

ABSTRACT

SPORT PARTICIPATION ACTIVITY IN
FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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By

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The purpose of this study was to determine what factors affect female high school students' participation in sport activities. Factors such as parents, peers, glory, staying in shape, love and siblings all influence participation. For this study a sample of convince was used. Sixty high school female students, 28 athletes and 32 non-athletes, were surveyed using the The Participation Motivation Questionnaire, (PMQ). This questionnaire has been used in past studies and is a good measurement for physical activity motivation.

According to this study, it was concluded that athletes are influenced more by intrinsic factors such as fun and fitness, and non athletes are influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Overall, for both athletes and non athletes, it was found that fun was the most influential factor among female high school students, but it was also concluded that several factors influence participation.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The past ten years have seen an increase in youth sport participation. In 1990 it was estimated that there were over 20 million youth between the ages of 6 and 16 years who participated in non school programs (Stern, Bradley, Prince & Stroh, 1990). Governments are increasingly getting involved in sport programs, trying to increase physical activity among youth as well as adults. Parents are also spending more money and time on their children's extracurricular activities (Wielberg, 2004). With this increase in interest and funds, it is important to look at why youth get involved in sports as well as what motivates them to continue sports throughout their life.

There are a variety of factors that influence every decision we make. We face decisions everyday throughout our life. Some of these decisions are minor while others may change the direction of our life. Influences, both good and bad play an important part in our decision making. Influences can take many shapes and forms. They can be intrinsic, or extrinsic. They can be major or minor. They can be conscious or unconscious. But how do these influences determine whether youth chooses to participate in sports?

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to determine what factors effect female high school students' sport activity participation. Various factors, such as parents, peers, glory, staying in shape, love and siblings were examined. Factors which effected sport activity participation for this group were determined.

Delimitations and limitations

This study focused on female high school students. Motivation for women differs considerably from motivation for men. Women are more social and results may reflect this factor. They may be more motivated for social reasons (Lewko & Ewing, 1980). Although I believe these findings apply to a variety of activities, and the different levels of play involved, it is important not to generalize the findings to all sport activities and levels of play. Therefore this study is delimited to female high school students.

Surveys are limited to the population that is studied, and the honesty of the subject surveyed. Other limitations include availability of the students and willingness to participate.

Assumptions

It is assumed that the students honestly answered the questions. The questionnaire was very simple and not confusing. It was not very long; therefore, the students took the time to fill it out in its entirety.

Research Hypothesis

The majority of these students have a combination of motivational factors. The literature suggests that the largest motivator will be parental influence. Parents are a huge influence and seem to be the reason most children get involved in sports and activities. If it was not for the parents, most of these children would not have access.

Peer pressure is a strong second. At this age (high school) students are under a great deal of pressure to fit in. If they think that being involved in sport activities will

help them fit in, they will. It is therefore predicted that parents and peers will be found to be the foremost factors affecting youth sport activity participation.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There have been several studies that address why students are motivated to participate in sport activities. Most of these studies divided motivation into extrinsic and intrinsic factors. Extrinsic factors focus on the rewards that they receive; the glory or recognition. Intrinsic factors on the other hand, are from the inside, like love and enjoyment.

Social acceptance is one of the biggest extrinsic motivators for participating. Gaining social acceptance and fitting in, in high school is a major concern for students. Playing sports and being involved in sport activities is one way to gain this acceptance. In a study conducted by Fasting (1982), it was concluded that many people participate in sports to create a social network. "An environment with high involvement in sport, is consequently characterized by having many socialization agents that are interested in – and active in sport" (p. 32). They want to fit in and playing sports help them not only fit in, but also meet new people.

This study interviewed 3098 people, 15 to 87 years of age. They asked several questions then classified the individuals into two groups: an active and a non-active group. They concluded that the best predictors for sport participation were the environment, then occupation, then age. This study was performed in Norway where hiking, and cross country skiing are the most popular forms of physical activity. Due to the fact that the environment is such an influence on sport participation, individuals take more interest in activities centered on the environment and the socializing agents involved in it. This study also concluded that a person's social network was a predictor of

sport participation. The more social a family was the more likely they were to participate in sports and that a sports atmosphere acts as a socializing agent for students as well as parents.

Another study conducted by Kincey, Amir, Gillespie, Carelton & Theaker (1993) also supports this theory. This study interviewed 485, fourteen to fifteen year olds. The questionnaire contained six general motivations: Intrinsic/physical motivation, Stress reduction motivation, Social/group motivation, Self-esteem/myself, Barriers to participation and Sports preferences. It also included open ended comments. They found that social enjoyment was one of the main motivators for sport participation. Students valued the social components of sports. Most of them liked team sports more than individual sports due to the socialization aspect. Participating allows children as well as adults to socialize and create a network of friends.

Parents are also a major influence on why children participate in physical activity. "Children of two active parents were six times more likely to be involved in physical activity than children of two parents who were inactive" (Stroot, 2002, p. 134). In a study conducted by Brustad (1996), the results "indicated that a significant relationship between children's perceptions of their parents' physical activity socialization processes and their own physical activity orientations were present" (p. 322). Their research suggested that parents influenced a child's desire to engage in physical activity and that a child's perception of the value of their parents' involvement in sports was directly related to their perception of sports. This study involved 107, fourth- through sixth- grade children. The students were a part of a large school district and were asked to complete a

questionnaire dealing with assessing attraction to physical activity, perceived physical competence, and perceptions of their parent's lifestyle and belief in physical life style.

In an earlier study conducted by Brustad, (1993) he concluded much the same.

Children's attraction to physical activity was greatly influenced by: parental physical activity orientations, parental encouragement levels, children's gender, and children's perceived physical competence. In this study, they tested parental socialization influences and children's psychological characteristics dealing with physical activity. There were 81 fourth-grade children, of which 39 were boys and 42 were girls. Their parents also served as subjects in the study. There were 231 questionnaires sent out for this particular study. The questionnaire that the parents filled out was to see the level of their child's physical activity. The children's mean age was 10 years old and was mostly Caucasian; about 95% were from an upper middle class socioeconomic background.

