Jurnal Sains Sukan dan Pendidikan Jasmani Vol 14, Special Issue, 37-44, 2025
ISSN: 2232-1918 / eISSN: 2600-9323
https://ejournal.upsi.edu.my/journal/JSSPJ

PARTICIPATION MOTIVATION IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AMONG FEMALE WITH DISABILITIES

Nur Syasya Shahrom, Siti Hannariah Mansor & Norfaezah Mohd Rosli*

Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Cawangan Perlis, Kampus Arau, 02600 Arau, Perlis, Malaysia

***Corresponding Author:** faezah_rosli@uitm.edu.my

Received: 04 August 2025; **Revised:** 11 October 2025 **Accepted:** 27 October 2025; **Published:** 30 October 2025

To cite this article (APA): Shahrom, N. S., Mansor, S. H., & Mohd Rosli, N. (2025). Participation Motivation in Physical Activity among Female with Disabilities. Jurnal Sains Sukan & Pendidikan Jasmani, 14(Isu Khas), 37-44. https://doi.org/10.37134/jsspj.vol14.sp.5.2025

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.37134/jsspj.vol14.sp.5.2025

Abstract

Female with disabilities often face multiple barrier that limit their engagement in physical activities and placing them at high risk of health. Lower levels of participation in physical activity will lead to higher chances to get health problems, especially non-Communicable Disease (NCDs). This study focused on examining motivations influencing physical activities participation among females with disabilities and analyse the differences of motivations with vary across different age group and types of disabilities. Quantitative data were collected to provide comprehensive understanding of motivation factors among the respondents. Participation Motivation Questionnaire was adopted for this study and the questionnaire was distributed through Facebook page. Respondents (N = 93) participated in this study with an age range from 18-55 years old. Results showed that the "achievement" factor had the highest mean and "miscellaneous" factor had the lowest mean. Results in Kruskal Wallis showed there was no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) between motivations factors and age. However, tests for differences between motivation factors and type of disability showed a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in skill development and energy release factors. The finding showed this community has the same motivation in physical activity but perceived less motivations when aging. Also, society perceptions and barriers cause females with disabilities not engaging in physical activity. In a forthcoming study, study on society perceptions and barriers should be suggested to find the main cause between these two of why people with disability not participate in physical activity.

Keywords: Female with disability, physical activity, motivation, barriers

INTRODUCTION

Physical activity (PA) is an activity that contributes to energy expenditure that compromises forms of physical effort and voluntary movements which causes an individual's body to work harder than normal (Moll and Bester, 2019). PA includes sports, exercise and leisure time physical activity (LTPA). In sports, it involves rules, exercises and training programmes that need to be followed to achieve certain goals (Zourikian et al., 2010). LTPA or recreational activities are done during leisure time or outside usual living tasks. Exercising like jogging or working at the gym is also included. It is merely for enjoyment which can be spend with family and friends which could maintain PA and meet the PA guidelines (Kouvonen et al., 2012).

In general, people with disabilities (PWD) have dismal health and have a higher rate for chronic disease than people without disabilities physically and psychologically. According to Carroll et al. (2014), physical health of PWD one or more chronic illnesses like diabetes, cancer or heart disease are three times more likely to be reported by inactive PWD. While psychological health of PWD, according to Kim et al. (2021) a prior study, people with disabilities experience high levels of tension, worry, and anxiety, as well as broken social bonds and unfavorable social stereotypes, all of which have a negative impact on their quality of life. These statements show why the main factors PWD participate in sport were because of enjoyment, and social interaction (Moll & Bester, 2019). PWD who engage in PA or sport had more vigour, a better attitude and experienced less stress, despair, rage and disorientation (Bartle & Markin, 2000).

