

Ranking the Motivations and the Impediments of the Youth's Athletic participation in Isfahan

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Abstract

The general objective of this study is to investigate and rank the motivations and the impediments of the youth's athletic participation and physical activities in Isfahan. The statistical population was the male and female members of Isfahan libraries with the age range of 14 to 30 years from whom 392 individuals were selected as the statistical sample according to Morgan table. In case of participation in athletics at leisure times, the youth completed the questionnaire of athletic motivation and they filled out the questionnaire of athletic participation impediments in case of the lack of physical activity and sports. The obtained information was described through statistical indices and it was analyzed by Friedman, Kruskal wallis and Mann-whitney U tests via SPSS software. The findings of the study showed that the major motivation of the youth in Isfahan in order to participate in physical exercises sequentially are obtaining enjoyment and happiness, keeping health, being in shape and beauty and physical fitness. In females, the motivations of being in shape and watching weight and in males the motivations of physical fitness, being competitive and with friends had higher priority. In youth with higher educational level, the motivations of obtaining enjoyment and happiness had greater importance and in youth with lower educational level the motivation of being with friends had higher priority. On the other hand, the most important impediments of the youth's athletics, on the basis of priority, were lack of the time and the plans overlap, weakness and laziness, economic status and the facilities condition. The statistical results specified that the facilities condition has greater importance in higher age group. Moreover two impediments of mental status and physical inability in individuals with lower education have higher priority. Generally it can be concluded that the basic factor of the youth participation in physical activities and sports, is attending to internal motivations and removing individual impediments.

Key Words: Youth's Athletic, Motivation Participation, Impediment Participation, Isfahan

Introduction

Nowadays motion poverty causes the insufficiencies in physical, psychological and mental aspects of different strata of the society specially the youth (Matthew, 2013:1). The studies imply locating physical activities after activities such as watching TV, listening to the music, using the computer, internet, and being with friends (Rahmani, Bakhshi Nia and Ghavami, 2006). From the one hand, the need of planning for improving the youth's athletic participation is investigating and recognizing their interests and motivations. Motivations are considered as one of the major pivots in explaining the individuals' behavior for participating in various activities and the key to do every effort and activity (Ghodrat Nema, 2013). The motivation can motivate, strengthen and lead the behavior or cause its control and stop (Pasha Sharifi, 2006).

The researchers have divided the motivations through different methods. Among them, biologic and psychological, inclinational and preventive, internal and external motivations can be pointed out. Biological motivations are created under the effect of a biologic need; however, the psychological motivations are taught through cross-action with others. In inclinational motivation, the people do an activity due to wanting, liking or needing. In preventive motivations the people do to avoid something or a situation. If we reward a behavior, we increase the probability of that behaviors' repetition. If this reward is rendered from outside the individual, it is called external motivation. On the contrary, the satisfaction which is rooted in committing the behavior from inside the individual is internal motivation (Mokhtari, 2008).

Some researchers have divided the motivations into subscales of external self-regulation, introjected self-regulation, simulated self-regulation and internal motivation (Matthew, 2013). External self-regulation occurs when the behavior is conducted for accessing to the external reward or avoiding the limits. Introjected self-regulation is a process according to which the external wishes are expressed as a force and internal urgency (like anxiety, shame, and the feeling of guilty). The person, urgently, does the activities to reach an internal reward, such as the increase of self-esteem and escaping from internal self-imposing punishment. Simulated self-regulation is defined through the behavior the person does because of the coordination with his/her values and objectives. When a person assumes the activities valuable consciously and considers them important from the personal viewpoint, simulated self-regulation takes place. In other words, when the activities are like the person's identity, his/her behavior is organized in an integrative way. The sum of two subscales of external self-regulation and introjected self-regulation composes external motivation and the subscales of simulated self-regulation and internal self-regulation make internal motivation (Pasha Sharifi, 2006).