The children completed an expanded version Harter's Perceived Competence Scale for Children. This questionnaire asked 9 questions that were scored on a 6 point response format. For parents a 34 item questionnaire was developed from a pilot study, from this, 22 items were included for the final version of the questionnaire. Of the 22 questions four items were of parental encouragement. These four questions asked the parents how much they encouraged their children to be physically active. These questions were based on a 5 point Likert scale. Three questions were used to measure parental enjoyment of physical activity. This was based on a 4 point Likert scale. The next section assessed parental views on fitness. This was done using two questions based on a 5 point Likert scale. The last section asked parents to describe how important physical activity was to them. This included two questions based on a 4 point Likert

scale (Brustad, 1993). This study concluded that parents have a great influence on children's attraction to physical activity.

Another study that focused on the influence of parents as well as other significant others was Weiss & Barber's (1995) study. This study compared the outlook, encouragement and support from socializing groups, in 1979 and 1989 female collegiate volleyball athletes. The 1989 sample included 345 female athletes, of which 241 were volleyball players and 104 were basketball players, at the Division I college level. In the 1979 sample, there were 95 Division I intercollegiate volleyball players. The athletes were the ages of 17 to 24 years of age, and the mean age was 19.6. For measurements of influence by significant others, this study used The Female Sport Socialization Questionnaire, which was developed by Greendorfer, and later revised by Weiss and Knoppers (Weiss & Barber, 1995). This questionnaire measured the degree of influence by parents, siblings, best male friend, best female friend and coaches. Influence was measured through four items: Modeling, interest, encouragement; and responsibility. A 4 or 5 point Likert scale was used. They conclude that interest and encouragement by parents, older siblings, and friends greatly increased from 1979 to 1989. In the 10 year span, female athletes had gained significant support and encouragement from those closest to them.

Another study that was designed to examine the socialization of children in sport and the influence of their family members on the sport involvement was done by Lewko & Ewing, (1980). There were 370 children age 9 to 11 years, who answered a fixed alternative questionnaire that tested the influences of mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers on the sport involvement of males and females. The children were from a

diverse geographical background and were mostly Caucasian (80% of males, and 75% of females). With the data that they collected, they concluded that fathers had a large influence on sport participation for both male and female children (Lewko & Ewing, 1980).

Children are influenced by how their parents view sports. Snyder & Spreitzer (1973) also concluded that family have a major influence on whether or not a child is involved in sports. The parent of the same sex had the greatest effect, yet both influenced a child's view of sports, and fathers seemed to have a greater knowledge and understanding of sports compared to mothers. This study mailed out questionnaires to 945 families of which 510 surveys were returned. They also concluded that sport involvement begins as a child, and parents either encourage or discourage further participation. Family influence had a direct relationship to sports participation (Snyder & Spreitzer, 1973).

Weinberg (1982), discussed the importance of setting goals and having children work for those goals, and making sure that these goals are reachable for each child. If it is too hard to achieve a goal that they set for themselves, then most children see that as them failing in their attempt to reach it. They must set the standards high enough, yet if the goal is too low then they achieved nothing and wasted their time. As they are setting these goals, it is important to be very specific in what it is they are doing. For instance, you can say that I want to get my shooting average up, but this is not specific enough. In order for it to be successful, they would have to be specific on what average they would like to obtain. Extrinsic motivators push children to improve their skills and to reach their goals. He stated that it was important to have an athlete write down goals, make

them public, have the athlete produce the goals and have realistic goals. Having a goal made public would make the child work harder to reach it. They would want the extrinsic acceptance as well as the extrinsic rewards.

A study conducted by Daley & O'Gara (1998) suggests that at a young age students focus more on the extrinsic factors such as social acceptance and liking the coach, but then develop into intrinsic factors such as playing because it is fun and keeps them in good health. This study used the Participation Motivation Questionnaire, PMQ developed by Gill, Gross & Huddleston (1983). This survey contained 30 questions that had the students rate their motivation of different factors such as fun, and keeping in shape. They used a Likert scale based on 1 being a high motivator and 3 being a low motivator. They inventoried 145 children both male and females ages 11-12 (year 7) and another group ages 14-15 (year 10), then tried to relate their age as well as genders to certain motivators.

Using this inventory they were able to conclude that children at year 7 were participating for extrinsic factors such as liking the coach. By year 10 the children had switched to more intrinsic factors such as skill acquisition.

A similar study conducted by Stern et al. (1990), showed that younger children ages 6-7 participated in sports for their health and to gain better skills. Children ages 9-10 participated to learn to do their best and have a coach to look up to. This study used a 24 item questionnaire of which only 14 questions were used to determine motivation for participation. The sample used was three hundred and fourteen boys ages 6-7 and 9-10. The questions were adapted from Gill's PMQ, but included other questions to make sure the children understood the rating system and to also determine the child's perception of

their own athletic ability. This study contradicts the previous study, yet focuses only on boys and not girls, which might be one reason for the contradiction.

Intrinsic influences are influences that come from within. They are the factors that rarely anyone sees, and are not publicly displayed. As stated in Daley & O'Gara's (1998) study, this usually develops later in life, when the individual already loves the sport.

A study conducted by Humbert, Chad, Spink, Muhajarine, Anderson, Bruner, Girolami, Odnokon & Gryba (2006) stated that fun was a popular factor in participating in sports or activities. This study also mentioned that if the activity or sport was going to be enjoyable then the child would be more willing to participate. This study focused on socioeconomic status as it pertains to physical activity. They used data obtained from the school for the socioeconomic and other demographics. They then used focus groups and interviews to obtain the remainder of the data. In total 160 students ages 12 – 18 participated. Unlike most of the studies discussed they did not use questionnaires that may have limited responses.

