EBM. RECIDE E-Balonmano.com: Revista de Ciencias del Deporte
E-balonmano.com: Journal of Sport Science / ISSN: 1885–7019
Abrev: Ebm. Recide / Ebm. JSS
Año: 2015 / Vol: 11

# MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN THE ELDERS

**Parreira, J.[1]; Bartolomeu, Raul F.[2]; Monteiro, António M.[3]**

Recibido: 25/04/2015
Aceptado: 25/05/2015

[1] Polytechnic Institute of Bragança, Department of Sport Sciences, Bragança, Portugal.
Mail: joao.marcelino90@gmail.com
[2] University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro/CIDESD, Department of Sport Sciences, Exercise and Health, Vila Real, Portugal; Mail: raul.ipb@gmail.com
[3] Polytechnic Institute of Bragança/CIDESD, Department of Sport Sciences, Bragança, Portugal;
Mail: mmonteiro@ipb.pt

Correspondencia:
Mail: mmonteiro@ipb.pt

## Introduction

Nowadays the elderly population is well aware of the benefits of the practice of physical activity, which leads to an increasing demand for specialized physical activity programs in urban centers or recreational self-practice. However, people easily quit those programs or recreational self-practice and return to a sedentary lifestyle. A key factor to avoid this quittance is to keep them motivated to practice and stay in the programs.

## Objectives

This study aims to understand the motivational factors that lead older people to physical activity in order to improve existing programs so to better meet the needs of this population.

## Method

*Subjects*.

The sample consisted of 21 elderly subjects (63±5,34 years) of both sexes participating in a physical activity program three times a week..

*Instruments*.

It was used a validated questionnaire Exercice Motivations Inventory (EMI-2) (Markland and Ingledew, 1997), to access the motivational factors.

*Methods.*

The participants were recruited randomly from a physical activity program held in the city of Bragança. Each participant should choose a value from 1 (not at all true for me) to 5 (very true for me) in each of the fifty one items in the questionnaire. This items are grouped in fourteen groups: 1) Stress management; 2) Revitalisation; 3) Enjoyment; 4) Challenge; 5) Social recognition; 6) Affiliation; 7) Competition; 8) Health pressures; 9) Ill-health avoidance; 10) Positive health; 11) Weight management; 12) Appearance; 13) Strength and endurance and; 14) Nimbleness.

Descriptive statistics were performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS v.22) to calculate the mean and standard deviation of scores for each answer and each group of answers.

## Results and discussion

The main motivational factors are, as shown in table 1, related to the positive health (4.50±0.02), ill-health avoidance (4.35±0.31) and nimbleness (4.3±0.20). The less important motivational factors to the practice of physical activity are related to social recognition (0..88±0.09), competition (1.46±0.33) and health related problems (1.62±0.36). The main motivational factors found are related to functional improvements needed to reduce the age-related declines. Worth mentioning that health pressures weren't important motivational factors, and could be deduced that a big part of the participants are relatively healthy, allowing to deduce that almost all practitioners are relatively healthy, leaving unclear why people whose diseases can be mitigated by the practice of physical exercise aren't involved in these programs.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation (SD) points given in each motivational factors groups

| Motivational factors groups | mean±SD |
|---|---|
| Stress management | 3.31±0.62 |
| Revitalisation | 4.03±0.53 |
| Enjoyment | 3.75±0.33 |
| Challenge | 2.39±0.77 |
| Social recognition | 0.88±0.09 |
| Affiliation | 2.33±0.40 |
| Competition | 1.46±0.33 |
| Health pressures | 1.62±0.36 |
| Ill-health avoidance | 4.35±0.31 |
| Positive health | 4.50±0.02 |
| Weight management | 2.67±0.49 |
| Appearance | 1.88±0.26 |
| Strength and endurance | 3.68±0.42 |
| Nimbleness | 4.13±0.20 |

## Conclusions

It can be concluded that health is the main cause for the elderly participating in a physical activity program. On the other hand, competition seems to be less important factor. It should be noted the low importance given to weight management and appearance factors for this age group. It should therefore been given priority to training methodologies that promote cardiovascular improvements, which promotes health, in a non-competitive way, meeting the main motivating factors found.

## Bibliography

Markland, D. & Ingledew, D.K. (1997). The measurement of exercise motives: Factorial validity and invariance across gender of a revised Exercise Motivations Inventory. British Journal of Health Psychology, 2, 361-376.