Commonly, tending to athletics is rooted in internal motivation which is strengthened by external motivation. In people who are not objective-oriented or those who have low internal motivation, the external motivation should be applied to fertilize and reaching internal motivation (Richard, 2002). Certainly, the motivation is not a fixed personal attribute which is steady in intensity during the time; however, the degree of motivation is affected by numerous various factors that one of the most outstanding one is the motivational atmosphere which is created for the athlete him/herself. The scientific surveys have proved the fact that the children usually are intrigued through showing their abilities. Therefore they seek the ways to dominate themselves and to create the skills in themselves through which they can use educational opportunities and express their skills. Further, the children assume the reasons of participation or withdrawal from athletic activities mostly related to the tutors and satisfaction of the

associates. In contrast, the motivation of the youth and the middle-aged from the athletic activities is to have physical fitness and shape. Athletic psychologists believe that there is not just one factor or motivation causing expression of athletic behavior, since in different people, various motivations such as social interactions, enjoyment and cheerfulness, the decrease of psychological pressures, weight watching, job relations, health and physical fitness, etc can lead to sports (Ramazani Nejad, 2009).

Patrick (2013) states obtaining fitness and enjoyment as the basic motivation of the presence of the youth in sports. James (2013) in his studies observed that three major motivations of the youth are obtaining enjoyment and cheerfulness, relieving from psychological pressures and social relations. Richard, Bell Thompson and Smith, through searching on the youth, perceived that, in whole, the motivations of health, physical fitness and mental health (enjoyment, keeping mental equilibrium and excitement), social relation and acceptance are among the priorities of the youth. The study carried out by Navvabi Nejad (1997) showed that keeping healthy is the most important goal of the participants in public sports; however, Saied Jafari (2010) in his study found out that most of the youth take part in public sports to obtain cheerfulness and a sense of enjoyment. Jafari et al. (2010) found that the most critical motivation for the youth to be present at physical activities is to keep healthy, being in shape and social interaction. The research conducted by Liu et al. (2011) indicated that the university students take part in athletic exercises with five motivational constituents, i.e. obtaining enjoyment, drawing the attention, being in shape, being competitive and social interaction. Moreover both internal and external motivations, such as enjoying the exercises and drawing attention, positively relate to the degree of the students' physical activities. The study by Stuntz and Weiss (2010) suggested the effect of the motivations of the feeling of competence, understanding the independence as well as autonomy and empowering the relationships with others on regular participation of the children and adolescents in athletic exercises. The results of the study by Bastos et.al (2006) indicated that men take part in athletic exercises to obtain social experiences and women do it to be in shape and healthy.

Since the individuals' motivations to participate in athletic programs associate with various factors such as economic status, social base, cultural origin, family attitude, personal needs, education and advertisements, but the fact is that machine-like life and living in apartments and the impact of electronic appliances such and internet, satellite and computer games have led the adolescents and youth to spend most of their leisure time on motionless and underactive programs. It is clear that the decrease of physical activities causes the decrease of consuming energy and, finally, can lead to the increase in sicknesses and some problems associated with wellbeing and health (Patrick, 2013). Unfortunately the researches prove that less than one fourth of the country's youth exercise regularly (Nasr-e-Esfahani, 2013). Indeed it can be pointed out that one of the factors of the lack or the decrease of athletic motivation in young generation is the presence of internal and external impediments. The lack of facilities, sport centers and economic problems have always been among the major impediments to take part in athletic exercises. The families' way of thinking regarding exercise and the loss of support from the children on the part of the parents as well as weakness and laziness of the youth themselves are effective, to a large extent, in decreasing the role of exercise at leisure times (Naderian, 2009).

