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Understanding Sport Activity During the Movement Control Order (MCO) among Z-Generation

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Abstract

The shockwave of the global health crisis at the end of November 2019 haunted people around the world. It is man's worst nightmare on planet earth. This dream is something real that has had a profound impact on social, economic and political aspects including human activities. Sports activities also receive the same effect. Therefore, this study aims to review the driving factors and barriers to sports activities during MCO among Z-generation. The study also looked at the differences between the driving factors and the hindering factors of sports activities involvement during MCO. A cross-sectional survey research design with a quantitative approach was adopted, where the method of data collection using a questionnaire involving a sample of students of the educational institution was selected as the study sample. The results of this study show that the motivating factors for sports activities are higher than the hindering factors in sports during MCO. Findings also found that motivating and hindering factors are significantly different to the mode of sports involvement during MCO. The discovery of this finding will contribute to the development of sports science and it can be used as an intervention for sports involvement if there is an unexpected situation in the form of confinement.

Keywords: COVID-19, Movement Control Order, Involvement in Sports Activities, Sports, Z-Generation.

Introduction

The Ministry of Higher Education, through higher education institutions across the country, strongly encourages its students (Generation Z) to engage in extracurricular activities such as sports and games. Most universities in the country and abroad have provided various opportunities for sports activities to encourage students to participate in the games. Participating in these sports activities will increase self-confidence and student focus as a result of healthy activities (Brunton and Mayne 2020). According Muhamad and Zawi (2022) an athlete's performance and concentration will increase if an athlete has high self-confidence. This statement is also highlighted by Ya'cob and Zawi (2022), that students who have a high self-concept will form strong mental, physical, spiritual and intellectual human

capital qualities in line with the goals of the National Education Philosophy in Malaysia respectively.

The situation is slightly different when there is a pandemic of COVID-19 which has hit all over the world and has had many negative effects on human activities (Fegert et al. 2020). The situation in Malaysia during COVID-19 through the Movement Control Order (MCO) on 18 March 2022 has resulted in major changes in the life of the community in this country, especially in sports activities (Mohd Zakari and Muhamad 2021). Most countries around the world have also taken similar measures to limit human movement to control the spread of the COVID-19 disease (Nicholas et al. 2020). At that time, the order of physical confinement and social isolation to prevent the spread of COVID-19 was introduced to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The chronology of the MCO in Malaysia starts with MCO 1.0 implemented on 18 March 2020 until 3 May 2020 and has already been enforced in four phases of implementation. Followed by the MCO 2.0 which will be implemented at the beginning of 2021 which is, from 13 to 26 January 2021 in several states, namely Selangor, Penang, Labuan, Melaka, Johor, Kuala Lumpur and Sabah. Tracked by MCO 3.0 on 25 May until 28 June 2021 throughout Malaysia. Next, the transition phase of the National Recovery Plan (PPN) as well as the relaxation of rules to do sports activities with little control and still under control (Joni 2021). Although activities have been comfortable for the community, the feeling of worry is still thick among the community. The concern over the COVID-19 Pandemic has a negative impact on several sectors, including the sports service sector resulting in the closure of many sports institutions, recreation centres and playgrounds that functions as places for activities and recreation are no exception. This closure includes indoor sports activities such as gymnasiums. Because of that, the community does not have the opportunity to engage in physical activity, which leads to emotional stress problems (Mohd Zakari and Muhamad 2021).

MCO and concerns in the community have changed the norms of cultural of the community in activities. The effect shows a reduction in involvement in sports activities. Referring to Castañeda-Babarro et al. (2020) found a decrease number in sports activity among adult (age 18 – 64 years). This factor includes physical activities such as walking which decreased by 58.2%. Yusof, Abdul Razak, and Ismail (2021) found that MARA Vocational College students were categorized as inactive due to low levels of physical activity performance during COVID-19. Similarly, the report of the National Institute of Health (2020), in Malaysia, one in four adults aged 16 and above is very inactive in sports and physical activities. Low sports participation and an unhealthy lifestyle over a long period of time will cause chronic health problems. Referring to the World Health Organization (2022), the fourth highest cause of death in the world is due to lack of involvement in physical activity and sports.

