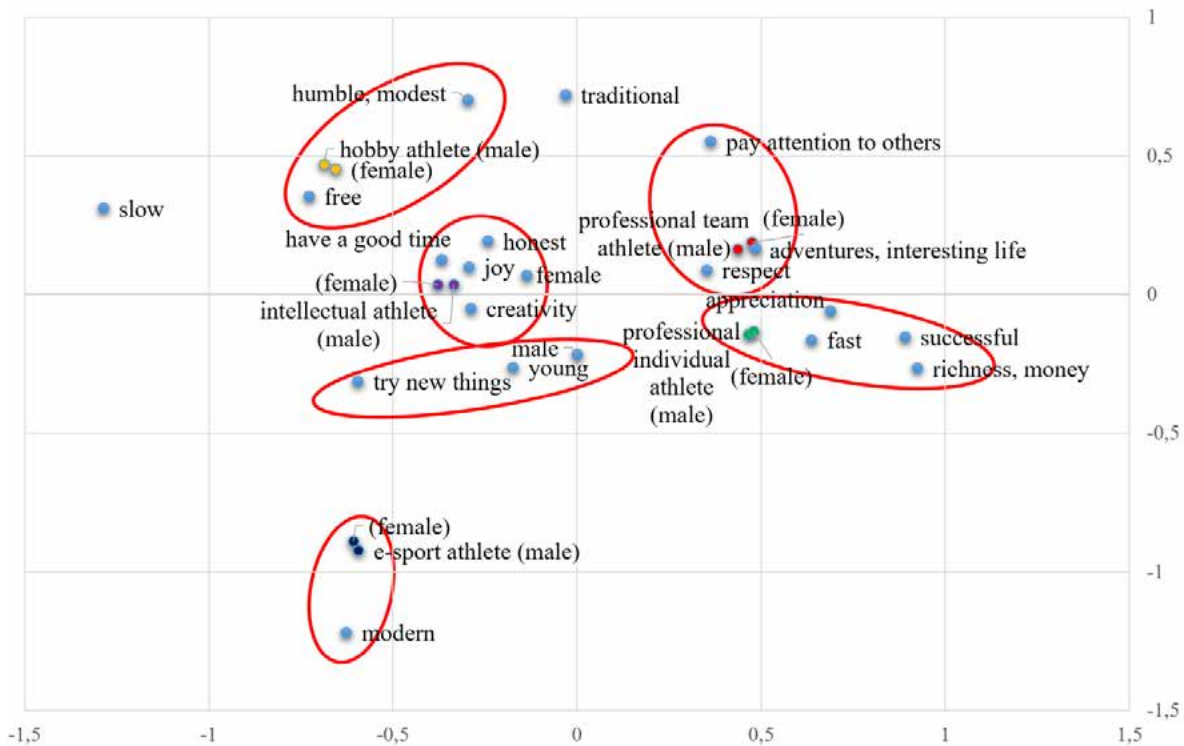
Source: Authors

In order to gain more information and to find out the differences between the perceptions of different types of athletes among the population, we examined the significant differences in the statistical sense which can be found in the frequency of responses in the dimensions of *genders*, *generations*, *sporting habits*, and *cheering habits*. After we divided the sample into several groups based on each of these criteria, we made another correspondence analysis for each of the 4 criteria, to make further findings about perceptual differences between different groups of the population.

Analysing *gender* differences, it appears that there are just only few differences between men's and women's perceptions of athlete types. Men mentioned "creativity" and "young" qualities for *professional team athletes* in a significantly higher rate and "creativity", "try new things", and "respect" attributes for *e-sport athletes* in a higher proportion than women. Women connected "humble, modest," and "traditional" characteristics for *none of them* category in a higher rate as men did. However, these significant differences we observed did not occur in those attributes, which specify the athlete types based on the frequency results. They also do not affect the linking of athlete types to attributes on the correspondence map. The perceptual map of the repeated correspondence analysis after the *gender* breakdown of the population (Figure 2) confirms that there are very little gender differences in perception of the characteristics associated with athlete types.

