

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

## MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS FOR SPORTS PARTICIPATION AMONG PAKISTANI ATHLETES

1. Associate Professor, Faculty of Pharmacy & Allied Health Sciences. University of Sialkot, Pakistan
2. Assistant Professor, Faculty of Rehabilitation & Allied Health Sciences. Riphah International University, Islamabad Pakistan
3. Assistant Professor Isra Institute of Rehabilitation Sciences, Isra University, Islamabad Pakistan
4. MPhil Student, Isra Institute of Rehabilitation Sciences, Isra University, Islamabad Pakistan
5. Lecturer, Faculty of Pharmacy & Allied Health Sciences. University of Sialkot, Pakistan
6. Lecturer, Abasyn University Islamabad. Pakistan

## Correspondence

Nazish Rafique

Assistant Professor, Faculty of Rehabilitation &amp; Allied Health Sciences Riphah International University, Islamabad Pakistan

E-mail: [nazish2312@gmail.com](mailto:nazish2312@gmail.com)

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Anum Aftab<sup>1</sup>: Conception, data collection, writing; Revised and accountable for all aspectsNazish Rafique<sup>2</sup>: Conception, Revised and accountable for all aspectsSadia Basharat<sup>3</sup>: Analysis & interpretation of data, Revised and accountable for all aspectsBushra Sultana<sup>4</sup>: Interpretation of data, Revised and accountable for all aspectsFarwa Abid<sup>5</sup>: Revised and accountable for all aspectsAnum Rafique<sup>6</sup>: Revised and accountable for all aspects

## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Successful athletes are motivated for future-oriented for more achievements. Apprehensive athletes are not as successful as highly motivated athletes. The sport participation is influenced by many factors those contribute in success of athletes.

**Objective:** To explore the motivational factors for sports participation among Pakistani athletes. **Methodology:** The cross-sectional survey was conducted on both male and female athletes (n=400) between the age of 14 to 40 years, played at the national and international levels at least from one year. The study was conducted at the Pakistan sports board (PSB) from July-December 2018. The non-probability convenience sampling was used in this study. The sports participation scale-6 was used to explore the motivational factors. The data was presented as n(%). **Results:** the mean age of the participants were 24±5.45 years. The results showed that the mean scores of six categories of Sports Motivational Scale (SMS) was 134.69±13.431, which showed that majority of athletes were highly motivated. The result of the study also showed that all subdomain of sports motivation scale positively correlated to total score ( $p<0.001$ ), while a motivation was negatively associated  $r=-0.701$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) with total score of sports motivation scale. Although most of the athletes were normal in term of depression, anxiety, and stress. But depression is negatively correlated ( $r=-0.09$ ,  $p=0.04$ ) with sports motivation. **Conclusion:** This study concluded that most athletes are motivated because hard training improves their performance and other motivational factors are also associated like pleasure, internal satisfaction, and excitement. The least motivational factor was achieving social or material benefits of being an athlete.

**Keywords:** Athlete, motivation, participation, stress.

## INTRODUCTION

An athlete is a person in sports who has a natural or acquired ability for physical activities or sports, particularly to be performed in a spirited nature. Successful athletes are motivated for future oriented for more achievements. Apprehensive athletes are not as successful as highly motivated athletes<sup>11</sup>. An athlete training includes muscle strengthening for competition in sports. Motivation is the reason for people's desires, actions, and needs. There are two types of motivation in sports extrinsic and intrinsic. The positive motivation gets experts reward and negative motivation gets experts punishment. The motivational prevalence demonstrated that alcohol effects on athletic performance delayed recovery of muscle, increased risk for injury and including increased dehydration<sup>2</sup>. Motives related to athlete appearance, competition intensity and excitement, fun and enhanced competence are the key factors for a competition.<sup>3</sup>

A research concluded that increasing participation in physical activity can create differences in motivations<sup>4</sup>. Results of the research showed that

the Motivation must require the systematic involvement of academic, athletic support staff to make clear to athletes and faculty that not affects athletic performance<sup>5</sup>. The motivational structure of the athletes from the different groups and their coaches seems incongruent and this incompatibility might induce athletes' lower and high motivation<sup>6</sup>. College athletes appear to have similar motivation to flow states, regardless of gender and sports type<sup>7</sup>.

