DETERMINATION OF SPORT PARTICIPATION MOTIVATION OF YOUNG ATHLETES FROM DIFFERENT COMBAT SPORTS

FARKLI MÜCADELE SPORLARINDAKİ SPORCULARIN SPORA KATILIM GÜDÜLERİNİN BELİRLENMESİ

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ÖZ: Amaç: Bu araştırmanın amacı 12-16 yaş grubundaki sporcuların spor türüne göre spor katılım motivasyonunun belirlenmesidir. Yöntem: Araştırmaya 409'u erkek (% 67.7) ve 195'i kadın (% 32.3) olmak üzere toplam 604 sporcu voluntary olarak katılmıştır. Sporcular Spora Katılım Güdüsü Ölçeği'ni doldurmuşlardır. Veriler betimsel istatistikler ve MANOVA ile analiz edilmiştir. Post hoc analizleri olarak Tukey testi kullanılmıştır. Bulgular: Sonuçlara göre sporcuların spor katılım motivasyonunun spor türüne göre farklılaştığı görülmüştür. F (40, 2578.00) = 3.425, p = .000; Wilks’ λ = .798; Kismi η² = .044. Her bir bağımsız değişken için sonuçların analizi, spor türü bakımdanın takım bağlılığı F (5, 598) = 10.742, p = .000, kisma n² = .082; fitness / enerji salımı F (5, 598) = 4.204, p = .001, kisma n² = .034; hayranlıma F (5, 598) = 3.855, p = .002, kisma n² = .031; arkadaşlık F (5, 598) = 2.567, p = .026, kisma n² = .021; ve yarışma boyutu F (5, 598) = 4.040, p = .001, kisma n² = .033. arasında anlamlı farklı ortaya koymmuştur. Sonuç: Bu araştırma sonuçları farklı dövüş sporlardan ile ilgilenen genç sporcuların gündelikme özellikleri ile ilgili karan koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dövüş Sporları, Güdülenme, Spora Katılım, Sporcu

Abstract: Aim: The aim of this research was to determine the sports participation motivation of athletes aged 12-16 according to sports type. Method: 409 male (67.7%) and 195 female (32.3%) athletes, as a total of 604 athletes voluntarily participated in the research. Athletes completed a Participation Motivation Questionnaire (Gill, Gross, & Huddleston, 1983). The data were analysed by descriptive statistics and MANOVA. Tukey was used as a post hoc analysis. Results: According to the results, it was seen that sport participation motivation of the athletes differs according to sport type F (40, 2578.00) = 3.425, p = .000; Wilks’ λ = .798; Partial η² = .044. Analysing the results for each dependent variable showed that there was a significant difference in team affiliation F(5, 598) = 10.742, p = .000, Partial η² = .082; fitness/energy release F(5, 598) = 4.204, p = .001, Partial η² = .034; enjoyment F(5, 598) = 3.855, p = .002, Partial η² = .031; friendship F(5, 598) = 2.567, p = .026, Partial η² = .021; and competition F(5, 598) = 4.040, p = .001, Partial η² = .033 according to sport type. Conclusion: The results of this research reveal the motivational features of young athletes from different combat sports.

Key Words: Combat Sports, Motivation, Sport Participation, Athlete

Doi: 10.17363/SSTB.2018.2.2

(1) Sorumlu Yazar: Hakan KOLAYİŞ, Sakarya University, Faculty of Sport Sciences, Esentepe Campus, Sakarya / Turkey, hkolayis@sakarya.edu.tr, Geliş Tarihi / Received: 21.02.2018, Kabul Tarihi / Accepted: 19.06.2018, Makalenin Türü: Type of article ( Araştırma – Uygulama / Research -Application) Çıkar Çatışması / Conflict of Interest: Yok / None Etik Kurul Raporu/ Ethics Committee: Yok / None

