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## Vulnerable groups at risk for sport and social exclusion

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### Abstract:

Groups at-risk of social exclusion are heterogeneous with their own particularities. Within social sciences scientific literature, sport has been conveyed as a tool for social inclusion of vulnerable groups. This study sought to understand the experiences of these groups and compile the data to shed light on some of the most excluded groups by creating a framework to allow for more clear and distinct logic to participate or not in sport. The study focuses on: youth, people with disabilities, substance abusers, gender, immigrants, senior citizens, and the homeless. A systematic search was conducted yielding a total of 60 articles and analyzed with Atlas-Ti. The evidence showed vulnerable groups are not homogeneous with their own special characteristics important for development and implementations of interventions; all sport programs and activities studied, fulfilled a social function and aimed at solving a problem associated with a group at-risk for social exclusion.

**Key words:** sport, inclusion, exclusion, integration.

### Introduction

The practice of sport among groups at risk for social exclusion is a problem that has formed part of the Social Science and Sport research agenda in the past few years. In this sense, the production of articles in the national and international environment related to sport as a path or tool for the social inclusion of vulnerable groups or those that at least traditionally have been at the verge of normalized sport participation. In addition, there are already numerous efforts to understand sport, the logic or the context in which such activities can be developed for specific at risk groups such as women, ethnic minorities, prisoners, substance abusers, the homeless or immigrants among others. This study has as its objectives to bring together data from the literature in relation to sport among groups at risk of social exclusion. The researchers seek to understand the experiences of these groups including sport programming, and compile the data to shed light on some of the most socially excluded groups. Results obtained from the analysis instrument Atlas-Ti, brings to light the frameworks used in research studies found in the literature concerning this topic. Finally a research guide on the subject will be developed; a framework detailing the interaction of these groups and sport programs.

The present manuscript is structured as detailed. The first section is intended to offer a general analytical framework as emerged from the analysis of the literature review, which highlight matters of interest on the topic of sport and vulnerable groups. The second section describes in detail the existing data from each of the groups. The third section will elaborate conclusions regarding the issues addressed and the findings for each of the groups analyzed, as well as matters on which it would be necessary to develop a deeper level of knowledge to address these groups.

### Method

To analyze the scientific output on the subject of sport among groups at risk for exclusion, the researchers identified a total of 60 articles which identified nine social groups at risk of exclusion, namely people with disabilities, youth, substance abusers, women, immigrants, senior citizens, ethnic minorities, prisoners and the homeless. The search was conducted on the SCOPUS and DIALNET databases using the search terms: inclusion, social inclusion, sport, physical activity, integration, disability, addiction, women, immigrants, youth, elderly, third age, ethnic minority, gypsy, prisoners, incarcerated, people without a place to live using the Boolean operator “and”, and eliminating the repeating articles. Other articles were found by using the snowball technique from references. We concluded the selection of articles selecting only those related directly to the topic under-study.

All articles were analyzed with the instrument Atlas-TI. From the 60 articles analyzed, a total of 343 references with relevant content were extracted. These references gave way for 13 codes or themes of investigation which resulted in eight important “families” as termed by Atlas-Ti program (see Table 1). As

visually explained in Table 1, a comprehensive analytical framework was developed listing the families leading to codes, to more clearly explain the results.

Table 1. Identified families and codes

FAMILIES (8)	CODES (13)
Motives for practice	Motives to practice sport
	Benefits of practicing sport
Motives not to practice	Motive not to practice sport
Level of sport practice	Level of sport practice
Sporting expressions	Sports/ Practiced Physical activity sporting expressions
Sport without control	Determinants in the practice of sport
Social context: barriers and support	Barriers to practice of sport
	Facilitators of sport practice
Political context: functions	Sport functions
	Population profile

The logic associated with practicing or not sport has been addressed in the literature. Apparent in the detailed analysis of groups, reasons for sport involvement from different social groups are closely related to aspects of culture and social character and religion and social functions. In this light sport is closely related to behavioral social expectations, such as the head of the family is responsible for the care of family members or household chores.

Accordingly, much of the work analyzed for this study has been earmarked for the characterization of sport and specifically, the level of practice such as the frequency and intensity with which it is practiced; sport expressions performed, the different sport disciplines practiced by different groups and finally, the study of sport in the informal sphere also known as “out of control”. The latter is when sport has been perverse and is far from being an avenue for social integration becoming a social activity with violence, lack of communication, segregation or exclusion.

Finally, the analysis of the data highlights the importance of context, as an area with the ability to facilitate or inhibit the practice of sport. Context, could be social on the one hand as it is associated with the aspects (due to behavior expectations that its characteristics or attributes socially represent) related to the individual and its environment which may limit or facilitate the practice of sport. In fact, it could be referred to a context of political character, comprehensive functions, characteristics and objectives of public policies geared to integration through sport.

Table 2 presents in a condense form the different issues addressed in the literature which we have termed as the analytical framework of current investigation on the subject.

Table 2. Research regarding sport in groups at risk for exclusion: Proposed comprehensive analytical framework.

	Logic/reasons associated with the practice of sport	Motives to practice	Reasons for which sport is practiced
		Motives not to practice	Reasons not to practice sport
Sport practice among groups at-risk for social exclusion	Characterizations of sporting practices	Level of sport practice	Frequency and intensity with which sport is practiced
	Context as a facilitator or inhibitor of sport practices	Sport expressions	Sport disciplines practiced
		Sport out of control	Effects derived from a non-inclusive sport practice
		Social context: barriers and supports	Social barriers to sport practice
		Political context: functions, objectives and characteristics of public policies	Social supports derived from sport practice
			Functions of sport policies that are of inclusive character.

With the analytical framework constructed, the following section focuses on the application to each of the groups selected.

## Results

Analysis by groups. Data related to each identified group was analyzed utilizing the framework previously described.

### *Sport among youth at risk for exclusion.*

In regards to sport among youth at risk for social exclusion, and the underlying reasons for the practice of sport, the literature relates social character, specifically associated to social models (heroes, idols) as the

principle reason for youth to determine what modality of sport they will practice (Balibrea & Santos, 2010). Accordingly, other studies (Balibrea, Santos, & Lerma, 2002) point out the attractiveness of sport to young people who find themselves in situation at risk for exclusion due to its dynamic character and the possibility of doing these in open spaces. Finally, it is often highlighted that the practice of sport is associated with the immediate pleasure experienced when practicing sport.

Others highlight the economic resources of the individuals as the principle reason for not practicing sport. Consequently, the lack of sport participation is associated with low social status and the regular practice of sport is almost exclusive to those of the middle or higher class (*deporte en los barrios*). To this situation the influences of living in vulnerable areas where the possibility of finding their own path is weak worsens the situation. In the words of Balibrea and Santos (2010), “There are certain opportunities to leave the *barrio*, to create or participate in other activities, but also many to succumb to precariousness and decline”.