The motivational effect on athlete's performance is undeniable. The self-determined motivation enhances performance of athletes<sup>8</sup>. Boys and girls 8 to 18 years of age at a summer sports school resulted have fun; improve skills, to be challenged, learn new skills and to be physically fit<sup>9</sup>. In advance countries a lot of research material is available, and they are also doing more research on it. Based on these materials they train their athletes and get the high performance and victory stands and, from the bottom level i.e., club, a motivational psychologist attached with teams. But no research available in Pakistan to take benefit from it and make the training programmers of current athlete's even psychologist is not attached at our national and

international level athletes or teams to enhance their performance. It is dire need to do research on motivational factors to get optimal level of performance of athletes to get to know that actual factors are associated with their motivation and to work on them which can result in the optimal level of performance of athletes. The motivation improves confidence, focus, composure, intensity and believes on performance among athletes<sup>6</sup>. There are many factors that contributed to sports participation but, as per author's knowledge, motivation in sports participation was not studied on Pakistani athletes. So, the objective of study was to explore the motivational factors for sports participation among Pakistani athletes.

## METHODOLOGY

The cross-sectional survey was conducted at Pakistan sports board (PSB) from July-December 2018 on n=400 male and female national and international level athletes at least from one year. The data was collected through non-probability convenience sampling after the approval from Director Pakistan Sports Board. The coaches, management and support staffs of athletes and Pakistan sports board (PSB) and individuals with any pathology were excluded from the study.

The outcome tools include general demographic questionnaire included age, gender, height, weight, and BMI. The 24 item sports motivational scale related to factors of six types of motivations displayed by athletes in their performances. There are six sub factors include a motivation, external regulation, identified regulation, introjected regulation, integrated regulation, intrinsic motivation. As the understanding of the questionnaire was difficult for athletes, the research asked the athlete the questionnaire in Urdu. The participants were asked to grade their motivational factors on the Likert scale with 7 points in it. 1= doesn't correspond at all, 2 and 3 = corresponds a little, 4 = corresponds moderately, 5 = corresponds a lot and 6 and 7 = corresponds exactly. The total score was 168. The two items from sub factor a motivation had negative scoring. The individual item of Sports motivation scale was presented as frequency and percentages, while correlation of mean score of subscales, depression, anxiety, and stress with total score was calculated

through Pearson correlation. The data was analyzed by using SPSS 21.

## RESULTS

In the current study n=380 were male and n=20 females with the mean age  $24 \pm 5.45$  years. The mean height was  $5.74 \pm 0.45$ , weight was  $71.64 \pm 13.05$  kg and BMI were  $16 \pm 0.83$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>. A total of n=144 athletes were players of Athletics, n=30 subjects were volleyball player= 99 were hand ball player and n=127 were boxing player. The results of the study showed that regarding Internal Motivation factor, a total of 348(87%) were corresponds exactly for the excitement they feel when they are really involved in the activity n=328(82%) to feel a lot of personal satisfaction while mastering certain difficult training techniques n=303(75.8%) and n=321(80.3%) were correspond exactly to the pleasure of discovering new performance strategies. (Table 1)

In external Regulation factor, a total of n=178(48.5%) were corresponds exactly to Because it allows them to be well regarded by people that they know, n=321(80.3%) to the prestige of being athlete, n=324(81%) to the material and/or social benefits of being an athlete and n=326(81.5%) were correspond exactly to show others how good they are at their sports. (Table 1)

The responses to Integrated Regulation factor, n=205(51.3%) were corresponds exactly to because it's part of the way in which they have chosen to live my life, n=305(73.5%), n=341(85.3%) and n=222(55.5%) were correspond exactly to because participation in their sport is an integral part of their life. (Table 1)

While Identified Regulation factor, a total of n=306(76.3%) were corresponds exactly to the statement Because it is a good way to learn lots of things which could be useful to them in other areas of my life, n=345(86.3%) for Because it is one of the best ways, they have chosen to develop other aspects of their life, n=358(88%) for Because it is one of the best ways to maintain good relationships with their friends and n=235(58.8%) were correspond exactly to Because training hard will improve their performance. (Table 1)