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INTRODUCTION

Koivula (1999:361) indicates benefits of regular exercise in both physical and psychological aspects, adding that regular participation in sport activities ensures improvement in physical and mental health, decrease in mental stress and anxiety, as well as vigour and open-mindedness. In the light of such positive influences, it is important for creation of a healthier society to determine why individuals participate in regular exercise and sport, as well as the motive behind such behaviour. As for performance sports, determination of reasons behind preference of sport by individuals may unearth applications directed at performance improving. Sport psychology intends to explain behaviours in sports environment and to bring along various approaches in this respect; indeed, it is capable of explaining, by several theories, the motives for individual tendency to sports. In this context, the self-determination theory by Deci and Ryan (1985) indicates that human behaviour is based on three fundamental psychological requirements, namely, autonomy, competence and relatedness (Frederick and Schuster, 2003:241). Accordingly, as Ryan and Deci (2000:54) remark, the theory can distinguish various types of motivation based on various reasons and objectives that lead to action, adding that the most important basic distinction is between “intrinsic motivation,” which means to do something because of its interesting or entertaining character by nature, and “extrinsic motivation,” which means to do something for an external acquisition (Ryan and Deci, 2000:55). According to Cognitive Evaluation Theory, a sub-theory of self-determination, Deci et al., (1975:82) state that a behaviour guided by intrinsic motivation renders one self-sufficient and capable of making his own decisions; besides, when one is intrinsically motivated, he has himself as focus of causality. On the other hand, external prizes or feedbacks may trigger feeling of competence and decision-making, and thus they may influence intrinsic motivation. As for sports environment, it is well known that there are many factors influential on participation, continuity and performance. Fun, health, status and performance are among notable concepts regarding individual tendency for sports. On the other hand, motivation is an important factor with respect to continuity and achievement parameters in sports, as well as orientation to it (Altıntaş and Koruç, 2014:62). Cognitive evaluation theory lays stress on intrinsic motivation; accordingly, individuals who participate in activities freely without any external pressure can fulfil their requirement of autonomy and improve their skill and self-confidence to a certain extent. Consequently, it paves the way for increasing competence and self decision-making, which
in turn leads to appearance of intrinsic motivation, whereupon the individual participates in sports (Frederick and Schuster, 2003:240). An analysis on relevant literature manifests more positive results of activities due to intrinsic motives (Ingledew, Markland, & Medley, 1998; Afzal, Imran, Aslam & Kashif, 2010; Moreno, González-Cutre, Martín-Albo, & Cervelló, 2010).

The literature reveals that sport psychologists have notably dwelled on determination of elements that lead youngsters to participate in competitive sports. In addition to psychological factors about youth participation in sports, the reasons for continuing or giving up sports have been popular subjects regarding participation (Weinberg et. al., 2000:323). As a matter of fact, Clewes & Gross (1995:90) Morris, Clayton, Power, & Jin-Song (1996:364), Weiss & Chaumeton (1992:61) analysed youth participation in competitive sports, while Rintaugu & Nteere (2011) asserted that college athletes begin sports due to need of mastering in competitive environment. Gill, Gross & Huddleston (1983:1), Kolt et al (1999:381), White & Duda (1994:4) carried out studies, according to which the reasons for participation in sports include skill development and learning, fun, fitness, making friends and achievement. According to Visek et al., (2015) Children cite ‘fun’ as the primary reason for participation in organized sport.

Relevant studies put forth various motives to encourage children to participation in sports. Besides, it is well-known that some youngsters are involved in sports for fun, enjoyment, skill development and learning new skills (Gardner et al., 2017; Dwyer, 1992; Gould, Feltz & Weiss, 1985). Likewise, Yan & Penny (2004:978) realised studies with American and Chinese youth in order to analyse cultural influence on participation motivations for sports; thereupon, American youth do sports in order to compete and develop skills, while Chinese get involved for socialising and health. Besides, upon an analysis about participation in combat sports, Özbek & Şanlı (2011:203) studied on karate players from universities and concluded that youngsters choose karate under the influence of family and friends, as well as for pleasure of winning and better physical appearance. There are many features which affect the motivational characteristics of athletes. Many researches were conducted in different countries with different samples to examine sport participation motivation of athletes (e.g. Gülbaş et al., 2018; Mishra and Acharya, 2017; Gjesdal, 2017; Ekinci et al., 2017; Shannon, 2016).