In regards to the modalities of sport practiced, the literature highlights soccer as a more common, specifically derived from the social model that favors the creation of idols associated with this sport. Similarly, other sports of traditional character are basketball, volleyball and baseball, although alternatives like *unihoc*, *kayak-polo*, *balón korf* share the popularity similar to cooperative activities of challenges and adventures such as rappelling and zip lining (Balibrea & Santos, 2010).

In regards to the social context in which the practice of sport is developed, the work of Huete and Muñoz (2011) and Torres (2004), stand out in a particular territorial scope: the “*barrio*” or low economic areas. A relationship is established between territorial contexts and other elements of social context such as the family which Balssels (2003) refers to as “*familial microsystem*”, a group of equals, schools or closest community and derivatives stemming from education, such as future expectations. The result is lack of resources to access the practice of certain sports, causing a stagnation of physical activity in youth between ages 15-24 years (Balibrea & Santos, 2010).

Studies places emphasis on the importance of equipment (Balibrea, Santos, & Lerma, 2002), as aspects related to barriers of social nature to the practice of sport. The lack of sporting facilities, the challenging of access to certain sport facilities, and the cost of these or the cost of the necessary sport equipment to practice certain sports lessens the practice of sport in this group.

In regards to sport policies geared to youth at risk for exclusion, the literature points towards educational functions, physical and mental health (improved physical fitness, lowers stress), culture, playful and social, not just at the individual level (with the development of interpersonal skills, potential responsibility development or increase self-esteem), but also social and comprehensive. As pointed out by the European commission (1998), sport can contribute to the integration of people excluded from areas such as the labor market.

Affirmed by the European Commission (1998), sport is an ideal instrument to promote a more inclusive society to fight intolerance and racism, violence, behaviors related to health risk such as alcohol consumption, addictions or practices involving the poor use of free time. In the same way, other studies (Balibrea, Santos, & Lerma, 2002) point out the ideality of sport as a tool for the acceptance of the norm, an aspect which children and youth tend to demonstrate resistance in complying. Furthermore, studies also point out related functions, not just sociological but psychosocial. Sport is identified as a principle course of emotion; secondly, as a means for collective identity and, thirdly, the fact that it has come to give meaning to the lives of individuals. In this sense, the characteristics of public policy of inclusiveness is analyzed from the literature, not only in the content of public policies aimed at the promotion of sport among youth, but in matters of procedural models of management of the same (Van Berkel, 2006).

Thus, in relation to the content of policies, Durán, Gómez, Rodríguez, and Jiménez (2000) note that without undermining achievements, there is space for more extensive and complex intervention that transcends the scope of education to the field of social inclusion, expanding objectives toward job training, professionalization and creation of relationships with companies.

In regards to the procedural aspect, for Balibrea and Santos (2010), performances related to integration and sport among youth is strongly connected to the following aspects: the diagnosis from youth of those who lead the action, the selection of suitable content to take advantage of the effectiveness of interventions; the profile of professionals that should be applied; the institutional support to provide continuity to the actions; and, the evaluation of the initiatives to display results and contribute to a better application. Furthermore, Balibrea, Santos, and Lerma (2002) point out that it is essential that the experiences encourage and have the participation of young people.

Furthermore, Durán, Gómez, Rodríguez, and Jiménez (2000) emphasized aspects related to political procedures. On one hand it is suggested that the simple practice of sport does not entail inclusive consequences, but requires an explicit commitment to their goals and specific methodology. Duran (2011), however, points out the following phases of a public policy that promotes an inclusive sport practice: (1) confidence and

participation; (2) Promotion of values through physical activity and sport; (3) Transfer of learning to other areas of everyday life.

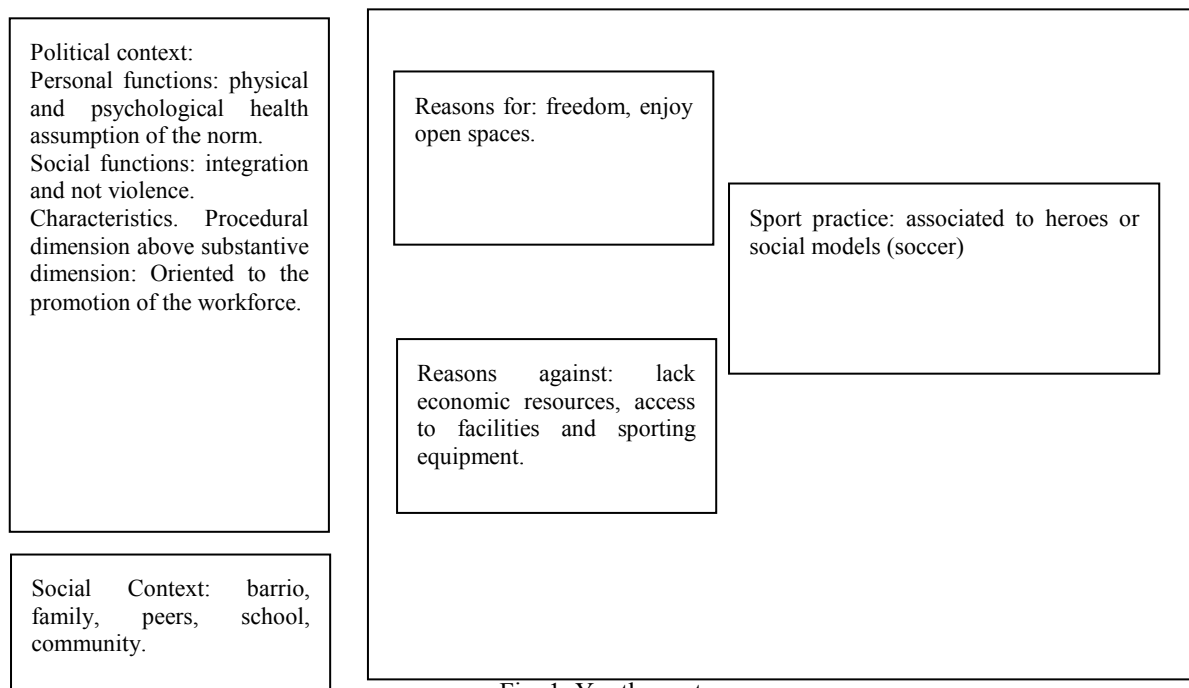


Fig. 1. Youth sport.

*Sport among people with disabilities*

The principle reason for people with disability not to practice sport is associated with a preference for activities that are passive or sedentary such as watching television, listening to music or simply not doing anything (Beart et al., 2001; Forrester-Jones et al., 2002) which brings about feelings of frustration, boredom or loneliness. Yet, when they participate in sport, (Ríos, M et al., 2010) the more popular are indoor soccer, adapted sports, basketball, swimming or paddling. Other sports of interest are goalball and bocce. When it comes to people with intellectual disability, the literature (Vuono & Castilla, 2015) points out aspects such as overprotection from family resulting in social isolation, the time dedicated to treatments, the absence of programs, and the lack of professionals with proper training. All these are obstacles which impede the participation in physical activity.