Motives people participate in sports could vary from enjoyment to goal attainment (Bartle & Markin, 2000). According to Petz (2005), it is a state in which individuals are motivated to achieve a goal by wants, impulses, desires, wishes or motives that originate on the inside and act as a stimulus for behaviour. Through Haughton McNeill et al. (2006), emotional support from loved ones can positively relate to intrinsic motivation for PA. Intrinsic motivation comes from within such as wanting to learn new skills while extrinsic motivation comes from outside or the surrounding example wanting fame. Past studies by (Egli et al., 2011) have found that male students and female student have different type of motivations where the male student prone to intrinsic factor while majority female students are the opposite Kondric et al. (2013) found male student participate in sport to achieve popularity while female students participate in sports for relaxation. These studies show that males and females have different types of motivation. Therefore, the first objective of this study is to examine the differences between motivation factors and age group, and to identify the types of disabilities factors that motivate female with disabilities to participate in physical activity. Through this study, it is hope that by understanding the motivation factors it can help to encorage and influence female with disability to actively get involve in physical activity.

MATERIAL & METHODS

Participants

This quantitative research was to study the participation motives in physical activity among female with disabilities in Malaysia. A purposive sampling technique was used for this research as the participants were female with various types of disabilities and were follower of one of Facebook page. The participants were followers from OKU Sentral (founded by Ras Adiba Radzi and Ilias Yaakop) Facebook page. The required sample size was referred to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table. Based on estimation its about 120 population of female with disabilities as the followers in the FB group and the required sample size according to Krejcie and Morgan was 93 respondents. The respondents that had participated in this study came from different types of disabilities which are 33 physical disability, 16 learning disability, 13 hearing disability, 12 visual disability, 11 intellectual disability, 4 speech disability and 4 multiple disability. The respondents aged between 18 and 55 years old. This study received ethical approval from UiTM Research Ethic Committee with reference number

REC/419/2023. All respondents were informed of their voluntary participation in this study and provided with purpose of the study.

Instruments

The questionnaire was developed using Google Form and the link was shared virtually via social media platforms, specifically Facebook. The survey had two sections: Section A consisted of 7-items to obtain demographic data such as age and type of disabilities. Section B was adopted Gill et al. (1983), Participation Motivation Questionnaire which consisted of a 30-items with three-points Likert Scale to measure participants' motives to engage in physical activity. The respondents answered the following with "I participate in sport because…" indicating their preferences from 1 ("not important"), 2 ("important") and 3 ("very important") and the results revealed eight factors of motivation which were; Achievement (6-item), Team oriented (3-item), Fitness oriented (3-item), Energy release (5-item), Miscellaneous/others (3-item), Skill development (3-item), Friendship (4-item) and Fun (3-item).

Statistical analysis

This study used IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 27 to analyse the data. Normality was done using Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Standard deviation, mean and Kruskal-Wallis was the method of descriptive statistics methods that used by the researcher to develop the findings. The statistics procedure for demographic profile was descriptive statistics meanwhile, to assess motivation of participation in section B also descriptive statistics. As for identifying the differences between motivation and age group and differences between motivation and type of disability researcher will use Kruskal-Wallis test.

RESULTS

The differences between motivations and age of female with disability into the involvement of physical activity

First objective of this study was examining the differences between motivations and age of female with disability into the involvement of physical activity. Table 1 showed the result of Kruskal-Wallis test for the differences of motivations on age groups among female with disability. A Kruskal Wallis H test revealed there was no statistically significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in age group between the motivation factors.

Table 1. Motivation factors on age group of females with disability

	Age	Krukal-Wallis H	df	p-value	Mean Rank
Achievement	18-24	1.924	2	23	53.70
	55			5	46.20
	25-54			65	44.69
Team Oriented	18-24	2.227	2	23	51.04
	25-54			65	46.75
	55			5	31.70
Fitness Oriented	55	0.265	2	5	52.90
	18-24			23	46.54
	25-54			65	46.71
Energy Release	18-24	0.283	2	23	49.57
	25-54			65	46.16
	55			5	46.16
Miscellaneous	25-54	0.231	2	65	47.85
	18-24			23	44.80

continued

	55			5	46.10
Skill Development	25-54	1.470	2	65	48.61
	18-24			23	45.15
	55			5	34.60
Friendships	18-24	1.016	2	23	50.59
	25-5			65	46.42
	55			5	38.10
Fun	18-24	3.174	2	23	54.93
	55			5	51.90
	25-54			65	43.82

The differences between motivations and type of disabilities of female with disability into the involvement of physical activity.