In a different study conducted by Perkins, Jacobs, Barber & Eccles (2004) they examined organized sport activities during childhood play and experiences to see if it would continue through adulthood. They concluded that "Childhood and adolescent sport participation was found to be a significant predictor of young adults' participation in sports and physical fitness activities" (p. 495). This study was one of the largest and longest studies of its kind focusing on physical fitness. This longitudinal study started in 1983 and continued for 13 years. They first interviewed subjects in sixth grade, and then continued with eight waves of data up to age 24 or 25. Of the 1800 participants that started, 600 remained from start to finish. Their conclusions emphasize the importance

of introducing children to sports at a young age, and providing opportunities for them as well.

PROCEDURES

Typically children from the age of 7-12 years participate in sports only because it is fun and entertaining to them (Kirk, 2005). He argued "that early learning experiences are crucial to continuing involvement in physical activity" (p. 240), and that children are involved in sports because they want to be, not for any materialistic reasons.

Another intrinsic motivator to participate in sports is to stay healthy. Many people suggest that their main motivation for taking part in recreation is because of their health (Fasting, 1982). This is more evident with age. The older the person is, the more health conscious and intrinsically motivated they are.

Other studies have focused on both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. A study conducted by Dishman (1990) summarized variables that may determine the probability of physical activity. His summary stated that factors such as participating in past programs, enjoyment of the activity and social reinforcement, all had repeatedly documented increased probability of participation. While participating in high school sports, having healthy behaviors, as well as health knowledge had little to no effect. Much of this research overlapped and had some conflicting data. He stressed how there were different methods used, on different age groups. He states quite clearly that "all of the determinants are not known, and it is not precisely known in what ways established determinants interact to influence participation" (p. 95). In other words there is a lot of work and studies that need to be done to determine motivators.

CHAPTER 3

PROCEDURES

The setting

This research study took place at Alamosa High School, a small school in the San Luis Valley, with a population of 581 students. Of the 581 students, 48% are male and 52% are female. The majority of the students are Hispanic (52%), followed by Caucasian (43%) (AHS, 2008). This high school is representative of the community. The area is a small agriculturally centered community. In the state of Colorado, it is one of the poorest counties. Average income is well below the national average (City data, 2008). Forty two percent of the students are on free and reduced lunch (City data, 2008), which is reflective of the community's lower income.

Due to the fact it is an agriculturally centered community, there is a large population of students of Hispanic origin. There is also a large population of English Language Learners (AHS, 2008). These students have limited or no English comprehension.

Population

The population of this study was female students at Alamosa High School. Subjects were conveniently selected and asked for their permission as well as their parents' permission to fill out a short questionnaire. The sample was selected based on teacher's willingness to allow for the administering of the questionnaire in their classroom, therefore, it was a sample of convenience. There were 60 girls that completed the survey. The mean age was 15.3 years old. Questionnaires with missing or incomplete data were not used.

Research Design

Motivation is very subjective. It is hard to measure and observe. For this reason descriptive research was chosen to try and determine female's motivation in sport activities. Sixty high school female students, 28 females who participated in a high school sports program or other organized activities (athletes) and 32 who classified themselves as a non-athlete, but did participate in some type of sport activity such as fitness, or exercise classes (non-athletes), were surveyed using The Participation Motivation Questionnaire, (PMQ). This sample is representative of the schools grade level population. This questionnaire has been used in the past and is considered one of the best measurements for youth sport activity motivation (Stern et al., 1980, Daley & O'Gara, 1998). This information was then used to rate the different motivation factors, and categorize the factors into smaller groups.

Reliability

The questions for this survey were developed from two pilot studies, in which 750 summer camp participants and 750 adults were asked to indicate reasons for sport activity participation. These questions were open ended and the subjects were allowed to answer any way they wanted. From these answers the researchers developed a 37-item questionnaire which covered a majority of the responses. Answers to the questions were limited to a 3 item Likert scale. The Likert scale was based on 1 as being very important, 2 as somewhat important, and 3 as not at all important. This questionnaire was later revised to the current 30 item questionnaire (Gill et al., 1983).

The 30 questions were then grouped into 8 factors or general categories. Factor one was based on achievement, which included the questions about winning, feeling important, being popular, gaining social status, doing something they are good at and rewards. Factor two was based on the concept of team. There were three questions for this factor. The questions were on teamwork, team spirit and being on a team. Factor three also had three questions based on fitness: Staying in shape, getting exercise and being physically fit. Factor four is about energy release. This factor had five questions which included, getting rid of energy, releasing tension, something to do, traveling and getting out of the house. Factor five was the miscellaneous reasons. This included the questions about parents and close friends, coaches and equipment/facilities. Skill development was factor six. This included the questions for improving skills, learning new skills, and going onto a higher level. Factor seven involves friendship. Questions include being with friends and making new friends, as well as two questions about competition and challenges. Factor-eight illustrates fun. Having fun, action and excitement were the questions for this factor (Gill et al., 1983).

Gill's study had two purposes: First to find youth sport activity motivators, and second to start developing a standard for measuring sport activity motivation (Gill et al., 1983). This study not only yielded descriptive data, but it developed one of the first tools to measure youth sport activity motivation.

Validity

There was little threat as to the validity of the instrumentation. Gill et al. (1983) determined that the wording and format of the survey was easy to understand and respond to and that respondents had no difficulty with it.

This researcher administered the survey and was present to answer or address any problems or questions that arose. Students were asked to answer as honestly as possible and they were reminded that their answers were completely confidential.

External threats included the specific group used. The results that were found may not apply to other schools. It may be very specific and the results may not be able to be generalized towards other groups. Results were measured objectively and reliably because the surveys did not have names associated with them.

Instrumentation

I chose to use the Participation Motivation Questionnaire, PMQ as the test instrument for measuring youth sport activity motivation. This survey was developed by Gill et al. in 1983. The survey has been used several times with professionals as well as in the field with actual PE teachers. The survey consists of 30 questions in which the students ranked the importance of each influence (appendix A). For this Likert Scale survey, a ranking of a 1 showed that the student was extremely influenced by that factor, while a ranking of a 3 suggested that the factor was not a major influence for participation. It is a one page survey that is very easy to read and understand.

