

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Summary and conclusion

In this chapter, the discussion would be on the summary and conclusion of the six research questions that were analysed in chapter four. Some recommendations were made based on the findings of this research.

5.1.1 Sport participation motive items in relation to male and female hockey players

Descriptive finding indicated that the girls considered “team spirit” as their most important motive item while the boys rated “improving skills” as the most important. Nonetheless, both boys and girls identified these two motive items as their first and second highest motives albeit the reverse. This finding was similar to the findings of Gill, Gross and Huddleston (1983). “To improve skills” is a requirement to play a better and skilful game. It is therefore a positive motivational aspect to the players. Particularly for the male players, improving skills become more urgent as they progress further and play the game faster.

Studies on achievement goal orientation (Nicholls, 1984; Weiss & Chaumeton, 1992) indicated that mastery goal orientation has a positive effect (Horn, 1985) and is more likely to continue with the effort. Duda (1989) found that mastery attempt was considered by females as the major sport participation motivation, and this was substantiated by this finding. As cited by Horn & Hasbrook (1986), girls prefer to avoid direct competitive conflict with other girls, it is no wonder that those involved in hockey identified that team spirit was important to them as team spirit is a way to overcome

conflicts and competition. Although those who participated in hockey seemed to have contradicted Horn and Hasbrook's conclusion, the study confirmed Harter's Theory of Competency which propounded that competence in peer relationship and physical domain drove the children into sports. Other important motive items were mostly related to skill development and social domain. This clearly relates to Harter's competence theory in physical and social domain. According to a study on self-ability judgements in the physical domain by Horn and Weiss (1991), the girls involved in sports were physically more competent than those girls who were not active in sports and their self-perception are comparable to male counterparts. Nevertheless, social domain such as "team spirit" and "co-operation" (Duda, 1989) is closely associated with female players. Cited by Weiss & Chaumeton (1992), intrinsically motivated experience were experience of competence and thus intrinsic motives were rated higher in this finding, for instance "teamwork", "like the challenge", "like to compete" and "to be physically fit" for the game. These were intrinsically "part of the hockey game". Other fitness motive items are not directly related to the game of hockey and thus were given a low rating. For the friendship motive items, they tended to be more prominent when one progresses with age or had acquired more years of experience. Participation motives which are general to physical activities or social activities, for instance, "to get out of the house" were given a low rating in relation to gender. Motive items such as "want to use the equipment or facilities" and "want to travel" were rated lowly by both gender as players would not be attracted to these motives for continuing the sports.

Achievement and status surprisingly did not feature prominently in the samples probably the sport was played only at the inter-school level and few were state players.

Therefore, a study on the players playing at higher level may be necessary to determine the importance rating of these items for both gender.

Female hockey players did not consider “learning new skills” and “going for higher level” as important as the male counterparts despite the dramatic increase avenue for females to be involved in competitive sports, as social inhibitions towards games, particularly hockey which is considered a hard and robust game. The girls also rated the motive “like the excitement” higher than the boys as they played more for the intrinsic values of the game.

5.1.2 Sport Participation motive factors in relation to male and female players

Skill development and team orientation factors were factors that appeared to be the most important factors for the male and female players. Skill mastery should feature prominently sport motivation for both male and female participants. However, the high rating for team orientation factor by the female players differ from past research by Gould et al (1985). It was possibly that a team requires good teamwork by at least 11 players and participating in this sport was no longer meant for fun and friendship as both factors were only given moderate importance by the respondents. The F-ratio for skill development showed that girls and boys differed significantly as the motive items in the skill development motive factors were not rated as highly as the male players, that is, “want to go to a higher level” and “want to learn new skills”. As there are more outlets for the boys to demonstrate their skills later, it is natural that they would be concerned about improving their skills to a higher level. While earlier studies (Potrac & Jones, 1998) found achievement and status motives to be very important to the interscholastic

players and differed in rating between male and female players in Britain, this was not the case in this finding as the achievement and status motive factor did not differ significantly between both sexes. Probably the comment by Potrac & Jones (1998) saying that “female were just as goal orientated” somewhat validate our finding that there was no significant difference in this motive factor. The findings also showed different conclusion from earlier findings from abroad.