Another situation that limits physical and sports involvement is the learning culture practiced in Malaysia. Usually, learning in Malaysia focuses more on classroom-based learning (Saura and Mamaoag 2023). Learning is a little different during COVID-19, where learning is conducted online with the help of virtual applications. This situation is a new norm and a challenge for Z-generation to adapt learning sessions. The most significant challenge is learning that involves physical movement such as sports education. Learning only happens theoretically without involving practical learning. Usually, practical learning during COVID-19 is aided by teaching aids such as video references and pictorial simulations (Kamaludin and Sundarasen 2023). This has a negative effect on the consistency of sports knowledge and leads to a decrease in student involvement in sports activities (Mok, Wee, and Poh 2019). Therefore, it is very important that schools and teachers improve the development and

management of the curriculum so that learning in sports can attract the generation's focus on sports (Michael and Ambotang 2019).

The development of technology is one of the obstacles for Z- generation to be actively involved in physical sports (Çobanoğlu, Tağrikulu, and Gül 2018). Instead, involvement in virtual sports such as online games is their choice. This situation is an unhealthy sports culture, if there is no good self-control it can interfere with healthy development. This situation became more severe when the sport was widely accepted during the MCO and it was accepted as a sport. This sport does not involve a lot of physical movement and it will increase the risk of disease in the community (Malm, Jakobsson, and Andreas 2019). Therefore, the focus of this study is to review the factors that encourage and hinder sports activities during MCO among Z-generation. This study also explored the differences in factors that encourage and hinder sports activities towards sports involvement during MCO among Z-generation.

Methodology

A cross-sectional survey design was conducted using a quantitative approach. Research design is the steps and procedures used to achieve research objectives (Akhtar 2016). Systematic simple random sampling is used as a method for research data collection, which is the selection of a sample from the study population. The study population is public university students majoring in sports in the Hulu Langat Zone, Selangor. A total of 150 samples was used in the study as suggested by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2017). The study uses a questionnaire as a data collection method consisting of Part A (Demographics), Part B (Sports driving factors) and Part C (Sports hindering factors). The data were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean) and inference statistical with Kruskall-Wallis test.

Results and Discussion

Respondent Profile

Table 1 shows the profile of the respondents involved in this study. The results of the study show that the involvement of the male gender as much as 51.3% is higher than the involvement of the female gender which is as much as 48.7%. The age aspect shows that the majority of Z-generation of educational institutions is between 21-25 years' old which is 94.7%. Likewise, the aspect of race shows that the average respondent is Malay, which is 85.3%, followed by other races at 8.7% and the rest are Chinese and Indian. The results of involvement in sports show that the highest percentage is indoor sports at 35.3%, followed by outdoor sports at 33.3% and electronic sports at 31.3%.

Table 1.
Respondent Demography Profile

Variabel	Frequency (People)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	77	51.3%
Female	73	48.7%
Age		
Less than 21 years old	4	2.7%
Between 21-25 years old	142	94.7%
Between 26-30 years old	4	2.7%
Race		
Malay	128	85.3%
Chinese	6	4%
Indian	3	2%
Others	13	8.7%
Sport Activity Involment		
Electronic Sports (e-sports)	47	31.3%
Indoor Sports	53	35.3%
Outdoor Sports	50	33.3%

A driving factor for Generation Z to play sports

The findings of the descriptive analysis in Table 2 show the mean score of the drivers of generation Z's involvement in sports activities during the MCO.