Second objective of this study was to identify the differences between motivations and type of disabilities of female with disability into the involvement of physical activity. Table 2 showed the result of Kruskal-Wallis, there was no statistically significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in type of disabilities between the factors of achievement, $X2(6) = 6.826$, $p = 0.337$ (Hearing Disability: M = 35.81, Visual Disability: M = 47.33, learning disability: M = 48.19, physical disability: 45.80, speech disability: M = 55.63, intellectual disability: M = 62.14, multiple disability: M = 37.25). team oriented, $X2(6) = 5.267$, $p = 0.510$ (hearing disability: M = 35.38, visual disability: M = 43.54, learning disability: M = 42.69, physical disability: 51.48, speech disability: M = 58.00, intellectual disability: M = 51.86, multiple disability: M = 51.00). Fitness oriented $X2(6) = 11.079$, $p = 0.086$ (hearing disability: M = 36.46, visual disability: M = 40.08, learning disability: M = 36.38, physical disability: 57.02, speech disability: M = 42.25, intellectual disability: M = 53.59, multiple disability: M = 48.50). Miscellaneous $X2(6) = 5.026$, $p = 0.541$ (hearing disability: M = 39.88, visual disability: M = 41.88, learning disability: M = 47.81, physical disability: 50.18, speech disability: M = 29.25, intellectual disability: M = 56.18, multiple disability: M = 48.50). Friendships, $X2(6) = 5.465$, $p = 0.486$ (hearing disability: M = 35.15, visual disability: M = 44.33, learning disability: M = 45.59, physical disability: 51.02, speech disability: M = 57.38, intellectual disability: M = 53.86, multiple disability: M = 36.75). Fun, $X2(6) = 6.601$, $p = 0.359$ (hearing disability: M = 33.85, visual disability: M = 40.75, learning disability: M = 44.81, physical disability: 50.65, speech disability: M = 58.00, intellectual disability: M = 55.23, multiple disability: M = 53.50).

However, A Kruskal Wallis H test showed that there was statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in type of disabilities between the factors of energy release, $X2(6) = 16.248$, $p = 0.012$ (hearing disability: M = 29.00, visual disability: M = 47.88, learning disability: M = 34.00, physical disability: 57.09, speech disability: M = 44.00, intellectual disability: M = 57.59, multiple disability: M = 45.50) and skill development, $X2(6) = 19.330$, $p = 0.004$ (hearing disability: M = 37.96, visual disability: M = 35.04, learning disability: M = 32.63, physical disability: 58.55, speech disability: M = 32.75, intellectual disability: M = 60.32, multiple disability: M = 52.13).

From these results, female with intellectual disability had the highest results in achievement factor, energy release factor, miscellaneous factor and skill development factor. Next, female with speech disability gained highest results in team-oriented factor, friendship factor and fun factor and female with physical disability obtained highest result in fitness-oriented factor.

Table 2. Ranks of motivation factors on different type of disabilities

	Type of Disabilities	**Krukal-Wallis H**	**df**	**p-value**
Achievement	Intellectual Disability	6.826	6	.337
	Speech Disability			
	Learning Disability			
	Visual Disability			
	Physical Disability			