The questionnaire was administered in the fall of 2008. It took less than 5 minutes to complete. There was no way to identify the student to their questionnaire.

Treatment of data

The questionnaire provided quantitative data. It was a one time survey with no follow up. Once this quantitative data was collected, responses were totaled and means were calculated. Responses were totaled and the average response for each question was determined. This then allowed for the ranking of the responses in order of importance.

The mean of each category was calculated, and the categories were ranked based on the eight factors that Gill et al. used. Each category was then ranked by importance.

RESULTS

Eighty females completed the questionnaire. There were 28 who classified themselves as athletes and 52 who classified themselves as non-athletes. There were 18 fourteen year olds of which 7 were athletes and 11 were non-athletes, 28 fifteen year olds of which 10 were athletes and 18 were non-athletes, 18 sixteen year olds of which 6 were athletes and 12 were non-athletes and 16 seventeen year olds of which 5 were athletes and 11 were non-athletes.

For the entire sample of 80 females, the highest category ranking was fun at a score of 1.43. This was followed closely by fitness which had a 1.37. Skill, friendship and team categories all came in very close with a ranking of 1.29, 1.25 and 1.27 respectively. The last three categories were Miscellaneous which came in sixth with a 1.20 followed by energy with a 1.11 and achievement with a 1.04.

Overall rankings had a range of 1.43 - 1.04, with fun as the overall highest category, and achievement as the lowest. Fun and fitness were by far the most influential factors for sport participation among the females surveyed. The category rankings are in order from most influential to least in the following table.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Sixty females completed the questionnaire. There were 28 who classified themselves as athletes and 32 who classified themselves as non-athletes. There were 16 fourteen year olds of which 7 were athletes and 9 were non-athletes, 20 fifteen year olds of which 10 were athletes and 10 were non-athletes, 14 sixteen year olds of which 6 were athletes and 8 were non-athletes and 10 seventeen year olds of which 5 were athletes and 5 were non-athletes.

For the entire sample of 60 females, the highest category ranking was fun at a score of 1.43. This was followed closely by fitness which had a 1.47. Skill, friendship and team categories all came in very close with a ranking of 1.54, 1.55 and 1.57 respectively. The last three categories were: Miscellaneous which came in sixth with a 1.69, followed by energy with a 1.71 and achievement with a 1.74.

Overall rankings had a range of 1.43 – 1.74, with fun as the overall highest category, and achievement as the lowest. Fun and fitness were by far the most influential factors for sport participation among the females surveyed. The category rankings are in order from most influential to least in the following table.

Fun	1.43	1.48	1.49
Fitness	1.47	1.63	1.43
Skill	1.54	1.56	1.53
Friendship	1.55	1.60	1.61
Team	1.57	1.56	1.66
Miscellaneous	1.69	1.78	1.76
Energy			
Achievement			

Table I

Overall Ranking for All Surveyed

Fun	1.43 (SD .57)
Fitness	1.47 (SD .66)
Skill	1.54 (SD .65)
Friendship	1.55 (SD .64)
Team	1.57 (SD .63)
Misc	1.69 (SD .71)
Energy	1.71 (SD .71)
Achievement	1.74 (SD .69)

Looking at the breakdown of categories by age group, the overall categorical data supports the general findings. Fun was overall ranked as a top category for all age groups, followed closely by fitness. Skill also had a strong ranking for all groups except the seventeen year olds. Due to the fact that a three point Likert scale was used the standard deviation had a small range. The lower standard deviation for fun suggests that majority of the subjects scored fun as a 1-2.

The following is a breakdown of categories according to age groups:

Table II

Category Data for 14 Year Olds

14 Year Olds	Athletes	Non-Athletes	Total
Team	1.24	1.56	1.40
Skill	1.19	1.63	1.41
Fun	1.33	1.48	1.41
Fitness	1.24	1.63	1.43
Friendship	1.50	1.56	1.53
Energy	1.63	1.60	1.61
Misc	1.76	1.56	1.66
Achievement	1.74	1.78	1.76

According to the data for the fourteen year olds, overall they ranked team as the most important factor for participating in sport activities. The athletes ranked skill the most important factor (1.19) followed closely by team and fitness (1.24). The non-athletes ranked fun as the most important factor, but overall all factors were ranked very close to each other. The overall ranking for non-athletes had a range of only .36, which would indicate they thought all factors were equally important.

Table III

Category Data for 15 Year Olds

15 Year Olds	Athletes	Non-Athletes	Total
Fun	1.30	1.47	1.38
Skill	1.37	1.43	1.40
Friendship	1.48	1.43	1.45
Fitness	1.43	1.63	1.53
Team	1.33	1.90	1.62
Achievement	1.58	1.83	1.71
Energy	1.78	1.84	1.81
Misc	1.80	1.83	1.82

According to the data for the fifteen year olds, fun was the most popular factor. Fun had a ranking of 1.38 overall. Athletes thought fun was the most important at (1.30), as for non-athletes friendship and skill was the top ranked for this age group at (1.43). Miscellaneous had a very low ranking of 1.82 overall. Both athletes and non-athletes ranked this factor low.

Table IV

Category Data for 16 Year Olds

16 Year Olds	Athletes	Non-Athletes	Total
Skill	1.39	1.54	1.47
Fun	1.33	1.71	1.52
Friendship	1.54	1.63	1.58
Fitness	1.61	1.67	1.64
Team	1.67	1.71	1.69
Misc	1.56	1.83	1.69
Energy	1.77	1.75	1.76
Achievement	1.61	1.96	1.78

The data from the sixteen year olds shows that the overall most important factor was skill (1.47). The highest ranking for the athletes was fun (1.33) as for non-athletes skill was their number one pick at (1.54). Both achievement and energy categories had a low ranking of 1.78 and 1.76.