The energy factor which were found to be very important in earlier studies (Rough.& Wall, 1986) did not materialise in this finding. Instead it was the least important factor with the mean of 2.9417 for the girls and 2.811 for the boys, thus showing that hockey was played for its intrinsic values of skills, control, fitness and teamwork. As there are much stoppage due to reasons of safety, the game may not be very significant in releasing tension or with the motive of getting rid of energy. As in earlier studies (Gould et al., 1985; Gill et al., 1983), miscellaneous or distracters (Fung et al., 1995) or others(Fung & Chan, 1995), the motive factor had a low mean score, and was ranked the second lowest, showing that social approval and external factors had less influence on sport participation motivation.

5.1.3 Sport participation motive items in relation to Under-15 and Under-18 groups

The older group appeared to be more diverse in sport motivation than the younger age group. This group as expected shows a progression on achievement motives item as it is suspected that “like to compete” and “like the challenge” are sub-scales of achievement motive factor. Most miscellaneous motive items were the least important to both groups and found to be similar to the findings by Gould et al. (1985). It is clear from the F-test

that there were significant differences in the several motive items between both groups. "I want to do something I'm good at" indicated that physical competence attained after some time was another motive item that was relevant for the older group. "I want to win" showed that it was physical competence and achievement motives that older and more experienced players sought. There was also a shift to external rewards. "I like the excitement" may mean "I like the excitement in the competition" as had been used by Potrac & Jones (1998). Thus it may be construed as an achievement motive item and thus rated moderately by the Under-18 players but was significantly different. F-test results shows a positive shift to external motives personalised motive items such as "I like to travel" and "to stay in shape".

5.1.4 Sport Participation motive factors in relation to Under-15 and Under-18 age groups.

Both groups again showed that skill development factors and team orientation were their most important motive and consistent with age. But there is a progression for all motive factors except miscellaneous factor as age of the players progresses. As the nature of the game requires teamwork and stresses good skills, the regression the importance of these two motive factors were understandably expected and were insignificant.

Miscellaneous factor which consists of 3 motive items (Parents/friends want me to participate, like the coaches, like to use the equipment or facilities) should generally wane as social experience made them less motivated with such motives. On the other hand, energy release motive factors were not rated highly by most studies (Fung et al. (1995), Gould et al. (1985), and Potrac and Jones (1998) left the motive out although

there were important items in Raugh's studies (1986). It was apparent they were peripheral factors for participation of these hockey players, but was given significant increase in importance perhaps due to the need to release tension as one matures.

Many studies quoted "fun" as their first or second most important factor for participation, but studies in Australia cited by Petlichkoff (1993) did include "fun" as prominent motive factor for 621 Australian children. Gill et al. (1983) indicated that fun is closely allied with excitement and action, while Gould et al. (1985) suspected that four motive factors such as affiliation, skill development, success/status, and excitement and action contribute to players having fun. As the study does not entail data reduction analysis (i.e. factor analysis) there was a possibility that fun factor had been closely allied to the four factors mentioned above. Another notable factor that appeared to be consistent to the physical and psychological as well as motivational need was the achievement/status factor. The progression was significant between both groups with the older group indicating higher mean scores.

While fitness factor shows some difference in their mean scores, there was no significant difference between the two groups as fitness may be considered as a requirement than a motivation in the game of hockey.

5.1.5 Sport participation motive items in relation to less than three years of experience and three or more years of experience.

Hockey players with three or more years of experience identified "team spirit" and "to improve skills" as their two most important motives as these motives are intrinsic to the sport itself. It must have been their reason to start playing the game and continuing it.