continued

	Multiple Disability Hearing Disability			
Team Oriented	Speech Disability Intellectual Disability Physical Disability Multiple Disability Visual Disability Learning Disability Hearing Disability	5.267	6	.510
Fitness Oriented	Physical Disability Intellectual Disability Multiple Disability Speech Disability Visual Disability Hearing Disability Learning Disability	11.079	6	.086
Energy Release	Intellectual Disability Physical Disability Visual Disability Multiple Disability Speech Disability Learning Disability Hearing Disability	16.248	6	.012
Miscellaneous	Intellectual Disability Physical Disability Multiple Disability Learning Disability Visual Disability Hearing Disability Speech Disability	5.026	6	.541
Skill Development	Intellectual Disability Physical Disability Multiple Disability Hearing Disability Visual Disability Speech Disability Learning Disability	19.330	6	.004
Friendships	Speech Disability Intellectual Disability Physical Disability Learning Disability Visual Disability Multiple Disability Hearing Disability	5.465	6	.486
Fun	Speech Disability Multiple Disability Physical disability Intellectual disability Learning Disability Visual Disability Hearing Disability	6.601	6	.359

DISCUSSION

The differences between motivation factors and age group and type of disabilities.

From the results, there were no differences between motivational factors and age group. Meaning, age groups do not influence the engagement of females with disabilities in physical activity. However, young adulthood, age range from 18 to 24 years old had higher result in most factors while 55 years old group, had only one higher result in motivation than other age group.

Nevertheless, type disabilities only showed differences in energy release factor and skill development factor. Releasing energy involves engaging in outdoor activities, often within settings like recreational parks where interactions with strangers are common. It is evident that these females with disabilities lack confidence in venturing outdoors due to fears of societal judgements regarding their appearance which may include conditions like amputation and down syndrome. Additionally, their behavior and reactions might differ from what is typically considered 'normal' by society. Certain abled individuals often exhibit a slightly unfavorable attitude towards disabled people leading them to subtly create distance or exit social interactions when encountering such individuals (Jing, 2019). Through this, people with disabilities were often isolated by society (Kaur & Tan, 2018). Other than that, people with disability sensed sympathy from abled people when they looked at them (Kaur & Tan, 2018). Furthermore, there were issues with facilities and equipment that were provided, in instance damaged trails and potholes in the recreational park. These conditions have the potential to pose risks particularly effecting visually impaired females which can be supported by Mohd Aswad (2019), respondents with visual impairments feared injury owing to accessibility concerns such as obstructions on the roadway, potholes and unprotected drains.

As for skill development, factors are associated with facilities and equipment provided. Due to inadequate maintenance and the absence of facilities tailored for individuals with disability, the area has become inaccessible for these females with disabilities preventing them from taking part in physical activity. Findings by Wee et al. (2021), the barriers faced by people with physical disability and people with learning disability in participating sport were lacking, unsuitable, no accessibility and insufficient facilities and equipment. Through Malaysia Kini news by Abidin (2020), 'Facilities Access: Key Towards Achievements of National Paralympic Athletes' stated in 2017 researchers from University of Alabama revealed that almost all sports and recreational facilities for competitive games and sports are often found to have lacking in accessibility hence nominal usage. This, hinders female with disability to improve, learn and sharpen their skills. Especially those who participate in competitive sports and want to go to higher levels.

The factors that motivate female with disabilities to participate in physical activity

From the results, the achievement factor was the main reason female with disabilities engages in physical activity and followed by energy release and friendship while the lowest factor was miscellaneous.

The achievement factor is an extrinsic motivation, wherein an individual ae desire to gain or obtain recognition from their society. Previous study showed that extrinsic motivations have higher means score than intrinsic motivation among people with disabilities (Požėrienė et al., 2018). Female with disabilities want recognition or gain status from the society on things they had achieved and contributed which could be supported by Ahmed et al. (2020), late-adolescent females aim for societal position based on their accomplishments.

