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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

## INVESTIGATING THE MOTIVATIONAL PREFERENCES OF CONSUMERS PARTICIPATING IN DIFFERENT SPORTS

### *Abstract*

One of the important issue facing sport researchers, is understanding why people participate in sport programs. Most participation motivation studies conducted in different countries have identified a consistent set of motivational factors for participation. Also, it is important to compare sport participation motivation across multiple sports. Participants (N=421), involved in different sports, completed the modified version of the McDonald, Milne and Hong (2002) sport consumption motivation scale. In addition, demographic questions and some questions in relation to nutrition frequency, supplement consumption, smoking habits and sport expenditures were asked to the respondents. Confirmatory Factor Analyses showed a set of motivational factors fairly consistent with the research conducted in other countries. Significant differences were found among different sports in relation to motivation factors. Discussion and implications address how sport marketers might interpret the different motivation factors across multiple sports.

**Keywords:** Sport consumption, sport participation, motivation, expenditures

## INTRODUCTION

Today, many people spend their leisure time sitting in front of TV or computers. This inactivity causes a rapid increase of chronic diseases and health expenditure. After the positive effects of regular exercise on the mental and physical health is documented by scientific research, the doing sports began to be recommended for people of all ages. The “Exercise is Medicine” movement pursued by American Sports Medicine Association for three years has come to Turkey, among the most sedentary countries in the world, with the initiatives of “Active Living Association's” to spread the exercise understandings ([www.egzersizilactir.org.tr](http://www.egzersizilactir.org.tr)). One of the important sources of informing about ensuring participation in sports and sports marketing to the masses is the motivational behavior. Until today, many motivational factors have been examined by researchers related to sport participation (Buonamano, Cei and Mussino, 1995). In previous studies, motivational factors such as physical fitness, entertainment, and achievement were raised as important factors (Ko, Park and Claussenn, 2008). In order to develop strategies for increasing sport participation, it is necessary to understand which factors can motivate individuals to do these exercises. Understanding the motives that drive consumers’ interest in sports will provide sport marketers with information that can be used to develop targeted promotional campaigns in order to foster increased attendance (James and Ross, 2004). The current study is intended to extend our understanding of sport consumers by identifying motives and to ascertain whether different motives influence participation across multiple sports. It was intended that the results would serve as a basis for further studies. This study will benefit the sports industry and the field of sports marketing by contributing to the development of a knowledge base regarding the motivation of sports participants.

### Sport Motivation Research

Motivation is an important process in understanding the behavior (Mitchell, 1982). Derived from basic ‘motive’ concepts, motivation is defined as the sum of efforts mobilizing one or more people to a certain objective and purpose (Güney, 2008). Intrinsic motivators refer to engaging in a sporting activity purely for pleasure and satisfaction derived from participation (Prayag and Grivel, 2014). It is important for sports marketers to understand the factors related to consumers participation in certain sports. Also, understanding the behavior of sport consumers on psychological variables is necessary for sport marketers (Prayag and Grivel, 2014).

Demographics, psychographics and sports participation behavior information allow sports marketers to arrive at a comprehensive picture of their targeted segment in the sports market (Ko et al., 2008). When the motivating factors are identified, it would be easier to satisfy consumer needs. The resulting motivational profiles can be used to implement promotional and marketing strategies (James and Ross, 2004).

To date, over 100 motivational factors regarding why people participate in sport have been examined by researchers (Ko et al., 2008; Hedstrom and Gould, 2004; Buonamano and Mussino, 1995). Milne and McDonald were the first researchers to reveal the motivation of sports consumption (Şimşek, 2012). Authors have developed the Motivation of Sport Consumer (MSC) scale. In the scale, there are four factors as mental health, sports-based, social and personal needs. In addition, the researchers found differences in motivation between participants in individual sports and those in team contact sports. In another study related to sports consumption, Trail and James (2001) have developed Motivation Scale Sport Consumption (MSSC) consisting of 9 factors as follows: achievement, knowledge, aesthetics, drama, escape, family, physical attraction, physical skills and social interaction. McDonald et al. (2002) examined 13 motivation constructs (i.e. physical fitness, risk taking, stress reduction, aggression, affiliation, social facilitation, self-esteem, competition, achievement, skill mastery, aesthetics, value development and self-actualization) for sport participants in the US.

