

Motivation of athletes: individual and group running lessons

UDC 159.9.072.42



Dr. Psych., Professor **O.V. Zashchirinskaya**^{1,2,3}

PhD, Associate Professor **N.L. Ilina**¹

E.V. Arkhipova¹

PhD, Associate Professor **N.A. Medina Bracamonte**¹

¹Saint Petersburg State University, St. Petersburg

²The Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia, St. Petersburg

³«Russian Christian Academy for Humanities» named after Fyodor Dostoevsky, St. Petersburg

Corresponding author: zaoks@mail.ru

Received by the editorial office on 24.09.2024

Abstract

Objective of the study was to determine the reasons why people participate in sports, focusing on both group and individual training running sessions.

Methods and structure of the study. The research involved 93 amateur runners, ranging in age from 19 to 69. The participants were divided into two groups: those who studied in a group (42 individuals) and those who studied individually with a coach (51 individuals). All athletes underwent a survey using the methodology «Assessment of the Motives of an Amateur Athlete (Motivation Scale for Motor Activity, FASHION)» in adaptation by K.A. Bochaver, D.V. Bondarev, M.A. Papkov, and the author's questionnaire for analyzing biographical data of the subjects' motivational attitudes.

Results and conclusions. The reasons why amateur runners consistently engage in training have been explored, and the relationship between motivation and the type of training has been examined, particularly in the context of the growing popularity of marathon and race participation, particularly in St. Petersburg, where the number of athletes participating is increasing year after year.

It was discovered that there were differences in the scale of «Group affiliation» between athletes who trained individually and those who trained in a group. Additionally, there were variations in the factors that maintained motivation and the ultimate objectives of their training.

Despite the diverse and individual motivations for running, there are commonalities that unite runners into a community, regardless of their personal motivational priorities.

Keywords: *amateur sport, running, motivation.*

Introduction. In today's reality, when high-performance sports are under sanctions, attention to amateur sports and mass physical education is increasing. The study of motivation for running among its fans is becoming relevant for sports psychology [2, 4, 7-9]. According to the study on trends in the development of mass amateur sports and physical education, conducted by the Sociological Center of the CSP "Platform" in 2023 together with the Ministry of Sports of the Russian Federation, the involvement of the Russian population in sports and physical education is growing. The most popular types of activities are walking or running (practiced by 24% of those involved in

sports), swimming (16%), fitness (14%), exercise therapy, health gymnastics (11%), weightlifting (11%), team games (13%) [1-3, 6, 11-12]. Group dynamics and support can stimulate a high level of motivation and self-confidence, as well as contribute to the setting and achievement of goals. Runners who train individually with a coach can rely on their own motivation, self-discipline, and internal factors to maintain their interest in running and make continued progress [5, 10, 13].

Objective of the study was to determine the reasons why people participate in sports, focusing on both group and individual training running sessions.



Methods and structure of the study. 93 amateur runners aged from 19 to 69 years took part in the scientific work. Most respondents were aged 30-39 years (46%), had completed higher education (76.8%) and were in a registered marriage (47%). All study participants mainly trained in St. Petersburg and the Leningrad Region. In the study, the athletes were divided into two groups: runners training in a group and runners training individually with a trainer. The group of runners who preferred group training consisted of 42 people, including 14 men and 28 women. The group of runners who preferred individual training consisted of 51 people, including 23 men and 28 women. All athletes completed a survey using the method «Assessment of the motives of an amateur athlete (Motivation Scale for Physical Activity, MODA)» adapted by K.A. Bochaver, D.V. Bondarev, M.A. Papkova and the author's questionnaire for the analysis of biographical data of motivational attitudes of the subjects.

Results of the study and discussion. The obtained results of diagnostics of motives for sports activities among amateur runners showed that the highest average values in both groups of respondents were found for the subscales «pleasure» and «physical condition», from which it can be concluded that the most pronounced motives for sports activities are enjoyment of physical activity and the desire to improve physical condition (Figure 1, 2). This emphasizes that emotional satisfaction and the desire to maintain or improve health and physical fitness play an important role in making a decision about regular physical exercise. The maximum value for all scales is 25 points, except for «Competition/ambition» - 24 and «Expectations of others» - 21 points. The minimum value is 5 points.

