

Examining the Sports Participation Motivation Levels of Physically Disabled and Hearing Impaired Athletes

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to examine the factors affecting the sports participation motivation levels of physically disabled and hearing impaired athletes concerning certain variables. The “Personal Information Form” that was developed by the researchers and the “Sports Participation Motivation Scale for Disabled Individuals (SPMSDI)”, which was developed by Tekkurşun et al., (2018), were used as the data collection tools. The survey forms were filled by the help of a sign language expert for the hearing impaired athletes and through one-on-one interviews with the physically disabled individuals. The sample group was comprised of 41 volunteer participants, 24 of whom were physically disabled and 17 of whom were hearing impaired individuals. The data obtained from the research were analyzed through the SPSS 20.0 package program. Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal Wallis tests were used. Based on the findings of the study, comparing the sports participation motivation levels of the hearing impaired and physically disabled athletes with age and educational status variables, it was determined that there was statistically no significant difference in all sub-dimensions of motivation. However, it was determined that there was a statistically significant difference in favor of the physically disabled individuals in the internal and external motivation dimensions. It was determined that there was statistically no significant difference in the amotivation sub-dimension. As the conclusion, it was determined that age and educational status had no effect on the sports participation motivation level; however, it was detected that physically disabled athletes had a higher motivation level compared to the hearing impaired athletes concerning the disability type and sports branch variables. In this regard, in order to increase both the sports participation of the physically disabled and hearing impaired individuals and their persistence in sports, it can be suggested to develop policies considering the motivational factors concerning their disability types and sports branches.

1. Introduction

In addition to the physical and mental health of people, sport is the effort demonstrated to increase the individual strength to the highest possible point in order for struggling in line with the rules, getting excited, winning

at the end of the competition, and achieving success [1; 2; 3]. In addition, sport is a tool that can appeal to large individual and social audiences, and when employed at high levels, it provides a certain economic income for individuals [4;5]. This inclusive feature of sports has a significant impact on the lives of both healthy and disabled individuals [6; 7; 8]. The effects of sports on disabled individuals were reported in previous studies [9;10; 11; 12]. However, individuals with disabilities do not enjoy the same opportunities for participating in sports activities as healthy individuals do [13; 14]. In order to close this gap, the obstacles in front of these individuals should be removed, they should be encouraged for doing sports, and their motivation levels should be increased [15; 16]. There are certain obstacles against the participation of disabled individuals in sports such as personal [17; 18; 19], social [20; 21; 22], and environmental obstacles [23; 17; 24]. In addition to these obstacles, lack of motivation is one of the important factors [25]. Similarly, it was reported in previous studies that people with disabilities had similar levels of motivation with the healthy individuals in certain motives such as improving their sports skills, achieving their goals, enjoying competitions, being part of a team, having fun and achieving success. [7; 8].

Motivation is a term used to describe a person's behaviors, desires, and needs, and it is defined as sincerely and willingly performing what is required to achieve a job. Motivation, which not only mobilizes the individual to act for his/her goals but also ensures emotional satisfaction [26], is a phenomenon that drives and mobilizes the individual to work, raising interest in the person to do so [27]. Accordingly, it is stated that the term motivation is based on triggering, directing and maintaining the behavior [28]. In line with these effects of motivation on individuals, the theoretical framework of the study is based on the theory of self-determination [29]. In self-determination theory developed by Deci and Ryan (1985), motivation is defined as an innate force that supports the development of the individual. It is stated that it includes socio-cognitive principles and psychological needs, and it outlines factors affecting motivational intensity [30; 29]. According to the theory of self-determination, internal motivation, which is one of the motivating elements, is motivating oneself. In addition, it was reported that internal factors such as individual's curiosity to learn and the pleasure of success are decisive, and it was also stated that individuals with internal motivation feel free and their behaviors reflect themselves [29; 31; 32]. As per external motivation, it is comprised of processes that bear material and spiritual values, that can give positive and negative reactions in the face of actions of others, increasing and decreasing the possibility to repeat the behavior [33]. External motivation is not directly related to the individual, but it is the effects of the events occurring in the environment on the individual [34]. In the light of this information, we can say that motivation has a positive effect on the behaviors of an individual and in meeting one's needs. However, amotivation results from underrating an activity, feeling insufficient to act, and/or anxiety of disbelief in achieving the desired result [30; 35]. Amotivation occurs when an individual is unable to perceive the connection between his/her actions and the consequences of these actions [33]. Self-determination theory is typically used to describe motivational styles and associated behaviors. An integrated approach based on these components will help to better understand the motivation of the disabled athlete and the associated behavior. Moreover, considering the concept of motivation from the standpoint of tending or encouraging sports, it is important to examine all aspects of motivation sources in order to promote sports among both healthy and disabled individuals, and to determine the dynamics that can be used in this promotion.

