

Motivation of Sports Participation among Sports and Recreation Students at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

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Abstract

Nowadays, more and more people are aware of the importance of physical and mental health in all aspects of economic, political, and social development. *The purpose of this study was to assess the level of sports participation motivation of sports and recreation program students At Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, as well as to investigate sports participation motivation differences based on gender, age, and years of study. The subjects of this study are a total of 86 respondents in years one through four. The Participation Motivation Questionnaire (PMQ) (Gill et al, 1983) is used to assess sports participation motivation. The study's findings indicate that the highest levels of motivation for sports participation are physical fitness (\bar{x} =2.81) while Team Membership (\bar{x} =2.23) was the least important sub-dimension. There are also significant differences in sports participation motivation based on gender, age, and years of study. This finding will help the Student Affairs Department to organize events regarding this finding. Also, it is recommended that future research be conducted using other sports participation questionnaires such as Exercise Motivation Inventory and Sport Motivation Scale.*

Keywords: Motivation, Sports, Participation, University, Student.

Introduction

Physical activity, such as sports, is beneficial to health at any age, but it is especially important during the formative years of adolescence. There are correlations between a number of factors (including sports motivation, the significance of physical education, and the climate of motivation) and the frequency with which people engage in physical sports practice, making physical education a perfect context for this study. Athletes are driven to compete by a wide range of factors; understanding these motivations is crucial. Many females stop doing sports during adolescence Canadian Women and Sport (2020), and fewer females than males participate in community sports (Bélanger et al., 2009). For many reasons, including a lack of leadership and representation possibilities, and social pressure, girls are less likely to

participate in sports than boys (Burton, 2015; Sabiston et al., 2019). The gender participation gap in sports has been linked to a number of factors, including the female/athlete dilemma (Krane et al., 2004), in which societal ideals of the conventional athletic body (e.g., muscular, powerful, strong) do not coincide with those of the stereotypical feminine body (e.g., tall, slim).

Lunde and Gattario (2017) found that girls had difficulty reconciling this contradiction within their own sense of identity, while Sabiston et al (2019) found that girls' unfavourable opinions of their own bodies and physical selves discourage them from engaging in physical activity. Another approach to understanding females' desire for sports and physical exercise is to investigate the unique processes that contribute to motivation. Girls, for instance, often sign up for extracurricular PE programmes on their own initiative because they feel intrinsically motivated to do so and because they want to join in with their peers (Lonsdale et al., 2011; Fitzgerald et al., 2012). This highlights the importance of girls' social environments in their decision-making and demonstrates the need to learn more about girls' individual processes in order to develop more targeted techniques that can increase girls' enthusiasm to participate in sports. Probably at the heart of the gender participation gap are fundamental concepts like social identity and physical self-concept. Finding out if these ideas are connected to motivation could help teams develop a plan to boost morale and reduce the gender participation gap.

According to the Self-Determination Theory Ryan & Deci (2000), a person's motivation is both autonomous and under their control if they feel competent, autonomous, and connected. Moreover, Vella et al (2020) found that a sense of belonging to one's team was associated with greater levels of independent athletic motivation, suggesting a link between social identity and feelings of community. Athletes' judgments of their physical self-concept are likely related to motivation, especially as athletic expertise plays a large influence in this area (Marsh et al., 2010). Several surveys designed to measure sports participation have been developed in the past for various reasons. Researchers have used a variety of instruments to measure sport motivation, including the 30-item Participation Motivation Questionnaire (PMQ; Gill et al., 1983) and the 28-item Sport Motivation Scale (SMS; Fortier, Vallerand, Biere, & Provencher, 1995). The eight factors for athlete involvement from the Involvement Motivation Questionnaire (PMQ) created by Gil et al. in 1983 were used in this research. Success/status, teamwork, fitness, energy release, circumstance, skill development, companionship, and fun are all examples cited by (Gill et al., 1983). This survey has been used in a wide variety of investigations (Velchez & De Francisco, 2017; Kondric et al., 2013).

In their study of Italian youth, Buonamano et al (1995) revealed that achievement was the most important involvement motive. Among young football players (ages 9 to 15), Gürbuz et al (2007) found that improvement in these areas, as well as teamwork, team membership, and skill and fitness, were the most important motivators. Caglar et al (2009) compared the enthusiasm of professional and amateur football players. Participants were shown to be most motivated by a desire to achieve success and improve their skill level, as shown by their results. Male and female athletes' intrinsic drives to compete have been studied in a number of studies (Egli et al., 2013; Jakobsen & Evjen, 2018). Konderic et al (2013) looked at sports students across the board and found large gender gaps in intrinsic motivation to engage in physical activity. Tsai et al (2015) found that men and women's perceptions of leisure sports varied across multiple dimensions. Jakobsen and Evjen (2018) found that compared to boys, Norwegian girls are more interested in participating in sports for their own sake and prefer to participate in structured sports.

