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Understanding the motivation factors towards sports performance within the scope of collegiate athletes

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history: Received: 9 Feb 2023 Revised: 1 March 2023 Accepted: 16 March 2023 Published: 1 April 2023</p> <p>Keywords: Student-athletes Athlete dual career Pandemic covid-19</p> <p> OPEN ACCESS</p>	<p>Motivation is known as a study that examines the process of energizing and directing behaviors. It is a power that works to stimulate and directs people to do their desirable behaviors. Motivation consists of three factors which are intrinsic, extrinsic, and amotivation. Thus, this study focuses on motivation factors toward sports performance among collegiate athletes where the respondent is retrieved from UiTM Seremban campus. Using the adopted questionnaire of Sport Motivation Scale (SMS) by Pelletier, Fortier, Vallerand, Tuson, and Briere (1995) which consists of 28 items have been distributed via an online platform to 210 respondents of the collegiate athletes at UiTM Seremban Campus. The data collected were analyzed using the SPSS version 27 with a level of significance at $p < 0.05$. The results showed that intrinsic motivation influences athletes more in performance compared to extrinsic motivation and motivation. The mean for intrinsic motivation was ($M = 4.09$) while for extrinsic motivation was ($M = 3.92$) and amotivation ($M = 3.54$). As this study focuses on athletes in the UiTM Seremban campus, a similar study could be carried out in a high school setting for future comparative study.</p> <p>Keywords: student athlete, motivation, intrinsic, extrinsic and performance.</p>

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INTRODUCTION

Sport is a physical activity that allows individuals to enjoy themselves while competing, while also gaining good results such as new challenges, social interactions, skill advancement, better levels of fitness, and improved bodily and mental health (Saadan et al., 2019). According to Ahmad et al., (2020) indicated that participating in sporting activities has been linked to a reduction in depressive symptoms, contribute to an increase in happiness, and a higher degree of life satisfaction. Moreover, physical activity is widely acknowledged as critical to young age group development and for the maintenance of a healthy lifestyle. On a physical, psychological, aesthetic, and social level, there is currently solid evidence that illustrates the various benefits connected with participation in sports or physical activity on a regular basis (Sazali et al., 2021).

Next, Kucukibis & Gul (2019) mentioned that participation, commitment, and performance in sports are all influenced by a variety of specific circumstances. An individual's perspectives about sports may be influenced by concepts such as games, health, status, or performance. The past study also believes that motivation is crucial for maintaining and achieving success in sports, as well as for developing a positive attitude toward sports. Generally, motivation is a key aspect in encouraging and maintaining people's participation in physical activities motivation is an important aspect of sports that helps athletes perform better and have a more enjoyable experience (Ling et al., 2019; Saadan et al., 2019). Furthermore, according to Kamarudin et al., (2022), individuals differ not only in terms of their level of performance but also in terms of their desire to perform that task or the motivation that drives them. On the other hand, in sports, motivation is a critical predictor of performance. It is a complicated construct, with athletes' motivations for initiating, directing, sustaining, and terminating efforts being diverse and dynamic. Internal or external influences, or a combination of both, can inspire athletes, and motivation varies by context and time (Sheehan et al., 2018).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Several conceptual frameworks have been developed to investigate motivation in the context of sports and physical activities, whereby self-determination theory will be the focus of outlining this study. Self-determination theory (SDT) appears to be particularly effective in athletic motivation studies that lay out a three-part conceptual framework for accounting for the many motivational processes that occur in sports. The researchers also stated that in the framework of the self-determination theory (SDT), motivation varies over a continuum that ranges from amotivation, and extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation (Ryan et al., 2002).

According to Saadan et al., (2019) individuals who participate simply for the pleasure, excitement, and happiness they derive from the activity are driven solely by intrinsic motivation. Someone who is intrinsically motivated will engage in an activity without the need for material rewards or external benefits. Meanwhile, extrinsic motivation is defined as behavior that is motivated by external motivators such as monetary rewards (e.g., money, gifts) or a desire to avoid punishment or condemnation from others and amotivation is the lowest level of motivation. Moreover, according to Rintaugu et al., (2018), SDT's basic concept is that humans are born with it. These make it easier to adopt behaviors and activities that will help them achieve their goals. The presence of intrinsic motivation, which is regarded to be the basic source of energy for human behavior, enhances behavior maintenance and adherence.

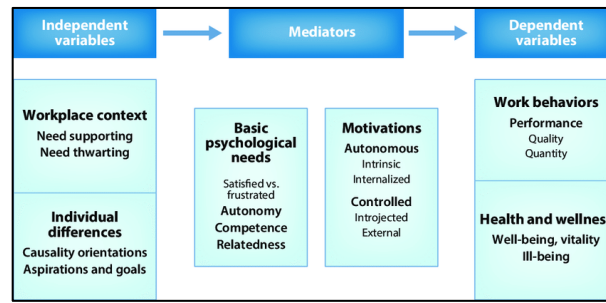


Figure 1: self-determination theory by Deci et al., (2017)

Intrinsic Motivation

Motivation is an essential aspect of sports that facilitates performance and helps create a positive experience. According to Deci et al., (2017), individuals who participate simply for the pleasure, amusement, and happiness they derive from the activity are driven solely by intrinsic motivation. Meanwhile, Ahmad et al., (2020) have also explained intrinsic motivation is directed toward achieving goals, eagerness to learn, and engaging in stimulating experiences. In detail, intrinsic motivation can be defined as doing something for the satisfaction of trying to outdo oneself that happens when people engage in activities for the enjoyment, or stimulation they get from learning something new and doing something for the pleasure of experiencing pleasant sensations generated by the activity.

Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation can be classified into three types: identifiable regulation, introjected regulation, and external regulation (Englert & Taylor, 2021). The most self-determined form of extrinsic motivation is identified regulation, which is followed by introjected regulation and external regulation. First, identified regulation entails engaging in a freely chosen action, even if it is not appealing in and of itself such as when an athlete practices a sports activity and he or she is driven by recognized regulation because he or she believes it is one of the best methods to develop other aspects of himself or herself. Second, when behaviors are taken to avoid bad sensations or to gain social approval, this is more known as introjected regulation. In this situation, an athlete engages in physical activity because he or she would feel horrible if he or she did not. Finally, external regulation describes behavior that is influenced by external rewards or restraints (such as trophies, prizes, or money) (Kucukibis & Gul, 2019).

METHODOLOGY

This study employed the quantitative study where the researcher used an adopted survey of the Sport Motivation Scale (SMS) developed by Pelletier et al., (1995) that consists of 28 items on a 5 Likert scale. A total of 210 respondents answered the questionnaire that has been collected among the UiTM Seremban Campus athlete group during the inter-university championship using simple random sampling. The data has been analyzed using SPSS version 27. A regression analysis was used to identify the dominant factors that influence the motivation between genders and the statistical significance was accepted at $p < 0.05$. Collectively, this study is aimed to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: Which motivation factors influence sport performance among collegiate athletes?

RQ2: Is there a difference in motivation factors between male and female collegiate athletes towards their sports performance?

RQ3: Are there differences in motivation factors between individual and team sports of collegiate athletes towards their sports performance?

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Perceived motivation factors towards sports performance among collegiate athletes

Table 1 showed the descriptive statistic of the most influenced motivation among collegiate athletes. Intrinsic motivation has the highest mean which is $M = 4.09$ ($SD = .533$) while extrinsic is the second lowest mean with $M = 3.92$ and an SD is at 0.589 . The last factor which is amotivation has the lowest $M = 3.54$ with SD of 0.745 .

Table 1: Descriptive of Motivation Factors

	N	Mean	Std.
Intrinsic	210	4.09	.533
Extrinsic	210	3.92	.589
Amotivation	210	3.54	.745

Certainly, motivation is a complex phenomenon that defies simple categorization into a single model. As indicated by past studies, motivation is defined as a state in which to be motivated from the "inside" by some needs, impulses, desires, wishes, or motives and directed toward achieving a goal that serves as a stimulus for behavior from the outside. The distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation was frequently discussed in the context of motivation to engage in physical activities and sports. As intrinsic motivation refers to everything that motivates athletes from the inside, such as activities that represent a specific goal, whereas extrinsic motivation refers to what motivates athletes from the outside, such as activities that serve another goal. Amotivation is the lowest level of motivation athletes that are amotivated may find it difficult to find reasons to train or participate in sports (Saadan et al., 2019).

Based on Table 1, it is found that the most influential factor in sports performance among collegiate athletes is intrinsic motivation. This justified that collegiate athletes participate in a sport because it provides them with a sense of fulfillment. When a person is intrinsically driven, they experience sensations of happiness, skill development, personal accomplishment, and excitement. This research finding aligned with research done by Bayyat, (2019) where athletes took part in the sport because it gave them the opportunity to learn more about their sport and try new training approaches and performance strategies they had never tried before. Furthermore, athletes felt fulfilled when they improved some of their weak areas, honed their skills, and mastered challenging moves.

Next, extrinsic motivation is the second lowest with a mean of 3.92 . This expresses that collegiate athletes participate in sports also because of external rewards such as money, prizes, or scholarships. In another hand, some of them may join sports because they want to meet new people and build mutual relationships and indirectly improve social skills. This result also brings similarity in the study by Bayyat, (2019) as athletes believed that sports were one of the best ways to meet new people, develop other elements of themselves, and gain a variety of skills that would be valuable in other areas of their lives, and establish excellent friendships. As a result, the participants believe that participating in sports is vital to stay in shape and feeling good. If they did not take the time to do it on a regular basis, they would feel horrible. Furthermore, participating in a sports activity helped them to be well-liked by their peers, achieve the status of being an athlete, and gain respect from their peers.

Nevertheless, the lowest self-determination, amotivation is in the lowest mean of 3.54 and this illustrates that athletes may feel more insecure and skeptical of their abilities in sports than before. They are at a point where they feel incompetent to achieve the goals they have set. Also, a motivated athletes are more likely to feel like they lack motivation or skills in a particular sport which causes them to give up easily.