Figure 2. Correspondence map – Gender approach – Relationship between attributes and athlete types (n=2000)

„What do you think, which type of athlete have these characteristics?“



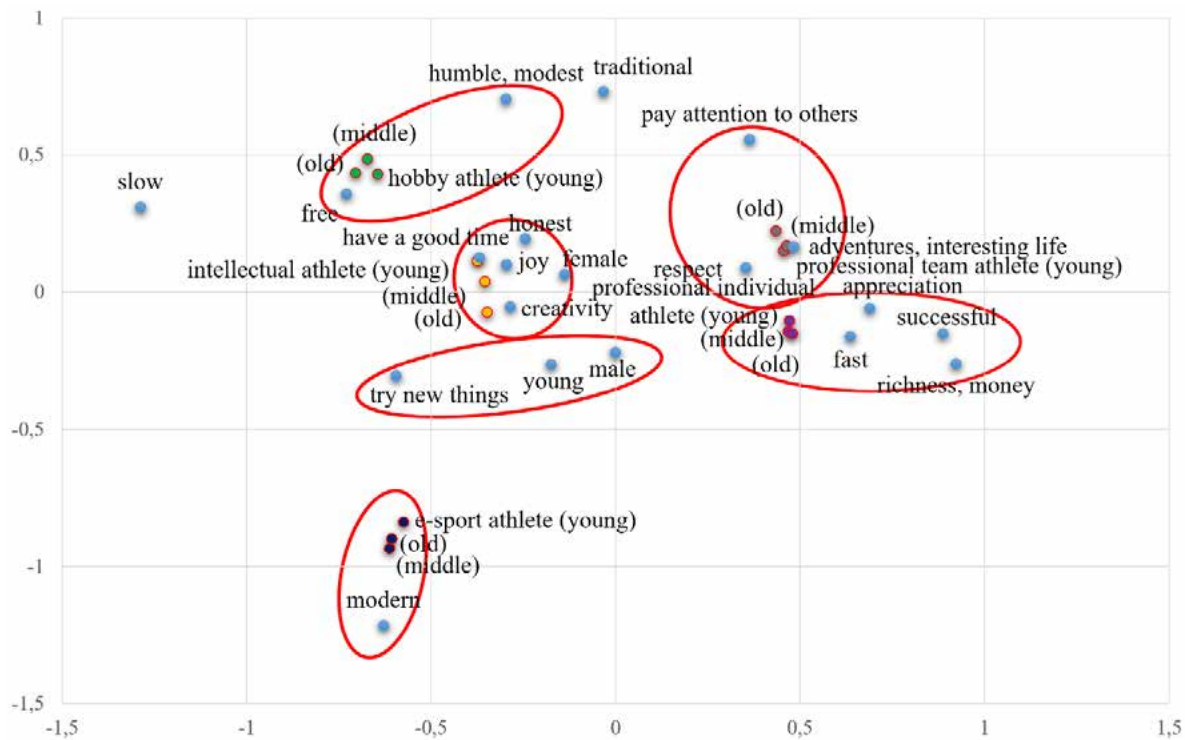
Source: Authors

Looking at the *generational* differences, we have found a number of significant differences in the attributes associated with athlete types. However, in these differences we did not find any regularity. In this analysis, we will only show those differences that have a significant impact on the perception of athlete types between *generations*. In other words, we only show significant differences between *generations* when they affect an important attribute of an athlete type on the basis of frequency analysis, or on the basis of the correspondence analysis. In the case of *hobby athletes*, there is a significant difference in “joy”, “have a good time”, and “free” attributes, which according to our frequency analysis are the most characteristic of this type. On the correspondence map, *hobby athletes* are associated with the “free”, and “humble, modest” qualities, which also show significant differences between generations. The direction of these differences is the same in all four cases, the members of the younger generation and the middle generation have linked these qualities in the same proportion to the *hobby athletes*, but the members of the old generation have evaluated them in a lower rate.

In the case of *e-sport athletes*, we have identified one significant difference. The “modern” attribute was mentioned at a smaller proportion to this group by members of the old generation than the members of young and the middle generations. In the case of *individual professional athletes*, *professional team athletes*, and in the case of *non-physical athletes*, we did not identify any significant differences in the dimension of the generations in connection with their defining qualities.

Figure 3. Correspondence map – Generational approach– Relationship between attributes and athlete types (n=2000)