The existence of many different branches and disciplines in sports makes it inevitable for individuals have different levels of motivation to participate in sports. Some individuals participate in sports for certain reasons such as competition, struggle, and contest, while others participate in sports for other reasons such as pleasure, socialization, health, or recreation [36]. Social and psychological needs that encourage the individual for doing sports are the need

to be active, to find oneself, to explain oneself, to prove, to know, to have prestige, to gain superiority, to want to dominate, to be adventurous, and to be dominant in the decision-making process [37]. Additionally, there is a significant correlation between the success and level of motivation in sports [38]. Inadequate motivation means that the athlete's motivation level is very low. In extreme motivation, anxiety and stress may occur in the athlete [39]; in sufficient motivation, the athlete is more prepared for the competition physiologically and psychologically and manages his/her stress [37]. In addition, it was reported that achieving maximum performance indispensably requires internal motivation in addition to external motivation, and the balance between internal and external motivation prevents amotivation and anxiety [40].

From this standpoint, determining the motivation source of athletes will ensure taking right and effective steps in achieving success [41]. Considering that 15% of the world's population is comprised of disabled individuals [42], we can say that this number is undeniably significant. At this point, the importance of sports is better understood which integrates disabled individuals with society and improves the quality of life of individuals. However, it is the social responsibility of every individual, who is a potential disabled in the future, to encourage the disabled individuals for doing sports in line with their interests and skills, and to promote and support disabled sports. Based on this responsibility, it was also reported that internal factors are effective in the participation of healthy individuals in sports, but this is not clear in individuals with disabilities [43; 44; 14].

Accordingly, this study is considered to be of significant importance since it not only determines the motivation factors of hearing impaired and physically disabled athletes, but also provides insight for the researchers of this field. To this end, the study focused on examining factors affecting the motivations of hearing impaired and physically disabled athletes in terms of age, educational status, sports branch, and disability type variables.

2. Method

In this research, the general survey model was used, which was one of the descriptive research methods. General survey model is explained as the research method which defines a case as is [45].

2.1. Participants

The population of the research is comprised of 78 disabled athletes who are doing professional sports in Muş province. The sample of the study is comprised of 41 volunteer disabled athletes (24 physically disabled, and 17 hearing impaired), who were dealing with active sports in the population. In the study, the wheelchair basketball team is playing in the professional league, and the hearing impaired football team is in the amateur league.

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis Results of the Participants

Variables		n	%
Age	12-18	10	24,4
	19- 30	13	31,7
	31 - 60	18	43,9
Educational status	Primary school	13	31,7
	Secondary school	15	36,6
	High school	13	31,7
Sports branch	Basketball	24	41,5
	Football	17	58,5
Disability type	Physically disabled	24	41,5
	Hearing impaired	17	58,5
Total		41	



2.2. Materials

The “Personal Information Form” that was developed by the researchers and the “Sports Participation Motivation Scale for Disabled Individuals (SPMSDI)”, which was developed by Tekkurşun et al., (2018), were used as the data collection tools in this study. Based on the data collected through the personal information form, the participants were evaluated according to age, educational status, sports branch, and disability type variables.

2.2.1. Sports Participation Motivation Scale for Disabled Individuals (SPMSDI)

The “Sports Participation Motivation Scale for Disabled Individuals (SPMSDI)”, which was designed to measure the sports participation motives of disabled individuals, is comprised of 22 items and three sub-dimensions (internal motivation, external motivation, and amotivation). In this context, the scale that was prepared to reveal the motivation sources of the participants for doing sports was designed as a 5-point likert scale. The answer preferences of the items in the scale were designed as “1=Definitely Disagree”, “2=Partially Disagree”, “3=Moderately Agree”, “4=Agree”, and “5=Definitely Agree”. Since the scores of the scale are between 1 and 5, it was accepted that higher scores indicate higher motivation levels and lower scores represent lower motivation levels. The values of items representing the amotivation sub-dimension were used in reverse (1=5, 2=4, 3=3, 4=2, 5=1). In order to test the reliability of the scale, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient was calculated, and it was determined as 0.98 in the whole scale, 0.94 in the internal motivation sub-dimension, 0.84 for the external motivation sub-dimension, and 0.88 for the amotivation sub-dimension [46].

2.3. Data analysis

The statistical analysis of the research data was conducted in the SPSS 23.0 program. Descriptive statistics, Shapiro-Wilk, and Kolmogorov Smirnov normality test were employed in the analysis of data; since the data did not demonstrate a normal distribution, the Mann Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis tests were implemented, which were among the non-parametric tests. The significance level was accepted as 0.05 for the comparisons.