While regarding the Identified Regulation factor, a total of n=306(76.3%) were corresponds exactly to the statement that it is a good way to learn lots of things which could be useful to them in other areas

of their,  $n=345(86.3\%)$  for Because it is one of the best ways, they have chosen to develop other aspects of their life,  $n=352(88\%)$  for Because it is one of the best ways to maintain good relationships with their friends and  $n=235(58.8\%)$  for Because training hard will improve their performance. (Table 1)

The responses of athletes regarding Interjected Regulation factor corresponded exactly to the statements;  $n=175(43.8\%)$  for it is absolutely necessary to do sports if one wants to be in shape,  $n=273(68.3\%)$  for Because they must do sports to feel good about themselves,  $n=318(79.5\%)$  for Because they would feel bad if they were not taking

time to do it,  $n=340(85\%)$  for Because they must do sports regularly. (Table 1)

In a motivation factor, A total of  $n=327(81.8\%)$  regarding they do not know anymore; have the impression of being incapable of succeeding in this sport,  $n=264(66\%)$  don't know if they want to continue to invest their time and effort as much in their sport anymore,  $n=358(89.5\%)$  was not clear to them anymore; they don't really think their place is in sport and  $n=362(90.5\%)$  were correspond exactly to that they don't seem to be enjoying their sport as much as they previously did. The detail frequency distribution of subscales with their individual items can be seen in table 1

Table 1: Frequency distribution of Sports Motivation Scale ( $n=400$ )

Factors	Does not correspond at all	Corresponds a little	Corresponds moderately	Corresponds a lot	Corresponds exactly
<b>Internal Motivation</b>					
For the excitement I feel when I am really involved in the activity	5 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	9 (2.3%)	33 (8.3%)	348 (87%)
Because I feel a lot of personal satisfaction while mastering certain difficult training techniques	13 (3.3%)	10 (2.5%)	0 (0%)	29 (1.3%)	328 (82%)
For the satisfaction I experience while I am perfecting my abilities	5 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	37 (9.3%)	55 (13.8%)	303 (75.8%)
For the pleasure of discovering new performance strategies	15 (3.8%)	0 (0%)	18 (4.5%)	46 (11.5%)	321 (80.3%)
<b>External Regulation</b>					
Because it allows me to be well regarded by people that I know.	174 (43.5%)	5 (1.3%)	10 (2.5%)	17 (4.32%)	174 (48.5%)
For the prestige of being athlete	1 (0.3%)	0 (0%)	18 (4.5%)	60 (15%)	321 (80.3%)
For the material and/or social benefits of being an athlete	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	19 (4.8%)	57 (14.3%)	324 (81%)
To show others how good I am at my sport	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	14 (3.5%)	60 (15%)	326 (81.5%)
<b>Integrated Regulation</b>					
Because it's part of the way in which I've chosen to live my life.	119 (29%)	0 (0%)	34 (8.5%)	42 (10.5%)	205 (51.3%)
Because it is an extension of me	26 (6.5%)	10 (2.5%)	20 (5%)	39 (9.8%)	35 (8.75%)
Because participation in my sport is consistent with my deepest principles	10 (2.5%)	11 (2.8%)	15 (3.8%)	23 (5.8%)	341 (85.3%)
Because participation in my sport is an integral part of my life	110 (27.5%)	13 (3.3%)	23 (5.8%)	32 (8%)	222 (55.5%)
<b>Identified Regulation</b>					
Because it is a good way to learn lots of things which could be useful to me in other areas of my life	0 (0%)	10 (2.5%)	10.5 (2.5%)	75 (18.8%)	305 (76.3%)
Because it is one of the best ways, I have chosen to develop other aspects of my life	0 (0%)	10 (2.5%)	15 (3.8%)	30 (7.5%)	345 (86.3%)
Because it is one of the best ways to maintain good relationships with my friends	5 (1.5%)	0 (0%)	13 (3.3%)	21 (5.3%)	352 (88%)
Because training hard will improve my performance	15 (3.5%)	14 (3.8%)	64 (16%)	72 (18%)	235 (58.8%)
<b>Introjected Regulation</b>					
Because it is absolutely necessary to do sports if one wants to be in shape	190 (47.5%)	0 (0%)	10 (2.5%)	25 (6.3%)	175 (43.8%)
Because I must do sports to feel good about myself	0 (0%)	13 (3.3%)	45 (11.3%)	69 (17.3%)	273 (68.3%)
Because I would feel bad if I was not taking time to do it	0 (0%)	6 (1.5%)	20 (5%)	56 (14%)	318 (79.5%)
Because I must do sports regularly	0 (0%)	36 (9%)	5 (1.3%)	19 (4.8%)	340 (85%)
<b>Amotivation</b>					
I don't know anymore; I have the impression of being incapable of succeeding in this sport	22 (5.5%)	15 (3.8%)	5 (1.3%)	31 (7.8%)	327 (81.8%)
I don't know if I want to continue to invest my time and effort as much in my sport anymore	54 (13.5%)	59 (14.8%)	13 (3.3%)	10 (2.5%)	264 (66%)
It is not clear to me anymore; I don't really think my place is in sport	0 (0%)	6 (1.5%)	4 (1%)	32 (8%)	358 (89.5%)
I don't seem to be enjoying my sport as much as I previously did	5 (1.3%)	5 (1.3%)	15 (3.8%)	13 (3.3%)	362 (90.5%)