The construct of physical fitness can be defined as the state of being in good physical condition and health (Özesen, 2007). Improving health and physical fitness are the prime factor that motivating the sport participation. Participating in sports provides opportunities for risk taking which may not be possible in the course of everyday life. Defined as the process of reducing state anxiety, stress reduction effects involving sports and exercising (Özesen, 2007). Sports also help for the expression of aggressive feelings and emotions. McDonald et al. (2002) claimed that affiliation can be described as connecting or associating oneself with the need to interact, socialize with others and it is the one of the important factors to participate in sports. Through sport, participants enhance their self esteem by having a positive perception of self and the physical skills and abilities being developed during the exposure to activities (Özesen, 2007). Because sport is a clearly achievement-oriented activity, it helps participants to satisfy achievement needs. Aesthetics is defined as the beauty, grace, or other artistic characteristics of sport (Özesen, 2007). Being with others who enjoy the same activity is important for sport and

leisure activities participants. Competition, skill mastery, value development and self-actualization are other participation motives suggested by Milne and McDonald (Şimşek, 2012). Ko et al. (2008), in consideration of the consumption behaviour of sports consumers, decided to directly measure fun as a motivational factor. Wankel (1985) claims that fun is a predominant reason for participating sport. Many individuals become involved in sport simply because it is perceived as an enjoyable pastime (Wann, 2008). Kondric et al. (2013) conducted a study to examine the differences in motivation to participate in sport activities among sports students from three different countries. According to results, students' sport motives consisted of sport action with friend, popularity, fitness & health, social status, sports events, relaxation through sports factors. The purpose of this study is to extend our understanding of sport consumers by identifying motives and to ascertain whether different motives influence participation across multiple sports.

## **METHOD**

### Sample

The data was collected from customers of a famous sport equipment retailer in a shopping mall located in Adana. The retailer is one of the world's largest sporting goods retailers and stocks a wide range of sporting goods, from tennis rackets to advanced scuba diving equipment, usually in large superstores. It is easy to reach consumers who perform different kinds of sports in this retailer. A convenient sample group of 450 subjects had been assigned randomly for the study. A total of 450 questionnaire were distributed at the store; 421 (93,5 %) usable questionnaires were collected.

### Procedure

Data of this research had been gathered via a survey questionnaire. Research personnel were recruited and trained to assist with the data collection. Following a prepared script, the researchers approached individuals after they made the payment and they asked them for participating in the research. The participants who agreed to participate completed a three-page questionnaire. On average, it took approximately 15 minutes for the participants to complete the study. Data was collected 14-30 September 2014.

## Scale

Within this project we employed the sport consumption motivation scale (McDonald et al., 2002) which has been widely used in several studies of motives to participate in sports. Basic motives constructs for sport participation as follows: physical fitness, risk taking, stress reduction, aggression, affiliation, social facilitation, self-esteem, competition, achievement, skill mastery, aesthetics, value development and self-actualization (Gill et al., 1983). "Fun" construct as a motivational factor has included to the study (Ko et al., 2008). It is claimed that "fun" is a predominant reason for sport participation (Wankel, 1985). "Fun" motive items are adapted from Ko et al. (2008). The scale items are shown in Table 2.

A pilot test was employed to test the reliability of the revised survey instrument. The researcher selected a convenience sample of 50 students from sports management classes at Cukurova University. The researchers deleted items which have low factor loadings. Items of "aesthetics" were deleted because doing so the Cronbach's alpha value improved. The modified survey scale contained a total of 39 items representing 13 motivation factors. A five-point Likert scale was used. Respondents answered the construct items, indicating their preferences from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). The reported reliability (internal consistency) of the scale is adequate. More specifically, the Cronbach's alphas of the original 39-item scale ranged from  $\alpha = 0.64$  to  $\alpha = 0.92$ . The alpha values for the scales are also shown in Table 2.

## Data Analysis

The data were processed with the SPSS Statistics software. The basic descriptive parameters were calculated (mean, standard deviation, frequency of answers). Univariate ANOVA was used to test for differences different sports in relation to motivation factors. We then performed a confirmatory factor analysis on each motivation construct using AMOS software. Goodness of fit indices is used to evaluate overall fit of the model.