Table 2
The mean scores of motivational factors in sports during MCO

No.	Items	Mean Score (M)	Standard deviation (SD)	Result of interpretation
1	I will make many friends through sports activities even during MCO	4.43	1.05	High
2	I am a person who likes the challenge of sports even during MCO	4.63	0.87	High
3	Sports can give me pleasure even during MCO	4.70	0.70	High
4	I like to participate in competitions online during MCO	4.49	1.00	High
5	I was able to improve my fitness through sports activities even during MCO	4.60	0.91	High
6	I was able to improve my health through sports activities even during the MCO	4.65	0.76	High
7	I can relieve stress through sports activities even during MCO	4.72	0.66	High
8	I got encouragement from my parents to do sports even during MCO	4.67	0.79	High
9	I got encouragement from my friends to do sports even during MCO	4.62	0.82	High
10	I have enough sports equipment during MCO at home	4.33	1.09	High

The results show (see Table 2) that the overall mean score shows a high level, which is between the score value (M = 4.33, SD = 1.09) up to (M = 4.72, SD = 0.66). The results of these findings explain that acceptance in sports during MCO is high among generation Z. Among the factors that drive the highest sports involvement among generation Z, that is, aiming to relieve stress through sports activities even during MCO (M = 4.72, SD = 0.66). Followed by the second highest motivation of generation Z in sports activities, that is, sports can provide pleasure (M = 4.70, SD = 0.70). This finding is in line with the findings of sports involvement during MCO (see Table 1) showing that generation Z's sports involvement is mostly done indoors. The findings of this finding are clear, showing that, generation Z sports during MCO aims to stabilize the self-stress and find joy through activities performed internally in the home. The findings of this study are in line with Abdul Razak, Muhamad, and Wan Daud (2022) mention that sports activities during MCO contribute to good health growth among individual.

Next, the findings found that parents play a role in encouraging generation Z to do sports activities during MCO with a score (M = 4.67, SD =0.79). The involvement of parents in sports with children will increase interest and motivation in physical activity (Hoyle and Leff 1997). In addition, the findings also show that Generation Z is aware that through sports activities can improve the level of health even during the MCA period which is on the score (M = 4.65, SD = 0.76). Interestingly, the findings found that in addition to self-awareness to do sports, it is also influenced by peers to do sports during MCO which is (M = 4.62, SD = 0.82). The individual factor that likes the challenge of playing sports is also one of the reasons for generation Z to play sports (M = 4.63, SD =0.87). The findings found that the sports equipment available at home is one of the motivations for generation Z to exercise during MCO which is (M = 4.33, SD = 1.09). This finding is in line with Zaman, Mian, and Butt (2018) individual factors of the younger generation who have a high awareness of health will be actively involved in sports activities.

Factors preventing Generation Z from playing sports

The result of the descriptive analysis in Table 3 show the mean score of barriers to the participation of generation Z in sports activities during the MCO.

Table 1
The mean score of hindering factors in sport during MCO

No.	Items	Mean Score (M)	Standard deviation (SD)	Result of interpretation
1	I was burdened with many academic tasks during the MCO	3.81	0.76	High
2	I'm a person who doesn't like to sweat	3.55	1.00	Moderate
3	I might get injured through sports activities during MCO	3.19	0.62	Moderate
4	I don't like engaging in tiring sports activities	2.96	1.39	Moderate
5	I have no encouragement from my family to do sports activities during MCO	3.49	1.02	Moderate

6	I have no encouragement from my friends to do sports activities during MCO	3.50	1.02	Moderate
7	I am not interested in sports activities even during MCO	3.49	1.03	Moderate
8	I'm worried about dull skin	3.05	1.40	Moderate
9	I am a person who lacks physical strength	3.00	1.39	Moderate
10	I lack sports equipment during MCO at home	3.51	1.07	Moderate

Referring to Table 3 shows the majority of factors that hinder participation in sports at the medium mean score level, which is the value below the score level (M = 3.81, SD = 0.76) and below. The results found that the highest barrier factor that prevents generation Z from playing sports during MCO is being burdened with academic tasks which are at a high level of interpretation. Students who are burdened with studies will be less involved in extracurricular activities such as sports and associations (Ching Ong, Tengku Mohamad Nazili, and Sern Lai 2021). The findings also show that the lack of motivation to play sports is one of the reasons why generation Z does not play sports. The results of this aspect of encouragement show that there is a lack of encouragement from friends (M = 3.50, SD = 1.02) and parents (M = 3.49, SD = 1.02). This finding is in line with research conducted by Biber et al. (2013) showed that a lack of motivation will reduce the interest of individuals to be active in sports. The culture of healthy living practices needs to be inculcated in the early education process of children in the family. Parents' awareness of sports activities is very important and needs to be applied from the beginning. This role is also played at school, through exciting sports activities to instill talent and enthusiasm in generation Z.