Mir Ghafoori (2009) in his study to rank the impediments of girls' participation in physical exercises found out that the social, personal, cultural, facility- economic and family impediments affect the loss of physical exercises. Furthermore it was specified that the facility-economic factor has the highest negative effect on the youth participation and after that, there are social, personal, cultural and family factors. Naderian (2009) in his research concluded that cultural-social factors have the greatest effect on the lack of women's athletic participation. Being highly busy with the job, prioritizing the work rather than the exercise, social-cultural bonds, unsuitable attitude of the cooperators toward physical exercise and the managers' not taking into account the women's exercise are among the factors that put the women's participation into difficulty. Ebrahimi (2013) observed the lack of time, economic problems, and not having a friend to take part in physical exercises as the basic impediments of the youth. Joanne (2011) knows the lack of time as the major factor of the youth's physical exercises. World health organization (WHO) (2003) has mentioned the loss of information regarding the benefits of physical activities, insufficient information in terms of tendencies, the lack of commitments and political support, low coordination between beneficiary departments, inaccessibility to facilities, economic problems, time limit and not supporting on the part of the family and friends and social condition of the women as the most critical impediments of the development of physical activities. Summarily, it can be stated that the degree of the youth's participation in exercises is the result of adjustment between impediments and motivations. In this regard Jackson, Crawford, and Godbey in their studies showed that preventive factors in athletic participation are put in a hierarchy of decision making. These factors in order of superiority are personal preventive, interpersonal and structural factors. They believe that the participation depends on preventive factors (impediments), not the fact that the lack of preventive factors implies participation (although this state might be right for some people), the participation is reached as the result of such impediments (Jackson, 1993). Generally since the people's participation in recreational exercises is conducted voluntarily and mostly at leisure times, successful development of such programs entails for the planners and policy makers to examine the impediments and preventive factors of the people's participation in physical exercises besides being aware of the motivations of the youth's presence. According to the above fact, in the present study the motivations and participation impediments of the youth of Isfahan in physical exercises and activities have been investigated and ranked. There is the hope that the obtained results will be effective in developing exercises and physical activities and it will be a step toward the health of the society.

Research Methodology:

It is a survey-descriptive study. In this study the motivations and impediments of youth participation in Isfahan in exercises and physical activities have been investigated and ranked. The statistical population included male and female members of Isfahan municipality libraries with the age range of 14 to 30 years old. The number of libraries of Isfahan municipality in different zones of the city was 46 and the total number of the members was 140671 individuals. 103854 of them are the youth who were determined 392 individuals as the sample size according to Morgan table. In order to select the samples, the plan of the zones of Isfahan municipality was provided and based on that, the city was divided into five east, west, north, south and center zones and from each a main library was selected. Then according to the total

number of each zone, the share of the sample of each of the five libraries was identified and finally the distributed questionnaires were filled out by 184 boys and 216 girls.

In the present study we asked the youth of Isfahan to complete the questionnaire of athletic motivations in case of doing physical exercises at leisure times and fill out the questionnaire of participation impediments in athletic activities in case of the lack of physical activities at their leisure time. To collect the information related to the motivations, Markland and Ingeldio (1997) questionnaire of exercise motivations (EMI-2) was applied. The stated scale included 14 sub-scales and 51 items. The participants had to answer the items involving 6 items which were ordered according to Likert scale. In order to determine the constructive validity the confirmatory factor analysis method was used which was confirmed and examined due to 7 subscales. These subscales included: obtaining enjoyment-happiness, being competitive, being with friends, keeping health, watching weight, and physicians' prescription, physical fitness, being in shape and beauty. In the section regarding the investigation of the impediments in the presence at exercises, the questionnaire of participation impediments in physical exercises at leisure times was used (Shaban, 2005). This 30-question questionnaire investigates 9 factors which are the major impediments in the presence of the youth exercises. These 9 factors involve: economic status, psychological status (loss of interest and not enjoying the exercises, scaring from the damage and shyness due to the weakness in skills), facilities condition, lack of time and overlapping with other programs, cultural-social bonds, inability and physical problems, lack of information from sport centers, social relations (not having a friend or a person to accompany and participate in exercise), weakness and laziness. The obtained information was described through statistical indices and for its analysis, Friedman, Kruskal wallis and Mann-Whitney tests were applied through SPSS software.

Findings

The sociologic features of the research sample indicate that the mean of age group under study is 23 years old and 48 percent of the respondents were boys and 52 percent of them were girls. The findings specified that 54% (n=175) of the research society do exercise at their leisure time and 46% (n=175) don't exercise. 61% of non-exercising people (n=175) were girls and 39% were boys. In table 1 the sociologic features of the sample society were recognized in terms of gender, age, educational degree, job and income. Further was clear that which percentage of each group do exercises at their leisure time.