Table V

Category Data for 17 Year Olds

17 Year Olds	Athletes	Non-Athletes	Total
Fitness	1.13	1.40	1.27
Fun	1.07	1.73	1.40
Team	1.33	1.80	1.57
Misc	1.60	1.60	1.60
Friendship	1.40	1.90	1.65
Energy	1.72	1.60	1.66
Achievement	1.53	1.87	1.70
Skill	1.73	2.00	1.87

For the seventeen year olds, the most influential factor overall was fitness (1.27). The athletes ranked fun as the most important (1.07) and the non-athletes ranked fitness at (1.40). Skill ranked much lower for both athletes and non-athletes.

Breaking the data down by category allows for a closer look as to how each age group ranked each category.

Table VI

Achievement Category Ranking by Age

AGE	ATHLETES	NON-ATHLETES	OVERALL
17	1.53	1.87	1.70
15	1.58	1.83	1.71
14	1.74	1.78	1.76
16	1.60	1.96	1.78

Overall the achievement category had an average of 1.74. All four age groups ranked achievement very close to this. The only notable difference would be between the athletes and non-athletes. Athletes ranked achievement higher than non-athletes.

Table VII

Team Category Ranking by Age

AGE	ATHLETES	NON-ATHLETES	OVERALL
14	1.24	1.56	1.40
17	1.33	1.80	1.57
15	1.33	1.90	1.62
16	1.67	1.71	1.69

The overall ranking for team was a 1.57. According to this table fourteen year old athletes ranked the team category more important than the average. They ranked it as a 1.24, which was the highest ranking of all the groups. Another outlier that stands out is

the ranking of a 1.90 from fifteen year old non-athletes. Both of these numbers may have affected the overall average. Maybe the reasoning for the outliers would be due to the participants answering certain questions inaccurately. Overall, team became less important as participants got older.

Table VIII

Fitness Category Ranking by Age

AGE	ATHLETES	NON-ATHLETES	OVERALL
17	1.13	1.40	1.27
14	1.24	1.63	1.44
15	1.43	1.63	1.53
16	1.61	1.67	1.64

Overall the seventeen year olds thought that fitness was the most important.

Looking at the data, the athlete's felt that fitness was in the top ranking and had high priority on why they participate.

Table IX

Energy Category Ranking by Age

AGE	ATHLETES	NON-ATHLETES	OVERALL
14	1.63	1.60	1.62
17	1.72	1.60	1.66
16	1.77	1.75	1.76
15	1.78	1.84	1.81

Overall energy was ranked as 1.71, which was the second to last category. As shown in the table above, all rankings are very similar to the 1.71. There was no number that greatly deviated from the average. Energy was not one of the most important factors for participation.

Table X

Miscellaneous Category Ranking by Age

AGE	ATHLETES	NON-ATHLETES	OVERALL
17	1.60	1.60	1.60
14	1.76	1.56	1.66
16	1.56	1.83	1.70
15	1.80	1.83	1.82

Miscellaneous was another category at the bottom, ranking at a 1.69. Since this category had a variety of questions that didn't fit into any other category, it is hard to draw any conclusions from this data. This category didn't focus on any specific aspects of participation.

Table XI

Skill Category Ranking by Age

AGE	ATHLETES	NON-ATHLETES	OVERALL
15	1.37	1.43	1.40
14	1.19	1.63	1.41
16	1.39	1.54	1.47
17	1.73	2.00	1.87

Skill was ranked at 1.54, which was in the top three categories. The table shows that the seventeen year olds ranked skill low, therefore it is not as important to them. Fourteen year olds might place more importance on learning the skill, because their skills are not yet developed. While seventeen year olds may feel as if they have already developed the skills, therefore they don't think skills are as important. Athletes, non-athletes and the whole sample placed less emphasis on skill as they got older, this was particularly noticeable in athletes.

Table XII

Friendship Category Ranking by Age

AGE	ATHLETES	NON-ATHLETES	OVERALL
15	1.48	1.43	1.46
14	1.50	1.56	1.53
16	1.54	1.63	1.59
17	1.40	1.90	1.65

Friendship had a ranking of 1.55 and was in the middle of the eight categories.

athletes in all the age groups seemed to be close to this ranking, as for the non-athletes the sixteen and seventeen ranked a lot lower. Most students would more than likely want to be involved in sport activities. Participating in sport activities gives them an opportunity to create friendships.

Table XIII

Fun Category Ranking by Age

AGE	ATHLETES	NON-ATHLETES	OVERALL
15	1.30	1.47	1.39
17	1.07	1.73	1.40
14	1.33	1.48	1.41
16	1.33	1.71	1.52

It appears that fun is important for the students; it will keep them involved and participating in sport activities. Athletes in all four age groups ranked fun as being extremely important to them, knowing that if they do not have fun during their season, they may lose interest. Seventeen year old athletes ranked fun at a 1.07, which showed very high importance. This was the highest ranking out of all categories and age groups. Fun became less important for athletes and more important for non-athletes as they got

older. This resulted in the importance of fun remaining stable overall across the age range.

DISCUSSION

Table XIV

Category Ranking for Athletes and Non-athletes

	Athletes	Non-athletes	Statistics
Fitness	1.37 (SD .44)	1.55 (SD .61)	t=1.69 p=.10
Fun	1.27 (SD .39)	1.57 (SD .56)	t=2.39 p=.02
Friendship	1.48 (SD .40)	1.61 (SD .48)	t=1.12 p=.27
Team	1.38 (SD .40)	1.74 (SD .53)	t=2.93 p=.01
Skill	1.39 (SD .40)	1.60 (SD .60)	t=1.59 p=.12
Misc	1.70 (SD .55)	1.72 (SD .56)	t=.11 p=.91
Energy	1.73 (SD .38)	1.71 (SD .45)	t=-.15 p=.88
Achievement	1.61 (SD .44)	1.85 (SD .37)	t=2.32 p=.02

According to this data, athletes overall ranked fun the highest (1.27) and non-athletes ranked fitness as the most important factor (1.55). The least important factor for athletes was energy (1.73) and the non-athlete's least important factor was achievement at (1.85). In general, athlete's rankings were much stronger than non-athletes. Athletes were more influenced than non-athletes, but it was not statistically significant except for three categories: Achievement, Team and Fun. The small sample size and the 3 point Likert scale, make it hard to show statistical significance.