## RESULTS

### Sample Characteristics and Descriptive Statistics

The sample composed of 421 respondents, 50,6% male and 49,4% female. As seen in Table 1, 46,3% of respondents were between 20 and 24 years old. In addition to demographic

questions, some questions in relation to frequency of nutrition, supplement consumption, smoking habits and sport expenditures were asked to the respondents. According to results, the majority of respondents (72,7%) were having meals 3-4 times during the day, were not smoking (68,4%) and did not have any supplement (74,3%). The participants, who had got some kinds of supplements, stated that they mostly decided to take supplement by their selves (44,9%). Instructors, friends, dieticians and others also recommended participants to take supplement (Table 1).

And it is seen that the majority of respondents (35,9%) spend less than \$100 per year concerning to sport participation. Also respondents were asked whether they bought something essential for sport participation when they went to the stores. Clothing was the most purchased product category (N=283). Shoes (N=219) and accessories (N=115) were purchased also mostly by participants.

**Table 1:** Sample characteristics

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
female	208	49,4
male	213	50,6
<b>Age</b>		
15-19	32	7,7
20-24	195	46,3
25-29	84	19,9
30-34	47	11,2
35-39	27	6,5
40-44	21	5,0
45 or above	12	2,7
not answered	3	0,7
<b>Sports</b>		
Canoeing	19	4,5
Pilates	84	19,9
Tennis	81	19,2
Climbing	13	3,1
Swimming	59	14,0
M. Thai	14	3,3
Handball	41	9,7
Football	26	6,2
Basketball	11	2,6
Volleyball	14	3,3
Fitness	59	14,0
<b>Frequency of nutrition</b>		
1-2	72	17,1
3-4	306	72,7
<b>Table 1(cont.):</b> Sample characteristics		
5 or above	42	10,0
not answered	1	0,2
<b>Supplement</b>		
Yes	95	22,6
No	313	74,3
not answered	13	3,1
<b>Supplement suggestion (Multiple choice)</b>		
Instructor	18	16,8
Myself	48	44,9
Dietician	21	19,6
Friend	10	9,3
Other (e.g. doctors)	10	9,3
<b>Smoking</b>		
Yes	130	30,9
No	288	68,4
not answered	3	0,7
<b>Expenditure (last 12 months conc.sport participation)</b>		
Less than \$100	151	35,9
\$100-250	116	27,6
\$251-400	61	14,5
More than \$400	88	20,9
not answered	5	1,2
Total	421	100,0

## Results of the Measurement Model Test

Before testing whether there were differences in the motives across different sports, a confirmatory factor analysis was computed to verify the internal consistency and construct validity of the sport participation motives. The CFA was necessary because one new construct was included and one old construct excluded, also the wording of several items was changed for this study. The results reported in Table 2 indicate that thirteen factors showed good internal consistency and construct reliability. Fit indices for the measurement model as follows:  $\chi^2/df=1438,7/624=2,30$ ; GFI= ,91; CFI=,90; RMSEA=,05. The Cronbach's alpha values for all the subscales were above the traditional cut off of .70 except for Risk Taking ( $\alpha =.64$ ) and AVE values for the subscales were greater than .50 except for three cases (i.e. Risk Taking, Social Facilitation, Value Development). In general, the results supported that scale items showed good convergent validity. The scale used in this study also can be regarded as having an acceptable reliability.

Table 2: Constructs used in the study

Factor and Items ( $\alpha=.92$ )	$\beta$	$\alpha$	AVE
<b>Achievement</b>		,89	0,74
• I have a strong desire to be successful in ... sports	,85		
• I would be willing to work all year to be successful in ... sports	,89		
• My goal is to be outstanding in ... sports	,84		
<b>Self-Actualization</b>		,75	0,504
• ... sports help me grow as a person	,73		
• ... sports help me accomplish things	,69		
• ... sports help me to achieve my potential	,71		
<b>Self-Esteem</b>		,78	0,548
• ... sports make me feel that I am a special person	,75		
• ... sports make me feel confident about my abilities	,74		
• ... sports give me a feeling of self-assurance	,73		
<b>Value Development</b>		,72	0,470
• ... sports help me to understand the value of hard work and dedication	,70		
• ... sports teach me lessons that i may not learn elsewhere	,68		
• ... sports have helped make me the kind of person i am	,67		
<b>Social Facilitation</b>		,72	0,472
• I enjoy playing ... sports because it gives me chance to form social relationships	,71		
• Participation in ... sports with a group helps me to learn social skills	,69		
• My enjoyment of ... sports depends on sharing the experience with other people	,66		
<b>Affiliation</b>		,78	0,548
• Participating in ... sports make me feel like i belong to a special group	,73		
• There is a certain camaraderie among the people who participate in ... sports	,76		
• I feel a bond with the people who play my favourite sport	,73		
<b>Fun</b>		,70	0,508