Table 1. Sociologic features of the sample according to presence or non-presence in exercise

Gender	exercise	lack of exercise	age	exercise	lack of exercise	education	exercise	lack of exercise	job	exercise	lack of exercise
392	217	175	392	217	175	392	217	175	392	217	175
Girl	46%	61%	15-17	15%	10%	Below diploma	13%	10%	Student	25%	20%
			13%			12%			22%		
52%	46%	61%	17-20	33%	28%	diploma	27%	36%	university student	39%	40%
			31%			31%			39%		
Boy	54%	39%	20-23	18%	31%	post diploma	19%	17%	searching for the job	10%	13%
			24%			19%			12%		
48%	54%	39%	23-26	22%	20%	graduate	29%	30%	incumbent	17%	17%
			21			29%					
			26-29	6%	8%	post graduate	8%	5%	housewife	3%	5%
			6%			6%			4%		

One of the major aims of the current study was to investigate the degree of the youth's leisure time in Isfahan in a day; the results indicated that the mean of hours of leisure time in youth is 3 hour and 37 minutes in a day. The mean of hours of leisure time in girls is 3.77 h and 3.47 h for the boys and more than 70% of the sample people have more than 3 hours of daily leisure time. It was specified that the mean of exercise and physical activity hours in the youth is 2 hours and 45 minutes in a week. In fact 54% of all the youth of Isfahan averagely do physical exercises 23 minutes a day. The greatest exercise at leisure times of the boys were reported swimming, soccer, volleyball and body building and for the girls they were aerobics, walking, volleyball, swimming and combative sports respectively. In determining their athletic encouragers, the respondents stated parents as the first priority with 32% and after it they specified myself (25%), friends (18%), relatives (14%) and teachers and tutors (5%).

Ranking the motivational factors in the youth participation in exercises showed that the most important factors include obtaining enjoyment and happiness, keeping healthy, being in shape, beauty and physical fitness (table 3). The data analysis through Friedman test showed that there is a significant difference between these aspects at $p \leq 0.5$ level (table2).

Table2. Friedman test to investigate the difference between the priorities of the youth athletic motivations

Chi square	Friedman degree test	significance level
151.899	6	0

Table 3. ranking the priorities of athletic motivation generally and according to the gender

General motivation priority	Mean	the girls' motivation priority	mean	the boys' motivation priority	Mean
Obtaining enjoyment and happiness	5.22	Obtaining enjoyment and happiness	5.05	Obtaining enjoyment and happiness	5.37
Keeping healthy	4.87	Keeping healthy	4.86	Keeping healthy	4.91
Being in shape and beauty	4.32	Being in shape and beauty	4.75	Physical Fitness	3.98
Physical Fitness	4.12	Physical Fitness	4.13	Being in shape and beauty	3.87
Being competitive	3.27	the physician's prescription and watching weight	3.15	being with friends	3.46
being with friends	3.22	being with friends	3.06	Being competitive	3.4
the physician's prescription and watching weight	2.98	Being competitive	3	the physician's prescription and watching weight	3

The statistical tests made it clear that in terms of sociographic features (age, gender, educational degree, job, and income), there is difference between two features of gender and educational degree in ranking the athletic motivations (table 4). Mann-Whittney U test indicated that there is a significant difference between girls and boys regarding being in shape and beauty; i.e., in female participants, the motivation of being in shape and beauty had higher priority comparing to males. Moreover, Kruskal Wallis test proved that there is a significant difference in two motivations of obtaining enjoyment and being with friends regarding the educational degree, in that, the motivation of obtaining enjoyment and happiness had higher

priority in people with higher educational degree and so did the motivation of being with friends in individuals with lower educational degree.

Table 4. Mann Whittney U and Kruskal Wallis tests to investigate the motivation ranking difference

	obtaining enjoyment and happiness	being competitive	being with friends	keeping health	the physician's prescription and weight watching	fitness	Being in shape and beauty
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) (Gender) Mann-Whitney U	1.00	0.98	0.58	0.67	0.34	0.19	0.01
Asymp. Sig. (education) Kruskal Wallis Test	0.025	0.239	0.023	0.929	0.796	0.304	0.662

In delving on the youth participation impediments in exercises and its ranking it was indicated that the ranking of the youth impediments are lack of time and overlapping the programs, weakness and laziness, economic status and the facilities condition (table 5). The data analysis through Friedman test showed that there is a significant difference between the impediments priority at $p \leq 0.5$ level.