The easiness or difficulty of access to practice sport and access resources who offer sport services is a difficulty that has been identified. This, in conjunction with a person with intellectual disabilities, and their adaptive abilities are factors ameliorating recreational activities including sport. Consequently, limitations of personal autonomy, deficits of social abilities, as well as conceptual limitations determine participation in this type of activity. In any case, the severity and type of disability has been recognized as a factor impeding access to recreational activities.

Motor problems, sensory deficits and communication problems are related to quantity, variety and quality of recreation in people with disabilities (Zijlstra & Vlaskamp, 2005). Regarding social functions of practicing sport, fundamentally, the principle functions of this practice among those with disabilities are related to the emotional wellbeing of the individual, access to social relationships and the development of competencies or adapted abilities (Badía-Corbella, 2006).

When looking at public policies destined to the promotion of sport practice among people with disabilities, these have been oriented to eliminate barriers which impede access to sport programs, promoting community participation (Badía-Corbella, 2006). In this sense, and in regards to policy content, the focus is participation over competitive sport.

The literature highlights, that the characteristics of inclusive sport programs should be geared towards continuous training favoring physical, intellectual, emotional and social development, Furthermore, activities should be adapted to the participant’s rhythm of learning, abilities, insecurities and demands (Sánchez, 2013).

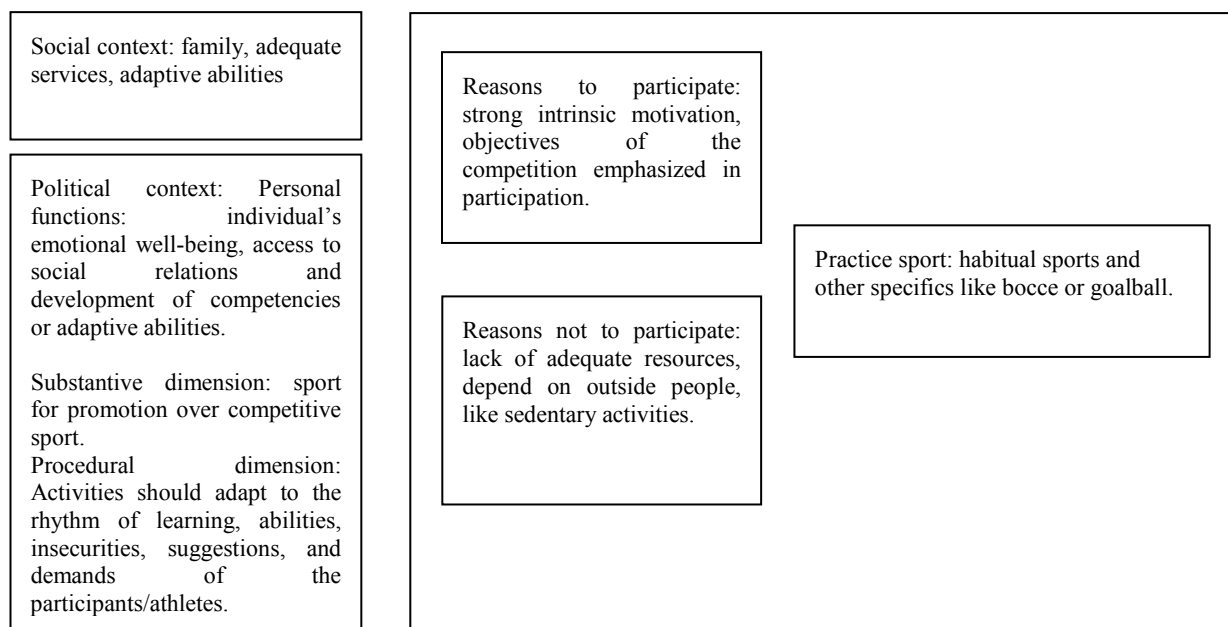


Fig.2. Sport among people with a disability.

*Sport among drug abusers.*

Drug dependence is a complex disorder affecting different aspects of the life of the person with this problem. Impacted are general health, family and social relationships, school or work activities, recreational habits, personal care, financials, etc., (Hernangil-Perona, Lastres-García, & Valcárcel-Lastra, 2011).

Evidence demonstrates that people who are chemical dependents and follow a voluntary regular treatment based on physical activity, experience benefits in the aforementioned affected areas (Varo-Cenarruzabeitia, Martínez-Hernández, & Martínez-González, 2003; Weinberg & Gould, 1996, & Hernangil-Perona, Lastres-García, & Valcárcel-Lastra, 2011), and most important, almost instantly, users themselves see how their self-esteem improves. Furthermore, motives for chemical dependents to practice sport are (Hernangil-Perona, Lastres-García, & Valcárcel-Lastra, 2011) physical and physiological benefits which include improve physique, hormonal regulation, and organic balance among others. Psychological benefits like strengthens will, self-control, anxiety and stress reduction, and finally social benefits which include being in contact with other people, learn to accept norms, learn to deal with peer pressure and value it as it may help avoid relapse.

There exist different modalities of sport practiced in this collective among which are physical fitness programs oriented towards improving motor skills such as velocity, strength, resistance and flexibility. Examples of these modalities are Anderson's Circuits of Oregon, or the resistance system of Wadmiel (La actividad física para toxicómanos.pdf), or other programs designed to improve psychomotor qualities such as coordination and balance following Shultz's method, for example. Popular, cooperative games, even those that are pre-sport like Indiacas as well as traditional sports like soccer, basketball, badminton, have been included in therapy for those who abuse drugs.

To be of benefit, the afore mentioned modalities must follow certain guidelines as suggested by Hernangil-Perona, Lastres-García, and Valcárcel-Lastra (2011): adapt to the characteristics of the person, variety, ensure continuity, they must be offered regularly, adapt aspects of duration or intensity, adapt to the interest and likes of those involved, and it must count with the supervision of professionals and specialist.

In context of facilitators of sport practice, the literature points out issues associated to individuals characterized by being people who are accustomed to experiencing everything as complete failure, which brings into question the depth of their distortion regarding their capability of self-worth and analysis.

Moreover, as evidenced in the literature on the subject (physical activity and drug prevention), the practice of sport activities constitute in an important tool for rehabilitation therapy that approaches the problem from three perspectives: psychological (increase self-esteem), biological (improve physical fitness, improve the immunological system) and social (acquire group consciences, team work and increase social relationships). Important for drug dependents, sport produces in the organism endogenous opiates which help the drug dependent reduce and in some cases abandon drug consumption. As evidenced in the reviewed literature, individuals who regularly practice physical activity are more predisposed to reducing their dose of methadone than those who practice sport sporadically.

