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Does Exercising for a While Changes the Motivation of Exercise Participation?¹

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Abstract

Total 300 individuals who are above eighteen years old, of which 176 (age $X=23.53$ $Ss=4.47$) are females and 124 (age $X=24.16$ $Ss=5.21$) are males, participated in the study conducted to determine the difference between the exercise motivations of adult females and males who has newly started to exercise and have been exercising for more than three years. The Recreational Exercise Motivation Measurement (REMM) was used in the research. The scale was applied before the session by the researcher on the females and males who just participated in the study and had been exercising for three years at the Fitness centers. The data obtained were applied with descriptive statistics, MANOVA and one-way ANOVA. As a result of MANOVA performed to compare genders and durations of participation, it was observed that there was a difference based on exercise participants' gender $\{F(5.292)=4.615; p=.000\}$ and durations of participation $\{F(5.292)=2.812; p=.017\}$. It was determined in the one-way variance analysis that there was a difference between females and males in favor of males in the subscale of challenge $\{F(1.296)=5.910; p=.016\}$ and the subscale of skill development $\{F(1.296)=14.016; p=.000\}$. When compared in terms of duration of participation, it could be seen that there was a difference in favor of those who had been exercising for three years and more in the sub dimensions health $\{F(1.296)=6.063; p=.014\}$, challenge $\{F(1.296)=11.194; p=.001\}$, body and outer appearance $\{F(1.296)=7.560; p=.006\}$, and skill development $\{F(1.296)=5.238; p=.023\}$. To be exercising (for three years and more) creates a discrepancy in the participation motives of females and males. It is observed that there are differences based on body and outer appearance, challenge, health, and skill development. It can also be seen that there is a difference in the participation motive between females and males based on gender. For the sub dimensions challenge and skill development, this difference seems to be in favor of males.

Keywords: Exercise Participation Motive, Gender, Duration of Participation

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Introduction

The increasing interest in the human mobility in the last half century has caused different concepts to be used in the branch. The first one is the physical activity. Physical activity is defined as the formation of energy due to the bodily movement in the skeletal muscle (Casperson, Powel and Chistenson, 1985). Exercise is considered to be a structure that is performed on a planned basis, repeatable and based on the improvement of the physical health (Casperson, Powel and Chistenson, 1985). Whereas climbing up stairs, going to work and working in the garden are physical activities in everyday life, it can be called exercise if one starts working in the garden systematically to maintain the physical health (Koruç, 1998). Biddle (1995) defines exercise as repetitive bodily movements that are conducted on a planned and programmed basis, and performed in order to enhance or maintain one or more elements of physical fitness.

Although those who study the exercise seem to have partly succeeded in people participation in exercise, they have not been able to ensure the continuity of the participation (Koruç and Arsan, 2009). About half of the beginners quit exercising in the first six months (Wankel, 1985). Quitting the exercise has similar rates in the individuals with coronary disorders who joined the exercise rehabilitation program (Oldridge, 1984).

In the studies performed on healthy individuals, time problem is often mentioned as the cause of quitting. The participants report that their exercise schedules take a long time away from job and family. Diseases in the family, indifferences towards the schedule, and transportation to the exercise center are considered to be both wastes of time and financial losses (Koruç, 2015). Song, Shephard and Cox (1983) listed the causes of quitting a fitness program as loss of interest, insufficiency of time, subscribing to another club, subscribing to a public program, and exercising alone.

Immobility has been considered to be an important health issue to deal with in today's Western countries and the interest in the subject has gradually increased for the past 25 years. Outdoor sports are one important area in this increase. Many people strive to be healthier through long walks while rediscovering the nature. In this connection, being healthy can be named as the first motivation for exercise. Reshaping the body or enhancing the appearance is another important motive for exercising. Even though it is known that shaping the body and the bodily health are very important, people do not exercise adequately. Secorad and Jourard (1953) proved in one of their studies that being able to love one's body also means being able to love oneself among women. Individuals need to exercise adequately to be able to love themselves and be pleased with themselves. Conversely, hating oneself, feeling of guilty and insecurity are observed more with losing the ideal sizes. Fun and seeking for social support call attention as another motivational instrument (Johnsgard, 1985; Willis and Campbell, 1992; Koruç, 1998; Berger, Pargman and Weinberg, 2002). One should think of fun as a requirement of a physical activity and the balance between the skills of the participants. To this end, the individual should consider the contest with close friends, and sometimes himself, as a recreational activity and not insist on performing difficult and compelling movements (Koruç, 2015). Moreover, physical activity's aspect of gaining social experience is an important factor to meet new people, get rid of loneliness and stop being alienated. The group exercises, therefore, are more important in that term. It was also determined that people have more fun when exercising in a group (Gould and Hourn, 1984).

