Participation and Motivation in Sport in relation to General Mental Health and Social Physique Anxiety

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Mental health has a stigma that is tied into weakness and is absolutely the antithesis of what athletes want to portray’ (Dr. Thelma Dye Holmes, 2012).
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Abstract

The aim of this research was to investigate motives for participation in sport having regard to gender, type of sport, general mental health and social physique anxiety. It is a cross-sectional observational study comprising of correlational and between group elements. Participants were 120 females and 140 males from various sporting teams and clubs who volunteered to take part in the study. Each participant was asked to fill out a number of questionnaires based on participation motives, general health and social physique anxiety. Analysis of the data found that males and females participated in recreational and competitive sport mainly for social engagement and fitness enhancement. The study also found that females had higher competitive motives for participating in sport than males. Females were found to have higher levels of social physique anxiety than males. No significant difference in mental health levels existed between males and females. The data collected was analysed using an ANOVA, Independent t-tests and Pearson’s correlation. Further research is needed in the area of mental health and social physique anxiety among all sports participants.
Introduction

Overview

This study will examine motivation to participate in sport, general mental health and social physique anxiety in relation to males and females and the type of sport in which they participate. Prevalence rates and definitions of physique anxiety and mental health will be outlined throughout the study with particular reference to Irish midland participants. Previous research carried out in this area will also be examined. The review will conclude with analysis of the proposed hypotheses.

The benefits of sport participation are well established. Previous studies by the Department of Health, the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and the Irish Sports Council (ISC) have shown that more Irish adults are now participating in sport than at any other time in our country’s history. During the 1970s many parents regarded participation in organized sports as crucial for the development and social status of their children (Coakley, 2007). For young children, parents see sport, both competitive and recreational, as an opportunity to experience fun, structured and healthy physical activity. They believe that their children will profit from the health-related benefits that are linked with sport participation. In the 1980s a growing emphasis on physical activity also heightened general awareness that physical activities, particularly the strenuous activities common in sports, were important to fitness and overall well-being. However, motives for participating in sport have changed in the past few decades. Today, a desire for competition and social inclusion appear to be the primary motivators among both men and women for participation in sport and physical activity. There is also a growing societal awareness of the importance of exercise in maintaining positive mental health.
There is a difference between competitive and recreational sport. While regular gym, jogging or yoga participation is often linked to body image and mental health awareness, it is less clear whether participation in competitive sports can also be linked to body image, mental health and social physique anxiety. Constant participation in one or more competitive or recreational sports may not always yield the expected and desired results with respect to body ideation, general mental health and overall psychological well-being (Bergeron, 2007). This study looks at individuals’ motives to participate in competitive and recreational sport structures. In turn, it will examine how these motives impact on an individual’s general mental health and social physique perception.

**Defining Sport**

Sport is a physical activity that gives participants a chance to experience enjoyment and competition, while at the same time acquiring positive outcomes such as new challenges, social interactions, skill enhancement and increased levels of fitness as well as enhanced physical and mental health (ISC, 2003). The focus of this study is on participation in competitive sport and recreational sport in Ireland where sport has been divided into two groups by the Irish Sports Council Act 1999, i.e. ‘Competitive sport – meaning all forms of physical activity which, through organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and at obtaining improved results in competition at all levels’. Recreational sport is defined under the same act as – ‘all forms of physical activity which, through casual or regular participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental wellbeing and at forming social relationships’. These definitions are important when analysing results of this study.
Competitive sport organizations prioritize their programmes by placing great importance on competition and winning, whereas recreational programmes generally avoid comparisons with others and place more emphasis on participation and fun (Mac Donald, 2001). Fortier, Vallerand, Briere, and Provencher (1995) noted that ‘It appears that in a competitive structure the focus is more on winning - something extrinsic to the sport - than in a recreational structure, where athletes probably play for fun rather than to win at all costs’ (Fortier et al., 1995, p.32).

The definition of sport in the Irish Sports Council Act (1999) is quite broad. It incorporates traditional competitive sports such as Gaelic games, rugby and basketball. It also includes physical activities such as jogging, cycling and range of other exercise activities aimed at improving physical fitness. In this study, the researcher refers to organized team based sport as competitive and regular jogging, gym attendance, yoga and pilates classes as recreational sport.

**Sport in Ireland**

A large number of studies and surveys carried out in the late 1980s and early 1990s showed that the percentage of individuals participating in sport was relatively low. The figure was also noticeably smaller among women than men. (Dishman, 1988; Gill and Overdoff, 1994; Martin and Dubbert, 1982; Robinson and Godbey, 1993). However, figures produced in 2013 revealed a different picture. Young adults are playing much more sport than their parents’ generation and, therefore, there is an increased chance that they will participate in sport as older adults (ESRI, 2008). This is an interesting result in a context where it is repeatedly suggested in the media that levels of physical activity are falling.
The Irish Sports Monitor (ISM) (2013) is a bi-annual study conducted by the Irish Sports Council that measures adult participation in sport and physical activity and compares it with previously published information. The current report provides an overview of active and social participation in sport during the first six months of 2013 and compares it with figures from the ISM 2011. The report identified significant increases in the level of sports participation in Ireland with a rise from 45% in 2011 to 47% in the first half of 2013. It also found that whilst participation in competitive team-based sports remained steady, participation in individual or recreational sports, such as going to the gym, aerobics and jogging had increased considerably (ESRI, 2008). Although analysis of the report showed that female participation in sport increased from 34% in 2011 to 44% in 2013, men are still twice as likely as women to play competitive sport, either as part of a team or in an individual discipline (Sports Sentiment Index, 2013). Within the 2013 cohort, further questions were asked in order to explore the difference between both genders in terms of their motivation to participate in sport and the female perspective on sports participation (ISM, 2013). Research into Irish sporting habits illustrates high levels of participation in recreational sports and an ongoing shift towards leisure and lifestyle sports such as running, swimming, cycling and walking. The traditionally popular competitive field sports such as Gaelic games, soccer and rugby are most popular amongst active 18-24 males but there is decline in participation after the age of 35 in team sports (The Sports Sentiment Index, 2013). In terms of motivations to participate in sport, the ISM (2013) identified that improving one’s health and fitness is the most common motivator for both genders to participate in sport. Men are more likely to be motivated to improve their athletic skills, strength and competition against others, whereas females are more likely to be motivated by weight control, appearance and as an activity to relax (ISM, 2013). This may lead to further initiatives to encourage more women to participate in sport at local and national levels.
**Literature Review**