Table 5. ranking the impediments of the youth presence in exercise

Exercise impediments	mean	Chi square	Friedman degree test	significance level
Lack of time and programs overlapping	6.49	132.715	8	0
weakness and laziness	6.03			
economic status	5.75			
facilities condition	5.24			
social relations (not having exercise pal)	4.69			
cultural difficulties (cultural bonds)	4.55			
not knowing about the place of exercise classes	4.36			
disability and physical problems	4.05			
psychological status (lack of interest and enjoyment, fear and shyness)	3.83			

The statistical results showed that there is not a significant difference between girls and boys regarding gender. Kruskal Wallis test indicated that there is a significant difference in various age groups in the factor of facilities condition; that is, the highest rank mean was observed in higher age group (23-26 and 26-30 years old) and so was the lowest rank mean in 15-17 and 20-23 year-old group. In terms of educational degree there observed a significant difference in two impediments of psychological status and physical disability. In both factors, the individuals with lower educational degree (below diploma and diploma) allocated to themselves the greatest rank mean (table 6).

Table 6. Mann Whittney U and Kruskal Wallis tests to examine the impediments ranking difference according to age and educational degree

	Lack of time and programs overlapping	economic status	psychological status	facilities condition	facilities condition	disability and physical problems	not knowing about the place of exercise classes	social relations	weakness and laziness
Asymp. Sig. Age) (0.116	0.67	0.124	0.025	0.223	0.369	0.144	0.363	0.056
Asymp. Sig.)(education	0.643	0.539	0.018	0.391	0.265	0.015	0.289	0.438	0.293

Conclusion

Findings of the present study suggested that the major motivations of the youth of Isfahan to take part in physical exercises, respectively, are obtaining enjoyment and happiness, health, being in shape, beauty, and physical fitness. The above results confirm the results of the study conducted by Shokouh, Ramazani, Shefard, Thompson, Tepli and Adamak, Chen, Smith, Hendli, Elderj. Indeed the results of the current study are a proof for the following statement "two motivations of physical hygiene and psychological hygiene is a popular and known motivation for all the world people from various social-economic groups (Ramazani Nezhad, 2009). The results of the study imply that the public exercise, is done mostly based on internal motivation and the youth's internal tendency and need is the most important factor for their presence in physical exercises. So the basic attention of the families and authorities should be on more internalizing of the youth exercise motivation, since the studies have proved that the people who have inclined to the exercise due to external motivations (e.g. losing weight) had a short exercise span (Sarah, 2013). On the other hand attending to the factors forming the internal motivation is highly valuable, because it will increase the probability of the continuity and commitment of the youth exercise (Parsa Mehr, 2011). Maybe determining specific reasons as the reasons which make internal motivations is not a fairly simple and easy attempt, since the motivations are different according to the individuals' needs, perception and features; notwithstanding the footstep of motivations formation, as usual, can be found in childhood. Nurturing methods of the parents, suitable models for the childhood which have high internal motivations, knowing about the manner the growth and nurturing the internal motivations, etc, are among the most outstanding and effective in forming internal motivations for taking part in physical exercises. Although forming athletic motivations can take place in all ages but special emphasis on childhood is greatly remarkable.

The comparison between the boys and girls athletic motivation proved that there is one statistical difference in one case and the girls have had higher priority comparing to male participant in the motivations of being in shape and beauty; the above fact agrees with the results of research carried out by Patrick (2013), Joanne (2011) and Bastos et.al (2006). Further, the motivations of physical fitness, being competitive and being with friends in boys and watching weight in girls had higher priority, but it was not significant difference. It seems that the relative difference between male and female's motivations is associated with their personality and physiologic features. The findings showed that in most of the cases the athletic motivation of the girls is higher than the boys; but on the other hand, various studies proved that fact that the degree of physical activities and exercise in girls is less than the boys. Therefore, it can be concluded that in case of creation of a suitable condition for the girls' physical activity and exercise, the above motivation can be advantageous in developing the culture of girls and families exercise and keeping a healthy and well society through providing specific facilities and athletic installations and removing some impediments and limits. The results show that in the youth with higher educational level (postgraduate) the motivation of obtaining enjoyment and happiness have higher importance; however in the youth with the lower educational level (diploma and post-diploma) the motivation of being with friends has greater role. The above result suggests that the increasing of educational level and respectively the youth's scientific, cultural and social promotion play an important role in changing the athletic (external to internal) motivations.