The results showed that the mean scores showed that most of the athletes were normal in term of depression { $n=309(77.3\%)$ }, anxiety { $n=258$

(64.5%)} and stress { $n=249(62.3\%)$ }, but depression is negatively correlated ( $r=-0.09$ ,  $p=0.04$ ) with sports motivation (table 2)

Table 2: Correlation between subscale and total score of sport motivation scale (n=400)

	Total score of Sports Motivational Scale-6 (134.69±13.431)		
	Mean±SD	Pearson Correlation (r)	p-value
Depression	1.57±1.21	-0.09	0.04*
Anxiety	2.01±1.55	-0.02	0.63
Stress	1.87±1.27-	0.009	0.85

Significance Level:  $p<0.05^*$ ,  $p<0.01^{**}$ ,  $p<0.001^{***}$

## DISCUSSION

The objective of the study was to explore the motivational factors for sports participation among Pakistani athletes. According to results, the major motivating factor for most of the athletes in this study was the excitement, they feel when they participate in sports and when they accomplish something, it motivates them more. Another motivating factor that was proved to drive the athletes to participate in sports was satisfaction while perfecting their skills and learning new and difficult techniques, factors of intrinsic motivation as well as to improve their performance. Some athletes were motivated because they wanted to prove themselves best and show others, how well they are at games. They wanted to be recognized by public and well regarded by people around them, while few of them participate for the prestige of being athlete. They were motivated to participate just because they wanted to be in international team. Hence, their performance was driven by external regulation. Majority of the athletes were motivated because they decided to choose playing because it was the specialty, they excelled it. They do so, because it is the selected way of life and is consistent with deepest principles, factors of integrated regulation. They struggle to achieve monetary recompenses, gold medals and rewards as they do for internal satisfaction.

According to the Mallet & Hanrahan (2004) elite athletes competing at the international levels, not only show external motivation, more specifically, identified regulation, but also intrinsic motivation. Some displayed introjected regulation, as they participate in sports because of their desire to stay physically fit and in shape. In their study, the integrated regulation and the intrinsic motivation was articulated, somehow. The study concluded that, due to presence of factors of external regulation, extrinsic type motivation, their intrinsic

motivation is not lowered. In fact, it influences the motivation to improve performance.<sup>10</sup>

Similarly, in current study majority of the athletes corresponded exactly or corresponded a lot to all the factors of integrated regulation. Majority of the participants corresponded that they participate in sports for the excitement they feel while doing athletic activity. All the participants corresponded that the satisfaction of fine-tuning of their skills, learning of new and difficult skills and desire of improvement in performance is also a major motivating factor. Almost all the athletes were motivated to participate just to show others their best performance. Majority, not all the participants of current study play to be recognized by people and peers. Few athletes i.e., less than half, participate to get the honour of being called an athlete or for the social or material benefits. Majority of participants were motivated because participation in sports become an integral part of their life. On the contrary, in current study, only few participants were displaying motivation for the external constraints and rewards.