**Gender differences in participation in sport**

Gender is defined as a set of characteristics that differentiates males and females (Chalabaev et al. 2013). Although some argue that gender is biological, research has shown that gender is also socially constructed. From the moment children are born, they understand their gender by the way they are named, dressed and treated (Chalabaev et al. 2013). As young children are introduced to various sports, their experiences are based on gender roles and expectations. Social cognitive models (Bandura, 1986) which serve as the basis for much research into sport and exercise, suggest that the social environment, with its gender restrictions, is a vital factor in motivation and self-perception (Chrisler & McCreary, 2010). These gender restrictions and self-perceptions are of particular concern to society when looking at children developing perceptions of various physical activities. Young boys and girls have relatively similar physical capabilities and could take part in the same activities. Irish research conducted in the 1990s reported how gender stereotyping was evident in Irish physical education. ‘Gaelic football, hurling, weight training, soccer, golf and karate were perceived as being “male activities”, whereas dance, gymnastics and netball were strongly associated with females’ (Jones et al., 1991). Most parents, sporting organisations and the media support ‘gender appropriate’ activities for children (Chrisler & McCreary, 2010). Boys’ participation in sports and physical activity has always been consistent with society’s definition of masculinity and it is reinforced, emphasized, and encouraged by the attitudes of parents, teachers, coaches and peers (Daigle, 2003). Further evidence of gender differences in sport exists in Knisel et al. (2009) who claimed that, from a young age, boys are more motivated than girls to participate in sport and in physical education classes. However, recent changes in society in general have meant that various gender orientated sports have more equal
participation of boys, girls, men and women (Chrisler & McCreary, 2010). The gap in sporting opportunities between boys and girls has certainly reduced and society’s attitude towards girls and women and their ability to participate and compete in sport has also changed (Cohen, 2001).

Research into gender differences and motives to participate in competitive sport have generally found that males tend to be more concerned with winning than females (Corbin, 1981; Gil, 1986; White & Duda, 1994). In collaboration with the Irish Sports Council (ISC), the ESRI conducted a research programme on sport and physical activity. It included research on the role of sport in the lives of males and females and the extent of participation in all types of sport (ESRI, 2009). The results from the study (ESRI, 2009) found that men are more likely to participate in competitive sport than women, but there was certainly an increase in women participating in sport, particularly recreational. Age and socio-economic status were also found to be prevailing influences. Both factors are very relevant to engagement in competitive sport. The ESRI study reported a decline after age 30 in competitive sports that require moderate to high levels of effort. Barnett et al. (2008) reported mixed results from studies based on sport and low socio-economic status as poverty was associated with both increasing and decreasing sport participation.

Standard analysis of gender and participation in sport prior to the late 1980s has shown that women were less likely to participate in sport than men and that women were also less interested in sport (Lunn and Layte, 2008). However, this common perception appears to have radically changed since the early 1990s. Women are not only participating more in sport than in previous decades, but they are now participating in many sports that have previously been considered as male dominated. Sports people such as Katie Taylor and the Irish women’s rugby team have played a prominent role in changing perceptions of ‘appropriate’ sport for females in Ireland over the last ten years. Literature from Hoiness & Cotrell (2008)
indicated the need for further research in certain aspects of gender and sport. They claimed that it is vital that coaches, sport psychologists, and all players understand the impact that sport participation can have on females. Negative stereotyping resulting from sport participation can be harmful in terms of increased stress, self-esteem and peer pressure. Simply being aware of potentially negative consequences and issues acknowledges the problems that have the ability to undermine motivation, perception, self-esteem and performance of sport participants (Hoiness & Cotrell, 2008). This may be particularly relevant to females but it is hoped that this study sheds some light on social physique anxiety levels in both male and female sports participants.

**Motives for participating in sport**

Motivation in sport and gender has been linked in many studies. Social factors and image were found to be stronger motives for women, and competence and competition were more valued by men (Koivula, 1999). These associations are likely to have emerged due to societal expectations for men and women. Are men still expected to be competitive and are women still expected to be concerned about their appearance in early 21st century Ireland? Although physical appearance concerns both men and women, studies show it is still more important to women. There is also a much stronger pressure on women to have a youthful appearance and to be slim (Garner, Garfinkel, Schwartz, & Thompson, 1980; Willis & Campbell, 1992).

Kilpatrick, Hebert and Bartholomew (2005) carried out a study differentiating men and women’s motives for sport participation and exercise. The motivational factors for participants who preferred exercise were appearance, stress management, strength and endurance and weight management. In contrast, competition, challenge, and social recognition were higher motivational factors for those who participated in sport. In the same study, significant differences between men and women were also found in the motivational
variables. Men reported higher levels of motivation than women for competition, strength and endurance and social recognition, whereas women gave weight management a higher rating (Kilpatrick et al, 2005). In addition to this, Kilpatrick and others found a significant gender interaction in some variables. These included stress management, revitalization, positive health and enjoyment.

Bem (1981a) showed that individuals internalize the desirable and appropriate behaviour that is expected of them from society. From a young age, individuals may also be pressurised by their parents to compete and to socially compare themselves with others in the athletic field. Duda (1987) argued that children who participate in highly competitive sport rather than recreational sport are more likely to compare their ability with others as they grow older. Smith, Smoll, and Curtis (1979) also found that individuals who participated in a positive and encouraging sporting environment from a young age showed a greater desire to continue their participation in sport than their counterparts who played in an environment that did not provide positive reinforcement. The level of motivation and support the child receives from a young age may encourage them to continue in the sport or to drop out. Participants tend to continue to engage in sport if their experiences are positive ones (ISC, 2003).

Competitive sports can express strong messages about one’s masculinity and femininity. Sport has traditionally been regarded as a domain where men are encouraged to pursue a masculine gender role identity (Czima, Wittig, & Schurr, 1988; Miller & Levy, 1996; Nixon & Frey, 1996). While this traditional view may be changing it is interesting to watch the rise of popularity in women’s rugby and women’s boxing. However, the literature points to very negative comment on sportspeople who do not conform to what many in society still see as the norm. Males who choose not to engage in sports are often perceived as abnormal and are branded with negative terms such as "wimp" or "sissy" or even as homosexual merely because they are seen as acting outside their prescribed gender roles (Messner & Sabo, 1994).
Certain competitive sports for females have been largely viewed as inappropriate and women who participate in these sports are often characterized as masculine. Labels such as "dyke", "butch" and "lesbian" are commonly used to describe female athletes and refer to the masculinizing effects of participation in competitive sports (Brady, Trafimow, Eisler, & Southard, 1996; Harris, 1973; Murphy, 1988).

Holt et al. (2011) reported social and personal benefits as motives for some individuals’ sport participation. Social benefits included positive relationships with coaches, establishing new friendships and developing teamwork and social skills. Similarly, Mueller & Reznik (1979) noted how participation in recreational sport can fulfil some of the individual’s personal needs of self-expression, self-reliance, self-esteem and the need to belong. It can also act as diversion or relaxation from the pressure of work and study. Bartko and Eccles (2003) reported that structured activities, including sport, led to higher positive functioning for participants. They also found that those who participated in sports had more developmental benefits than non-participants.