Despite that, intrinsic motivation like energy release and friendship also had higher scores. Meaning an individual engages in physical activity because of self-satisfaction. Participation in physical activity by female with disabilities contributes to their overall mental and physical well-being. Engaging in these activities helps them channel their energy and effectively manage tension, which is particularly beneficial for individuals with hyperactivity. According to Star (2023), physical exercise benefit mental health such as anxiety and stress, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) depression, panic disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and according Congsheng et al. (2022), engagement in physical activities exhibited a favorable connection with mental well-being and research has

demonstrated its potential to induce antidepressant effects. Additionally, experiencing limited mobility such as within a household setting may result in stiffness of muscles and bones, particularly among aging individuals. This statement can be supported by Goodwin and Compton (2004), respondents with spinal cord injury want to keep on engaging in physical activity to maintain a strong body as there will be higher disability from her own body due to aging.

Females with disabilities perceive the importance of friendships as they value the time spent with friends and seek to establish new social connections. Reasons are they feel more comfortable to spend and share the time with their significance others which can be supported by Nagoor Meera et al. (2019). This also aligned with previous research that mentioned female respondents place higher value on the companionship of their loved ones and female athletes had higher ranking in social integration (Wee et al., 2021).

Female with disabilities had lowest score on miscellaneous factors (participate because of others or facilities and equipment). They merely joined physical activity because of themselves, however finding by Omar-fauzee et al. (2010), friends were one of the closest people that support disabled people to pursue physical activity. Regarding coaches, their importance is centered around their crucial role in shaping the involvement of female with disabilities in physical activity especially within the context of sports. It is worth noting that eight percent of disabled athletes expressed dissatisfaction with coaching quality, often due to the absence of full-time coaches and insufficient coaching expertise. (Wee et al., 2021). Females with disabilities were also bothered by the facilities and equipment provided. This is because it is not user friendly due to poor planning and designing (Wee et al., 2021). Thus, responsible organizations or governments should provide better and thoughtful planning in providing services towards disabled customers (Lim et al., 2015).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, females with disabilities in young adulthood tend to perceive a greater number of motivational factors influencing their participation in physical activity, however the number of perceived factors tends to decrease with increasing of age. As for coaches, they need to be knowledgeable when handling athletes with disabilities, in instance athletes' characteristics and needs, as this can help them understand better on how to communicate with them. Nonetheless, it remains important for society to consider individuals with disabilities and responsible organizations should increase awareness efforts to disseminate knowledge and promote acceptance of disabled individuals. This could avoid any discrimination among people with disabilities (especially different genders) when participating in physical activity.

REFERENCES

Abidin, N. E. Z. (2020). Akses fasiliti: Kunci kecemerlangan atlet paralimpik negara. Malaysiakini. https://www.mlysiakini.com/sukan/538953

Ahmed, M. D., Ho, W. K. Y., Van Niekerk, R. L., Sulz, L., & Begum, S. (2020). Social support and sports participation motivations of female adolescents in India - study of age transition and achievement level. Physical Culture and Sport. Studies and Research, 88(1), 49-67. https://doi.org/10.2478/pcssr-2020-0025

Bartle, L. P., & Markin, M. J. (2000). The Motivation to Move. Park and Recreation 35(1), 28-35.

Carroll, D. D., Courtney-Long, E. A., Stevens, A. C., Sloan, M. L., Lullo, C., Visser, S. N., Fox, M. H., Armour, B. S., Campbell, V. A., & Brown, D. R. (2014). Vital signs: disability and physical activity—United States, 2009–2012. Morbidity and mortality weekly report, 63(18), 407.

Congsheng, L., Sumaira, K., & Amna, K. (2022). An empirical study of physical activity and sports affecting mental health of university students. Front Psychol, 13, 917503. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.917503

Egli, T., Bland, H. W., Melton, B. F., & Czech, D. R. (2011). Influence of Age, Sex, and Race on College Students' Exercise Motivation of Physical Activity. Journal of American College Health, 59(5), 399-406. https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2010.513074

Gill, D. L., Gross, J. B., & Huddleston, S. (1983). Participation motivation in youth sports. International Journal of Sport Psychology, 14(1), 1-14.