„What do you think, which type of athlete have these characteristics?“



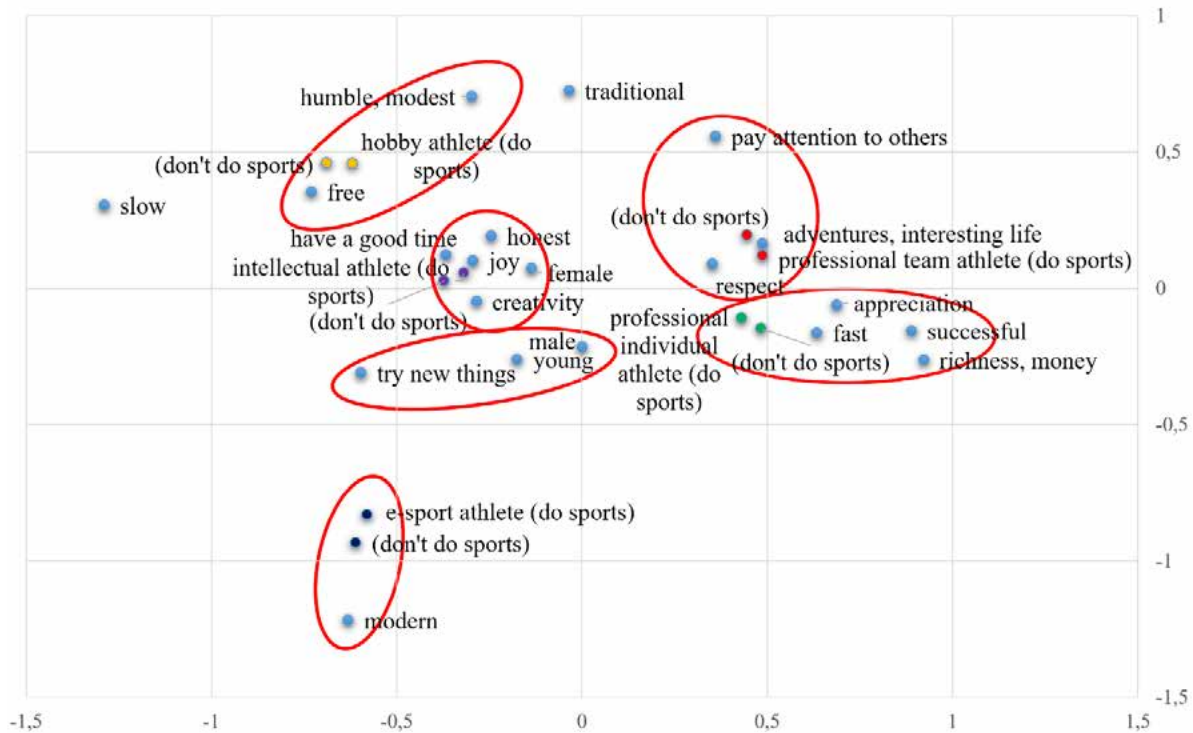
Source: Authors

By conducting the correspondence analysis on the divided sample into *generations*, it emerged that the significant differences we identified do not affect greatly the perception of athlete types among generations. The perceptual map (Figure 3) clearly shows that for each *generation* the attributes are related to the same types of athletes, like in the general correspondence analysis (Figure 1). It is also true that the distances of perception of each athlete type from the attributes show minimal differences. It is worth mentioning that for the old generation, the type of *non-physical athlete* is closer to the “young” and “male” qualities than for the young and middle generations. However, from our study’s point of view, we cannot make meaningful statements in the dimension of intergenerational differences because of the slight differences of the correspondence map.

Based on these statements, we can conclude that our general findings on the overall sample are considered really stable in the case of genders and generations.

Figure 4. Correspondence map – sporting habits approach– Relationship between attributes and athlete types (n=2000)