A recent study in 2011 measured the effects of participation in sport on social anxiety. It compared participants who took part in team sport, individual sport and no sport. Findings showed that participants in team sport had reductions in social anxiety scores over time, whilst anxiety scores in the no-sport and individual-sport groups actually increased. The conclusion was that participation in sport, particularly team sports, had a positive effect as a buffer against anxiety (Dimech and Seiler, 2011). Wankel and Kriesel (1985) found that some of the most important motivational factors for young individuals in sport participation were the excitement of the sport, personal accomplishment, and improvement of skills. Being on a team and meeting with friends were of intermediate importance. Factors such as winning and getting rewards were identified as being the least important by the same participants.
Another motivational factor for participating in sport is competence and high achievement. Dr Tadhg MacIntyre, lecturer in sport, exercise and performance psychology at University of Limerick, spoke in 2013 about the quality of some of the advice being provided for sportspeople, especially in the GAA where the use of psychology and motivation techniques has increased dramatically in recent years (Breheny, 2013). He expressed concern that some players could be getting the wrong advice, which carries serious risks. Performance and motivational coaches are reducing the mental side of sport to something that equates with 'mental fitness' and a naive focus on performance enhancement. However, the big fear is that the relentless drive for success leads to a focus on winning and does not allow for the pleasure of team participation and general enjoyment of the sport. In addition, many GAA players are subjected to intense highs and lows and much of their self-esteem is wrapped up in their performances on the pitch (Breheny, 2013). Many sportspeople will have identified with David Corkery, the Munster and Ireland player who eloquently described the highs and lows of competitive rugby on RTE radio1 on 21st February 2014 and the resultant links with low self-esteem and depression. This fear is also relevant for individuals preparing for a college scholarship or for those who want to play the sport at a higher competitive level. They are training and competing regularly and intensely which, in turn, can lead to extreme pressure and excess negative stress (Bergeron, 2007).

**General Mental Health and Sport**

Sport can be most helpful in maintaining one’s mental health regardless of the type of sport or level of participation (Irish Sports Council, 2010). The camaraderie of team sport and the personal achievement in individual sport are significant buffers for maintaining a positive and healthy lifestyle (Titkov, Schneider and Novoradovskaya, 2012). On the other hand, the
pressure, the stress and the disappointment that comes with sport at a competitive level can at times be overlooked.

Although the World Health Organisation’s definition of health incorporates physical, mental and social health domains, research providing evidence of the physical activity guidelines does not specifically address mental health (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2008). Extensive research has been carried out on the physical health benefits of participating in physical activity, but less research focuses on the mental health and social aspects of sport (Eime et al., 2013). Furthermore, research has primarily been directed towards the health benefits of recreational sport such as walking, swimming, cycling with little research concentrating specifically on competitive sport participation.

Regular participation in physical activity is essential for good mental and physical health. Sport and regular exercise has specific advantages in cardiorespiratory fitness and general muscular strength, power and endurance. This has been shown in males and females across a variety of sports including football, basketball, swimming and tennis (Bergeron, 2007). It is well-documented in international academic literature that people who play sport are healthier and enjoy reduced risk of various serious diseases (Irish Sports Council, 2010). Physical strains and injuries endured by athletes are common, but, interestingly, psychological strain from sport participation is on the increase (Bergeron, 2007). This can sometimes arise from the immense pressure of competing or from the pressure to achieve a certain sport physique. Arsène Wenger, the manager of the Arsenal soccer team, recently reported that the pressure and criticism surrounding his players this season has affected their performance in games (Isaacs, 2013). Rory McIlroy, the Irish golfer, has spoken of the pressure to succeed in sport that is pushing more and more sportspeople towards stress-related illnesses. He said that the mental toll of sport could far outweigh the physical pressures (Rutherford, 2013). Physical injuries, poor performances, issues with teammates or coaches, overtraining, and even
retirement from sport, may leave an individual vulnerable to mental health problems (Vickers, 2013). In 2013, the Gaelic Players Association (GPA) reported that the number of county players seeking support from the GPA mental health services trebled this year with reasons such as depression, gambling and bereavement the most common among players (Fegan, 2013).

Many studies in the past have focused on physical activity and different aspects of mental health. A study involving American high school students, found that participation in team sport was associated with lower general risk-taking and fewer mental health problems, compared with non-participants in team sport (Steiner et al., 2000). Petruzzello et al. (1991) claimed in their study that short bouts of physical activity, in the form of aerobic exercise, can also reduce anxiety. In another study, involvement in team sport was positively associated with social acceptance and negatively associated with depressive symptoms (Boone and Leadbeater, 2006). This study concluded that benefits from team sport may be linked to the effect of positive experiences such as peer relationships, support or skill development in enhancing perceived social acceptance and reducing body dissatisfaction. Wang et al. (2010) gave evidence that tai-chi (a mind-body exercise) improved the psychological well-being of individuals by reducing stress, anxiety and mood disturbances. Lastly, another study looked at number of sports, type of sport, and years participating in sport, and discovered that sport participation was positively connected to self-assessments of physical appearance, physical self-esteem, physical competence and general self-esteem (Bowker, 2006). Valois and others (2004) also reported that a primary health benefit of participation in team sport is life satisfaction.

Although many male and female sporting participants live a positive and healthy lifestyle, some individuals suffer with mental health issues for a variety of reasons. Economic problems in Ireland, unemployment, openness about sexuality and bereavement or simply the
stress and pressure of everyday life can cause depression or other mental health issues for individuals on or off the sports field or gym.

**Social Physique Anxiety and Sport**

Studies in the past have examined how individuals perceive their own bodies, but much less research has examined self-perceptions of how others evaluate our bodies (Brown, 2002). Social physique anxiety is a personality disposition defined as ‘the degree to which people become anxious when others observe their physique’ (Hart, Leary & Rejeski, 1989). It has often been related to motivation and behaviour (Brunet & Sabiston, 2009).