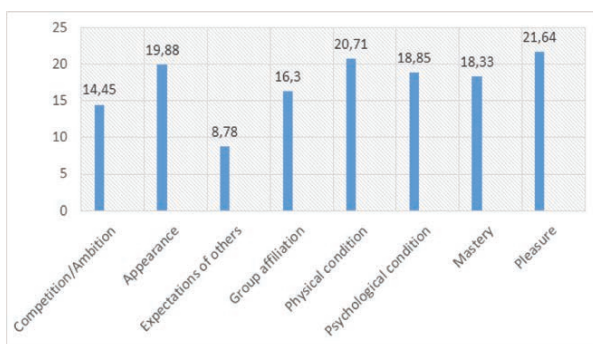


Figure 1. Expression of motives for running in athletes who prefer group training using the method «Assessment of motives of an amateur athlete»

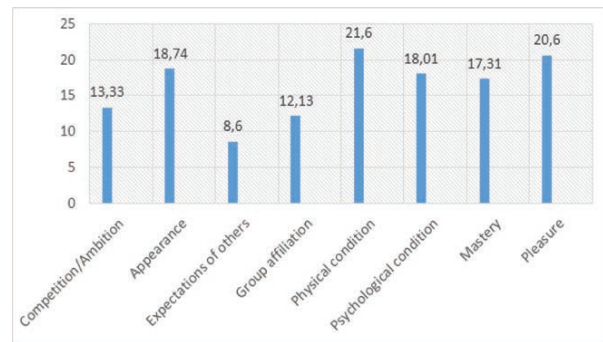


Figure 2. Expression of motives for running in athletes who prefer individual training using the method «Assessment of motives of an amateur athlete»

Small differences in the mean values for the subscales «mastery» and «competition/ambition», which are higher in group running, may indicate that training in a group contributes to the development of skills and improvement of running technique. The subscale «appearance» also shows higher mean values in group participants, which may be due to increased attention to one's own appearance in the context of social interaction. Participation in group activities often involves not only joint training, but also social activity, during which participants may strive to make a positive impression on others. When checking the reliability of differences in the expression of motives for running in the two groups, reliable results were obtained only for one scale – «Group affiliation» (I exercise to communicate with friends during training) (see table). Perhaps, participants in group training feel more motivated due to social support and competition with other participants.

Comparison of mean values of motives for regular physical activity using Student's t-test

Scale	Average value		The meaning of the Student's t-test	p
	Group	Individual		
Group affiliation	16,30952	12,13725	4,490970	0,000021*

Comparison of motives did not reveal statistically significant differences in the expression of other motives for doing sports. This may indicate that the main reasons that motivate people to run are universal and do not depend on the preference for training alone or in a group. This may include the desire to maintain health, the desire to improve physical fitness, the search for relaxation and stress resistance, as



well as the desire to be part of a community of like-minded people. Thus, regardless of the training format, the main motives remain similar and are aimed at achieving personal goals in running and general well-being. Runners demonstrate differences depending on the chosen training format. During group training, runners experience anxiety before the start, and during individual training, excitement and optimism are manifested, based on faith in themselves and their own abilities. Internal factors of runners' motivation include individual characteristics, needs, values, and beliefs. They determine a person's preferences, interests, and goals, which may differ from group norms and values. Individuals often strive for self-realization, independence, and personal satisfaction, which leads to the formation of internal motives. External factors – social norms, expectations, support from loved ones and the coach play a big role in motivating group running. Group norms and values determine the behavior of group members in compliance with group norms and mutual respect.

Conclusions. The results of the study indicate that the motivation for running in amateurs is multifaceted and individualized, but at the same time has common features that allow runners to be united into a single community, regardless of their personal motivational emphases. This emphasizes the importance of taking into account individual characteristics when developing training programs and motivational strategies in amateur running.