• I participate in ... sports to have fun	,79		
• ... sports are enjoyable to me	,78		
• While I am participating in ... sports i am having fun	,54		
<b>Physical Fitness</b>		,80	0,584
• I participate in ... sports to stay physically fit	,72		
• I participate in ... sports because i feel it keeps me healthy	,79		
• I participate in ... sports because it improves my physical fitness	,78		
<b>Skill Mastery</b>		,75	0,515
• I enjoy participating in ... sports because the skills are difficult to master	,66		
• ... sports are challenging because they are a difficult activity to master	,76		
• It takes a high degree of skill on my part to attain the mastery I expect in ... sports	,73		

**Table 2:** Constructs used in the study (continued)

<b>Stress Release</b>		,83	0,632
• ...sports are an excellent remedy for me if I am tense, irritable and anxious	,81		
• ...sports make me feel less stressed than I did before I started	,85		
• ...sports help me to reduce stress	,72		
<b>Aggression</b>		,72	0,503
• ... sports can bring out my aggressive nature	,73		
• Much of my enjoyment from ... sports comes from the aggressive aspects of it	,43		
• Feel less aggressive towards other people after participating in my favourite ... sports	,89		
<b>Competition</b>		,84	0,64
• ... sports help me to develop a competitive work ethic	,79		
• Competition is the best part of participating in ... sports	,80		
• The better the opponents, the more I enjoy ... sports competitions	,81		
<b>Risk Taking</b>		,64	0,454
• If I have to sacrifice my body when playing ... sports, so be it	,75		
• I put my entire self on the line when i participate in ... sports	,80		
• Part of the fun of ... sports is the danger involved	,40		

### Overall Difference Tests

Table 3 contains summated means and standard deviations for each of the 13 factors of motivation. 'Fun was rated as the most important motivation factor for the Canoeing, Tennis, Climbing, Swimming, Handball, Football, Basketball and Volleyball sports. For Pilates and Fitness, 'Physical Fitness' motive was rated as most important motive. And lastly 'Achievement' motive was rated as most important motive for Muay Thai sports.

One-way ANOVA was conducted to assess whether there were significant differences between sports consumption motives across multiple sports. Sports types differences (p values) on thirteen dependent variables (Achievement, Self-Actualization, Self-Esteem, Value Development, Social Facilitation, Affiliation, Fun, Physical Fitness, Skill Mastery, Stress Release, Aggression, Competition and Risk Taking) were significant ( $p < .05$  see Table 3).

Especially, ‘Pilates’ sports consistently showed higher means for the Achievement, Self-Actualization, Self-Esteem, Value Development, Stress Release, Affiliation, Fun, Physical Fitness and Social Facilitation factors. ‘Muay Thai’ sports showed higher means for the Achievement, Skill Mastery, Competition and Risk Taking factors. Climbing and Football sports showed higher means for the Fun factor. ‘Fitness’ sports showed higher means for the Physical Fitness factor. In addition, significant differences were found among other sports types seen in the table.