The bibliography addresses sport public policies, suggesting that sport activities geared to this group should focus on the promotion of behaviors oriented to improving health, understood as physical, psychological and social status. In regards to social status, studies reviewed (Ley, 2003), affirm that individuals who practice sports affirm themselves and become part of a group that carries a physical activity and sport program.

Therefore, regarding the content of actions to develop, it is suggested those actions be aimed at promoting inclusive sport among this group structure in four phases: 1. Develop a habit to attend the sessions, 2. Value resistance, 3. Diminish the consumption of drugs, through their record/registry, 4. Qualitative assessment of the degree of group cohesion (Pérez, 2002). Accordingly, the literature evidences the suitability of motivation and stimulation of athletes on behalf of the professional, since self-esteem is a core issue the professional must address when working with this group. In this regard, actions when working with this group should be to push, encourage or even expect from the beginning good results.

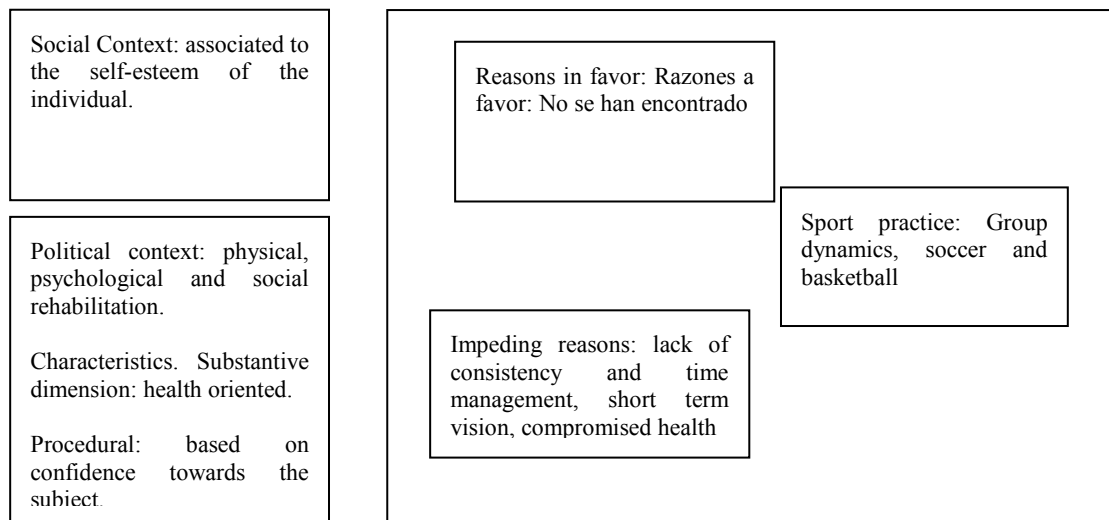


Fig. 3. Sport among those who are drug dependent.

#### *Sport among Women.*

The body of knowledge centers principally on analyzing motives as to why women demonstrate lesser participation in sport. Reasons are strongly associated with behavior expectations related to the social construct of what is feminine and the behavior of women associated to this image with is socially shared. Their resistance to practicing sport is related to being observed while practicing sport, sport equipment necessary participate in certain sport, lack of self-confidence or excessive control on behalf of the family or those close to her who in some cases desensitize the practice of sport, by not considering it sufficiently feminine. On the contrary, principle reasons for which women practice sport, is associated with health issues, for leisure or for image, very different from that of men (Fernández & López, 2012).

Taking into account the particular ways in which sport inserts itself among women, the most practiced are swimming, aerobics, rhythmic gymnastics, corporal expression and fitness (Soler et al., 2010). Particularly, sport practiced among women tends to be individual (contrary to men who tend to practice more team sports) and non-competitive whereas men sport practice tend to be competitive. Furthermore, the environment where more women tend to practice sport are private facilities versus the majority of men which practice sport in public sport facilities.

When looking at the context in which women practice sport, there are different social aspects for which women express difficulties. The literature in this respect offers the following: lack of free time due to household responsibilities; lack of economic resources; transportation difficulties to access sport facilities; concern for personal safety or of their children in areas where sport is practiced; failure to adapt sport resources to their needs, which studies (Martínez del castillo et al., 2005; Martín et al., 2014), point out the prioritization for masculine sports.

Along this line, the literature suggest characteristics of an inclusive sport policy concerning women that would defy principle barriers to sport practice: a comprehensive approach taking into account family life, adapting the activities offered to the needs of women and the associated family responsibilities. In addition, sport programs should consider other aspects which impede access to sport such as content and location of spaces and sport activities as well as the role of families. Due to the secondary role women play in sport, an inclusive sport policy should empower the participation of women in administrative and leadership positions (Soler et al., 2010).

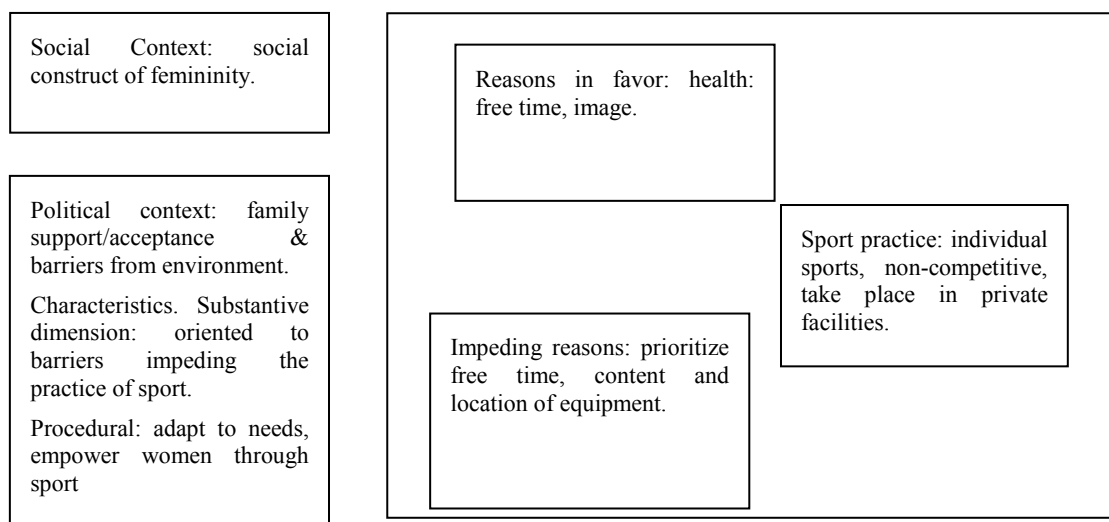


Fig. 4. Sport among Women.