The primary purpose of this research is to determine the magnitude of the PMQ's component measures. There are disparities in gender, age, and number of years spent in university among the sports and leisure majors at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Methodology

This research is descriptively and inferentially quantitative in nature, but it does not involve any actual experiments. After collecting descriptive data about the sample population, an inferential study would be conducted to make comparisons between demographic characteristics. Eighty-six students from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Sports and Recreation Program (UKMSUKRES) participated in the study. This survey is divided into two parts: a demographics component and a PMQ section. The Gill et al (1983) questionnaire on sport participation motivation ranked eight factors (achievement/status, teamwork, fitness, energy release, situational factors, skill development, friendship, and fun) on a scale from very important (3) to not important (1). The reliability of this survey was reported by Zahariadis and Biddle (2000), Gregory et al. (2004), and Franchignoni et al (2015) using Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.80, 0.88, and 0.89, respectively. This study's data were collected in advance of the tutorial session. After 15 minutes, we collected the completed questionnaire from the respondent.

Content and concept validity assessments were made of the tools. The internal consistency test for the PMQ pilot version was 0.84. All collected data were analysed using SPSS Version 27, and the parametric test method was used to look into the situation. The alpha value of the internal consistency test ranged from 0.80 to 0.88 in actual studies. Sekaran (2003) claims that an alpha value greater than 0.60 indicates good and acceptable reliability for questionnaire items. Analysis of the data was performed using the t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). Both the skewness and kurtosis of the data, which range from 0.444 to -0.650, are well within the usual range. Parametric tests are used when the population data follows a regular distribution.

Result and Discussion

Demographics

The characteristics of the respondents were identified using a descriptive study, and inferential analysis was used to compare and correlate the variables in this quantitative, non-experimental study. Eighty-six undergraduates from the UKMSUKRES took part in the research and their sex distribution is shown in Table 1. With 48 females responding, that means there were more than twice as many females as males. Table 1 also provides some demographic information about the respondents, showing that half of them are ages 18–22 and ages 23–27 themselves. The greatest percentage of initial respondents was 26.7% or 23 people from year 1. For years 2 and 3, we received 22 (25.6%) and 20 (23.3%) responses. In the fourth year, there were 21 respondents (24.4% response rate).

TABLE 1

Frequencies and percentage of study respondents

		N	%
Gender	Male	38	44.2
	Female	48	55.8
Age	18-22	43	50
	23-27	43	50
Years of study	1	23	26.7
	2	22	25.6
	3	20	23.3
	4	21	24.4

Level of Sub-Dimension of Sports Participation Motivation

The participants' mean PMQ sub-dimension scores are given in Table 2. It can be observed that Physical Fitness/ Working off Energy (\bar{x} =2.81) is the most important sub-dimensions, whereas the least important sub-dimension was Team Membership/Spirit (\bar{x} =2.23). All sub-dimension were high level but Team Membership/Spirit was at an intermediate level.

TABLE 2

Descriptive statistics of the sub-dimensions of PMQ.

Sub-dimensions	N	Mean	SD	Level
Achievement/ Status	86	2.35	.181	High
Physical Fitness/Working off Energy	86	2.81	.259	High
Team Membership/ Spirit	86	2.23	.236	Intermediate
Friendship	86	2.47	.346	High
Fun	86	2.47	.233	High
Competition	86	2.58	.287	High
Skill Development	86	2.67	.227	High
Motion/Being Active	86	2.58	.320	High

Students who actively engage in sports have a greater chance of becoming and remaining physically fit. Regular exercise is essential for maintaining a healthy immune system, promoting positive mental health, and warding off lifestyle-related disorders. Numerous studies (Lee et al., 2010; Krusturup et al., 2010; Bangsbo et al., 2015; Milanovi et al., 2015) have shown the importance of exercise in preventing and treating lifestyle diseases like type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, and hypertension. Teens and young adults need to be more active to reap the health advantages of exercise (Ahmed et al., 2020).

It can be difficult for college students to maintain a social life, a rigorous academic schedule and a part-time job. There is a spot for student-athletes to go to blow off steam and relax from their busy commitments. By taking part in intercollegiate athletics, students can network with their fellow students, expand their social circle, and feel more connected to their school. This social component may be especially important for freshmen and transfer students who are adjusting to life away from home for the first time. Students who engage in extracurricular athletics often show notable improvements in these areas and more:

communication; leadership; teamwork; problem-solving. They can use these skills in their personal and professional lives. Students who manage their time well can benefit from participating in both sports and academics.

