The aim of this study was to investigate the motivation in Physical Education students and in particular, the effects of the attended school.

The sample consisted of 223 students, 158 males and 65 females, 103 coming from a technical school and 120 coming from a no technical school, collected in September 2006. Participants were Physical Education first year students, from Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milano. A questionnaire has been prepared to understand diverse aspects of the motivation to study Physical Education. The tool is divided into 5 areas:

1. Personal Motivation (influence of family friends or school, love for sports, etc.);
2. Motivation based on the structure of the university and on the programme of studies plan (variety of contents, variety of sports, prestigious university, etc);
3. Motivation based on the characteristics of profession (good and well paid job, work with young people, etc);
4. Motivation based on professional objectives (to teach through activities involving movements, to teach wellness, etc);
5. Preference about future profession (trainer, physical education teacher, sport manager, etc).

Participants answered 65 questions using a six point Likert-type scale anchored by not at all important (0) and very important (6). Data has been analysed using the SPSS Software to asses differences between who has attended a technical school and who has attended a no technical school.

First of all, we tested data for normality using Skewness and Kurtosis. Some items have been eliminated. For the first four areas, a synthetic index has been calculated, as the mean of the answers. The mean of answers has been used as a synthetic index for the first four areas and the Student's t test to check differences between the two groups. Students of technical school have a mean score higher in personal motivation (t (214) = – 2,402, p < 0,05), motivation based on the structure of the university (t (214) = – 2,381, p < 0,05) and motivation based on professional objectives (t (214) = – 3,168, p < 0,05).

Considering the fifth area (future profession), polytechnic students' scores are higher in physical education teacher (t (205,899) = -1, 971, p < 0,05), fitness trainer (t (203,489) = – 2,526, p < 0,05), expert consultant for rehabilitation techniques (t (201,483) = – 2,498, p < 0,05) and sport plant administrator (t (208) = – 2,013, p < 0,05). We have also investigated the role of the parental educational qualification. Mothers have no influences on students' motivation, fathers have only a small part on the decision of which faculty to attend.

Keywords: Motivation, University Sport, Sports Employment