According to the achieved results, the first factors or impediments in the youth athletic presence are rendered as the lack of time and overlapping with other programs that agrees with the findings of Ebrahimi (2013), Joanne (2011), Patrick (2013), Ehsani (2007), Sha'bani (2005), Meshkati (2004), Kent Allison (1991) and Wales athletic association (2003). Though the results proved that the number of the hours of the youth leisure time is 3 hours and 37 minutes, which agrees with the results of the surveys by Tondnevis, (1996), Rahmani (2006), Jahangiri (2008), Modiri, (2010). According to the above results, the fact that the lack of time is introduced as the first impediment in physical exercises is to some extent worthy of thinking. Moreover, weakness and laziness of the people were observed as the most critical impediments. Moreover, weakness and laziness of the people were observed as most crucial impediments. According to the above fact, it can be suggested that the individual impediments (lack of time and laziness) play the most outstanding role in the lack of the youth's athletic activities. These two factors might be considered the result and the gift of modernization and the industrial world, since the growth and the development of the new technologies, causes the current societies entangled in the problem of immobility and the poverty of physical activities and, as the result, weakness and laziness. In fact, electronic and individual recreations such as satellite and internet, because of being attractive and comprehensive and easy access, has replaced physical and group recreations; In other words, "the existence of other options" to be selected and used at leisure times by the youth plays an important role in the loss of the youth tendency and interest in physical exercise (Parsamehr, 2011). Patrick (2013) in his study concluded that among the major factors in losing weight in the youth are having interests and other recreational activities and replacement of the exercise at leisure times. Therefore, immobility and lack of physical activity is the dilemma of today's world which should be taken into account more than any other time. According to the reports of the World Health

Organization, one of four major factors threatening the health and causing the people's death (blood pressure, tobacco products, blood sugar, immobility), is immobility and the lack of physical activities (Hallal, 2012).

On the other hand, the second group of the youth' exercise impediments was observed as economic problems and high costs of exercise classes and also the related problems to exercise facilities which agrees with the results of the studies carried out by Ebrahimi (2013), MirGhafoori (2009), Naderian (2009) and Ehsani (2007). The above issue indicates that the authorities and those in charge in sports have provided an appropriate condition and background for the youth exercise and the physical and mental health of the youth are in danger.

The results of the current study showed that the most important motivations of the youth exercise is the motivation of obtaining enjoyment and happiness. On the other hand, the most crucial impediment in the youth exercise was observed as the lack of time, weakness and laziness. In fact it can be stated that the major cause of the loss of exercise in youth is the lack of internal motivations and the presence of some personal impediments. Of course, lack of suitable facilities and economic problems have important role in the youth tendency toward exercise but the major point in participation or the lack of participation in physical activities and exercise, is the motivation and internal tendency as well as personal impediments. Therefore, the importance of the role of internal motivation should be the focus of attention for the individuals, families, tutors and authorities more than anything else. Based on that, at the first place it is the responsibility of the families and parents to put the exercise in their basic programs in order to be healthy both physically and mentally and at the same time provide an appropriate model for the children and the youth. Furthermore, it is the duty of the parents to encourage and motivate the children to do various physical exercises from childhood and infancy and provide a suitable condition for their athletic activities. Of course the role of the families in removing the youth's exercise impediments besides rendering training and required guidance, such as the manner of time management and programming, are valuable to be taken into account. In the next stage there is the role and importance of the course of physical exercise at schools which should pave the way to make the students familiar and administer various athletic majors for them. One of the responsibilities of physical exercise teachers at schools is the improvement of knowledge, awareness and the students' experience in different athletic majors, hence, through this method the students' athletic potential and interests will be explored and guided and the condition for the growth and institutionalization of internal motivations will be provided. In this way the role of responsible centers in public exercise such as the ministry of the physical exercises and the youth and the municipalities to improve the role of exercise in peoples' life specially the youth, through providing appropriate and free athletic places, environments and facilities is highly important and vital which should specially taken into account.

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