These results suggest that athletes' most important factor for sport activity participation is because it is fun. The non-athletes believe that the most important factor is fitness, followed closely by fun. There were several factors for the non-athlete that had a very close ranking. The athletes however had distinct factors that they believed were important, those factors being fun and fitness.

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CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Discussion & Interpretation

The Participation Motivation Questionnaire, (PMQ) developed by Gill et al., (1983), is an important tool when measuring youth sport activity motivation. The division of questions into factors is equally as important. It is hard to construct an instrument that can determine participation reasons; the use of several questions to cover one category gives a more accurate picture. I found that the use of the survey was extremely easy. Very few subjects had questions on how to complete the survey. It was short enough that I believe the participants filled it out honestly and understood fully what they were saying.

As stated in my hypothesis I proposed that the majority of these students would have a combination of motivational factors. I found that to be true. It was found that fun was the most important factor.

The overall categorical data supports the general findings of each age group. Fun was overall ranked as the top one or two for all of the age groups; therefore, it had an overall ranking of one. Fitness on the other hand had an overall ranking of two, but had a ranking of four for 14, 15 and 16 year olds, and a number one ranking for 17 year olds. These two categories were the only categories to be ranked in the top four for all of the age groups. I found that skill was in the top three for the 14, 15 and 16 year olds, yet with the 17 year olds it ranked last. Friendship was ranked in the top four in only three out of four age groups. The 14 year olds did not think of friendship as being very important, ranking it as fifth, but the 15, 16 and 17 age groups thought friendship was a

very important aspect. These age groups ranked friendship as the top three and four. Looking at the top four categories for each age group, it was found that team and miscellaneous was only listed once. Team was number one for the 14 year olds and miscellaneous ranked at number three for the 17 year olds.

Overall it was found that the categories for fun and fitness had the highest rankings. Fun was ranked highest in all categories and this was for a reason. Earlier studies by Humbert et al. (2006) and Kirk (2005) support the importance of fun. Humbert et al. found that if the activity or sport was going to be enjoyable then the child would be more willing to participate. Kirk (2005) also found that fun was an important factor for participation. Youth are involved in sport activities because they want to be, not for any other reasons.

It appears that the easy way or no way, is what today's young adults are all about. If it is not going to be easy or fun, more than likely, they will not get involved. I know from experience as a coach, if I make my practices too hard, intense and demanding; I will lose the girls and their motivation to stay focused. They get upset, frustrated and will stop working hard for me. I learned through my experience that if I incorporate hard, intense, demanding practices with fun activities, my girls would stay focused, continue to work hard, enjoy practice and have a good time playing. I have also learned when fun is involved, they will lose track of time and focus more.

Fitness was the second highest ranking in the categories. The importance of fitness in activity was supported in an earlier study by Stern et al. (1990). In this study it was concluded that children participated in sports for their health. There are a lot of people who are concerned about fitness and staying in shape. Young adults today, are

more aware and know what they should be doing and are at least trying to stay fit.

Maybe the young students who took this survey, think about being fit and scored it high because they know it is what they are suppose to do.

Achievement had the lowest ranking of the categories. Some young individuals do not have the desire to set goals, achieve those goals or have a winning attitude being involved in an activity. Sometimes just being active and involved in "something" is enough for people. When students set goals, they have a greater chance of achieving them. When writing them down they have a visual reminder of what is important to them and what needs to be accomplished.

In general, athletes ranked all factors higher. It could be because they care more about physical activity, therefore they are more influenced by these factors. Non-athletes are not influenced as much because they may not enjoy the activity as much. The T-test showed that there was a statistical difference between athletes and non-athletes for the categories of achievement, team and fun. Team had the largest difference with a p value of .01. This would be expected because athletes value the importance of team to succeed. Although fun also showed significant differences with a p value of .02, both athletes and non-athletes ranked fun in their top two. The other five categories showed no significant differences. Since there was a small sample size of sixty subjects this is no surprise. For a sample of this size it is extremely hard to show any statistical significance.

Individually the question "I want to be popular" had the lowest ranking of 2.04. This was the only question that averaged over 2. This was surprising to me, because I would think in high school that most students want to be popular and noticed. Maybe playing sports and being involved in sport activities is not as popular today as it was back

when I was in high school. Fasting's (1982) study showed the importance of creating a social network, and supported the theory that some participate in sport activities for the social aspects of it.

The second least popular question was "I want to release tension", which had an average of 1.92. I do not think that students at this age understand what releasing tension means. Or it could be that student at this age do not have much tension to release. Again although both questions ranked low, there was very little difference between these and the most popular factors.

The most popular individual questions were: "I like to have fun", and "I want to stay in shape" which both had a ranking of 1.32 and 1.37 respectively. The high ranking of these two individual questions directly influenced the overall categories rankings of fun as number one and fitness as number two.

Although the PMQ covers a variety of questions, there was little that addressed family influence. Questions referred to friends and family, or coaches and instructors, which may include parents, but there were no questions that directly asked about parents and family influence. Literature suggests that one of the largest motivators is parental influence. Parents are a huge influence and seem to be the reason most children get involved in sports and activities (Stroot, 2002 & Brustad, 1996). But the PMQ does not directly address this area. Therefore it is not possible to conclude how influential family is on participation.

My hypothesis that peer influence would be a strong influence was supported. Overall friendship came in a strong 4th with an average of 1.55. Although it was ranked fourth it was not far behind the leading factor, fun which had an average of 1.43.