3. Results

Table 2. Kruskal Wallis test results of participants concerning the age variable

	Age	n	Mean rank	sd	χ^2	P
Internal motivation	12-18	10	20,95	2	,140	,933
	19-30	13	21,88			
	31-60	18	20,39			
External motivation	12-18	10	21,65	2	,073	,964
	19-30	13	20,35			
	31-60	18	21,11			
Amotivation	12-18	10	16,40	2	4,871	,088
	19-30	13	26,69			
	31-60	18	19,44			

According to Table 2, comparing the sports participation motivation of the athletes, it was determined that there was statistically no significant difference in the internal motivation, external motivation, and amotivation sub-dimensions concerning the age variable ($p>0.05$).

Table 3. Mann Whitney U test results of the participants concerning the sports branch and disability type variables

	Sports Branch	n	Mean rank	Rank sum	U	p
Internal motivation	Hearing impaired Football	17	9,00	153,00	,000	,000*
	Physically disabled Basketball	24	29,50	708,00		
External motivation	Hearing impaired Football	17	11,29	192,00	39,000	,000*
	Physically disabled Basketball	24	27,88	669,00		
Amotivation	Hearing impaired Football	17	26,38	448,50	112,500	,014
	Physically disabled Basketball	24	17,19	412,50		

*p<0.05

According to Table 3, comparing sports participation motivation levels, it was determined that there was a statistically significant difference between the internal and external motivation sub-dimensions of the participants concerning the sports branch variable ($p<0.05$). As per the amotivation sub-dimension, it was determined that there was statistically no significant difference ($p>0.05$).

Table 4. Kruskal Wallis results of the participants concerning the educational status variable

	Educational status	n	Mean rank	sd	χ^2	P
Internal motivation	Primary school	13	18,96	2	1,500	,472
	Secondary school	15	23,20			
	High school	12	18,79			
External motivation	Primary school	13	18,00	2	1,664	,435
	Secondary school	15	23,40			
	High school	12	19,58			
Amotivation	Primary school	13	26,27	2	4,900	,086
	Secondary school	15	18,23			
	High school	12	17,08			

p>0.05

According to Table 4, comparing the sports participation motivation of the participants, it was determined that there was statistically no significant difference among all sub-dimensions of motivation

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Sports is one of the most important factors for disabled individuals to ensure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent life, and economic self-sufficiency. It is among the responsibilities of societies to encourage disabled individuals for doing sports, to increase their motivation levels for participation in sports, and to maintain their motivations. In this respect, the objective of our study is to examine the motivations of physically disabled and hearing impaired athletes in terms of various variables, and to test the motivation levels of disabled athletes based on

self-determination. As a result of the findings obtained in our study, it was determined that there was statistically no significant difference between the motivation levels of the participants and the age variable. Similarly, in previous studies conducted on disabled individuals, it was determined that there was statistically no significant difference between motivation level and age variable [8; 39]. These results support our work. However, although there was no significant relationship between the age variable and motivation level in our study, it was observed that there were differences in average scores. For example, the average scores of the internal motivation levels of athletes between the ages of 19 and 30 were higher compared to the other age groups. Based on this result, we can say that the 19-30 age group was affected at a higher level by the factors such as success and enjoyment of success compared to the other age groups. The average scores of external motivation level of the 31-60 age group were higher compared to the other age groups. We can say that athletes between the ages of 31 and 60 were affected at a higher level by environmental factors such as winning awards, appreciation, etc. compared to the other age groups. Similarly, previous studies demonstrated that the motives of athletes to show their strength and their motivation levels increase as their age progresses [47; 39], this finding is in parallel with the findings of our study. Additionally, Crone et al., (1998) stated that, with increasing age, individuals become aware of their responsibilities at a higher level and rather display a success-oriented and determined personality [48]. In the amotivation sub-dimension, it was observed that the average scores of the amotivation levels of the athletes in the 12-18 age group were lower compared to the athletes in the other age groups. We can mention that athletes in this age group participate in sports activities more purposefully and they have higher future expectations in terms of sports. Polat et al., (2018) concluded that younger individuals have stronger motives for participating in sports; this finding supports our study [49]. It was observed that the average scores of amotivation levels of the 19-30 age group were higher compared to the other age groups.