*Sport among Immigrants.*

According to the literature, immigrants tend to practice sport in search for social relations. For this reason, it is imperative to understand sport in this group as an instrument for communication and living among others. The literature points out that for immigrants sport represents an escape from the everyday life, an opportunity to interact with others, reaffirm their identity and share free time with family (Fernández-Gavira, Ries, Huete-García & Grimaldi, 2013). Immigrants see the practice of sport as an informal activity, not subject to strict institutionalized norms. It is precisely this characteristic that could act as the principle barrier within the society in which they live, who have a different way of practicing sport, leading on occasion to exclusion or rejection (Bodin, Robène, Héas & Le Yondre, 2007; Henry, 2007).

Along with this, the literature suggest that sport practiced among immigrants should not be clustered. The geographic origin of the individual, gender, and socio-economic status of the individual must also be considered (Fernández-Gavira, Ries, Huete-García & Grimaldi, 2013).

Within the social context in which the sport practice of immigrants develop, the principle barriers are associated with the establishment of social programs that not always adapt to the needs and characteristics of the immigrant resulting in a type of colonization of sport (Maza, 2002; Maza et al., 2010). In this light, the literature offers cases where sport programs geared towards immigrant populations are far from fostering integration, resulting in segregation and marginalization.

The literature suggest that sport, in and of itself, does not change social exclusion problems or culture, although it aids the processes of exclusion, and reverses the direction of the same, being sport more of a tool than an end. (Maza & Sánchez, 2012). Therefore, the content of the programs should stay away from sport as a career or the competitive version. Initiatives in this matter should be oriented to improve sport skills in these individuals and their network, friendships and contacts inside and outside the group, while trying to improve prejudices, stereotypes and cultural barriers (Maza & Sánchez, 2012). In respect to procedures, the data highlights the importance for social intervention programs to have a participation process by which the athletes themselves can form part in decisions, thus avoiding the approach of sports performance with a biased and ethnocentric character (Maza & Sánchez, 2012).



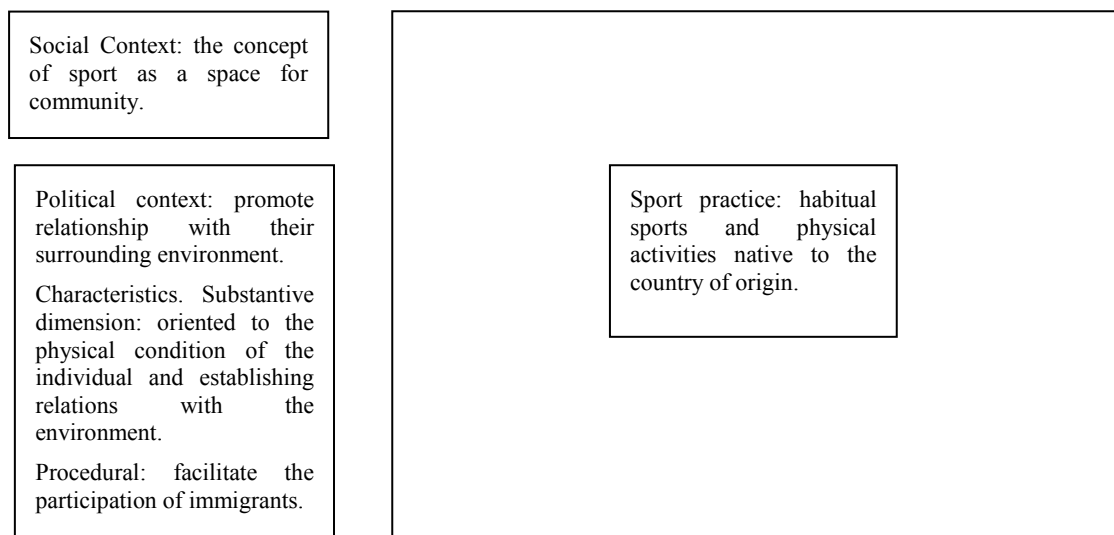


Fig. 5. Sport among Immigrants

*Sport among the elderly.*

Concerning the logic associated with sport for the elderly, the different contribution consulted, focus mainly on the analysis of the reasons why older people do not play sports. Motives are associated with the fiscal capacity of the individuals (status of health, age, physical impediments or fear of causing damage), difficulties to access and use equipment), and finally, motives related to social pressure regarding older people, or at least the perception the elderly may have about the matter such as embarrassment or disapproval from family and friends (Martínez del Castillo et al., 2007). In any case, these barriers are more often manifested in people with little education and lower class (Casas & Fraile., 2007). On the contrary, reasons associated to the practice of sport are related to health, develop social relationships and occupy free time.

In regards to sports practiced, the literature demonstrates that men as well as women of advanced age prefer program of physical exercise in activities like fitness, basic physical activities, and aquatic exercise. However, there are differences between men and women. Older women demonstrate greater participation in activities like yoga or taichi and activities related to music. Men, on the contrary, show more predisposition for activities of competitive orientation or self-organized outdoor activities (Martín et al., 2008).

The data for characteristics of an inclusive sport policy for the elderly, supports the purpose for sport programs should be geared towards improving physical health, and improve social relationships, as a way to occupy free time in healthy activities (Moreno et al., 2008). In regards to its procedural dimension, the need for sport to be organized by a sport entity to boost activities for this group was established. The location of the sport facilities is in this case key to promote the practice of sport in this population and finally, the cost of these activities, since this group is generally of limited resources (Del Hierro et al., 2008).

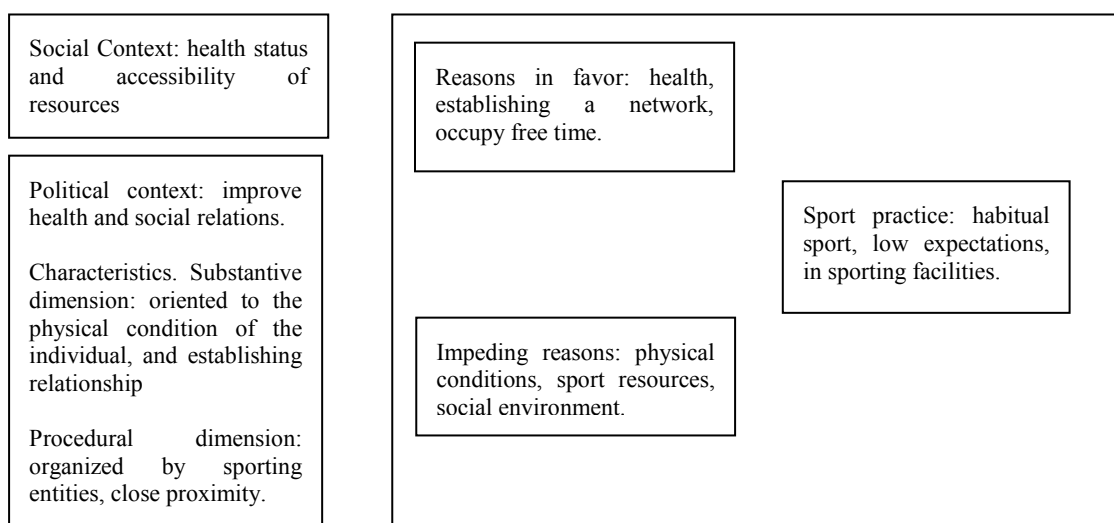


Fig. 6. Sport among the Elderly

*Sport among the Incarcerated/Inmates.*

The profiles of the incarcerated are varied. They share some characteristics that are more or less common according to Moscoso et al. (2011). Most inmates come from families of middle-low social class and have a low level of education. They are people who at the moment of incarceration have partners and children. In regards to the practice of sport or physical activity, the majority have previous positive experiences which predisposed them to practice it in prison.