„What do you think, which type of athlete have these characteristics?“

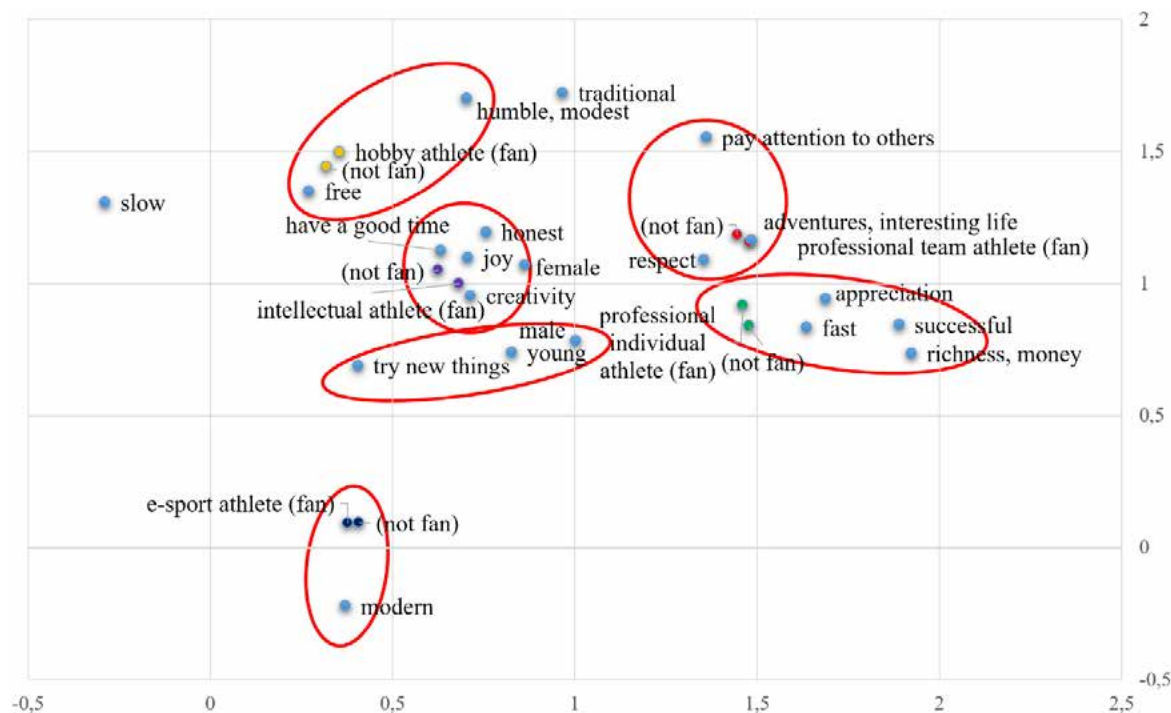


Source: Authors

When we examined the attributes associated with the athlete types in the dimensions of sporting and *cheering habits*, we gained very similar results in both cases. We divided our sample into two groups based on sporting habits, one of them became those who do sports regularly while the others are those who do not do sports regularly. Figure 4 shows that there is no significant difference in the correspondence analysis between those who perform sport activities regularly and those who do not perform them regularly in their perception of athlete type characteristics. However, it is interesting, that in the frequency analysis significant differences were found in many cases.

The 20 examined attributes associated with each of the 5 athlete types results a total of 100 frequency ratios, of which 52 were found to be significantly different in terms of sporting habits. All these 52 deviations, without exception, meant a higher ratio of the connected attributes to athlete types among those who do sports regularly. Comparing this result with the results of correspondence analysis (Figure 4), we can conclude that those who perform sports regularly and those who don't combine similar qualities to each type of athletes, but those who participate in sports regularly see these related attributes more intensively than those who do not do sports regularly. This occurrence may be due to the fact, that they are involved in sporting activities themselves, and their personal involvement in sport is strong, which makes their perception of athlete types different, maybe more positive than those who do not participate in sports.

Figure 5. Correspondence map – Cheering habit approach– Relationship between attributes and athlete types (n=2000)
 „What do you think, which type of athlete have these characteristics?“



Source: Authors

We got very similar results when we split the sample into two parts based on the cheering habits, to those who cheer for a sports team and those who don't. Figure 5 shows that, according to our correspondence analysis, the associations of the two groups differ only slightly from each other again. However, in our frequency analysis, we found significant differences between the two groups in 48 cases from the previously mentioned 100 association ratios. With one exception sport team fans mentioned attributes in higher ratios to athlete types. So, as in the case of cheering habits, the fans and non-fans are seeing the athlete types similarly, but those who cheer for sport teams probably could connect attributes to athlete types more intense, in a higher ratio because of their personal involvement.

3. CONCLUSION

During our research, we managed to identify a field of research in sports consumption that had not been previously investigated by researchers. This issue is the topic of the attributes associated with different types of athletes by the population, which provides valuable information for sports marketing professionals to position their products and services as accurately as possible.

In our research, we examined the perceived attributes to different athlete types in Hungary by a sample of 2000 paper and pencil personal interviews. In our study, we observed in case of 5 different types of athletes which of the 20 attributes our respondents connect to particular athlete types. We analyzed the frequency of the responses to our survey, and then, using a correspondence analysis, we determined which type of athlete is close to which attribute and thereby how they are connected. According to the correspondence analysis, the type of *hobby athlete* was connected to the attributes "free" and "humble, modest" in the associations of respondents. In terms of answer frequencies, many people also mentioned the characteristics of "have a good time", "joy", and "female" in regard to this athlete type. Based on the correspondence analysis, the perception of the *non-physical athletes* was close to the perception of *hobby athletes*, but because of the distance between them on the perceptual map, other attributes can be linked to them. According to the correspondence map the characteristics of "have a good time", "joy", "honest", "female", and "creativity" were attached to this group above average. In the case of *non-physical athletes*, the mention rate of "creativity" and "male" was also high in terms of answer frequencies. On the correspondence map the type of *professional team athlete* was close to the attributes of "pay attention to others", "adventures, interesting life" and "respect", while in the case of answer frequencies, respondents mentioned the "successful", "male" and "richness, money" qualities for this type in a high ratio. On the perceptual map of the correspondence analysis the type of *professional team athlete* was very close