Overall I can conclude that there are a variety of factors that influence sport activity participation. There is not any one overwhelming factor that has the most influence.

Athletes ranked fitness as the most important factor for sport activity participation, followed by fitness, and social. The ranking of 1.17 for the low category was much higher than my other rankings. This is not surprising. As the fitness of athletes reach high school sport programs and sport activities become more demanding. If it is not for fitness, athletes they no longer participate.

Athletes ranked fitness as the second most important factor with 1.18. Being in shape and staying fit, helps all athletes to become more enjoyable. I think that most athletes realize how important this factor is for their success as well as the enjoyment of staying fit. They realize how hard it is to get into shape, and what they need to stay there.

Athletes ranked social in third it was very close to fitness, and social 1.19 and 1.20 athletes. Very few activities or sports are individual. They require working with others and relying on others for success. Even the sports and activities that are more individual usually have some aspect of team. For instance, wrestling and cross country are considered more of an individual sport, but yet in both sports you start from the same team, and there is a part of being on and helping a team.

Non-athletes ranked fitness as being most important (1.55). I feel that the majority of non-athletes believe that fitness is important because society has put so much pressure for young adults to have the ideal body. Young adults today realize that staying

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, RECOMENDATIONS and CONCLUSIONS

Summary

Athletes ranked fun as the most important factor for sport activity participation, followed by fitness, and team. The ranking of 1.27 for the fun category was much higher than any other rankings. This is not surprising. By the time athletes reach high school, sport programs and sport activities become more demanding. If it is not fun for the athlete they no longer participate.

Athletes ranked fitness as the second most important factor with 1.37. Being in shape and staying fit, helps all athletes to become more successful. I think that most athletes realize how important this factor is for their success as well as the importance of staying fit. They realize how hard it is to get into shape, and what they must do to stay there.

Although team came in third it was very close to fitness, it scored 1.38 with athletes. Very few activities or sports are individual. They require working with others and relying on others for success. Even the sports and activities most consider individual usually have some aspect of team. For instance, wrestling and cross country are considered more of an individual sport, but yet in both sports you score points for your team, and there is a part of being on and helping a team.

Non-athletes ranked fitness as being most important (1.55). I feel that the majority of non-athletes believe that fitness is important because, society has placed pressure for young adults to have the ideal body. Young adults today realize that staying

fit is the only way to obtain this. Society sets the standard that majority seek to obtain.

In reality the size zero, Barbie, frame is unobtainable for most.

Fun follows close behind fitness and comes in second for the non-athlete students. For all different age groups, fun is important. If activity is not fun, then people will more then likely lose interest and stop participating. Maybe somewhere along the lines these non-athletes stopped having fun while participating; therefore they no longer are involved in high school sports or higher level activities. At higher levels it is not all fun and games, there is more pressure to win and compete at this level. It is no longer pick-up games and back yard rough house, it is structured, serious and business like.

Fun and fitness were overwhelmingly the most important factors for non-athletes. The least important factor was achievement. Non-athletes do not measure success by wins and loses. As noted before, getting fit is one of their main concerns. They don't participate in competitive programs.

According to this study, fun and fitness were the most important factors for high school females. It seems that athletes continue to view high school sports and physical activity as fun, while non-athletes do not. Keeping athletics fun may increase the number of participants, which would keep people involved and participating in future activities. This would keep people healthier and health conscious.

Recommendations

Even though the PMQ is a valid instrument, I believe that several factors were overlooked, and that some could have been dropped. For example parents are not factors on the survey. Snyders & Spreitzer (1973) found that children are influenced by how their parents view sports, and that family has a major influence on whether or not a child

is involved in sport activities. It seems that family and parents would be a major factor that should be included in this survey.

Factors that I think do not play much of a role would be that of tension release and popularity. I believe that at the high school level these are less of a factor. Tension release may be a factor later in life when the competitiveness is gone, but at the high school level it would be much less of a factor. Popularity on the other hand may be a factor, but by the time they reach high school I believe that few would participate to become popular. It is too much work and dedication.

I also think that it would be more useful to have a 5 point Likert scale instead of a 3 point. I found that few students would rank a 1 or 3. Most kept in the middle at 2 unless they had a strong feeling. The use of a 5 point Likert scale would allow the student to move to one end or the other without having to choose the extreme. This would possibly give a much more accurate representation of how they feel.

The last recommendation to this study would be to either eliminate the miscellaneous category or to replace it. It seems that the questions in this category did not fit in well with the survey. It would be best to replace it with a section on parents and family influence.

Conclusions

It is no surprise that there are several factors that influence sport activity participation. According to this study, that holds true. Although it was found that fun was the most influential factor among female high school students, it was also found that several factors influence sport activity participation.

It was concluded that athletes are influenced more by intrinsic factors such as fun and fitness, and non-athletes were influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors such as making friends. Whatever the factors may be, it is important to realize that not all athletes and non-athletes are the same and that there are several factors that influence participation.

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APPENDICES

Do you participate in high school sports? Yes No Age _____

Do you participate in any regular physical activity (team sports, running, etc.) Page

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	Important	Important	Important
I like to win	1	2	3
I like to do something I'm good at	1	2	3
I like the rewards	1	2	3
I like to feel important	1	2	3
I want to be popular	1	2	3
I want to gain status or recognition	1	2	3
I like the teamwork	1	2	3
I like the team spirit	1	2	3
I like being on a team	1	2	3
I want to stay in shape	1	2	3
I like to get exercise	1	2	3
I want to be physically fit	1	2	3
I want to get out of at work	1	2	3
I like to travel	1	2	3
I want to relax television	1	2	3
I like to have something to do	1	2	3
I like to get out of the house	1	2	3
If parents or clubs wants me to play	1	2	3
I like the coaches or instructors	1	2	3
I like to use the equipment or facilities	1	2	3
I want to improve my skills	1	2	3
I want to learn new skills	1	2	3
I want to do on a higher level	1	2	3
I want to be with my friends	1	2	3
I like to meet new friends	1	2	3
I like to compete	1	2	3
I like the challenge	1	2	3
I like the excitement	1	2	3
I like to have fun	1	2	3
I like the action	1	2	3

QUESTIONNAIRE

Do you participate in high school sports? Yes No Age _____

Do you participate in any regular physical activity (team sports, running, aerobics, etc.)

outside of school? Yes No if so please list the physical activities _____

Please rank the following factors on a scale of 1-3, with 1 being very important, 2 somewhat important and 3 not important at all.