Gender Differences in Sub-Dimension of Sports Participation Motivation

Based on Table 3, the results of a one-way t-test were conducted to see the significant difference in the sub-dimension of sports participation motivation based on gender showing that there were statistically significant differences between the participants' mean physical fitness/working off energy and motion/being active. A statistically significant difference was found in favor of the male respondents in physical fitness/working off energy ($\bar{x}=2.23$; $p<.05$), competition ($\bar{x}=2.21$; $p<.05$), and achievement ($\bar{x}=2.23$; $p<.05$) meanwhile for female favor on motion/being active ($\bar{x}=2.21$; $p<.05$) and friendship ($\bar{x}=2.23$; $p<.05$).

TABLE 3

Comparison of gender among respondents' sub-dimension of sports participation motivation

Sub-dimensions		t	SD	p
Achievement/Status	Male	1.651	.331	.030*
	Female			
Physical Fitness/Working off Energy	Male	2.511	.271	.006*
	Female			
Team Membership/Spirit	Male	-.268	.234	.345
	Female			
Friendship	Male	1.734	.543	.030*
	Female			
Fun	Male	-.423	.352	.073
	Female			
Competition	Male	1.970	.534	.004*
	Female			
Skill Development	Male	-.345	.123	.780
	Female			
Motion/Being Active	Male	1.981	.243	.020*
	Female			

Although men and women participate in sports for a wide variety of reasons, certain motivations tend to be more common among one gender. Biological, societal, and cultural factors all play a role in these differences. The following are some of the most obvious ways in which males and females engage in sports for different reasons:

One, men are more energised by competition and the pursuit of accomplishment, especially in the realm of athletics. The cultural expectations that men should be dominant and aggressive may be at play here. Men may participate in sports more often to boost their self-esteem and reputation among their peers. Second, women are often more driven by social factors like making friends, finding a community, and making connections. Participating in sports could be a way for them to meet new people and maintain relationships with those they already have. Women's sports could be a means for them to spend time with their loved ones. Third, one's outward look and self-perception are common sources of motivation for women, more so than for men. They may decide to work out in order to slim down and tone their bodies.

Yildirim (2021) found that men were more likely than women to report high levels of motivation in both dimensions of sports participation. Regular, well-rounded exercise can improve muscles and joints, increasing physical endurance, which may have been known to these people. These findings are consistent with those of Korur, et al (2013) as well as (Altas and Koruç, 2014; Yüksel and Bayar, 2015). The current study's results corroborate those of Allender et al (2006), who stressed the importance of the preponderance of evidence suggesting that young people are located in community settings, the prevalence of competition and a challenging attitude towards tasks among adolescents, and the correlation between these two factors, including the prevalence of positive body image among adolescents as a means of competing with their peers. This may explain why men place a premium on physical well-being.

Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations play a role in engaging in fitness and health-promoting activities, with the former having a direct bearing on issues such as the ability to compete in terms of one's skills and talents and on one's level of social acceptance (Bosnar & Balent, 2009). In addition, Allender et al (2006) discovered that the most common reasons for participating in sports and physical activities were enjoyment, social contact, and weight management. It's obvious that during adolescence, muscle development is a key focus.

Age Differences in Sub-Dimension of Sports Participation Motivation

Based on Table 4, the findings show that statistically significant differences were found between the participants' mean motion/being active and physical fitness/working off energy sub-dimension scores in terms of age. It is observed that there was a statistically significant difference in favor of the participants aged between 18 and 22 in motion/being active sub-dimension ($\bar{x}=2.85$; $p<.05$) physical fitness/working off energy ($\bar{x}=2.23$; $p<.05$), achievement ($\bar{x}=2.83$; $p<.05$), and competition ($\bar{x}=2.23$; $p<.05$).

TABLE 4

Comparison of age among respondents' sub-dimension of sports participation motivation

Sub-dimensions		t	SD	p
Achievement/Status	21-23	1.83	.331	.030*
	24-27			
Physical Fitness/Working off Energy	21-23	2.62	.271	.015*
	24-27			
Team Membership/Spirit	21-23	-.361	.234	.441
	24-27			
Friendship	21-23	-.334	.543	.131
	24-27			
Fun	21-23	-.233	.352	.112
	24-27			
Competition	21-23	2.54	.534	.003*
	24-27			
Skill Development	21-23	-.271	.123	.662
	24-27			
Motion/Being Active	21-23	2.21	.243	.012*
	24-27			

If young adults see participation as a means to an end, like increased confidence or continued physical health, they may be more inclined to do so. They can begin to value success and competitiveness more highly than simply hanging out with their mates. It's

possible that once people hit middle age, they'll lose interest in athletics because of the stress of juggling work and family responsibilities. Some people may find that maintaining a regular exercise routine is helpful for both stress management and general health maintenance. People of advanced age often engage in competitive or recreational sports to maintain physical fitness and social connections. At this time, it could be the company of peers with comparable interests or the promotion of healthy aging through an exercise that drives you forward. Playing for enjoyment (children), striving for individual goals (young adults), juggling multiple priorities in life (middle-aged), and maintaining long-term commitments to good health (older adults) are all reasons to participate in sports.

