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Introduction

Motivation for participation in sports has been extensively investigated in the area of sport and exercise psychology. Curry & Weiss (1989, p. 258) defined sport motivation as the 'reasons that people give for participation in sport". Various theoretical models have been proposed to understand motivated behavior. The Cognitive Evaluation Theory was developed by Deci and Ryan (1985) and it appears to be the most frequently used model. Further, Ryan and Deci (2000) proposed a subtheory under the large construct of Self Determination Theory that describes three types of motivation: a) intrinsic motivation, b) extrinsic motivation and c) amotivation. Pelletier, Tuson, Fortier, Vallerand, Briere & Blais (1995) have proposed a three-dimensional conceptualization model for both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation includes three sub-dimensions: intrinsic motivation to know, intrinsic motivation towards accomplishment and intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation. Extrinsic motivation includes three sub-dimensions too: identified regulation, introjected regulation and external regulation. The construct is based on a continuum that starts at the low end (less autonomy) from amotivation, expands to the variables of extrinsic motivation (external regulation, introjection and identification) and ends (more autonomy) with all types of intrinsic motivation. According to Vallerand (2001) intrinsic motivation and identified regulation are related to positive affective experiences such as enjoyment and satisfaction and amotivation is related to negative affective experiences such as stress and anxiety.

In Greece, as in most countries in Europe, sports in Universities are elective extracurricular activities. Participation in sports and exercise activities provide the opportunity to associate with other individuals, to raise physical fitness levels, to improve mental status and physical health and to learn new skills and improve knowledge (Gallien, 2006). According to Vallerand (2001) who suggested that motivation leads to cognitive, affective and behavioral outcomes, research on motivation can promote a better understanding of students' decisions regarding their sport behavior. The objectives of the present study were to examine the differences in the motivational dimensions between university intramural participants and amateur basketball players.

Method

Sample-Procedure

The Greek version of the Sport Motivation Scale (Pelletier et al., 1995), that was adapted and validated in the Greek language by Doganis (2000), administrated to 222 women university sport intramural participants and 58 female amateur basketball players (N=280) from 18 to 31 years of age (M=20.8 yr.; SD= 2.3). Participants took part voluntarily. The questionnaires were completed in the area of the University gyms and basketball courts.

Equipment

The Sport Motivation Scale consists of 28 questions under 7 subscales: a) intrinsic motivation to know (e.g. for the pleasure it gives me to know more about the sport I participate), b) intrinsic motivation towards accomplishments (e.g. for the satisfaction I experience while I am perfecting my abilities), c) intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation (e.g. for the pleasure I feel in living exciting experiences), d) identification (e.g. because, in my opinion, it is one of the best ways to meet people), e) introjection (e.g. because

it is absolutely necessary to do sports if one wants to be in shape), f) external regulation (e.g. because it allows me to be well regarded by people that I know) and finally g)amotivation (e.g. I don't know any more; I have the impression that I am incapable of succeeding in this sport). The students answered on a seven-point Likert scale anchored by 7= totally agree and 1= totally disagree.

Statistics

The reliability of the questionnaire was examined by calculating the Cronbach (α) coefficient. Correlation between variables were examined using Pearson's tests.

Results

Preliminary Analysis

Table 1 presents the internal consistency coefficient of the subscales that was moderate. Five factors showed satisfactory Cronbach coefficients (a>.70), whereas two factors didn't show adequate internal consistency (a>.60).

Pearson intercorrelations in sport motivation revealed strong relationships among subscales that lie close to each other on the continuum. The three types of intrinsic motivation and external regulation showed the highest correlations among themselves and negative correlations with amotivation. Unexpectedly introjected regulation had high correlations with factors that are related to positive affective experiences. (Table 1). The mean scores and the standard deviations of the factors are also presented in this table.

Differences between intramural participants and amateur athletes.

Motivation subscale multivariate analysis between intramural participants and amateur athletes showed significant Wilks' Lambda (Wilks' Λ=.871, F=5.756, df=7.000, p=.001). The post hoc test showed that amateur basketball players were significantly stronger in intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation than intramural participants.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics, Cronbach a, and Pearson Correlations among Seven Motivation Subscales

Factors	M (SD)	Cronbach a	r					
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
IM to know	5.48(.97)	.74		.532**	.694**	.344**	.263**	.018	-.140*
IM to experience stimulation	5.36(.99)	.70			.549**	.396**	.272**	.187**	-.094
IM to accomplish	5.55(.93)	.72				.437**	.417**	.064	-.109
EM identification	4.65(.97)	.60					.367**	.349**	-.057
EM introjection	5.34(.96)	.61						.369**	.019
EM external regulation	3.20(1.31)	.75							.181**
Amotivation	2.43(1.11)	.70							

IM: Intrinsic Motivation, EM: Extrinsic Motivation, **p < .01, *p < .05

Discussion

The aim of the present study was to examine sport motivation between university sport intramural participants and students who were amateur basketball players. The results showed that both categories of students are mainly intrinsically motivated. These findings are in line with Iso-Ahola (1989) as well as those reported by Iwasaki and Mannell (1999), who suggested that sport participants in recreational activities, like intramural participants and amateur athletes, are intrinsically motivated.

It could be argued that self determination continuum is not fully supported in the present study. These results are similar to Tsorbatzoudis, Alexandris, Zahariadis, and Grouios (2006), Doganis (2000), Martens and Webber (2002), Zahariadis, Tsorbatzoudis, and Grouios (2005), and Zahariadis, Tsorbatzoudis, and Alexandris (2006) studies.

Our findings showed that amateur basketball players experience stronger feelings of stimulation. These results are in contrast to previous research (Fortier, Vallerand, Briere, & Provencer, 1995) findings. However, because measurement error variance of the questionnaire scores was not examined, the above finding should be treated with caution (Gregorich, 2006. Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). In conclusion, the present results showed that university students experience intense feelings during their participation in amateur leagues or games, despite the dominance of internal motives for sport participation in physically active female students who were also examined. This suggests that internal motivation constitutes a determinant factor for sport participation in university sports. For this reason, enforcement of internal motivation is recommended.

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Correspondence to: Andreas Gavriilidis, Ph.D. Department of Physical Education and Sport Science, University of Athens, Patroklou 21, Voula, 166 73, Greece; E-mail: agabri@phed.uoa.gr

- References have been cited in the Greek (printed) version of the manuscript