**AIM of the STUDY**

The current studies in relevant literature put forth the necessity of new studies about motivation for participation in sports in various
environments and cultures (Benar & Longhmani, 2014). Therefore, although there have been some research in sport participation motivation of athletes, more research is needed in athletes with different characteristics. In this context, the objective of this study is to determine reasons behind participation of 12 to 16 year-old licensed athletes in combat sports depending on the kind of sport and gender.

RESEARCH METHOD

Participants

A total of 604 athletes, namely, 409 males (67.7%) and 195 females (32.3%) participated in the survey. In the group, 209 do taekwondo (34.6%), 65 athletes are involved in kickboxing (10.8%), 162 do karate (26.8%), 90 are engaged in judo (14.9%), while there are 50 wrestlers (8.3%) and 28 boxers (4.6%). The age of athletes vary between 12 and 16 (their average years in sports are found 3.49±2.30 years). There are less female athletes in the above mentioned sports therefore the number of males and females are representative of the universe.

Measures

Sport Participation Motivation Questionnaire

“Sport Participation Motivation Questionnaire” is used for determining the related motivation of workgroup. Hereby scale, developed by Gill, Gross and Huddleston (1983), consists of 30 articles and 8 sub-dimensions so as to determine why athletes participate in sports. These sub-dimensions are named as achievement/status, fitness/energy release, team spirit, friendship, fun, competition, skill development and activity/being active. Athletes evaluate each item over a triple scale, including “Very important (1),” “Somewhat important (2),” and “Not important (3).” During the phase of data entry to computer, hereby study employed a recoding process in dataset so that higher scores signify higher motivation. Accordingly, the data are calculated as “Very important (3),” “Somewhat Important (2),” and “Not important (1).” Consequently, the higher the score in a given sub-dimension reflects the importance of the latter. The scale was adapted to Turkish by Çelebi (1993). Then, Oyar et al (2001) conducted a study of validity and reliability on 9 to 17 year-old Turkish students.

Procedure

Data collection process took place before or after training sessions of athletes. Permissions were taken from the sports coaches before the data collection. Data collection was conducted by the researchers who are experienced in sport psychology research and sport psychology consultation. Athletes were asked to participate in the survey, once the objective of research was provided. All the athletes
were informed that the obtained data will exclusively be used for research purposes.

**ANALYSIS**

Once the data were transferred to the software SPSS 17, necessary checks were made for detecting any erroneous entries, and the mistakes were duly corrected. During the data assessment, their percentage frequency, arithmetic mean and standard deviations were calculated. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used in order to determine any difference in motivation for participation depending on sport branches. Turkey test was employed as post hoc analysis so as to determine between which sport branches there is a significant difference, regarding such differences in motivation of participation. Throughout calculation, significance level was set as 0.05.

**RESULTS**

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics About Scores in Motivation of Sport Participation Among Female and Male Combat Athletes

| Achievement/Status          | Gender  | N   | \( \bar{x} \) | Ss   |
|-----------------------------|---------|-----|---------------|------|
| Male                        | 409     | 2.74| 0.30          |
| Female                      | 195     | 2.76| 0.30          |
| Team membership/Spirit      | Male    | 409 | 2.74          | 0.35 |
| Female                      | 195     | 2.79| 0.33          |
| Fitness/ Energy release     | Male    | 409 | 2.72          | 0.31 |
| Female                      | 195     | 2.71| 0.31          |
| Fun                         | Male    | 409 | 2.67          | 0.35 |
| Female                      | 195     | 2.67| 0.38          |
| Friendship                  | Male    | 409 | 2.68          | 0.39 |
| Female                      | 195     | 2.67| 0.43          |
| Competition                 | Male    | 409 | 2.77          | 0.34 |
| Female                      | 195     | 2.74| 0.37          |
| Action/ Being active        | Male    | 409 | 2.82          | 0.35 |
| Female                      | 195     | 2.84| 0.35          |
| Skill development           | Male    | 409 | 2.88          | 0.24 |
| Female                      | 195     | 2.84| 0.27          |
As shown in table 1, upon an analysis on motivation for sports participation among combat athletes as per gender, the motivation types for male athletes are listed, from the most to least important, as follows: skill development, action/being active, competition, team spirit, achievement/status, fitness/energy release, friendship and fun. As for females, the motivations according to importance level are as below: action/being active, skill development, team spirit, achievement status, fitness/energy release, fun and friendship.