It might be argued that an individual's motivation to engage in sports depends more on their immediate environment as they age. When combined with an extrinsic reward (such a compliment, money, or a feeling of accomplishment), which is likely more motivating than intrinsic drive, a person may come to expect similar rewards again in the long run. It is critical to supply suitable extrinsic motivations in this context. This result is consistent with those of Brodtkin and Weis (1990); Gould, et al (1985), and Irin, Alayan et al (2008), as well as (Stern et al., 1990). Adolescents in their latter and intermediate years might benefit much from exercising because fitness and health are such strong motivators (Ahmed et al, 2020). This factor is set by an individual's level of intrinsic motivation, which is defined as a preference for fitness and the many health benefits of exercise.

Years of Study Differences in Sub-Dimension of Sports Participation Motivation

It can be observed in Table 5 that there were statistically significant differences between the participants' friendship and fun sub-dimension scores in terms of their years of study ($p < .05$). Age group 21-23 years old is higher than the age group 24-27 years.

TABLE 5

Comparison of years of study among respondents' sub-dimension of sports participation motivation

Sub-dimensions	Year	F	p
Achievement/ Status	1-4	.990	.563
Physical Fitness/Working off Energy		.443	.078
Team Membership/Spirit		.452	.836
Friendship		4.675	.003*
Fun		3.520	.014*
Competition		1.243	.556
Skill Development		1.345	.456
Motion/Being Active		.455	.536

According to Table 6, a statistically significant difference was found in the fun and friendship sub-dimensions ($p < .05$). Year 1 is higher than years 3 and 4 in both sub-dimensions.

TABLE 6

Multiple comparison test findings related to the difference between the participants' mean PMQ sub-dimension scores in years of study.

	Years of study		Mean Score Differences	Standard Error	p
Friendship	1	3	1.86	.066	.010
		4	1.23	.076	.015
Fun	1	3	1.33	.055	.013
		4	1.45	.072	.018

Since there is no previous research relating to years of study, this finding demonstrated that first-year respondents were still in a fun mindset and in the process of making new acquaintances through participation in sports. There appears to be a generational divide in students' motivations for getting involved in sports. The following are examples of common trends

- 1) Most first-year students get involved in athletics because they want to make new friends and become more integrated into campus life.
- 2) Young athletes appear to be motivated by both internal (motivation to better oneself and enjoy the sport) and external (the desire to win and gain respect from one's peers) factors.
- 3) Because of internal or external rivalry, sophomores often prioritise individual objectives for skill and performance improvement.
- 4) Older people might start running or taking fitness classes more often if they decide that their long-term health is more important than short-term success.

These alterations may be associated with developmental goals or major shifts throughout time, such as the elevated status of professional preparation in the educational system. College athletes can be categorised by their level of intrinsic, extrinsic, or amotivational drive. One type of motivation is known as "intrinsic motivation," in which an individual is driven by the enjoyment or gratification they get from participating in an activity. A student, for instance, may take pleasure in playing basketball because of the game's excitement and the sense of accomplishment one has after making good shots. Extrinsic motivation is the type of motivation that comes from outside of oneself and might include things like receiving praise or rewards from one's peers or coaches for participating in a sport. Joining a football team for the sake of winning games or accumulating scholarship money is a good example. Students who lack the motivation to participate in sports have no interest in doing so and are not motivated to do so by any internal or external factors.

It is the responsibility of universities, and the Student Affairs Department in particular, to provide students with opportunities that appeal to their individual motivational styles, whether those styles are intrinsic, extrinsic, or a lack thereof. This allows college campuses to better tailor their physical activity programs to the interests of their student body, encouraging those who are interested without discouraging those who aren't, and vice versa. Athletes would be more prone to unmotivated patterns if this were the case, leading to subpar athletic performance. Exercise Motivation Inventory (Markland & Hardy, 1993) and the 28-item Sport Motivation Scale (Fortier et al., 1995) are two other questionnaires that could be used in future studies of sports participation.

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