to the type of professional individual athlete, which similarities were highlighted in the case of mentioning frequencies. According to the correspondence analysis the *individual professional athlete* type is characterized by a higher rate of “fast”, “appreciation”, “successful” and “richness, money” compared to the average of the sample. Based on the frequency of answers the “male” attribute also characterized this type well. The type of *e-sport* athletes was closest to the “modern” attribute on the correspondence map, and all the other tested attributes were very far from it. The same was confirmed by the high rate of mention of “modern” attributes for *e-sport* athletes in terms of answer frequencies.

Our results were also examined in cross-sections of *gender, generations, sporting habits, and cheering habits*, to explore the differences between groups that can be developed on the basis of these criteria in the perception of athlete types. The result of our general, full-sample analysis was found to be very stable and there was no significant difference in the structure of athlete type detection according to any of the previously mentioned criteria we examined.

This study is based on data from a representative sample in Hungary, which would make it useful to carry out an international research in this topic in order to deepen the results. For a deeper understanding of the characteristics of athlete types perceived by the population, a more specific, mainly qualitative research is needed. The results of our research, in addition to providing guidance to practical sports marketing professionals in the development of accurate positioning in their daily work, can also be a good base for attracting interest to this topic and inspiring further research.

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ATRIBUTI POVEZANI S TIPOVIMA SPORTAŠA U MAĐARSKOJ

SAŽETAK

Smatramo važnim ispitati kako ljudi razmišljaju o različitim tipovima sportaša i kakve kvalitete im pridaju. Stoga smo sportaše podijelili u pet različitih tipova: oni koji se sportom bave iz hobija, profesionalni individualni sportaši, profesionalni timski sportaši, nefizički i e-sport sportaši. U našem istraživanju ispitali smo karakteristike koje su povezane s tipovima sportaša, što je jedinstveno u literaturi o sportskoj potrošnji. Članovi društva različito doživljavaju različite tipove sportaša. Istraživanje karakteristika ovih tipova može značajno pomoći tvrtkama u svakodnevnom radu na sportskom tržištu kako bi odredili različite ciljne segmente i kako bi ih na odgovarajući način pozicionirali. Studija podržava ovo stajalište predstavljanjem rezultata istraživanja na uzorku od 2000 ispitanika, stanovnika Mađarske u dobi od 15 do 74 godine rađeno kako bi istražili karakteristike sportskih tipova koje društvo smatra karakterističnim. Istraživanje se provodi u okviru Projekta EFOP-3.6.2-16-2017-003. Korespondencijskom analizom (correspondence analysis - CA) utvrdili smo da su atributi povezani sa svakim tipom sportaša odvojeni jedan od drugog. Dok su neki od ispitivanih atributa jasno povezani s određenim tipom, drugi ne pokazuju takav uvjerljivi odnos. Na temelju naših nalaza, tipovi sportaša koji se sportom bave iz hobija bili su povezani s atributima "slobodnog" i "skromnog". Atributi „visokog poštovanja“, „brzog“, „bogatog“ i „uspješnog“ povezane su s tipom profesionalnog sportaša pojedinca, dok je tip profesionalnog sportaša u timu povezana s „poštovanjem“, „avanturama“, „zanimljivim“ život „i, obratite pozornost na druge“. Među ispitivanim tipovima, nefizički sportaš bio je povezan s najviše atributa, koje su bile "pošten", "radost", "imaju dobar provod", "žene" i "kreativnost". Tip sportaša e-sporta najviše se razlikovala od ostalih vrsta, što je usko povezano s atributom "modernog". Pretpostavili smo da daljnja analiza asocijacija daje vrijedne informacije, primjerice fokusiranje na određene segmente društva tijekom obrade. Međutim, analiza prema dobi, spolu, sportskim navikama, prihodima kućanstva pokazala je samo minimalne razlike između asocijacija u vezi s vrstama sportaša.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: sportska potrošnja, sportski marketing, tipovi sportaša, korespondencijska analiza (correspondence analysis - CA).