



PARTICIPATION MOTIVES AND GENDER DIFFERENCE IN TAEKWANDO PLAYERS

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Abstract

The purpose of the present investigation was to determine whether differences in participation motives exist between male and female Taekwondo players. The participants included youth (12 to 18 years) taekwondo male (n = 50) and female players (n = 50) were selected from Pondicherry state. Independent groups t – tests were completed for each subscale of Participation Motivation Questionnaire (Gill et al., 1983) for male and female Taekwondo players. The mean difference for Participation Motivation Questionnaire (PMQ) subscale scores for male and female Taekwondo players were not significantly different. The relationship between sex of participants and the PMQ was assessed to determine which motives were significant in differentiating between males and females. It can be seen that only five of the 40 items significantly differentiated male and female participants.

Key words: Motivation, Participation Motivation, Taekwondo,

INTRODUCTION

Taekwondo

Tae Kwon Do (also known as Taekwondo) is the art of self defense that originated in Korea. It is recognized as one of the oldest forms of martial arts in the world, reaching back over 2,000 years. The name was selected for its appropriate description of the art: Tae (foot), Kwon (hand), Do (art).

Tae Kwon Do in the United States

The introduction of TaeKwon Do in the United States began during the 1950's when a handful of pioneering master instructors travelled to America to spread the art. Throughout the next few decades Tae Kwon Do grew in popularity, not only as a martial art, but as an international sport. In 1973, Korea hosted the first Tae Kwon

Do World Championships. In that same year, the World Tae Kwon Do Federation was established as the international governing body for the sport aspects of Tae Kwon Do. Today the WTF counts 120 separate countries as its members, representing 20 million practitioners. These numbers earn TaeKwon Do the distinction of being the most practiced martial art in the world. Tae Kwon Do first gained acceptance as an Olympic sport when it appeared as a demonstration event in the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games. Tae Kwon Do became a full medal sport competition beginning in 2000 at the Sydney Olympics.

History of Tae Kwon Do

One of the earliest clues of Tae Kwon Do's existence is a mural painted on the wall of a tomb that was built in the

Korean kingdom of Koguryo, between 37 BC and 66 AD. The drawing shows two unarmed figures facing each other in a Tae Kwon Do style stance. Additional drawings in the tomb show figures performing blocks and wearing uniforms similar to those used in modern day Tae Kwon Do training. The advancement of Tae Kwon Do and its techniques developed as the country of Korea developed. There are examples and history of Tae Kwon Do training in virtually all the records of the different kingdoms that existed within the country throughout the centuries.

The highest form of the ancient art was achieved in the kingdom of Silla. This tiny kingdom constantly faced attacks and opposition from larger and stronger areas. As a result the ruler of the kingdom, King Jin Heung, established an elite group of warriors called the “Hwarang” or “Flower of Youth”. The Hwarang consisted of the sons of nobles within the kingdom. They were carefully selected and formally trained in all aspects of military skills including unarmed combat, which at the time was known as Tae Kwon. It is significant that the Hwarang were taught not only the importance of developing their bodies, but their minds and spirits as well. In addition to fighting techniques, the young warriors were instructed in history, poetry, and philosophy. The entire body of study was known as Hwarang Do. The Hwarang gained skills not only for battle, but for daily life. This relates directly to modern Tae Kwon Do training, which provides self defense skills as well as improved character, self-discipline, and confidence that can be applied to any task. Following the Silla dynasty came the Koryo dynasty (935 AD - 1352 AD) from which Korea takes its name. Martial arts practice, known as Subak Do, became popular as an organized sport with detailed rules. The royal family sponsored competitions and

demonstrations, and martial arts became deeply rooted in Korean culture.

A great deal of young people's structured physical activity that might have health-enhancing effects will come through sport and physical education (PE). It has been argued that describing the reasons young people give for being physically active through sport and PE - 'participation motives' - is a useful starting point for understanding their motivation (Biddle, 1997). Research has found that a number of motives exist, including fun, social aspects, and skill development (Biddle, 1998). Indeed, Gill, Gross and Huddleston (1983) assessed the major participation motives through the Participation Motivation Questionnaire (PMQ). The PMQ is a 30-item questionnaire describing the possible reasons for sport participation. There has been research into participation factors in relation to general sport and exercise - both competitive and recreational, as well as research in to those participation factors that specifically relate to martial arts. In contrast to competitive sports, taekwondo is a martial art focused on developing and mastering predefined techniques at different levels and not competing with, or against others. However, taekwondo also includes tournaments, where competitive aspects are displayed directly against others in sparring, or indirectly in patterns or board breaking.

Furthermore, taekwondo has been trialed as a competitive sport in the 1996 Olympic games. Therefore, it does have some competitive elements. Compared to exercises like bodybuilding or aerobics that also have competitive opportunities, taekwondo concerns more than developing the body. It incorporates “mental training and techniques of unarmed combat for self defense as well as health” (Choi Hong Hi, 1995). Furthermore, taekwondo is also different to other sports and exercise

because individuals progress through a predefined structure of belt ranks and learn self-defense. Thus taekwondo participants may have different motives compared to those in other sports and exercises. Therefore, taekwondo may also change and develop different motivational orientations (Weiss & Chaumeton, 1992).

METHODOLOGY

Selection of Subjects

The participants who volunteered for this study were 100 males (N=50) and females (N=50) aged 9-18 years (mean=13.88, SD=1.45) from five professional taekwondo clubs of Pondicherry state.