Forzoni and Karageorghis (2001) states that the high levels of intrinsic motivational factors are reported to be present elite soccer players.<sup>11</sup> Similarly in current study, athletes are highly motivated due to intrinsic factors. In a study conducted by Reeve and Deci (1996), it was concluded that, athletes participate in sports activity for the pleasure and satisfaction of learning new performance skills and strategies and mastering them via difficult training to be competent enough.<sup>12</sup> In another study, factor of participation in sports for the purpose to learn new thing irrelevant to sports but useful in other aspects of life was lacking in elite athletes.<sup>13</sup> Similarly in current study, factors of intrinsic motivation and integrated regulation were major motivating factors.

A study conducted by Reinboth M (2006) on Perceived motivational climate, need satisfaction and indices of well-being in team sports: A longitudinal perspective. They assessed perceptions of the motivational climate; the need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness; subjective vitality and physical symptoms. Result showed that an increase in perceptions of a task-involving climate positively predicted an increased satisfaction of the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In turn, changes in the satisfaction of the needs for autonomy and relatedness emerged as significant predictors of changes in subjective vitality.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, in current study, all the athletes corresponded that they participate in sports because they feel a lot of satisfaction while doing so and only few participate for the material benefit. On the contrary to the results of previous one, they both can coexist somehow because in another study by Mallet & Hanrahan (2004) this concept was nullified by saying that the factor of external regulation doesn't decrease or limit the intrinsic motivation, but it can be an additive to overall motivation for giving best performance<sup>10</sup>.

The Leslie Podlog in 2015 conducted a study on need satisfaction, motivation, and engagement among high-performance youth athletes. They concluded that intrinsic motivation and identified regulation partially mediated the relationship between competence and engagement. These Findings support SDT contentions highlighting the importance of self-determined forms of motivation in mediating need satisfaction and engagement<sup>15</sup>. While in current study, conducted on professional athletes, among them more than half participates for being physically fit.

A study was conducted by Van Heerden CH (2014) on the relationship between motivation type and the sport participation in South African teams. This study concluded that, the participation of athletes is mainly driven by the factor to prove them best and show others how well they are at sports, instead of their love and passion towards game. Thus, external regulation plays major role in athletes' participation as compared to intrinsic motivation<sup>16</sup>. Similarly in current study the factor of external regulation, reason of participation to show their best and prove themselves dominated all

types of motivation with 100% agreement. Contrarily, the factors of intrinsic motivation play major role in participation of athletes in current study.

A study was conducted by Leigh McGraw et al. in USA (2012) to determine the influence of mental skill on motivation and psychosocial characteristics. They recruited the participants immediately after regular training activities and were assessed on DASS-21. They concluded that participants who were intrinsically motivated were more psychosocially healthier and with strong mental skill profile as compared to others which is like the current study, showing the strong correlation between DASS-21 and motivational<sup>17</sup>.

A similar study was conducted in 2007 by Katrien Wijndaele et al. to find association between leisure time physical activity and stress. They concluded that sports participation and other types of leisure time physical activity was significantly lower in stressed participants which also depicts strong association between stress and sport motivation like the current study<sup>18</sup>.

Although sample was appropriate but there is vast variation in age of the athletes that may affect the motivation level. There was multiple demographic factor that may be included in the study including education level, marital and financial status that may affect the result of study.

## CONCLUSION

The mostly athletes are highly motivated because hard training will improve their performance and other motivational factors are also associated like pleasure, internal satisfaction, and excitement. The least common motivational factors were achieving social or material benefits of being an athlete. The depression may also affect the motivation level for sports participation.

Some demographic related Pakistani athletes must be included in the future study to obtain a clear picture of factor associated with Sports motivation.

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