In a study by Kruisselbrink and others (2004), it was proven that females exhibit higher levels of social physique anxiety than males. This may be because of societal norms and views which place greater emphasis on the shape and size of the female body than that of males (Columbus, 2007). For many decades, women have been pressurized to change their body size, shape and weight to fit whatever is seen as the current trend in society. The fact that this trend may be set by anorexic super models on Paris catwalks does not seem to diminish the power of suggestion. Researchers have also revealed that the majority of women in Western cultures are dissatisfied and unhappy with their body shape and weight (Grogan, 1999). For female athletes, it is believed that excess weight may inhibit their physical performance where leanness is an asset. This is particularly prevalent in aesthetic sports where focus is on appearance, gracefulness and physique. Wearing of a uniform is another issue that may affect social physique anxiety in women. Self-presentation may increase anxiety especially if the uniform is revealing or of tight fit (Columbus, 2007). Supporting evidence of this was found in a study linking weight pressure and social physique anxiety in synchronized skaters who indicated that their uniforms increased their awareness of their appearance and their bodies (Greenleaf, 2005).
Holle (2004) reported that over the past decade there has been increasing evidence of body image disorders in males. The results of this study revealed that self-perceived overweight and underweight males reported less willingness to participate in sporting activities that may involve the body being scrutinised by others (Holle as cited by Bakere, 2008). A further finding was unwillingness by males to expose the upper torso in the presence of others. This was associated with a fear of negative evaluation and increased social physique anxiety. This upsurge in body dissatisfaction among males might be reflected by the increased media attention paid to the muscular male ideal (Holle as cited by Bakere, 2008). Although advertising in general has been shown to affect both male and female body image one needs to ask if specific sport advertising has the same affect. Perhaps the representations of the body used in sport advertising may be perceived by individuals as the standard to which their bodies would be compared in general team sport or exercise environments. Research from Tylka (2007) conducted with male college students, found that those who were exposed to advertisements depicting highly muscular men experienced greater dissatisfaction with their bodies than men exposed to neutral ads. This may in turn affect the sporting activity in which individuals choose to participate as they are worried about others evaluating their body in a negative way (Bakere, 2008 and Lantz, Hardy and Ainsworth, 1997). New research from Tylka (2007) suggested that some men succumb to the pressure to have almost perfect muscular bodies, which can ultimately lead to eating disorders, pressure to use steroids, and an unhealthy preoccupation with weightlifting. The perceived attractiveness of muscular men has grown since the 1950s, with an emphasis being place on large muscle and lean body mass rather than body fat. This trend is also reflected in toy action figure heroes such as Action Man and Ken, who have become more muscular, with physiques now similar to advanced bodybuilders (Ricciardelli, 2012).
Brudzynski and Ebben (2010) conducted a study on ‘Body Image as a Motivator and Barrier to Exercise’. This study is the most comprehensive qualitative study on the topic of body image and exercise behaviours. In this study, 58% of individuals who exercised regularly reported that body image affected the amount of exercise they did. The perception of physical appearance as being positive or negative may predict exercise motivation and participation. A study conducted by Weinberg and Gould (2011) found that people with high social physique anxiety are likely to avoid fitness settings and may struggle with motivation to participate in sport or physical activity as they fear how others will evaluate their physiques. The relationship between body image and exercise participation is demonstrated by the fact that issues such as physical appearance, weight management and physique anxiety have all consistently ranked high as motivators to exercise. In particular, research has revealed that those who perceive themselves as overweight are more likely to exercise to lose weight than those who do not perceive themselves to be overweight (Ingledew and Sullivan, 2001).

The pressure that is placed on young males and females to portray an ideal physique are predominant social forces in today’s society. Proof, if needed, may be found in the many diet plans, exercise regimes and programmes such as Operation Transformation that flood the media. Failure to live up to these expectations, whether real or imagined, may induce thoughts and feelings that others are negatively evaluating one’s physique. In this situation, social physique anxiety may be experienced (Hart, Leary, & Rejeski, 1989). Subsequently, individuals who are worried that others may be negatively judging their physiques may feel pressured by society’s ideals to participate in physical activity to enhance their physique and decrease the chances of negative evaluations (Leary, 2013).
Specific rationale for the study

Many studies have examined participation and motivation in sport and physical activity, with less research focussing particularly on competitive and recreational sport. Studies have also examined male and female participation and how participation may have been influenced by social factors from childhood or current media.

Less research has focused on the specific mental health implications of competitive sport participation as opposed to recreational sport. It is acknowledged that sport has a generally positive effect on mental health but questions need to be put which will focus on the recent trends of extreme body image ideation and the subsequent pressures on team sport participants. This study will examine both males and females’ motives to participate in competitive team sports, as well as recreational sports and how this participation affects their general mental health and social physique perception. It will compare general mental health and the social anxiety physique of competitive sportspeople with those who take part on a recreational level. It will test the literature to see if women have higher physique anxiety than men and it will look at what motivates both males and females to engage in sport at both levels.

Hypotheses

The research hypotheses used in this paper are as follows:

➢ *Hypothesis 1:* It is hypothesised that motives for social activities and fitness enhancement will be the strongest motivator for individuals who participate in recreational sport.
- **Hypothesis 2**: It is hypothesised that males will have higher skill improvement and competitive motives than females when participating in sport.

- **Hypothesis 3**: The third hypothesis is that there will be a difference in mental health levels between male and female participants.

- **Hypothesis 4**: The fourth hypothesis is that females will have a higher level of social physique anxiety than men.

- **Hypothesis 5**: The final hypothesis is that there will be a significant relationship between social physique anxiety and general health.
Methodology

Participants
The total number of participants that took part in this study was 260. The sample was a convenience sample taken from the researcher’s network. Participants were chosen from both competitive and recreational sporting organizations. Within the competitive sports group, participants were on rugby, football, camogie, hurling and soccer teams. The teams chosen were also based on convenience. Within the recreational sports group, participants attended the local gym regularly, went jogging or to yoga and aerobics classes. The sample comprised of 140 males and 120 females. Each participant in this study was over 18 years old albeit no age range was ascertained. There were no circumstances in which any of the participants were pressurised to take part in the study and under no circumstances were the participants obliged to take part on behalf of the researcher or Dublin Business School.

Materials
The materials used in the study consisted of three online questionnaires. These were distributed to participants through various online resources including email, Facebook and Twitter. Participants were first asked demographic information about their gender and whether they took part in competitive sport, recreational sport or both. The study then used standardised instruments, consisting of the Participation Motivation Questionnaire (Gill, Gross, and Huddleston, 1983), the General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg, 1992) and the Social Physique Anxiety Scale (Hart, Leary and Rejeski, 1989).
**Participation Motivation Questionnaire**

The Participation Motivation Questionnaire (PMQ) by Gill, Gross, and Huddleston (1983) has been widely used in several studies to examine individuals’ motives for participating in sport. Participants complete a 30-item list of possible reasons for participating in the sport. In doing so they answer stem questions such as ‘I like to win’ or ‘I like to get exercise’ on a 3-point Likert scale indicating their preferences from ‘not at all important’ to ‘very important’. This followed the work of Yann and McCullagh (2004) who similarly used a 3-point Likert scale based on Gill et al (1983). In Yann and McCullagh’s (2004) study:

“A physical activity motivation questionnaire (Gill et al., 1983) was used to collect data about youth's sports participatory motivation at participant's school or church. A reliability of .85 was determined by using the technique of split-halves. Based on the nature of the question, the 30 questions of the "physical activity motivation questionnaire" (Gill et al., 1983) were categorized into three general areas: (1) motivations related to skill improvement/competition; (2) motivations related to social activities/fitness enhancement; and (3) other types of motivation”.