In our research, comparing the sports participation motivation levels of the participants and the branch type variable, it was determined that there were statistically significant differences in the internal and external motivation sub-dimensions, while there was statistically no significant difference in terms of amotivation sub-dimension. In studies conducted by Altıntaş and Koruç (2014), and Yaşar Sönmez (2018) on athletes with physical disabilities, it was determined that there were statistically significant differences in the internal and external motivation sub-dimensions [50; 16]. These findings show that our study is consistent with the results of the field. In many studies, it was concluded that successful athletes have higher concentration levels, higher self-confidence, higher subject-oriented thoughts, more positive thoughts and higher positive motivation on the path leading to success [51]. Some research studies demonstrate that the levels of sports participation motivations may vary at more professional and amateur levels [52], for recreational purposes [53], or in different branches [54] and at different levels [55; 49]. Actually, in our study, comparing the branch type variable and the sports participation motivation levels, it was observed that the average scores of internal and external motivation levels of the athletes playing in the wheelchair basketball branch were higher compared to the football players. The hearing impaired athletes participating in our study are playing in the amateur football league, while physically handicapped athletes are playing in professional wheelchair basketball league. Soyer et al., (2010), concluded that there was a statistically significant difference in the success motivation levels of amateur and professional athletes, and it was determined that amateur football players had higher motivation levels than professional football players [27]. Gould et al., (1985), asserted that elite athletes had higher internal motivation and lower external motivations [56; 57]. These results do not correspond to this finding of our study. Additionally, comparing the motivation levels of amateur and professional athletes, Türkmen (2005) determined that although there was no significant difference, professional footballers had higher average scores in the

sub-dimensions of motivation compared to amateur footballers [58]. Halldorsson et al., (2012) also stated that elite athletes have higher motivation levels [59]. This finding is in parallel with our findings as well.

Comparing another variable of our research, the educational status, and the sports participation motivation levels of disabled athletes, it was determined that there was statistically no significant difference in all of the sub-dimensions of motivation. Similarly, in previous studies, [16; 60; 61; 39; 58] it was found that there was statistically no significant relationship between educational status and motivation level. These results coincide with our findings. However, Abakay (2010), determined significant differences in the educational status variable and the sub-dimensions of motivation [62]. This result contrasts with other studies and our findings. In our study, a relationship was observed between the educational status and average scores in the amotivation sub-dimension. It is observed that as the educational status increases, the average scores of amotivation level decrease. In another study conducted by Abakay (2010), it was found that there was an increase in motivation level as the educational status increases. This finding is in parallel with our findings.

Comparing the sports participation motivation levels of the athletes with the disability type variable, it was determined that there was a statistically significant difference in internal and external motivation dimensions. However, no statistically significant difference was determined in the amotivation sub-dimension. The findings of a study conducted by Shihui et al., (2007) are in parallel with those of our study [63]. Comparing the average scores, it was observed that athletes with physical disabilities have a higher average. In studies examining the factors that affect the motivation levels of disabled athletes conducted by Shihui et al., (2007) and McLoughlin et al., (2017), it was found that elements of internal and external motivation affect athletes with physical disabilities at a higher level. Ryan and Deci (2000), stated that externally motivated behavior is generally normal, and the main motive for people to take such actions is that they think of (or want) themselves, and that there were also cases where externally motivated actions could be internalized and perceived as internal. In another study examining the factors motivating olympic disabled athletes to participate in sports, Shapiro (2003) determined that internal and external motivation elements came to the fore. These results support our findings. In a study conducted to examine the obstacles of hearing impaired individuals in sports participation, Tsai and Fung (2005) determined that hearing impaired people were affected at a higher level by the negative attitudes of the society, and they suffer negativities such as fear of stigmatization and humiliation, and insufficient personnel quality [64]. Although the results of previous studies conducted on the self-esteem levels of hearing impaired individuals are inconsistent [65], some studies demonstrated that hearing impaired individuals had low self-esteem levels and they were affected from the negative attitudes of the society [66; 67]. Previous studies also demonstrate that hearing impaired individuals are more incapable in learning, problem solving, and productivity compared to normal individuals [68]. In addition to the above information, we can say that such a result was reached in our study since the hearing impaired athletes involved in this study are amateur athletes and physically disabled athletes are professional athletes. Similarly, Kavas (2018), concluded that athletes with high financial income had a higher level of motivation compared to the athletes with lower financial income levels.

Consequently, for the participants of this study, it can be mentioned that age and educational status variables are not effective in the sports participation motivation levels of the participants, but the type of disability and branch variables are effective in the internal and external motivation sub-dimensions in favor of the physically disabled athletes. Accordingly, it can be stated that individuals with physical disabilities motivate themselves better, internal factors are decisive, and external factors have an effect on these individuals. As a matter of fact, in the context of self-

determination theory, it was stated that external factors are the most important reason for participation in sports in general, but internal factors are quite dominant in maintaining the sport [69]. Therefore, it is suggested to encourage the disabled individuals to sports at early ages in line with their interests and skills; in order to increase both the participation of disabled individuals in sports and persistence in doing sports, it is suggested to take into account the motivational factors and lack of interest, and to develop the required policies accordingly. It can also be suggested for further studies in the field to involve wider sample groups and different disability groups.

Conflict of interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest

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