Prisons have been thought of and designed as places of punishment (by taking away peoples' freedom), contention (impeding the cause of harm to society while completing their sentence) and the re-education (during their time in prison, they go through a team of educators and psychologist with whom they meet and prepare for "reinsertion") for people who in the free community have been harmful to society. "Prisons are thought of and constructed with the intention of re-education and reinserting in society those who have been condemned" (Spanish Constitution of 1983).

The profile of both inmates and drug abusers are very diverse, and depends largely on the offense committed. People who are in prison and frequently visit the recreational areas do so with different intentions which we will intend to describe. Nevertheless, we understand (Martos, Devis & Sparkes, 2009) that reinsertion is a complex process and it would be very ambitious to grant this potential to physical activity and sport. In fact, being in prison does not guarantee access to recreational spaces since these frequently are reserved exclusively for those who exhibit good behavior. According to Martos, Devis and Sparkes, (2009) only 10% of inmates have access to these areas.

The majority of inmates see physical activity and sport as an effective way to spend time in prison, to escape and mitigate the negative consequences of being locked up, such as physical, psychosocial and health problems which provoke isolation. Thus sport becomes a fun means through which feeling good about yourself, knowing new people or interact with mates from other sections, getting in shape, diminish the use of drugs, release tension and keeping busy and distracted to endure confinement, it even encourages the development of personal skills like self-control (Martos, Devis & Sparkes, 2009; Chamarro, Blasco & Palenzuela, 1998). Additionally, in some cases participating in a sport program and demonstrating good behavior results in a good report which may later reduce the sentence. In this sense, "the inmate, to regenerate, adopt standard habits and modifying their behavior, can recognize their options for social integration and fight to seize new opportunities that life presents to them" (Moscoso et al., 2011).

In any case, sport activities offer possibilities associated with them, such as having a high component of spontaneity, practicing in areas of the prison with greater freedom or requiring a higher level of concentration causing inmates to forget other concerns with performing the sport activity. To a lesser degree, there are training sport programs for inmates to serve as sport monitors thus creating an employment opportunity when they are released. A sport monitor is the first level of a physical educator.

The prison institution itself is no stranger to the benefits of physical activity and favors it. Reference is made to the fact that regular practice improves health and the wellbeing of inmates, new ways of relating are created different from the marginal subculture, powers patterns of behavior and respect for rules (Chamarro, 1993; Moscoso et al., 2011).

The sports more frequently practiced in prison (Chamarro, Blasco & Palenzuela, 1998) are: outdoors, including what is accessible to inmates daily within their module such as bodybuilding, indoor soccer, chess and basketball. Guided sports, under supervision of a monitor and if available are swimming, yoga, Chi-Kung and on specific days, sport activities are organized to be a friendly match. These could be sport competitions among inmates, sport events schedule within the annual calendar of the center and lastly, scheduled fieldtrips outside the center with low-risk inmates.

Despite all he recognized goodness of sport in prisons, these also encounter barriers making it inaccessible to all. In this sense, accessing sport programs that are outside their module or area of the prison is a privilege gained through good behavior, meaning, inmates who struggle to adapt) are forced to stay within their area and accept the activities that take place there. On the other hand there are certain activities that are often seen by the worker as problematic and prohibit the practice of the activity. Examples of these are: climbing/rappelling, karate, judo (Martos, Devis & Sparkes, 2009). Other barriers observed are directly related to personal circumstances of the inmate which have an abandonment rate of physical activity of 50% during the first six months. This could be lowered through the establishment of goals, decision making, attitude modification and systematic social support (Chamarro, Blasco & Palenzuela, 1998). The last type of barrier is very common in other public organism: the lack of educators or the concern for the number of activities performed rather than the quality of the activities (Martos, Devis & Sparkes, 2009).

From a political perspective, the objective is to promote sport within prisons as a means of reinsertion is all too often not the case (Moscoso et al., 2009). In fact, the majority of authors concur that it is the personal effort and not the means afforded to the institution the most effective way for reinsertion (Martos, Devis & Sparkes, 2009). Yet, sport has been observed to in and of itself help the inmates with reintegration, especially when these are in prison for crimes associated to the consumption of narcotics. Then, these sport programs are geared to the abandonment of these, while at the same time, recovery and reintegration of people who are incarcerated (Valverde, 2014).

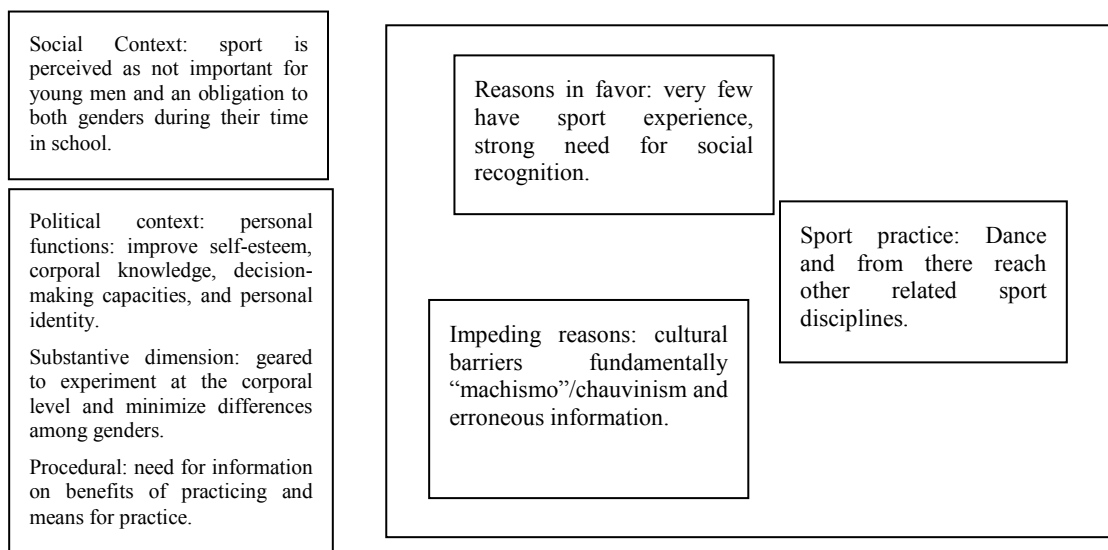


Fig. 7. Sport among inmates in the penitentiary.