Following on from their work, this current study using the Participation Motivation Questionnaire (Gill et al., 1983) was similarly categorized into three general areas: 1) motivations related to skill improvement/competition; 2) motivations related to social activities/fitness enhancement and 3) other types of motivation. The purpose of this questionnaire was to categorise participants within three distinct motivational groupings based on their gender and whether they took part in competitive sport, recreational sport or both. This would then further enable a cross correlation to take place in relation to their disposition towards their mental health identified in the General Health Questionnaire and their body physique via the Social Physique Anxiety Scale.
**General Health Questionnaire**

The General Health Questionnaire (1988) developed by Goldberg, is a widely used psychological measure to assess the mental health levels of an individual within the past few weeks. This measure focuses on breaks in normal functioning rather than on life-long traits. The GHQ is available in 28, 30 or 60 items but a reduced form was developed to give a good indication of a person’s mental health. This is known as the GHQ12 (1992). The short version of a 12-item scale was used in this study. The questions ask participants to indicate their general mental health over the past few weeks, with questions including ‘Felt constantly under strain and ‘Been losing self-confidence in yourself’. Each question has four responses from “better than usual” to “much less than usual”. Items are scored using a four-point Likert scale and summed up to compile a total ranging from 0 to 36. A higher score indicates a greater degree of psychological distress. Goldberg reported good reliability and validity for the GHQ12 scale. Good internal consistency was also found with a range between 0.82 to 0.90, as assessed by Cronbach’s alpha (Goldberg, 1992).

**Social Physique Anxiety Scale**

The final questionnaire used was the Social Physique Anxiety Scale, (Hart, Leary, & Rejeski, 1989). This 12-item self-report scale is useful for examining the degree to which people become anxious when others observe or evaluate their physiques especially in a sporting environment. Participants were presented with 12 statements, for example “I wish I wasn't so up-tight about my physique or figure” and “In the presence of others, I feel apprehensive about my physique or figure”. Each answer representing the participant’s disposition towards the statement ranging from 1) Not at all to 5) Extremely, in terms of whether they agreed with the statement or not. Items are scored using a five-point Likert scale and summed, to compile a total ranging from 0 to 60. The positively worded items were reversed scored and then were
added to the score of the remaining items for the overall total. Hart et al. (1989) provided evidence for the SPAS with construct validity, test-retest reliability and internal consistency (alpha = .90). In general, high scores on the SPAS imply individuals have a high anxiety in relation to their physique in social circumstances (Hart, E. A., Leary, M. R., & Rejeski, W. J., 1989).

**Research Design**

This is a cross-sectional observational study comprising of correlational and between group elements. The independent variables include males and females and in what type of sport they participate; competitive, recreational or both. The dependent variables include participation motivations, general mental health and social physique anxiety.

Questionnaires investigating motivation and participations (PMQ), general mental health (GHQ) and physique perception (SPAS) were used for data collection purposes. Participants were asked in what type of sport they took part, competitive or recreational sport or both.

**Procedure**

Participants for the study were chosen from local sports teams and members of the local gym. The chosen teams and individuals from the gym were a convenience sample taken from the researcher’s network. In total, 320 individuals accessed the questionnaire and on further review of the data, 260 respondents’ replies were deemed eligible for the study. Over 170 individuals were contacted and the study was discussed with them. In turn they were asked to invite fellow team mates and colleagues to complete the questionnaires. For ease of reply, the questionnaire was online and the relevant link was given to all. Furthermore, use was made of online resources such as Facebook, email and Twitter requesting that people take part in the
study. In all communications, a brief explanation of what the study would entail and an access link to the study was given to all participants.

The cover letter at the beginning of the questionnaire informed the participant that the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw from it at any stage, until the point at which the questionnaires were submitted. Participants were also advised of the confidential nature of the study and that no identifiable information appeared on any of the questionnaires. The completion of the questionnaire took around ten minutes and participants were informed that they could email the researcher at any time with questions.

All completed questionnaires were stored in a folder online until the researcher had sufficient numbers for a viable study. The data was entered into SPSS and scored appropriately. Analysis of the research and results were contained in a folder on the researcher’s laptop and on a USB key which could only be accessed with a password.

**Ethics**

This study was examined by the Dublin Business School Department of Psychology Board of Ethics. Once they deemed the study viable, ethical approval was granted. The researcher ensured that all the individuals participating in the study were above the legal age of 18 years so this was not an area of ethical concern. As the issues of mental health and body image can be distressing for some, participants were given help-line numbers and websites such as Bodywhys Ireland and Aware which were featured on the last page of the questionnaire.
Results

Data management and input
All questionnaires were first screened for errors and missing answers which resulted in the data of some students being discarded from statistical analysis. Twenty three individuals did not complete the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) and thirty-four individuals did not complete the Social Physique Anxiety Scale (SPAS). Reverse scoring was carried out on the GHQ and SPAS questionnaires, data was entered into SPSS and the appropriate statistical tests were run.

Descriptive Statistics

Overview of the Sample
The total number of participants who took part in the study was 260, which is comprised of 120 (46.15%) females and 140 (53.85%) males.
Figure 1: Type of Sport

All participants in the study took part in some form of sport. 70 individuals (26.92%) took part in competitive sport, 95 individuals (36.54%) took part in recreational sport and 95 individuals (36.54%) took part in both.
Figure 2: Gender participation in each type of sport

The different type of sport that males and females participated in was also calculated. Types of sport were divided into competitive sport and recreational sport, with some participants in the study taking part in both. Results on a bar chart revealed that recreational sport n = 95 (mean = 1.74 S.D= .433) was the most popular type of sport for women, whereas both recreational and competitive sport were the most popular for men n= 95 (mean = 1.27 S.D = .448).
Gender and motives to participate in sport

Figure 3: Male motives to participate in sport.

Results from Figure 3 show that social and fitness activities are the strongest motivator for sport participation among males (mean =22.17, S.D= 4.1) across all types of sports.
Figure 4: Female motives to participate in sport.

Results from figure 4 indicate that social activities and fitness enhancement are also the strongest motivators for females (mean = 22.17, S.D= 3.8) to participate in all sports. Additionally, reflecting on figures 3 and 4, results also show that skill improvement and competitive motives are higher for females (mean = 18.12, S.D = 4.73) than males (mean = 15.20, S.D= 3.69) across all types of sport.
Testing for reliability data.
Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the reliability of the PMQ, GHQ-12 and SPAS scales used amongst the sample. This is a measure of scale reliability using the variance of respondent’s scores on each item in relation to the overall variance of the scale (Cortina, 1993). Results of Cronbach’s alpha revealed high levels of internal reliability for all three scales. The alpha coefficient for the General Health Questionnaire was 0.87. The alpha coefficients for the PMQ and the Social Physique Anxiety Scale were reported to be 0.87 and 0.88 respectively.