**Table 3:** Means and Standard Deviations for Sports Consumption Motivations

Sport	Mean (S.D.)													F Stat.	P value	Post Hoc
	Canoeing (1)	Pilates (2)	Tennis (3)	Climbing (4)	Swimming (5)	M. Thai (6)	Handball (7)	Football (8)	Basketball (9)	Volleyball (10)	Fitness (11)					
<b>Achievement</b>	3,631 (.736)	4,369 (.998)	3,462 (1,005)	3,666 (.838)	3,395 (.880)	<b>4,571</b> (.479)	3,967 (.805)	3,461 (1,119)	3,090 (1,096)	3,452 (1,188)	3,881 (.806)	7,675	.000	2>1,3,5,8,11 6>1,3,5,8,9,11		
<b>Self-Actualization</b>	3,754 (.606)	4,526 (.577)	4,012 (.617)	4,179 (.537)	3,983 (.591)	4,071 (.629)	4,113 (.580)	3,987 (.689)	3,757 (.634)	3,595 (.601)	4,242 (.605)	6,867	.000	2>1,3,5,10		
<b>Self-Esteem</b>	3,877 (.487)	4,594 (.668)	3,977 (.587)	4,205 (.500)	4,045 (.667)	4,190 (.580)	4,292 (.548)	4,012 (.635)	3,818 (.672)	3,666 (.522)	4,096 (.663)	6,978	.000	2>1,3,5,10,11		
<b>Value Development</b>	3,561 (.556)	4,429 (.699)	3,613 (.580)	4,102 (.599)	3,621 (.704)	4,000 (.739)	4,113 (.474)	3,730 (.754)	3,424 (.559)	3,500 (.725)	3,909 (.645)	10,738	.000	2>1,3,5,8,9,10		
<b>Social Facilitation</b>	3,807 (.611)	4,566 (.639)	3,983 (.586)	4,102 (.567)	3,858 (.547)	4,238 (.529)	3,951 (.776)	4,038 (.369)	3,575 (.449)	3,857 (.338)	4,016 (.653)	8,122	.000	2>1,3,5,7,8,9,10,11		
<b>Affiliation</b>	3,912 (.564)	4,614 (.605)	4,016 (.572)	4,282 (.524)	3,892 (.641)	4,142 (.759)	4,187 (.687)	4,089 (.570)	3,787 (.637)	3,833 (.748)	4,000 (.678)	7,268	.000	2>1,3,5,11		
<b>Fun</b>	<b>4,456</b> (.487)	4,823 (.376)	<b>4,481</b> (.524)	<b>4,666</b> (.333)	<b>4,248</b> (.688)	4,000 (.506)	<b>4,479</b> (.421)	<b>4,653</b> (.370)	<b>4,484</b> (.431)	<b>4,023</b> (.619)	4,163 (.730)	8,972	.000	2>3,5,6,7,10,11 4>6,11 8>6,5,11		
<b>Physical Fitness</b>	3,649 (.652)	<b>4,847</b> (.372)	4,166 (.565)	4,179 (.752)	4,152 (.632)	3,904 (.646)	4,040 (.696)	4,166 (.817)	4,121 (.637)	3,571 (.810)	<b>4,542</b> (.441)	15,305	.000	2>1,3,5,6,7,8,10 11>1,2,3,5,7,10		
<b>Skill Mastery</b>	3,403 (.857)	3,859 (.704)	3,802 (.733)	4,128 (.928)	3,683 (.908)	4,547 (.563)	3,943 (.536)	3,641 (.729)	2,969 (.836)	3,142 (.854)	3,610 (.812)	5,027	.000	6>1,2,3,5,8,9,10,11		
<b>Stress Release</b>	3,771 (.472)	4,739 (.565)	4,259 (.534)	4,179 (.661)	4,050 (.680)	4,071 (.730)	3,878 (.626)	4,166 (.687)	3,969 (.586)	3,619 (.737)	4,231 (.632)	10,380	.000	2>1,3,5,7,10,11		
<b>Aggression</b>	2,701 (1,005)	2,867 (.997)	3,049 (.802)	2,794 (.674)	3,220 (.808)	3,785 (.674)	3,569 (.796)	3,217 (.742)	3,454 (.500)	3,666 (.691)	3,293 (.940)	4,373	.000	7>2		
<b>Competition</b>	3,315 (1,108)	3,024 (.995)	3,543 (.916)	2,897 (.774)	3,468 (.899)	4,261 (.629)	4,081 (.622)	4,051 (.522)	3,606 (.663)	3,595 (.838)	3,542 (.984)	6,931	.000	3,6,7,8>2 3>2,7,8		
<b>Risk Taking</b>	2,807 (1,050)	2,481 (.767)	2,757 (.902)	3,076 (.682)	3,135 (.947)	3,952 (.855)	3,682 (.816)	2,871 (.843)	2,484 (.750)	3,095 (.946)	3,107 (.998)	8,203	.000	5>2 6,7>2,3		

