

# Mental well-being of sporting women

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## Abstract

**Objective of the study** was to test benefits of habitual physical training and sporting lifestyles for the 25-42 year-old women's mental health and wellness.

**Methods and structure of the study.** We randomly sampled for the study the 25-42-year-old (32.7 years on average, SD =.51) women (n=78) residing in Yekaterinburg with representative variations in ages, education levels and socio-economic situations. The sample was tested in February through April 2019. We split the sample into an unsporting Reference Group (RG, n= 38) and habitually sporting/ physical education and sports-devoted Experimental Group (EG, n= 48). Mental well-being of the sample was tested by the D. Shevelenkova and T.P. Fesenko mental well-being test and the D.A. Leontiev and E.I. Rasskazova Life Mission and Priorities Survey.

**Results and conclusion.** The test and survey data analyzed herein give us good grounds to believe that physical progress is associated with mental well-being progress – in agreement with the prior study findings.

The sporting versus unsporting women's group mental well-being / mental health test differences showed the habitual physical training and sports being mostly beneficial for the following: individual self-control and self-management mechanisms; stress tolerance; independence; and self-esteem. On the whole, the study demonstrated benefits of habitual physical training and sporting lifestyles for the 25-42 year-old women's mental health and well-being.

**Keywords:** *mental well-being, physical education, mental health, emotional status, physical activity.*

**Background.** Individual health may be interpreted as the balanced mix of physical, social and mental health elements forming a basis for a personality progress in every vocational field [2]. mental well-being in this context may be defined as the emotionally and psychologically balanced status indispensable for a joyful lifestyle [2] full of happiness and contentment [2], with positive experiences, life values, meanings and priorities [4], good moods, positive emotions and life satisfaction on the whole [5]. G. Lordan et al. have demonstrated that sporting lifestyles tend to improve mental health / mental well-being [6]. F. Penedo and J. Dan [7], K. Kiz [5] and Z. Gidami et al. [3] found some benefits of habitual physical activity for mental health; with these studies urging the research community to

further explore correlations between habitual physical training and sports lifestyles and mental well-being / mental health [1].

**Objective of the study** was to test benefits of habitual physical training and sporting lifestyles for the 25-42-year-old women's mental health and wellness.

**Methods and structure of the study.** We randomly sampled for the study the 25-42-year-old (32.7 years on average, SD =.51) women (n=78) residing in Yekaterinburg with representative variations in ages, education levels and socio-economic situations. The sample was tested in February through April 2019. We split the sample into an unsporting Reference Group (RG, n= 38) and habitually sporting/ physical education and sports-devoted Experimental Group (EG, n=



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**Results and discussion.** The mental health / mental well-being tests and surveys rated the sporting EG higher than the RG on the following scales:

- Close and precious relations with relatives and friends (significant difference verified by the Mann-Whitney ratio of 0.0001 at  $p < 0.001$ );
- Higher commitment to the personal principles/values even when they run counter to the common social standards (significant difference verified by the Mann-Whitney ratio of 0.0001 at  $p < 0.001$ );
- Higher stress coping and solution-finding skills in everyday problematic situations (significant difference verified by the Mann-Whitney ratio of 0.0001 at  $p < 0.001$ );
- Higher assurance in own gifts, skills and lifelong progress (significant difference verified by the Mann-Whitney ratio of 1.5 at  $p < 0.001$ );
- More purposeful behavior, with the goals better set and articulated (significant difference verified by the Mann-Whitney ratio of 2.0 at  $p < 0.001$ );
- More determined in the situational responses, with a strong belief in the high chances to find something personally relevant and valuable for their personality progress agendas (significant difference verified by the Mann-Whitney ratio of 0.0001 at  $p < 0.001$ );
- More prepared to cope with their life problems even when a success is not guaranteed (significant difference verified by the Mann-Whitney ratio of 0.01 at  $p < 0.002$ );

- More prepared to acquire and appreciate new experiences, go beyond the standard situational life tracks and sacrifice comfort and security as the life-improvement aspects (significant difference verified by the Mann-Whitney ratio of 0.01 at  $p < 0.002$ ); and

- Higher stamina, with reasonable optimism as an injury-prevention and stress coping mechanism (significant difference verified by the Mann-Whitney ratio of 0.0001 at  $p < 0.001$ ): see Table hereunder.

The intergroup difference was the lowest on the self-acceptance scale (with the Mann-Whitney ratio of 18.0 at  $p < 0.15$ ). This may mean that the unsporting women tend to stall in viewing themselves as having virtually no physical and mental health related progress motivations. In the averaged terms, the sporting EG was tested significantly higher than the RG (with the integrated Mann-Whitney ratio of 0.0001 at  $p < 0.001$ ). The test and survey data analyzed herein give us good grounds to believe that physical progress is associated with mental well-being progress – in agreement with the prior study findings by D. Edwards [1], G. Faulkner [2], Z. Gifami [3] and F. Pinedo [7].

**Conclusion.** The sporting versus unsporting women's group mental well-being / mental health test differences showed the habitual physical training and sports being mostly beneficial for the following: individual self-control and self-management mechanisms; stress tolerance; independence; and self-esteem. On the whole, the study demonstrated benefits of habitual physical training and sporting lifestyles for the 25-42-year-old women's mental health and well-being.

**Table 1.** Mental health / mental well-being test and survey data of the sporting and unsporting groups

Mental health tests	Mann-Whitney ratio	Significance rate, p	Average	
			EG	RG
Relations	0,0001**	0,0001	15,50	5,50
Autonomy	0,0001**	0,0001	15,50	5,50
Life situation management	0,0001**	0,0001	15,50	5,50
Personality growth	1,5 **	0,0001	15,50	5,50
Life missions	2,0 **	0,0001	15,50	5,50
Self-acceptance	18,0 *	0,015	13,70	7,30
Mental well-being	0,0001**	0,0001	15,50	5,50
Commitment	0,0001**	0,0001	15,50	5,50
Control	0,01**	0,002	14,85	6,15
Risk management	6,5 **	0,0001	15,50	5,50
Stamina	0,0001**	0,0001	15,50	5,50

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$



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