Statistical analysis
Using the SPSS computer software package a number of statistical analyses were carried out on the data. These tests included independent t-tests to look at the differences between variables, a one way analysis of variance to test for significant group differences and a Pearson Correlation to look at a relationship between two variables. All tests used in the study were two-tailed.

Inferential Statistics

Hypothesis 1: It is hypothesised that motives for social activities and fitness enhancement will be the strongest motivator for individuals who participate in recreational sport.

A one-way analysis of variance was carried out to see if there was a difference in the 3 groups of sport participants and their social and fitness motives to participate in sport. The
ANOVA showed no significant difference between the three groups of sport participants in terms of social activities and fitness enhancement motivation (F (2,242) = .986, p = .375). Post-hoc analysis confirmed that the difference was not significant in nature between the group who participated in competitive sport (M = 21.97, S.D = 4.1), the group who took part in recreational sport (M = 22.64, S.D = 4.05) and the group who took part in both sports (M = 21.86, S.D = 4.0). The null hypothesis was accepted. However, looking at the mean of all sport groups, social activities and fitness enhancement was a slightly stronger motivator for participants of recreational sport.

*Hypothesis 2: It is hypothesised that males will have higher skill improvement and competitive motives than females when participating in sport.*

The first independent samples t-test examined the difference between males and females and skill improvement and competitive motive to participate in sport. The independent sample t-test found that there was a statistically significant difference between males and females and the skill improvement and competitive motive to participate in sport (t (211.6) = -5.34 p < .01). Females (mean = 18.12, SD = 3.69) were found to have higher skill improvement and competitive motives than males (means = 15.20, SD = 3.69) when participating in sport. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted.

*Hypothesis 3: The third hypothesis is that there will be a difference in mental health levels between male and female participants*

**Table 1: General Mental Health in terms of gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>22.53</td>
<td>5.32</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23.56</td>
<td>6.23</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An Independent Samples T-Test was used to investigate Hypothesis 3 which stated that there would be a significant difference observed between males and females in relation to levels of mental health. Higher scores indicated higher levels of mental health. Females (mean=23.56, SD=6.23) were found to have higher levels of mental health than males (mean=22.53, S.D. =5.32). The 95% confidence limit shows that the population mean differences of variables lies somewhere between -4.615 to .964. The independent samples t-test found that there was statistically no significant difference between general mental health levels of males and females (t =-1.289, df = 250.48, two-tailed p = .177). Therefore the null hypothesis is also accepted for this hypothesis.

*Hypothesis 4: The fourth hypothesis is that females will have a higher level of social physique anxiety than men.*

**Table 2: Social Physique Anxiety in terms of Gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31.84</td>
<td>8.38</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>39.72</td>
<td>9.57</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another independent samples t-test examined the different between male and females levels of social physique anxiety. The independent sample t-test found that there was a statistically significant difference between male and female levels of social physique anxiety (t (216) =-6.48, p <.001) with females (mean = 39.72, SD = 9.57) found to have higher levels of physique anxiety than males (means = 31.84, SD = 8.38).
Hypothesis 5: Significant relationship between social physique anxiety and general health.

Table 3: General Health and Social Physique Anxiety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Physique Anxiety Total</td>
<td>35.64</td>
<td>9.787</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Health Total</td>
<td>23.01</td>
<td>5.779</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Pearson correlation was carried out to see if there was a significant relationship between social physique anxiety and general health. The mean score for social physique anxiety was 35.64 (SD = 9.78) and the mean score for general health was 23.01 (SD = 5.78). A Pearson correlation found that there was a weak positive significant relationship between social physique anxiety and general health (r (215) = .261, p <.001).
Discussion

The aim of this study was to examine general mental health and social physique anxiety in the context of gender, but also in relation to those who participated in competitive or recreational sport. The study also intended to determine the motivational factors that males and females had for participating in sport. In this study sport was divided into recreational sport, competitive sport and also a group who took part in both sports. The first hypothesis of this study examined social activities and fitness enhancement as a motivational factor for recreational sport and competitive sport participants. The second hypothesis investigated skill improvement and competitive motives as a factor for sport participation among males and females. The third hypothesis investigated the impact that sport participation had on both male and female levels of general mental health. The fourth hypothesis examined social physique anxiety, again in relation to both males and females. The final hypothesis of this study looked at the relationship between sport participants mental health and their levels of social physique anxiety. The findings will be discussed based on the five hypotheses and using the literature in the field. Limitations of the study will also be addressed and recommendations will be made for future research.

Findings

Motivational factors for sports participation was a central area of research in this study. Results from a one way analysis of variance showed that social activities and fitness enhancement was the most common motivator for both males and females in recreational and competitive sport. This finding was in line with previous studies by Frederick and Ryan (1993), who reported that competitive sport participants rated enjoyment as their primary
motivator. However, they noted that individuals who took part in recreational sport most often cited body-related motives as their primary reason for participation. Dwyer (1992) examined college students’ motives for participation in sport and found that their motives were fitness, fun, challenge, and improving skills. Thus many sport participants, in different situations, would cite fitness, fun, and friendship as major motives for sport participation.

The second hypothesis examined the difference in motivational factors to participate in sport in males and females, in relation to skill improvement and competition. The hypothesis predicted that males would have higher skill improvement and competitive motives than females when participating in sport. However, results from an independent t-test in this study showed that females had in fact higher skill improvement and competitive motives than males when participating in sport. In this case, the null hypothesis was accepted. Few studies have researched the area of competitiveness between males and females in sport, with most people simply believing conventional wisdom that women are less likely to compete than men (Kamas and Preston, 2010). However, some studies have examined gender differences and motives to participate in competitive sport and they have generally found that males tend to be more concerned with winning than females (Gil, 1986; Duda, 1987). A more recent study by Kilpatrick et al (2005) found that higher levels of motivation for challenge and competition rated higher among males than females in physical activity. Frick (2010) also found that women were less competitive than men in long distance and ultra-marathon running. However, Benenson (2008) carried out a study and found that females were in fact more subtle than males in competitive situations and merely the difference in technique could explain why men have long been considered the more competitive sex. In a study by the Department of Education (1996) men cited ‘competition’ and ‘occupying spare time’ as important motivators for sport participation, while most females cited ‘weight-loss’ as a primary motivator with very few citing ‘competition’. However, women’s motives for sport
participation have changed in the past few decades. Women athletes today are stronger, faster and participating in more male dominated sports than ever before. Katie Taylor winning a gold medal in the Olympics for boxing and the Irish women’s rugby team winning the Grand Slam in 2013 show that women can succeed in sex-integrated sports. Results from findings from the hypothesis reveal that females are more competitive in sport. However, based on the many other studies disproving these findings, there is still a long way to go before physical achievements and competitiveness in female sports is widely recognised (McDonagh and Pappano, 2008).