In Table 4 test homogeneity of the variance results are seen. Before choosing the Post Hoc Tests the results are considered. Scheffe Post Hoc Test was used when equal variances assumed (Risk Taking, Aggression, Stress Release, Affiliation, Value Development, Self-Actualization and Self-Esteem). Dunnett’ T3 Post Hoc Test was used when equal variances not assumed (Achievement, Social Facilitation, Fun, Physical Fitness, Skill Mastery and Competition motives)

**Table 4:** Test of Homogeneity of Variances

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Levene Statistic</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Achievement	2,954	,001
Self-Actualization	,135	,999
Self-Esteem	,965	,474
Value Development	1,519	,130
Social Facilitation	3,160	,001
Affiliation	,616	,800
Fun	5,391	,000
Physical Fitness	5,331	,000
Skill Mastery	2,638	,004
Stress Release	1,125	,341
Aggression	1,722	,074
Competition	3,805	,000
Risk Taking	1,495	,139

## CONCLUSION

The trend towards increasing participation in sports, as a leisure time activity, indicates a particular need to study the consumption behavior of sport participants. This research offers several potential contributions, but particularly, extends the sport consumption motivation literature. There were found significant differences in important motives between different types of exercise and physical activity. Overall, the results suggest that fun was rated as the most important reason why people participate in most of the sports. Participants doing Muay Thai are rated achievement factor as the most important factor. On the other hand, Physical fitness is important for Fitness sport participants. Considering differences tests results, especially 'Pilates' sports consistently showed higher means for the Achievement, Self-Actualization, Self-Esteem, Value Development, Stress Release, Affiliation, Fun, Physical, Fitness and Social Facilitation factors than many of others.

The results of the present study provide information about the consumer behavior of sport participants. With regard to expenditures, it would appear that most of the respondents spent less than \$100 in the last 12 months. The implications of these results suggest that this market segment is not comfortable spending money. Results show that clothing, shoes and accessories were the most purchased product categories. It is known that sport apparel and footwear can have both a sport and a fashion use (Stevens et al. 2005). The reason can be this multipurpose

usage. Future research could examine how this segment will spend money to buy something essential to do sports.

## **DISCUSSION**

This research offers several potential contributions, but particularly, extends the study carried out by McDonald et al's (2002) on the sport participation motivation. In this study, we have adapted scale items from the published previous studies. The present research results showed the existence of thirteen motives for sport participants in Turkey. Although these findings are in consistent with McDonald et al's (2002), it includes an added motive (fun) that was reported in Ko et al.'s (2008) and excludes aesthetic motive. It is thought that aesthetics is fundamental motive for aesthetic sports (e.g. figure skating and gymnastics). Future studies should incorporate aesthetic sports. Fun is considered an important aspect of sports participation. Therefore, fun can be added to the original motivation scale developed by McDonald et al. (2002) for use in conducting research on the motivation of Turkish sport consumers.

This study has important implications to marketers and researchers in the field of sport marketing. Understanding the important motives for sport participation would help the sport marketers position their strategies accordingly. Previous literature has indicated that sport participation motives would vary by different sports and different contexts (i.e. cultural environments). Hence, sport marketers in Turkey need to effectively communicate with sport consumers along with those thirteen important motives. Successful promotion and advertising campaigns can be planned taking into consideration the different motives. For example, responses from the current sample that suggest most of the sports elicit higher fun scores could assist sport marketers in the development of a campaign communicating to consumers that they will get the enjoyable experience they desire. This is merely one example of ways in which the findings from the current study can have practical application. Fit-bodied instructors in the gym that appeal to targeted markets or have the capability of transferring images could assist in the development of a campaign communicating to consumers that they will get the physical fitness experience they desire.

One of the limitations of this study is about data collection. The data for the study was collected using a convenience sample in Turkey. Although the sample profile is considered appropriate for this study, future studies should utilize more representative samples. Secondly,

we purposefully selected easily reachable consumers in this study. Our study does not provide any information regarding the dimensionality of customers. Future studies should incorporate gender as a moderating variable to see if there are any variations between male and female consumers' sport consumption motives. Moreover, differences among motivating factors between different age groups should be examined in the future.

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