The difference in the source of motivation is based on gender.

Table 2 illustrates the result of regression analysis between motivation factors and gender toward their sports performance. Based on the regression results, the p-value for gender is greater than 0.05 ($p = 0.071$), indicating that the effect of gender on motivation factors is not statistically significant. The coefficient beta of -0.130 suggests that for every one-unit increase in gender and motivation factors decrease of 0.130 units. However, since the p-value is greater than 0.05, this coefficient is not statistically significant. The R-squared value of 0.016 suggests that gender explains only 1.6% of the variation in the motivation factors. This indicates that there are likely other factors beyond gender that are more important in determining motivation factors. Overall, these results suggest that gender may not be a significant predictor of motivation factors and that there are likely other variables that should be included in the model to better understand what factors influence motivation.

Table 2: Regression analysis result of motivation factors and gender

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p	R squared
	B	SE	Beta			
Constant	4.051	.115		35.100	.000	
Gender	-.130	.072	-.125	-1.818	.071	.016

As this present study is also aimed to examine the differences between the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of male and female athletes toward their sports performance. The result shows that there are no significant differences between males and females in the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors toward their sports performance. One possible explanation for the lack of major motivational differences between male and female athletes is that sports are no longer considered a largely masculine domain in developed countries. Social etiquette, religious beliefs, and cultural conventions no longer compel girls to be feminine, friendly, and health- and beauty-conscious in Greece, where the previous study took place.

In addition, these results are in line with a few previous studies as there were no significant differences in the mean score for physical exercise motivations between gender according to the result in Al-Kubaisy et al., (2015) which also discovered that there was no difference in motivation between male and female badminton players in their research. However, the result of this study does not support the findings of earlier studies which suggested significant differences between the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of male and female athletes whereby females were more intrinsically motivated, while males were more extrinsically motivated (Candela et al., 2014).

Difference between the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation between individual and team sport athletes towards their sports performance.

According to the result in Table 3, the coefficient beta of -0.030 indicates that there is a negative relationship between the type of sport and motivation factors. However, since the p-value for type of sport is greater than 0.05 ($p = 0.717$), we cannot conclude that this relationship is statistically significant. In other words, the result may be due to chance rather than a true relationship. The R-squared value of 0.001 indicates that the type of sport explains a very small proportion (0.1%) of the variation in the motivation factors. This suggests that other factors, such as individual differences in personality, social support, and other environmental factors, may play a larger role in determining motivation factors. In summary, the results suggest that the type of sport may not be a significant predictor of motivation factors. To better understand what factors, influence motivation, other variables should be included in the model, such as individual differences and environmental factors that may impact motivation factors.

Table 3: Regression analysis result of motivation factors and type of sport played.

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p	R square
	B	SE	Beta			
Constant	3.903	.147		26.603	.000	
Type of sport	-.030	.082	-.025	-.362	.717	.001

In this present study, it has been discovered that athletes who play team sports are more internally motivated because they will be more focused on better tasks as well as the present study also explained that there will be a feeling that athletes will continue to play sports because the social interactions in the team greatly influence a person in continuing their sport. Sport-specific, these findings parallel with research done by Nielsen et al., (2014) as their result showed that football players stated that playing football and the good social interactions that occurred during their games was pleasurable enough in and of themselves to provide further intrinsic desire to continue. However, that was not the case for those who had engaged in CrossFit/spinning. Continuously, in this present study, the researcher also found that athletes who play team sports will find satisfaction with their teammates if they focus on doing their best in the game while striving to improve their own performance. This result finding is compatible with the research done by Saadan et al., (2019) that stated players who regarded team cultures to be characterized by a focus on personal progress, giving it one's all, and maximum participation enjoyed basketball more.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the athlete group who play at the collegiate level consists of athletes who are at a level where they want to develop talent in sports. It is a great opportunity for them besides focusing on academic studies only. However, athletes who have never participated in sports and those who have just participated in sports after furthering their studies at the university need to learn how to motivate themselves in engaging in sports. This is because the right motivation factors can help them throughout the process of sports development as well as can put them in the sport for longer.

In relation, this study focuses on what motivates a person in sports. This research can be used as a reference for sports organizations looking to create programs connected to athlete identity development. As a result, sport competition organizers should devise measures to prevent sports players from engaging in gamesmanship because of a win-at-all-costs mentality. Nevertheless, this study also urges coaches to practice more ethical behavior and have a more professional view of coaching for sports participation. In the nutshell, understanding motivation factors towards sports performance among collegiate athletes can help them to know and identify which factors can help them in participating in sports and could help them in improving their sports performance. The result of this study illustrates that collegiate athletes who have achieved their highest achievement in sports are more intrinsically motivated to participate in sports. The result of this study also finds that there are no significant differences between the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation between male and female athletes toward their sports performance. Other than that, the finding of this study also indicated that there are no significant differences between the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation between individual and team sport athletes toward their sports performance while representing in their collegiate championship.

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