The third hypothesis stated that there would be a difference in levels of general mental health between males and females. Results from an independent sample t-test confirmed that there was no significant difference between males and females on mental health levels. The mean results of the test found that females had higher levels of general mental health issues than males but this was not statistically significant. The World Health Organisation (2012) statistics state that the prevalence of depression and anxiety is much higher in women than men but this was not borne out in the findings here.

Another interpretation of these finding is that women seek health care and support in much greater proportion than men. Franek (2012) referred to mental health as a ‘silent crisis’ among males today and promoted facilities such as the Gaelic Players Association counselling services as the first step in overcoming the barriers to male mental illnesses. Negative mental health among both male and female sporting participants is an increasing area of concern in sport. Sports clubs and organisations are now trying to encourage coaches and players to talk about their mental health problems, in the same way that people discuss physical injuries. The GAA have indicated their intention to launch a campaign in 2014 aimed specifically at ‘encouraging players to engage with our mental health programme and services with a focus on changing the culture within our membership’ (Breheny, 2013).
The fourth hypothesis was that females would have higher levels of social physique anxiety than males. Results from an independent t-test supported this hypothesis and showed that females have significantly higher levels of social physique anxiety than males. The findings of this hypothesis were supported by previous research which revealed that females do tend to experience higher levels of social physique anxiety than males, (Brown, 2002; Crawford & Eklund, 1994). Kruisselbrink (2004) also showed in his study that women expressed higher social physique anxiety when men were present in an exercise setting rather than in women-only situations. This current study adds support to the research previously carried out in this area. Research has shown that males are also affected by social physique anxiety, but to a lesser extent that females. However, there is no doubt that body image concerns, with specific focus on social physique anxiety is becoming an increasing concern among males. In a study by Gurjar (2012), she reported that men experience high levels of social physique anxiety due to the societal pressures to achieve ideal muscularity. Grieve (2008) also found in a study that men who exercised for self-presentation reasons are more likely to show signs of social physique anxiety, lowered self-esteem and muscle dysmorphia. This pursuit of muscularity is tied to Western cultural views of masculinity and men are succumbing more and more to this pressure.

Hypothesis five proposed that there would be a significant relationship between general mental health and social physique anxiety. The results of a Pearson correlation showed that there was a weak, yet significant relationship between general mental health and social physique anxiety for both males and females. High social physique anxiety can have a severe effect on one’s mental and physical health and can inevitably lead to low confidence, poor self-esteem, reduced social interaction, the development of eating disorders and an obsession with exercise. Most previous research deals with body image and mental health, with results reporting body image as a major negative influence on the mental health of individuals.
Research by Harter (1999) reported a link between self-appraisals of physical appearance and self-esteem among individuals. She found that individuals who are considerably dissatisfied with their appearance tend to be less enthusiastic in their overall sense of self-regard. Less research has been carried out on social physique anxiety but, results of the findings here are in line with previous research on body image and mental health.

**Limitations**

Some limitations must be acknowledged in this current study. The researcher would have liked to carry out a large scale study with a greater number of participants from various sporting organisations. However, this was not possible due to time constraints. The thesis had to be completed over a short period of time.

A possible limitation of this study may have been the selection of the sample. The participants of the study comprised of a convenience sample and selection was based on the different types of sport in which they participated albeit recreational or competitive. However, sampling was not systematic in controlling for a range of demographic factors that had the potential to confound findings. Prominent variables that have this potential include the type of sport in which one participates, level of activity, age and the amount of time spent per week participating in the sport.

Self-report measures are generally considered an appropriate method of assessing internal states such as general mental health or social physique anxiety, but at times they are also liable to misinterpretation (LePage & Crowther, 2010). A limitation of this current study is that participants' responses may have been influenced by social desirability bias. In order to avoid this occurring in future studies, the researcher could ask random participants who are
not known to him or her to complete the self-report questionnaires. This may increase the credibility of respondents' data as they are not connected in any way to each other or the researcher. As previously mentioned, this study used a convenience sample to carry out research, but perhaps a more random sample of individuals from a wider and general sporting population may profit future research in this area.

Each questionnaire was short and compiled of easily understood questions which could be completed in 10-15 minutes. However, for some participants the length of the questionnaires might have induced boredom so they did not respond in an appropriate manner. For instance, when entering the data into SPSS the researcher noted that some participants ticked the same box for every question or simply left the box blank which may indicate laziness or a lack of understanding. Some participants did not complete the last questionnaire on social physique anxiety at all. This begs the question if individuals ever addressed their own social physique anxieties or were they not willing to share their anxiety even in an anonymous online survey?

Further research

Certain sports are labelled masculine or feminine and are not considered appropriate for both genders. For example, rugby is considered to be a male sport and gymnastics a female sport. Stereotyping a particular sport can further influence an individual’s decision or motives to participate in the sport. In addition, those who participate in sports that are not considered gender appropriate are also subject to being labelled or stereotyped in an unflattering manner. However, there has been a recent upsurge in females participating in traditionally masculine sports, such as rugby, boxing and martial arts. Women are now displaying the specific requirements such as aggression, strength, endurance and competitiveness that are traditionally attached to male dominated sports (Kleindienst-Cachay & Heckemeyer, 2008).
This researcher looked at the various motives males and females had for participating in recreational or competitive sport, but further research might look solely at the motives females have for participating in traditionally male dominated sport.

Former All-Black rugby player John Kirwan spoke of his suffering with depression in his documentary, ‘All Blacks Don’t Cry’, and how difficult it can be to talk about one’s concerns when immersed in sport at a top level and the need for professional mental health support for all athletes (Titkov et al., 2012). Although this present study does not deal with professional athletes, mental health support applies to participants in sport at all levels. A greater focus is needed to examine the societal factors that affect males and mental health issues, particularly in the area of competitive sport.

Is there a further link between mental health in sport and openness about sexuality? It took former Welsh rugby player, Gareth Thomas, over a decade before he could be open about his homosexuality. Former Cork hurler Donal Og Cusack was also the first ever senior GAA star to publicly declare his homosexuality. Both men are now pioneers in addressing mental health issues and promoting awareness of depression both within and outside the sporting community. Ultimately, breaking down the stigma around mental health in the sporting world could lend itself to doing the same for the general public (Titkov et al., 2012). Further research into the link between openness about sexuality and mental health is crucial.