REASONS	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all Important
I like to win	1	2	3
I like to do something I'm good at	1	2	3
I like the rewards	1	2	3
I like to feel important	1	2	3
I want to be popular	1	2	3
I want to gain status or recognition	1	2	3
I like the teamwork	1	2	3
I like the team spirit	1	2	3
I like being on a team	1	2	3
I want to stay in shape	1	2	3
I like to get exercise	1	2	3
I want to be physically fit	1	2	3
I want to get rid of energy	1	2	3
I like to travel	1	2	3
I want to release tension	1	2	3
I like to have something to do	1	2	3
I like to get out of the house	1	2	3
My parents or close friends want me to play	1	2	3
I like the coaches or instructors	1	2	3
I like to use the equipment or facilities	1	2	3
I want to improve my skills	1	2	3
I want to learn new skills	1	2	3
I want to go on to a higher level	1	2	3
I want to be with my friends	1	2	3
I like to meet new friends	1	2	3
I like to compete	1	2	3
I like the challenge	1	2	3
I like the excitement	1	2	3
I like to have fun	1	2	3
I like the action	1	2	3

TO OBTAIN THE
Adams State College
Human Performance and Physical Education
Master's Degree Culminating Activity Contract

All candidates for a Master's Degree in Human Performance and Physical Education (HPPE) must meet graduation requirements as set forth in the Adams State College Graduate Catalog.

In addition to the School requirements, the Department of HPPE allows the candidate for the Master's Degree in HPPE two culminating activity options. Graduate students must use this contract to formally declare their option. This contract must be complete with required approval(s) prior to beginning the culminating activity.

Option 1: Master's Thesis

Graduate students may, after consultation with their advisor, elect to write a thesis. It must be in accordance with prescribed standards.

Candidates wishing to complete **Option 1** must sign and process this form:

Print name Jackie Rowbury Signature Jackie Rowbury Date 10/27/08

Students electing the thesis option must:

1. Obtain approval for thesis from their advisor.

Advisor Approval Andy Lal Date 10/27/08

2. Obtain approval for thesis from the Director of the Graduate School.

Director Approval [Signature] Date 10/27/08

3. Form a Master's thesis committee consisting of three professionals. Two must be full time members of the ASC HPPE faculty. Approval of a committee member outside the Department of HPPE must be approved by the HPPE Department Chair.

Thesis Committee

Print Name Margie Miller Signature [Signature] Date 10-27-08

Print Name Jeff Strom Signature [Signature] Date 10-27-08

Print Name ANTHONY LAKER Signature Andy Lal Date 10/27/08

Department Chair Approval Andy Lal Date 10/27/08

4. Successfully complete HPPE 591 Thesis Proposal in the preceding semester of graduation.

5. Successfully complete HPPE 593 Thesis in the final semester

6. File in the library an original ~~and one copy~~ of the thesis in a ~~form~~ prescribed by the School Council.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM
Motivation Factors in Female High School Athletes
Jackie Rowbury
Adams State College
HPPE

Purpose of Research

The purpose of this study is to determine what factors affect students' participation in sports. I will look at various factors such as parents, peers, glory, staying in shape, love and siblings. I will then determine what factors affect sport participation.

Summary of Specific Procedures to be Used

This thesis is a descriptive study. I will randomly select 50 female students at Alamosa High School. I will administer the survey, and there will be no names on the survey.

Duration of Participation

This survey will take 5-10 minutes. I will administer and collect all surveys.

Risks to the Individual

The risks are no more than the participant would encounter in "everyday life".

Confidentiality

I will administer the survey. I will be the only one that will have access to it. There will be no names on the survey to identify the participant.

Voluntary Nature of Participation

I do not have to participate in this research project. If I agree to participate I can withdraw my participation at any time without penalty.

Human Subject Statement:

Please direct any questions to: Jackie Rowbury, jrowbury@adams.edu, 588-3332 or,
Dr. Laker, tonylaker@adams.edu, 719-587-7208

I HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO READ THIS CONSENT FORM, ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RESEARCH PROJECT AND AM PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROJECT.

Participant's Signature

Date

Participant's Name

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

ADAMS STATE COLLEGE
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
Approved on: NOV 10 2008
Expires on: NOV 10 2009

Assent Form

Motivation Factors in Sport

My name is Jackie Rowbury. I go to school at Adams State College.

I am asking you to take part in my study because I am trying to find out more about why students are motivated to participate in sports. I want to learn what influences students sport participation.

If you agree, you will be asked to fill out a short questionnaire. The questionnaire will consist of several questions that will ask you to use a scale to rate how influential certain factors are. Answering these questions will take about 10 minutes. You will not put your name anywhere on this questionnaire and your answers will only be seen by me.

You do not have to be part of this research if you do not want to. No one is going to be mad at you and you will not get into any trouble for saying you do not want to do this. And even if your start, you can stop if you decide you don't like doing it. No one will get mad at you for stopping the research and you will not get into any trouble for changing your mind.

If you decide to be in this research no one is ever allowed to know what you say to me or what your answers are on the problems you complete. Even if your parents or teachers ask, your answers are what I call "confidential" which means they are secret.

Signing on the line below means that you have listened to me or read this form and that you agree to be part of the research.

Signature of subject _____

Subject's printed name _____

Signature of investigator _____

Date _____

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Expires on: NOV 10 2009