| Sub-Dimensions          | n  | X   | Ss  | Sub-Dimensions          | n  | X   | Ss  |
|-------------------------|----|-----|-----|-------------------------|----|-----|-----|
| Taekwondo               |    |     |     | Judo                    |    |     |     |
| Achievement/Status      | 209| 2.74| 0.29| Achievement/Status      | 90 | 2.73| 0.34|
| Team membership/Spirit  |    | 2.63| 0.39| Team membership/Spirit  |    | 2.78| 0.31|
| Fitness/Energy release  |    | 2.66| 0.37| Fitness/Energy release  |    | 2.74| 0.28|
| Fun                     | 209| 2.60| 0.41| Fun                     | 90 | 2.73| 0.31|
| Friendship              |    | 2.71| 0.43| Friendship              |    | 2.65| 0.41|
| Competition             |    | 2.78| 0.33| Competition             |    | 2.76| 0.37|
| Action/Being-active     |    | 2.83| 0.36| Action/Being-active     |    | 2.82| 0.39|
| Skill development       |    | 2.87| 0.28| Skill development       |    | 2.82| 0.26|
| Kickboxing              |    |     |     | Wrestling               |    |     |     |
| Achievement/Status      | 65 | 2.78| 0.28| Achievement/Status      | 50 | 2.71| 0.32|
| Team membership/Spirit  |    | 2.84| 0.38| Team membership/Spirit  |    | 2.82| 0.27|
| Fitness/Energy release  |    | 2.83| 0.20| Fitness/Energy release  |    | 2.69| 0.31|
| Fun                     | 65 | 2.79| 0.34| Fun                     | 50 | 2.62| 0.39|
| Friendship              |    | 2.76| 0.40| Friendship              |    | 2.53| 0.45|
| Competition             |    | 2.90| 0.22| Competition             |    | 2.78| 0.37|
| Action/Being-active     |    | 2.88| 0.25| Action/Being-active     |    | 2.78| 0.35|
| Skill development       |    | 2.92| 0.16| Skill development       |    | 2.85| 0.31|
As shown in table 2, according to average scores of motivation for sports participation as per branches, the most and least important reasons for participation in taekwondo are skill development and fun, respectively. In kickboxing, the most important motivation is skill development while the least important is friendship; in karate, team spirit and skill development are the most important (0.21) whereas friendship is the least. Judokas consider action/being vital and friendship insignificant; wrestlers see skill development as the most important and friendship as the least, while among boxers, skill development is of utmost importance, where friendship does not matter.

Table 3. Results of Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) on Motivation Scores of Sports Participation as Per Branch

| Impact          | Wilks’ λ | F     | Hypothesis SD | Error SD | Sig. | Partial η² |
|-----------------|----------|-------|---------------|----------|------|-------------|
| Intersection    | .008     | 9117.071 | 8.000         | 591.000  | .000 | .992        |
| Sport Branch    | .798     | 3.425   | 40.000        | 2578.904 | .000 | .044        |