References

1. Venediktov I.V., Yarchikovskaya L.V., Mironova O.V., Sharonova A.V., Lukina S.M. Povysheniye rabotosposobnosti obuchayushchikhsya metodom reglamentirovannogo upravleniya dykhaniiem. *Teoriya i praktika fizicheskoy kultury*. 2023. No. 4. pp. 58-60.
2. Grigorev V.I., Kryuchek S.S., Mironova O.V. et al. Informatizatsiya podgotovki begunov na sredniye distantsii na osnove mnogofunktsional'noy informatsionno-analiticheskoy platformy. *Uchenyye zapiski universiteta im. P.F. Lesgafta*. 2023. No. 11 (225). pp. 116-122.
3. Koval T.E., Lukina S.M., Yarchikovskaya L.V. Psikhologicheskiye aspekty onlayn kommunikatsiy v studencheskom sporte. *Ananyevskiyechteniya – 2021. Proceedings International scientific conference*. A.V. Shaboltas, V.I. Prusakov [ed.]. St. Petersburg, 2021. pp. 739-740.
4. Plotnikova S.S., Kovshura T.E., Sidorenko A.S., Yarchikovskaya L.V. Korrektsiya temporitmovoy struktury bega na sredniye distantsii studentok vuza za schot povysheniya skorostno-silovogo potentsiala. *Teoriya i praktika fizicheskoy kultury*. 2016. No. 11. pp. 60-62.
5. Bochaver K.A., Bondarev D.V., Dovzhik L.M. *Psikhologicheskaya diagnostika v sporte*. Study guide. Moscow: Sport publ., 2023. pp. 75-79.
6. Tokareva A.V. Beg na zanyatiyakh fizicheskoy kulturoy so studentami spetsialnoy meditsinskoy gruppy. *Pedagogika i sovremennost*. 2012. No. 1. pp. 59-62.
7. Sharonova A.V., Portnova L.N., Sokolovskaya O.L. Vliyaniye gipoksicheskoy trenirovki v tekhnike kumbkhaka na proyavleniye rabotosposobnosti studentov v nagruzkakh s povyshayushcheyshy moshchnostyu. *Zdorovyeshberezheniye kak innovatsionnyy aspekt sovremennogo obrazovaniya. Proceedings V International scientific-practical Internet conference*. St. Petersburg, 2024. pp. 131-136.
8. In G. C. Roberts (Ed) (2001). «Achievement goal research in sport: Pushing the boundaries and clarifying some misunderstandings». *Advances in motivation in sport and exercise*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics. pp. 135-140.
9. Han Q.Y., Liu X.G., Zhong T. (2019). «Research on the awareness and behavior of leisure sports participation among different social class groups». *Henan Norm. Univ.* No. 47. pp. 114-120.
10. Pearce M., Garcia L., Abbas A., Strain T., Schuch F.B., Golubic R., Kelly P., Khan S., Utukuri M., Laird Y., Mok A., Smith A., Tainio M., Brage S., Woodcock J. (2022). «Association Between Physical Activity and Risk of Depression: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis». *JAMA Psychiatry*. Jun 1. No. 79 (6).
11. Mironova O.V., Yarchikovskaya L.V., Kuritsyna A.E., Ustinova O.N., Sharonova A.V. (2024). «Physiological and motor characteristics of long distance running depending on the level of preparedness». *Theory and Practice of Physical Culture*. No. 5. pp. 16-19.
12. Zarauz-Sancho A., Ruiz-Juan F. (2016). «Motivation, satisfaction, perception and beliefs about the causes of success in Spanish master athletes». *Ibero-Am. J. Exerc. Sports Psychol.* No. 11. pp. 37-46.
13. Zarauz-Sancho A., Ruiz-Juan F., Flores-Allende G., Garcia-Montes M.E. (2017). «Perception of success in marathoners depending on their training habits». *Retos*. No. 32. pp. 111-114.