In addition, the findings also show obstacles in terms of equipment for playing sports during MCO is also a barrier to sporting activities during MCO which are (M =3.51, SD =1.07). Equipment support for sports is very important to encourage individuals to do sports. Without the support of good equipment will cause injury to individuals. The individual factor of generation Z itself is a barrier to being involved in sports. For example, individuals who do not like activities that cause sweat (M = 3.55, SD = 1.00), are not interested in sports activities (M = 3.49, SD = 1.03), are worried about getting injured if they play sports (M = 3.19, SD = 0.62) and worried about the appearance of the skin becoming dark and dull as a result of sports activities (M = 3.05, SD = 1.40). Very interesting findings from individual factors found that the barrier to not being involved in sports due to a lack of confidence in physical strength among the lowest causes of Generation Z not being involved in sports (M =3.00, SD = 1.39) and also individuals who do not like tiring activities (M =2.96 , SD = 1.39). This finding shows that the weakness of self-potential in sports is high and it hinders the development of self-potential in sports as discussed by the study Lochbaum et al. (2022).

Learning the Differences in driving and hindering factors based on sports involvement among Generation Z

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to achieve the second objective of this study, which is to identify the difference between driving and hindering factors based on sports involvement. The results represent detailed in Table 4.

Table 4
Kruskal-Wallis test of the motivating and hindering factors based on sports involvement

Variabel		N	Mean rank (M)	Degree of Freedom (DF)	Asymp. Sig.
Driving factors	e-sports	47	81.47	2	0.01
	Outdoor sports	50	57.82		
	Indoor sports	53	86.89		
Barrier factors	e-sports	47	80.36	2	0.01
	Outdoor sports	50	56.71		
	Indoor sports	53	85.78		

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test (see Table 4) show that the driving factors based on sports involvement are significant and different ($P < 0.05$). Similarly, the findings show that the barrier factors based on sports involvement are significant and different ($P < 0.05$). This finding explains that the motivating factors and the hindering factors towards sports involvement during MCO are different. Where, generation Z prefers indoor sports during MCO (M = 86.89, M = 85.78), followed by online sports (M = 81.47, M = 80.36) and the lowest is an outdoor sports (M = 57.82, M = 56.71). This finding explains that Generation Z prefers indoor sports to avoid being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also in line with government policy during the MCO period prohibiting people from being outside the home area to break the chain of COVID-19 infection. Although generation Z chooses outdoor sports, sports activities are still carried out in a simple manner according to the support obtained at home. This situation shows a positive sign that sports activities are still emphasized even in uncomfortable conditions (Zakari and Muhamad, 2021).

Conclusion

As a conclusion, this study looked at the driving factors and barriers to sports activities during MCO. The study also looked at the differences between motivating factors and hindering factors towards the involvement of sports activities during MCO. The findings clearly show that motivating factors play an important role in sports involving during MCO compared to hindering factors in sports that only recorded moderate scores for the entire assessed aspect. This discovery also explains that generation Z is now more aware of the importance of sports and its benefits for health. Interesting findings found significant motivating and hindering factors in the mode of involvement in sports. Findings show that indoor sports involvement is an option during MCO due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Beside indoor sports, electronic sports are also the choice of today's generation Z. However, this electronic sport is not a healthy sport because it does not involve vigorous physical movement, rather electronic sports are more of a sport that hones small psychomotor talents and a lot of cognitive functions for individuals. Findings also clearly found that the choice of the outdoor sports mode was not the choice of respondents during MCO. This choice is in line with the government's policies and policies that limit physical movement in open areas. The results of this study still have limitations, where the focus of the study only focuses on generation Z at educational institutions in one area only. The survey also only looked at two aspects of drivers and barriers to sports activities. In-depth exploration can be carried out by looking at individual and psycho-social factors qualitatively in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the driving and hindering factors in this sport.

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