In the studies to come, it will bear importance in terms of exercise motivations to know whether there is difference between the motivational levels of beginners and those who continue exercising. If it can be proven that motivations of individuals are enhanced with exercising, continuity of exercise can be encouraged by adding some motivation enhancers or by stimulating their wish to participate.

The aim of this study which was accordingly conducted is to find the difference between the exercise motivations of adult females and males who just began exercising and had been exercising for over three years. Thus, motivations of the beginners and those who had been exercising for a long while were compared. It was also examined whether there is a difference between females and males in terms of motivation.

Method

176 females (age 23.53 ± 4.47) and 124 males (age 24.16 ± 5.21) participated in the research to this end. The Recreational Exercise Motivation Measurement (REMM) was used in the research. The scale was developed by Rogers and Morris (2003) to determine the motivational levels of individuals in the exercise setting. It is composed of eight subscales (mastery, physical condition, social relation, psychological condition, appearance, others' expectations, pleasure and challenge/ego). It was adapted into Turkish by Gürbüz, Çelebi, Aşçı (2006). 5 factors supported the structure in the factor analysis. In this sense, other factors were excluded from the scale. The internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found to be .93 for the subscale of health, .88 for challenge, .85 for body and outer appearance, .88 for fun and .84 for skill development. The scale was applied on the female and male groups just before the exercises and received back. Descriptive statistics, MANOVA and one-way ANOVA were used for the data analysis.

Findings

In the analysis performed according to participant groups' duration of participation and genders (Table 1), it was observed that there was a difference in terms of duration of participation $\{F(5.292)=2.812; p=.017\}$. When compared according to gender, a difference $\{F(5.292)=4.615; p=.000\}$ was observed, whereas there is no difference $\{F(5.292)=.393; p=.854\}$ was observed in terms of gender X duration of participation.

Table 1. MANOVA Results Concerning the Exercise Motivations of Exercising Individuals Based on Duration of Participation and Gender

	Wilk's λ	F (5.292)	P	η^2
Duration of Participation	.954	2.812	.017	.073
Gender	.927	4.615	.000	.046
Duration of Participation X Gender	.938	.393	.854	.007

When looked at the one-way ANOVA results performed to determine from which subscales the differences originate using MANOVA results, it is observed that there is a difference in all five subscales in terms of the exercise motivation (Table 2) based on the duration of participation. Accordingly, there are differences in the subscales health { $F(1.296)=6.063$; $p=.014$ }, challenge { $F(1.296)=11.194$; $p=.001$ }, body/outer appearance { $F(1.296)=5.655$; $p=.018$ }, fun { $F(1.296)=7.560$; $p=.006$ }, and skill development { $F(1.296)=5.238$; $p=.023$ }.

Table 2. Motivational Levels of Individuals Who Just Began Exercising and Had Been Exercising for Over Three Years

Subscale	New (N=139)		Above 3 years (N=296)		F(1.296)	P	η^2
	X	Ss	X	Ss			
Health	86.38	14.35	90.48	13.19	6,063	.014	.020
Challenge	35.17	10.81	40.78	12.41	11,194	.001	.036
Body/Outer Appearance	39.39	8.56	42.28	8.10	5,655	.018	.019
Fun	31.41	9.32	34.98	10.08	7,560	.006	.025
Skill Development	28.95	6.20	31.32	5.70	5,238	.023	.013

In terms of findings for gender (Table 3), there is a difference between female and male participants in the subscales challenge { $F(1.296)=5.910$; $p=.016$ } and skill development { $F(1.296)=14.016$; $p=.000$ }. It is observed that male participants scored more in the subscales challenge and skill development than females.