Most research has been directed toward females and social physique anxiety but it is an increasingly worrying issue among males with more research needed in the area. With ever more media sources promoting the ‘perfect’ male physique, the male body is becoming more exploited and commodified with this in turn evoking higher levels of body image dissatisfaction and appearance concerns among young men (Ricciardelli, 2012). According to Dr. Doug Bunnell, clinical director of the Renfrew Center of Connecticut, any research that
examines men's construction of self-image is a step forward as it is has been an ‘understudied phenomenon’ (Tylka, 2007). Societal pressure exists for males and females to have a perfect physique, particularly in a sporting environment. Further research is needed so that work may be done to alleviate social physique anxiety at all levels of sport.

Conclusion

This study set out to investigate the motives for participation in sport in relation to gender, type of sport, general mental health and social physique anxiety. All areas were examined through self-administered questionnaires and study of relevant literature.

Both males and females cited social engagement and fitness enhancement as their primary motives for participation in both competitive and recreational sport. This was a very positive finding in terms of social intercourse and communal well-being.

Competitive motives for participation in sport were also examined in this study with females having higher competitive and skill improvement motives than males. This was an unexpected result as traditionally and in the literature males are seen as more competitive. The finding may relate solely to the cohort questioned here or may be an indication of societal change.

Sport can have a positive impact on one’s mental health. However, playing a competitive sport may bring an increasing pressure from coaches, fellow team mates, media and the general public. The current study, supported by the literature, raises the issue of the negative effect of competitive sport on some people, which in turn raises the need for increased awareness of positive mental health for all concerned.
There was little research found on the effects of male social physique anxiety. Most literature referred to body image. The results in this study pointed to high levels of social physique anxiety in males and females with higher levels found in women. The fact that social physique anxiety is an issue for everyone means it must be addressed at societal level and in sports clubs and gyms at all levels of involvement – recreational and competitive.

The study was a short one using a small scale sample of people in the Irish midlands who take part in sport at competitive and recreational levels. The findings were generally in line with current research. It is hoped that some awareness may be raised of issues which affect the general mental health of sportspeople and, therefore, the general mental health of a broader society.
References


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Ricciardelli, L. (2012). Boys aren’t immune to body image pressures – and never have been. American Psychological Association.


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Appendix 1

Cover letter of Questionnaire

Participation and Motivation in Sport in relation to General Mental Health and Social Physique Anxiety

Dear Participant,

My name is Eavan Byrne and I am currently a final year student of Higher Diploma in Psychology at Dublin Business School. I am conducting research on males and females motives to participate in competitive or recreational sport and general health, focusing particularly on body physique anxiety. This study has been granted ethical approval from Dublin Business School and is being conducted as part of my studies and will be submitted for examination.

You are invited to take part in this study and participation involves completing the following survey.

Participation is anonymous and confidential. Responses cannot be attributed to any one person. For this reason, it will not be possible to withdraw from participation after the data has been collected.

The questionnaires will be securely stored and data from the questionnaires will be stored on a password protected computer.

It is important you understand that by completing and submitting the questionnaire, you are consenting to participate in the study.

Should you require any further information about the study, please contact Eavan Byrne at 1749105@mydbs.ie

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.
Appendix 2

Questionnaire

Are you male or female?

Male
Female

Which type of physical activity do you participate in?

Recreational sport
Competitive sport
Both
Participation Motivation Questionnaire (PMQ)

( Gill, D.L., Gross, J.B., and Huddleston, S. 1983)

The PMQ is a useful psychometric instrument to measure individual’s reasons or motivations for participating in physical activity. As a teacher you can use this questionnaire on your students to identify what motivates them to be physically active. Through identification of these motivations you will be able to adjust your lesson programs and activities to suit the desires of your students. In doing so, you will help to motivate students by giving them activities that they want to partake in and to break down the barriers that prevent motivated sports participation.

You may hand this questionnaire out to your students to identify their motives for exercise. To complete, please ask them to circle the answer they believe best applies to them. 1- Very Important 2- Somewhat Important and 3- Not at all Important

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

Please read the following statements and underline the answer that you think most relates to you over the last few weeks.

Have you recently:

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Been able to concentrate on whatever you’re doing?</td>
<td>Better than usual</td>
<td>Same as usual</td>
<td>Less than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lost much sleep over worry?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>No more than usual</td>
<td>Rather than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Felt that you are playing a useful part in things?</td>
<td>More so than usual</td>
<td>Same as usual</td>
<td>Less useful than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Felt capable of making decisions about things?</td>
<td>More so than usual</td>
<td>Same as usual</td>
<td>Less so than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Felt constantly under strain?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>No more than usual</td>
<td>Rather more than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Felt you couldn’t overcome your difficulties?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>No more than usual</td>
<td>Rather more than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Been able to enjoy your normal day to day activities?</td>
<td>More so than usual</td>
<td>Same as usual</td>
<td>Less so than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>No more than usual</td>
<td>Rather more than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Been able to face up to your problems?</td>
<td>More so than usual</td>
<td>Same as usual</td>
<td>Less able than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Been feeling unhappy and depressed?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>No more than usual</td>
<td>Rather more than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Been losing confidence in yourself?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>No more than usual</td>
<td>Rather more than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>No more than usual</td>
<td>Rather more than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered?</td>
<td>More so than usual</td>
<td>About same as usual</td>
<td>Less so than usual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social Physique Anxiety Scale

For each item, indicate the degree to which the statement is characteristic or true of you on the following scale:

1=not at all; 2=slightly; 3=moderately; 4=very; 5=extremely

1. I am comfortable with the appearance of my physique/figure.*

2. I would never worry about wearing clothes that might make me look too thin or overweight.*

3. I wish I wasn’t so uptight about my physique/figure.

4. There are times when I am bothered by thoughts that other people are evaluating my weight or muscular development negatively.

5. When I look in the mirror I feel good about my physique/figure.*

6. Unattractive features of my physique/figure make me nervous in certain social settings.

7. In the presence of others, I feel apprehensive about my physique/figure.

8. I am comfortable with how fit my body appears to others.*

9. It would make me uncomfortable to know other were evaluating my physique/figure.

10. When it comes to displaying my physique/figure to others, I am a shy person.

11. I usually feel relaxed when it is obvious that others are looking at my physique/figure.*

12. When in a bathing suit, I often feel nervous about the shape of my body.

*=reverse score before summing
Information Sheet

If participating in this study has caused you any distress, please consider contacting the following services.

**BodyWhys**

Helpline: 1890 200 444

Email: alex@bodywhys.ie

**AWARE**

Helpline: 1890 303 302

Email: info@aware.ie

**The Samaritans**

Helpline: 1850 60 90 90

Email: jo@samaritans.org

If you have any queries regarding this study please do not hesitate to contact me at [contact information removed]