*The Homeless.*

People without a home are those who live in public areas and sleep in temporary refuge. Their profile is very diverse, due to their different walks of life. Yet, they do have a common profile: males close to 40 years of age, frequently have children (not in their custody), high school level education and scares or no financial income. Frequently the circumstances that have taken them to the street are career failures, diseases and a weak family support.

Among the reasons that these people have to practice sport are to meet up with the group, and have that weekly space in which they feel protected. By doing this on a regular bases, it puts their life in order and helps them create stronger ties with others who share similar circumstances. They have a good time, have fun and sometimes participate in sport competitions providing an opportunity to come into contact with other people through common means, soccer or another sport. The time of sport is a clean space where it is okay to dream and bases are set for more ambitious projects like employment to get out of the streets. Furthermore, these encounters are a way of exiting invisibility and utilize sport areas in the same way as those in normalized context. There are no differences when you are playing sport (García & Sánchez, 2012).

When it comes to practicing sport, it is important to favor the sense of team regarding equipment, songs, etc. These are opportunities to put everyone as equals and minimize the differences. Jarvie (2003) points out that sport for those without a home adds much social capital.

On the other hand, motives for abandoning sport as a regular activity are related to finding a job, moving to another city, the need for someone to look out for their things while they play sport, not wanting to leave the space they are occupying, lose track of time/days (they forget what day it is), poor physical state and/or sick due to life on the streets, being under the influence of drugs at the moment of practicing sport or lack of information regarding sport involvement (García & Sánchez, 2012). Regular sport practice requires a commitment and trust within the group, social skills and apart from sport relatedness, knowledge about what is going on and the ability to organize their time and relationships, in addition to having a sport group (association) that organizes the encounters and others who want to participate in the same (García & Sánchez, 2012).

In addition to the reasons previously explained regarding this group, there are other barriers for the homeless to practice sport. Among those are mental health, affecting 20% to 50% of this population. Furthermore, those participating in sport program for the homeless are those who are less deteriorated frequently visiting soup kitchens and health clinics. Those in more extreme circumstances are completely distant from these types of initiatives (Cabrera & Rubio, 2008).

Among the more commonly practiced sports in Spain by the homeless is without a doubt soccer which has led to Spain hosting its own championship of the well-known Homeless World Cup. Notwithstanding, there are other physical activity experiences such as excursion and fitness.

From the perspective of trainers and social educators, sport fulfills a social function in an informal space which can modify the standard habits of the subjects when these are pernicious which provides the opportunity to work on the individual's identity when interacting with other people with similar or different characteristics. Sport is a platform which everyone understands.

Different benefits to regularly participating in physical activity and sport for people who live in extreme situations such as increase self-esteem, empowerment of a person or group and improved health. There are secondary benefits emanating from the latter among which are entering into commitments or obligations with the group which go beyond themselves when becoming part of the community that surrounds them. This can

produce internal transformations which in many cases, for example, they go back to a stable living situation, have access to information, employment and improved health.

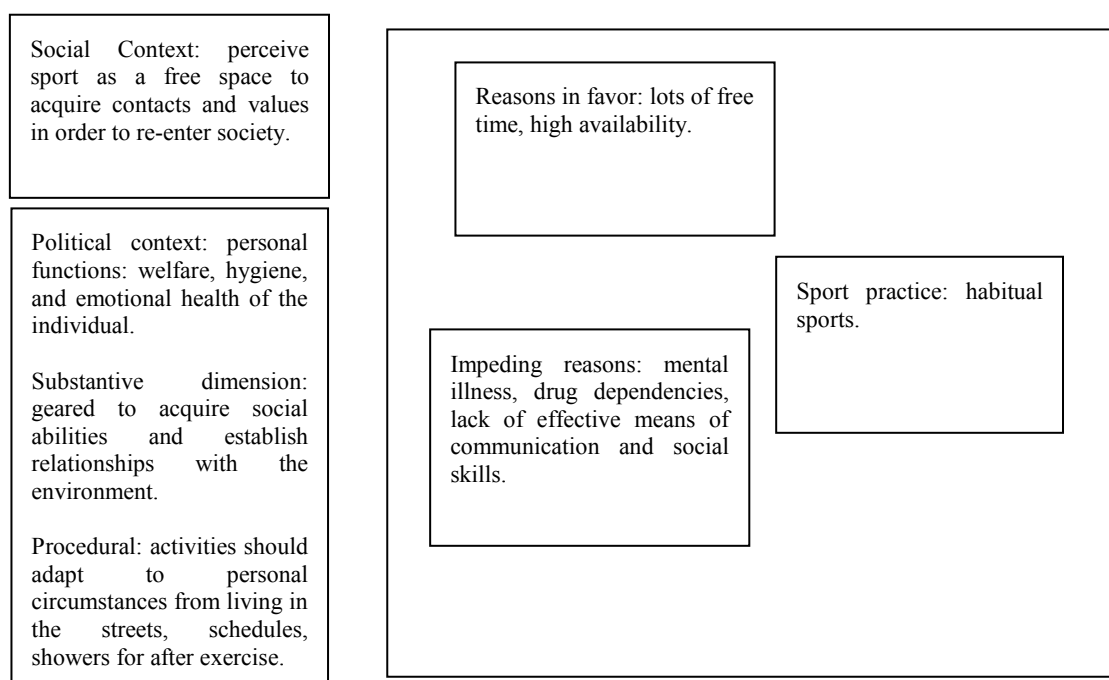


Fig. 8. Sport among the Homeless

## Dicussion

Traditionally, sport tends to be considered an activity that in and of itself contributes to the social integration of vulnerable groups. Yet, (Durán, 2011), sport does not necessarily carry inclusivity as a result. Sport must be carried out with an explicit commitment to obtain integration, materializing the commitment in a comprehensive intervention model with a specific methodology.

Just as sport in and of itself does not guarantee social integration among individuals, neither does the same model of intervention work for all. To consider people in vulnerable situations as one homogeneous group upon which the development of an effective single model of intervention to promote inclusion through sport would be the same error as thinking sport single handedly guarantees social inclusion.

The present paper has as its focus the assessment of such extreme. An analysis was conducted using the Atlas-Ti tool highlighting the areas of analysis that have emerged thus far in field of sport and groups at risk for social exclusion. The authors considered the necessary attributes of the individual as a key element for the design of the intervention models geared towards social integration through sport.

In this sense, the review of the literature concerning the practice of sport offered evidence and differentiation of nine vulnerable groups individually (motives related to the practice of sport), as the context in which the practice is developed, as well as public policies purposed to promoted sport among these groups (See Table 3).