According to table 3, pursuant to results of MANOVA test, there is a significant difference between the scores of motivation for sports participation as per branch. F (40, 2578.00) = 3.425, p = .000; Wilks’ λ = .798; Partial η² = .044. ANOVA analysis was applied in order to determine which dependent variable/variables lead to the mentioned difference.
Table 4. Results of ANOVA Test On Motivation of Sport Participation as Per Branch

| Source           | Dependent variable           | Sum of squares | Degree of freedom | Mean of squares | F       | P      | Partial η² |
|------------------|------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------|--------|------------|
| Sports branch    | Achievement/Status           | .204           | 5                 | .041            | .448    | .815   | .004       |
|                  | Team membership/Spirit       | 5.961          | 5                 | 1.192           | 10.742  | .000   | .082       |
|                  | Fitness/Energy release       | 1.966          | 5                 | .393            | 4.204   | .001   | .034       |
|                  | Fun                          | 2.463          | 5                 | .493            | 3.855   | .002   | .031       |
|                  | Friendship                   | 2.082          | 5                 | .416            | 2.567   | .026   | .021       |
|                  | Competition                  | 2.363          | 5                 | .473            | 4.040   | .001   | .033       |
|                  | Action/Being active          | .338           | 5                 | .068            | .561    | .730   | .005       |
|                  | Skill development            | .465           | 5                 | .093            | 1.492   | .191   | .012       |
| Error            | Achievement/Status           | 54.425         | 598               | .091            |         |        |            |
|                  | Team membership/Spirit       | 66.372         | 598               | .111            |         |        |            |
|                  | Fitness/Energy release       | 55.931         | 598               | .094            |         |        |            |
|                  | Fun                          | 76.409         | 598               | .128            |         |        |            |
|                  | Friendship                   | 96.993         | 598               | .162            |         |        |            |
|                  | Competition                  | 69.939         | 598               | .117            |         |        |            |
|                  | Action/Being active          | 72.097         | 598               | .121            |         |        |            |
|                  | Skill development            | 37.272         | 598               | .062            |         |        |            |
| Total            | Achievement/Status           | 4602.600       | 604               |                 |         |        |            |
|                  | Team membership/Spirit       | 4667.625       | 604               |                 |         |        |            |
|                  | Fitness/Energy release       | 4523.920       | 604               |                 |         |        |            |
|                  | Fun                          | 4397.125       | 604               |                 |         |        |            |
|                  | Friendship                   | 4419.111       | 604               |                 |         |        |            |
|                  | Competition                  | 4686.000       | 604               |                 |         |        |            |
|                  | Action/Being active          | 4908.000       | 604               |                 |         |        |            |
|                  | Skill development            | 4991.438       | 604               |                 |         |        |            |

As shown in table 4, once the analysis results are separately evaluated for each dependent variable, significant differences are determined as below: For team spirit, F(5, 598) = 10.742. p = .000. Partial η² = .082; for fitness/energy release, F(5, 598) = 4.204, p =
.001, Partial $\eta^2 = .034$; for fun, $F(5, 598) = 3.855, p = .002$. Partial $\eta^2 = .031$; for friendship, $F(5, 598) = 2.567, p = .026$, Partial $\eta^2 = .021$; and for competition, $F(5, 598) = 4.040, p = .001$, Partial $\eta^2 = .033$.

In the wake of Turkey post hoc analysis to determine between which branches significant difference occurs, team spirit scores are significantly lower for taekwondo (2.74±0.29), kickboxing (2.84±0.38), karate (2.86±0.27), judo (2.78±0.31) and wrestling (2.82±0.27).

As for fitness/energy release aspect, the average score for taekwondo is found (2.66±0.37), and it is significantly lower than those of kickboxing (2.83±0.20) and karate (2.76±0.28).

The significant difference with respect to fun arises from the difference between average scores in taekwondo (2.60±0.41) and kickboxing (2.79±0.34). An analysis on friendship aspect shows that the difference is due to kickboxing (2.76±0.40) and wrestling (2.53±0.45). The significant difference regarding competition aspect originates from the difference of average scores in karate (2.69±0.38) and kickboxing (2.76±0.40).

**DISCUSSION**

It is important to determine participation motivations among youth for sports so as to take measures to prevent them from alienating from sports and physical activity. The number of relevant studies gradually has recently increased (e.g. Sindik et al., 2013:14–31; Cope et al., 2013:56-75; Gülbahçe et al., 2018: 79-87; Mishra and Acharya, 2017: 79-85). Hereby this research aims at determining reasons for participation of 12-16 year-old athletes in sports as per sports branch; and results reveal different participation motives for different sports. According to the findings, the scores in team spirit, fitness/energy release, fun, friendship and competition differ depending on branches of athletes.