Goodwin, D. L., & Compton, S. G. (2004). Physical Activity Experiences of Women Aging with Disabilities. Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly, 21(2), 122-138. https://doi.org/10.1123/apaq.21.2.122

Haughton McNeill, L., Wyrwich, K. W., Brownson, R. C., Clark, E. M., & Kreuter, M. W. (2006). Individual, social environmental, and physical environmental influences on physical activity among black and white Adults: A Structural Equation Analysis. Annals of Behavioral Medicine, 31(1), 36-44. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15324796abm3101_7

Jing, C. C. (2019). Malaysians' attitudes toward people with disabilities. Journal of Arts & Social Sciences, 2(2), 27-65.

Kaur, G., & Tan, P.-L. (2018). Acceptance of Disability: A perspective from people with disability. Asian Journal of Behavioural Studies, 3, 1. https://doi.org/10.21834/ajbes.v3i10.75

Kim, J., Kim, J., Kim, Y., Han, A., & Nguyen, M. C. (2021). The contribution of physical and social activity participation to social support and happiness among people with physical disabilities. Disabil Health J, 14(1), 100974. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dhjo.2020.100974

Kondric, M., Sindik, J., Furjan-Mandic, G., & Schiefler, B. (2013). Participation Motivation and Student's Physical Activity among Sport Students in Three Countries. J Sports Sci Med, 12(1), 10-18.

Kouvonen, A., De Vogli, R., Stafford, M., Shipley, M. J., Marmot, M. G., Cox, T., Vahtera, J., Väänänen, A., Heponiemi, T., & Singh-Manoux, A. (2012). Social support and the likelihood of maintaining and improving levels of physical activity: the Whitehall II Study. The European Journal of Public Health, 22(4), 514-518.

Lim, C. K., Muhammad, M. Y., Mohd Sofian, M. F., Ahmad Tajuddin, O., Mohd Salleh, A., Elumalai, G., & Hamdan, M. A. (2015). Examining Sport and Physical Activity Participation, Motivations and Barriers among Young Malaysians. Asian Social Science, 12(1). https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v12n1p159

Moll, A. M., & Bester, G. (2019). Factors that relate to sport participation of adolescents with a mobility impairment. African Journal of Disability, 8.

Mohd Aswad, R. (2019). Outdoor recreation experiences among Persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Klang Valley, Malaysia: Constraints, facilitators, and constraint negotiation strategies (Publication Numbers 27668212) [Phd., Michigan State University]. United States Michigan.

Nagoor Meera, A., Mohamad Nizam, M. S., Mohamad Nizam, N., & Mohamad Nizam, N. (2019). Persons with Disabilities and Their Motives for Participating in Sports. Pertanika Journal of Social Science and Humanities, 25), 51 – 58.

Omar-fauzee, M. S., Mohd. Ali, M., Soh, K., & Norazillah, I. (2010). Participation Motive in the Paralympics. Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences, 1.

Petz, B. (2005). Psihologijski rječnik [Psychological dictionary]. Jastrebarsko: Naklada Slap. Croatian [Google Scholar].

Požėrienė, J., Adomaitienė, R., Ostasevičienė, V., Rėklaitienė, D., & Kragnienė, I. (2018). Sport Participation Motivation of Athletes with Intellectual Disabilities. Baltic Journal of Sport and Health Sciences, 3(70), 69-75. https://doi.org/10.33607/bjshs.v3i70.490

Star, K. (2023). The Mental Health Benefits of Physical Exercise. Verywellmind. https://www.verywellmind.com/mental-health-benefits-of-exercise-2584094

Wee, E. H., Anak, R., Fatt, T., Kang, Ler, H. Y., & Chin, N.-S. (2021). Physical Activity and Sport Participation among Persons with Disabilities in Malaysia: Motivation and Constraint. In (pp. 125-136).

Zourikian, N., Jarock, C., & Mulder, K. (2010). Physical activity, exercise and sports. A Guide for Families. Canadian Hemophilia Society.