Measurement Instruments

The Participation Motivation Questionnaire (Gill et al., 1983) was used to determine what motivated male and female young taekwondo players to participate in Taekwondo. The inventory was created to gain more information on why individuals participate in sports using the following subscales: Achievement/Status, Team, Fitness, Energy Release, Other, Skills, Friends and Fun. The questionnaire is a 30 item inventory using a 3- point Likert scale to determine the motives of sport

participation (3 = Very Important, 2 = Somewhat Important and 1 = Not Important at All).

Procedure

Consent to administer the questionnaire was obtained from the Director of the Taekwondo/Karate Club or Academy. The Director organized a meeting with the instructors of the Club. The objectives of the study, the nature of the questionnaire, the meaning of each item and how the questionnaire should be administered were explained to the instructors, who then agreed to administer it. The students were asked to read the covering letter before they completed the questionnaire to inform them of the objectives of the study, the nature of the questionnaire, how to complete it and the way in which the results of the research will be used to promote Taekwondo. Instructors assisted the younger subjects (less than 12 years) to complete the questionnaire when necessary by explaining the meaning of any item which they did not understand. Subjects were thanked for their assistance and the questionnaires were returned to their instructors after their completion.

RESULTS

Table- 1
Descriptive statistics for the Participation Motivation Questionnaire PMQ

GROUP	M	SD	MIN.	MAX.	N
MALE TAEKWONDO PLAYERS					
Achievement	2.170	0.42	1.69	3.00	50
Team	2.491	0.40	1.67	3.00	50
Fitness	2.460	0.502	1.33	3.00	50
Energy Release	2.007	0.45	1.20	3.00	50
Others	1.776	0.57	1.00	3.00	50
Skill	2.286	0.53	1.67	3.00	50
Friends	2.186	0.47	1.00	3.00	50
Fun	2.756	0.34	2.33	3.00	50
FEMALE TAEKWONDO PLAYERS					
Achievement	2.090	0.37	1.43	2.86	50
Team	2.505	0.42	1.67	3.00	50
Fitness	2.430	0.505	1.00	3.00	50
Energy Release	2.140	0.52	1.20	3.00	50
Others	2.064	0.69	1.00	3.00	50
Skill	2.168	0.57	1.33	3.00	50
Friends	2.255	0.53	1.50	3.00	50
Fun	2.576	0.34	2.33	3.00	50

Table- 2
Independent Groups t – ratio Comparing Mean Participation Motivation Scores for Male and Female Taekwondo Players

Group	Mean	N	Mean Difference	t - ratio
Achievement				
MTP	2.170	50	0.08	0.771
FTP	2.090	50		
Team				
MTP	2.491	50	- 0.14	0.789
FTP	2.505	50		
Fitness				
MTP	2.460	50	0.30	0.821
FTP	2.430	50		
Energy Release				
MTP	2.007	50	- 0.133	0.134
FTP	2.140	50		
Others				
MTP	1.776	50	-0.288	0.011
FTP	2.064	50		
Skills				
MTP	2.286	50	0.118	0.433
FTP	2.168	50		
Friends				
MTP	2.186	50	-0.069	0.284
FTP	2.255	50		
Fun				
MTP	2.756	50	0.18	0.290
FTP	2.576	50		

$t_{.05} (98) = 1.980$

*MTP – Male Taekwondo Players FTP – Female Taekwondo Players

Table- 3
Means and Standard Deviations of Top five Participation Motives (N=100)

ITEM	MEAN	SD	RANKING
I Want to be Physically Fit	2.73	1.02	1
I Want to Improve My Skills	2.56	0.97	2
I Like to Have Fun	2.12	0.92	3
I Want to go to Higher Levels	1.65	0.94	4
I Like Being on a Team	1.23	0.90	5

Table - 4
Ranking of Motives by Sex Groups (N=100)

ITEM	OVERALL	GROUPS	
		MALE	FEMALE
I Want to be Physically Fit	1	2	1
I Want to Improve My Skills	2	1	2
I Like to Have Fun	3	3	3
I Want to go to Higher Levels	4	4	5
I Like Being on a Team	5	5	4

CONCLUSION

A total of two independent groups t – tests were used to determine differences in participation motives among young male and female Taekwondo players. The mean differences of the PMQ (Gill et al., 1983) subscale scores for male and female Taekwondo players were not significantly different ($p < .05$). In addition, the relationship between sex of participants and the PMQ was assessed to determine which motives were significant in differentiating between males and females. It can be seen that only five of the 40 items significantly differentiated male and female participants. Male and female young Taekwondo players were found to be motivated to participate in Taekwondo for almost similar reasons.

The male and female young Taekwondo players were highly motivated by fitness; desire to learn new Skill and fun Flood and Hellstedt (1991) found similar results in which teamwork was a high motivator for male college athletes. The results were similar to Brodtkin and Weiss (1990), was indicated that adult participants reported health and fitness, fun, and friends as the highest motivators to participate in swimming. Ebbeck, Gibbons, and Loken – Dahle (1995) noted that fitness, enjoyment of the activity, mastery of the activity, stress relief, and self concept were the highest motivators for participation within physical activity for adults. The male and female young karate players were less motivated by Other, Energy Release, and Achievement. Kolt, Driver and Giles (2004) also reported that Energy Release was not a strong motivator for adults.

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