Table 3. Findings on Exercise Motivations Based on Gender

Subscale	Male (N=174)		Female (N=126)		F(1.296)	P	η^2
	X	Ss	X	Ss			
Health	88.78	14.27	88.30	13.35	.215	.843	.001
Challenge	40.21	12.67	35.38	10.44	5,910	.016	.020
Body/Outer Appearance	41.87	8.61	39.60	8.01	2,343	.127	.008
Fun	34.15	9.83	32.19	9.87	.668	.407	.007
Skill Development	31.54	5.51	28.41	6.29	14,016	.000	.045

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of the research show that exercise participation makes differences in the exercise motivations of those who just began exercising and had been exercising for over three years. Sonstroem (1997) states in his work *Psychological Model in Physical Activity Participation* that regularly engaging in physical activity has positive impacts on both physical and psychological health.

In previous research performed with individuals who engaged in physical activities for longer, participants stated that they continued such activities because they found them to be fun (Willis and Campbell, 1992). Playing games and socializing can be matched with fun more easily. However, today's societies feature the production and being successful, getting away from personal necessities and motives (Wankel, 1985). Yet, production and being successful mainly depend on socializing and having fun. Success and production are at low levels at workplaces where there are tough, rigid and unpleasant rules, one cannot enjoy while working and being serious. In addition, health and fun are addressed not as conflicting experiences but consistent experiences (Willis and Campbell, 1992). Participating in the exercise for a long time positively affects individuals' appearances, ensures a more positive self-presentation, and therefore, makes them motivate for exercise even more (Altıntaş, Aşçı and Özdemir, 2007). Kyllö and Landers (1995) stated in a meta-analysis that it can be said that continuing the exercise is effective in increasing the motivation.

Deci and Ryan (2000) states that individuals will like doing an activity instead of showing performance, and this will enhance the intrinsic motivation when they freely engage in an activity and obtain some results in terms of extrinsic motivation. The findings of the study conducted accordingly have parallels with the literature. Engaging in physical activities livelily and entertainingly affects individuals' exercise participation.

In terms of findings on gender, it is seen that male participants show differences in exercise participation for the sub dimensions challenge and skill development compared to females. In the study conducted with 202 female and 208 male participants, Koivula found that there is a significant difference between genders for the dimensions challenge and excitement, outer appearance and physical health, and there is no significant difference for the dimensions socializing and getting away from stress (Koruç, 2015).

Today, cultural approaches towards man's body have changed. Man's body have started to be featured in the popular culture, and men are now used for the marketing of cosmetic products which have previously been perceived as female products such as diet, soft drinks. These changes compel traditional, masculine icons and signs and encourage men to be more interested in their appearances. It is observed that men increasingly complain most about their bellies, weights, muscles and breasts (Andersen and Fawkner, 2005). Accordingly, the findings of the study show that women have been paying more attention to their bodies lately and getting motivated more quickly to continue exercising.

Mishkind et al. (1986) presented a hypothesis of 3 main socio-cultural changes as the reason for the increasing body awareness and concern for physical appearance among men. The first one, developing muscles as a result of narrowing masculine domain is one of the few ways through which men can show their manliness. The second one, preventable diseases (such as cardiovascular), is one of the primary death causes and this highlights the fact that individuals

should preserve their health. Finally, being healthy and looking healthy is associated with fine but mesomorphic physical structure for men.

In an article discussing about “the new ideal beauty” published in the magazine “Time”, the most accented subject is the mixture of fineness and a muscular structure. Within this scope, losing weight and exercising are important to achieve the ideal body sizes. People who live unhappily because of their weight want to be able to look thinner or more flamboyant. Indeed, more importantly, having weak and impressive muscles conceives the belief that it would bring success to the people. Such wrong believes may cause some problems, which I will talk about later. In short, being healthy and fit are two most important motives for exercise participation (Koruç, 2015).

It would be useful to perform the research with a wider study group due to the limitations that individuals reasons for participation and which of them changes during the long term participation are determined. On the other hand, it would also be practical to find whether the discrepancy between the participation of females and males makes a difference culturally.

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