The relevant studies put forth the difference in motivation for sports participation depending on certain features of athletes. For example, Altıntaş and Koruç (2014) conducted a research in order to analyse young athletes’ motivation as per gender and sport. Pursuant to results of their study, no significant difference of participation motivation is in question with respect to gender. Nonetheless, athletes in team sports have significantly higher scores in sub-dimensions of team spirit and friendship, compared to those in individual sports (Altıntaş & Koruç 2014:65). Another study examines participation motivation for sports among 15-18 year-old high school student in terms of diverse variables. Thereupon, the sub-dimension “competition” is more important among footballers compared to those in “other branches” group. Moreover, the sub-dimension of friendship is more important
for volleyball and football players than it is for basketball players (Şirin et al, 2008:104). Korur et al (2013:233) analysed the participation motivation of youth for sports with regard to certain variables, and concluded that the motivation differs depending on gender, age, sports branch and geographical region. Pursuant to the study by Erdoğdu et al (2014: 262), the dimensions of achievement/status, fun and friendship display dramatic changes as per sports branch. There are some differences among athletes therefore sport participation motivation is examined in different cultures with different samples (e.g. Gülbahçe et al., 2018; Mishra and Acharya, 2017; Gjesdal, 2017; Shannon, 2016).

Environmental factors should comply with the motivation among children for participation and continuity in sports, for that they are orientated to sports and other physical activities at an early age (Cope et al, 2013:57). For this purpose, relevant literature comprises various recommendations about behaviours and practices by trainers so as to ensure active participation of children in sports (Cope et al, 2013:67). For example, Pelletier et al (2001) carried out a study with swimmers at an average age of 15.6, and found out that an environment which supports autonomy of athletes may have a positive impact on the quality of motivation compared to a non-autonomous and more controlling environment (Pelletier et al, 2001:279). Another research to determine participation motivation among young Americans, Australians and New Zealanders yielded similar results regarding motivation in the mentioned countries. The analyses as per gender indicate that competition is a greater motivation among boys, while girls participate in sport more for social reasons and fitness (Weinberg et al, 2000:342). According to a study on adults between 20 to 30 year-olds, the participation motivations pursuant to importance level are determined as follows: social energy, fitness, energy release, intrinsic motivation, teamwork, fun, extrinsic motivation and competition. Besides, differences were observed between women and men regarding mentioned motivations (Afsanepurak, et al., 2012:793). Again, the intrinsic motivations for physical training among students who join afterschool sport activities are found much higher than those who do not (Koka & Hein, 2003:86).

An article derives scientific studies with qualitative research methods; and it examines individuals who lived in England between 1990 and 2004 regarding the experience of participants in sports and physical activities, as well as their reasons for participating in sports/physical activities or not; accordingly, the individuals join sports and physical activities so as to initiate and maintain fun and social relationships (Allender et al., 2006:829). Pursuant to another survey on participation
reasons of students in sports and exercises, intrinsic motives came to the forefront such as fun and challenge. As for participation in exercises, the extrinsic reasons such as physical appearance, overweight and overcoming stress stand out among individuals (Kilpatrick et al., 2006:87). According to another study in England, affiliation, fitness, skill development and friendship are the four fundamental participation motivations for martial artists (Jones et al., 2006:30).

CONCLUSION

The results of hereby study manifests different participation motivations among athletes in combat sports depending on branch. In other words, there is a prominent motivation in each sport branch. Such difference may be due to different individual features and requirements. Besides, the unique structure and character of each sport should not be overlooked. Once young athletes find the sports environment compatible with their participation reasons, they will like practising sports more and will continue training. This could also prevent dropouts from sports. These findings provide unique information for sports coaches, sport psychologists and the parents. Each athlete’s motivational features should be known. This information then can be used to increase persistence of the athletes and to create a better sports environment and experience.

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Author Notation: This research was presented at the 14th European Congress of Sport Psychology, 14-19 July, Bern, Switzerland.