A comprehensive look at the underlying reasons for these groups to practice sport through an analysis of the literature suggest motivations for this decision are associated with the search for better physical or mental health of the individual has be found in women, those with drug addictions and the elderly. Now, motivations for practicing sport are not always related to health but for a good use of free time (young people and the incarcerated) or to establish relationships within the community as is the case of immigrants or the homeless (see Table 3).

On the contrary, the analysis of reasons for not practicing sport, highlights the role of the attributes of each individual on the situation. Therefore, while for some groups the principle motive is the health of the individual (the elderly and homeless) reasons transcend issues beyond the individual when it came to the rest of the groups studied. The literature showed resources or lack of them (as is the case of young people) or the inability to adapt resources to the needs and characteristics of the individuals as in the case of people with disabilities (see Table 3).

Furthermore, the analysis of texts has revealed that various elements of cultural character materializes in expectations of conduct with regard to certain groups also exercise an inhibitor role to the practice of sports, independent of the state of health of the individual or of the available resources for the practice of sports. This is especially evident in the literature purposed to analyze the practice of sport among women, associating barriers to the socially assigned role of caretaker, or among immigrants whose way of understanding sport is different with the pre-established patterns of their new society (see Table 3).

With regard to the type of sport practiced, although the majority of the groups are cataloged as usual modalities, the differences between the groups display two dimensions to consider. Namely: health oriented sport (characteristics of older people or drug abusers), competition oriented (youth), have fun; and unorganized sports (characteristic of immigrants), against organized sport, understanding by it that this would be physical activities performed under the guidance of a professional in a specific sport facility, typically conducted in this form by women and the incarcerated (see Table 3).

Finally, the analysis of the existing literature is destined to understand the proposals in the form of public policies that have addressed inclusion through sport in the different collective groups studied. In this way, the specific peculiarities of each group are addressed while other efforts are focused on the welfare of the individual, as happens in the actions aimed at people with disabilities, in regards to women or the elderly, the creation of ties with the community emerges as the main orientation of interventions just as for immigrants or homeless, behavior modification results as the focus for young people and inmates (see Table 3).

Along the same line is directed both the content of the proceedings (its substantive dimension), as well as the manner in which they are implemented (procedural dimension). While in some cases, the proceedings consisted in the development of activities for the promotion of sport, it gears to health and social abilities of the individual (people with disabilities, drug dependents, or the elderly). In other cases, interventions are destined to promote through sport a different relationship with the environment turning sport practice into an employment opportunity (as the case of youth and inmates) or as a transformative element with a work of sensitization toward the community or through mechanisms of empowerment in the field of sport management (women or immigrants). In any case, and in transversal form and independent of the group analyzed, the literature emphasizes the need to adapt initiatives to the characteristics and needs of actors, either in terms of resources available, either in a modification of those resources in terms of hours available or the physical location of the same (see Table 3).

Table 3. Sport and social exclusion. Interaction and logical systems of their own.

	Youth at risk for exclusion	People with disability/ies	Chemical dependents	Gender	Immigrants	Senior citizens	Inmates	Homeless
<b>Reasons for</b>	Freedom, enjoy open spaces.	Occupy free time.	Physical, psychological, and social health.	Health and image	Health. Networks.	Health, network, occupy free time.	Use of free time, penitentiary benefits, socialization.	Seek ties with the community, improve physical and mental well-being.
<b>Reasons against</b>	lack economic resources	Poor adaptation of existing resources.	Lack of consistency, self-esteem, and personal organization.	Expectations of what is femininity.	Opposing views on the social concept of sport.	Physical state, access to equipment, social environment.	Health status, self-esteem.	Physical and mental status, unaware of available sport resources.
<b>Sport practice</b>	Soccer, traditional sports. Compete in sport facilities.	Habitual sports. Low expectations, compete against self. In sport facilities with professional guidance.	Programs to improve motor and psychomotor qualities, traditional games, pre-sport and habitual sports.	Individual sport, not competitive, facilities and equipment are of private character.	Habitual sports. Of the country of origin.	Habitual sports, low expectations, in sport facilities.	Habitual sports within a program context.	Habitual sports.
<b>Political context</b>	Importance of rules, integration and no violence. Substantive Dimension: promotion of the workforce Procedural dimension: technical issues in the design, implementation and evaluation	Importance of emotional welfare, access to social relations and development of competencies and or adaptive abilities. Substantive dimensions: sport promotion over sport competition.	Importance of physical, psychological and social rehabilitation. Substantive dimension: oriented to health. Procedural dimension: based on the trust of the individual.	Importance of adapting what is offered to the need of women. Substantive dimension: Orientation: improve self-esteem. Procedural dimension: work within the social context empowerin	Importance of the relationship between the individual and the environment. Substantive dimension: promotion of base sports. Procedural dimension: empowerment of immigrants.	Importance of improving health and social relations. Substantive dimension: oriented to the physical condition of the individual and the establishment of relations with the	Importance of health, proper use of time, benefits penitentiary benefits. Substantive dimension: oriented to improving	Importance of welfare, hygiene and emotional health of the individual. Substantive dimension: oriented to the acquisition of social abilities which can allow a relationship with the environment.

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of programs. Participation of individuals addressed.	Procedural dimensions: adapt to learning rhythm, abilities, uncertainties, and demands from the individuals.	g women in sport.	environment. Procedural dimension: organized by sport entities, in close proximity.	behavior. Procedural dimension: adapting to schedules and situations of inmates.	Procedural dimension: Adaptation of personal circumstances of those who live in the streets.
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## Conclusions

Vulnerable groups are not homogeneous and each one presents its peculiarities which should be considered at the time of intervention. To work with groups at-risk of exclusion, the model of intervention should be chosen comprehensively and must adapt to the characteristics of the group as well as to the objectives of the organization or person promoting the intervention.

Reasons that motivate or limit the different vulnerable groups to practice sport are common among the groups. For example, the elderly and drug dependent engage in health oriented sport (due to their lack of such). Immigrant's interest in practicing sport is motivated by creating community relationships since this is one of the most important needs in their process of acculturation.

There are socio-cultural elements that limit the practice of sport beyond personal characteristics of the groups. In this regard we refer to the attributes labeled by the dominant society to some groups, for example, women's roles are associated to household chores.

Different motives of practicing sports related to health, competition, and fun in self organized form and external organizations. All analyzed sport practices fulfilled a social function and intended to resolve a problem associated to a group. It is necessary to adapted sport policies to the appropriate needs of the groups as expressed by the group.

This study adds to the body of knowledge a comprehensive framework organizing and categorizing current investigative data of the populations addressed. This framework offers eight families identified by the Atlas-Ti analysis, thirteen codes allowing for detailed categories of the context for each of the vulnerable groups thus providing a more clear understanding of the information and issues pertaining to each group in regarding their participation in sport and physical activities. The body of literature can now offer new research a framework to reference and facilitate further and more specific investigations to understand the nuances of vulnerable groups at risk for exclusion.

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