

## MODERN CHALLENGES IN CHILDREN'S SPORTS

**Tsitsagi B.A.**

*Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University,  
Georgia, Batumi, [besiktsitsagi@gmail.com](mailto:besiktsitsagi@gmail.com)*

**Abstract.** Children's sports play a crucial role in physical and psychological development. However, modern challenges such as excessive training loads, injury risks, and psychological pressure hinder the sustainable growth of sports. Additionally, the impact of digital technologies on physical activity and the shortage of qualified coaches further exacerbate the issue. It is essential to create a safe environment that allows children to fully benefit from sports and develop a healthy lifestyle.

**Keywords:** children's sports, physical development, psychological pressure, injury prevention, digital technologies, physical activity, sports education, coach qualification, health protection.

**Introduction.** Sports play a significant role in the cultural, social, and economic development of society. Throughout history, sports have served not only as a means of physical endurance and psychological training but also as a factor in strengthening ethical values and national identity. Despite its long evolution, modern sports face multiple challenges, particularly in the domain of children's sports. This study reviews pressing issues related to sports, including the development trends in children's sports, existing problems, and possible solutions, using the example of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara.

**Objectives and Research.** The present work study aims to highlight key problems and related issues in the sports sector in Georgia, particularly in the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, using available statistical data. The study also seeks to draw conclusions that reflect the current situation both in Adjara and across Georgia.

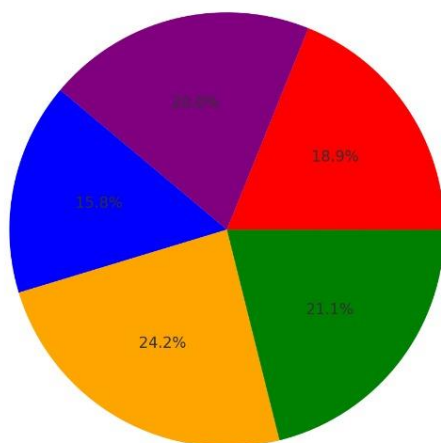
Before discussing professional sports, it is essential to examine key aspects related to children's sports. Despite Georgia's rich sporting traditions, the

country still lacks an independent national physical education system, which would greatly benefit the field. In recent years, sports have become significantly younger, including children's sports. It is now common to see 3-4-year-old children in sports halls. This shift in approach is not focused on immediate athletic achievements but rather on familiarizing young children with sports discipline, developing fundamental motor skills, understanding the rigorous nature of athletic training, and recognizing the role of sports in a healthy lifestyle. Early exposure fosters both short- and long-term motivation, instilling confidence in young athletes as they integrate into the sports community.

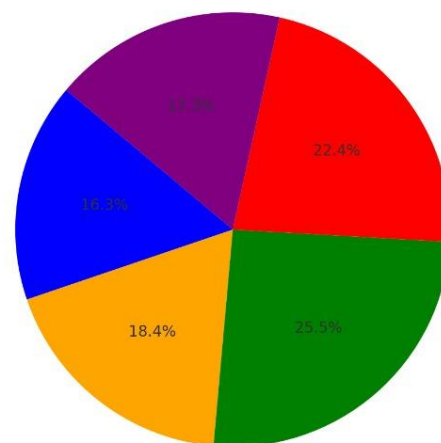
A study conducted at the Batumi Gymnastics Sports School revealed intriguing insights into parental motivations for enrolling their children in gymnastics and the perspectives of coaches on this matter.

**Survey Question: What motivates parents to enroll their children in sports schools?**

Distribution of Teacher-Student Interactions



Distribution of Student Activities



At first glance, these statistics may not seem surprising, except for the alarming emergence of "gadgets" as a concern. Digital devices increasingly consume young athletes' free time, negatively affecting their health and training routines. The study confirmed that both pedagogical science and educators,

including coaches and parents, were unprepared to combat this trend effectively. However, efforts are being made to integrate modern technologies into training processes to enhance and diversify sports education.

The traditional focus on health, a healthy lifestyle, and overall development remains unchanged, reinforcing that these factors are primary motivations for sports participation. A significant percentage of parents enroll their children in gymnastics as preparation for other sports. It was found that gymnastics is not as financially rewarding as sports like football, basketball, tennis, and other individual or team disciplines. Professional sports generally retain only the most talented athletes, who often leave before reaching college age due to alternative career prospects. Additional deterrents include injury risks and the demanding financial and physical requirements of professional sports.

In the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, there is a 60% shortage of physical education teachers and a nearly 90% shortage of coaching staff, mirroring the situation in other regions of Georgia.

Furthermore, 11% of students at the Batumi Gymnastics Sports School are Ukrainian children, who exhibited higher motivation compared to their peers, largely driven by patriotic spirit. Their training is financially supported by a German non-governmental organization.

**Conclusion.** The state must not only support but also prioritize the physical education and sports sector, including professional sports, as a matter of national significance. On a global scale, a country's reputation is enhanced through outstanding athletes who represent their nation while standing on the podium as the national anthem plays. Ensuring a strong sports infrastructure and fostering young athletic talent should be a strategic priority for Georgia's development.

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