“I like the challenge” and “I like to compete” as well as “I like to win” appeared to be considered achievement motives although the first two were labelled under friendship motive factor in this research. Thus factor analysis is recommended in future studies of this nature. Nonetheless, there appeared to be more diverse motives for participation in sports for the more experienced group. As expected, the less experienced had identified “to improve skills” as their most important item, which is similar to the findings by Gould et al. (1985) who found less experienced swimmers rating “to improve skills” as their most important motive. This is probably the intrinsic aspect of hockey and sports in general. As expected there were lesser number of important motives rated by the less experienced group as it was likely that this group were more attracted to the intrinsic values or rewards of the game when picking up the game. It should be noted that it did not wane significantly irrespective of years of experience. As such it is expected that status motive like “want to be popular” and external motive like “like the rewards” as well as secondary motive like “want to get out of the house” were the least important for both groups. Nonetheless the F-test over these motive items revealed prominent progression in rating achievement and status motives. On the other hand, “teamwork” shows a regression as the more experienced group began to focus on other motives as they gained more experienced and understood and played the game better. Thus, as mentioned earlier other motives including miscellaneous motive items like “release tension” and friendship item like “be with friend” show a progression with increased years of experience.

5.1.6 Sport participation motive factors in relation less than three years of experience and three years of experience and above.

The less experienced rated team orientation and skill development motives higher in mean scores than the more experienced ones, although both factors were ranked the first and second most important factors respectively. Generally, the more experienced ones should be more skilful and have better understanding of the game, hence, the likelihood of rating other motive factor higher in mean score compared to the other group. These motivation factors were relevant to the hockey players' motivational need, particularly the achievement and status motive factor. The high F-ratio indicated that achievement/status motive factor was significant between the less and the more experienced the hockey players were, the need to win and gaining status became more important after years of learning and trying. Perception of better competence would motivate one to achieve and enhance one's status. The less experienced would tend to be motivated to skill development and team orientation. However, the least important factor for the more experienced was the miscellaneous factor, and it is natural that they were more focused in the pursuit of the sport. Fun motive factor also showed significant difference as it might be the motive for continuation in sports for the more experienced. It should be noted that there are always other alternative to hockey in particular and sports in general, thus fun factor might not be a sustainable factor for sport participation. Similarly for energy release factor, the higher level and intensity of the skills needed to perform might be another reason for indicating significantly the motive to release tension, as the higher the level the more anxiety and tension the players would face. Closely related to this energy release is the social and psychological pressure to achieve

in many facets of life as one grows up or considers an old hand in the trade, hence the need to release tension.

In conclusion, most of the motive items and factors had similar results of earlier research with the exception of fun motive item and fun motive factor which had 3 subscales that is "like the excitement", "like the action" and "like the fun". Only "like the excitement" was found to be significant and was suspected to be considered a motive item for achievement motivation. Moreover, without factor analysis motive items which may be an achievement motive can be wrongly identified as other motive factor. Among them are "I like the challenge" and "I want to compete". While F-test was used, other test such as Tukey test may be more useful if the motives were significantly different, that is the null hypothesis is rejected. Tukey test tells us where the difference among the means is. There may be a need to use two way analysis of variance to differentiate the Under-15 girls and boys as well as the Under-18 girls and boys. Perhaps multivariate analysis of variance (Manova) should be used for three independent factors and above.

5.2 Recommendations

Knowing the sport participation motives of hockey players in Penang in particular and in Malaysia in general provides us with an insight in their behavioural pattern in hockey participation. Hence, this may enhance the ability to structure the necessary motivational climate for continued participation and may finally enhance the abstract value of health and sports. As yet to be studied in Malaysia, this study on participation motivation should be of help to future researchers in the establishment of a conceptual framework for sport involvement and structuring of sport environment to cater for the

hockey players of different age, gender and experience. This research therefore has obvious implication for school children aged between seven to seventeen, and for the teaching of physical education and hockey in particular. It is suggested that a motive system in Physical Education (including hockey lessons) be the framework in structuring and implementing the lesson

5.2.1 Motive system for hockey lessons in Physical Education

Competitive sports and fitness are the mainstay of our Physical Education curriculum and it has its limitations. Children involving in Physical Education lesson are largely aware of their competence and constantly remained about their physical and social competence, which limits their enjoyment in sports or physical activities. Comparison between individuals are largely ego-orientated motivation, which has been found to be detrimental to self-perception unless success was often achieved. On the other hand “improving skills” through setting of appropriate target will enhance positive experience.

Considering that skill development motive items are ubiquitous irrespective of age, age and experience, it is suggested that physical activities and sports including hockey should incorporate skill improvement and learning of new skills. In many cases, organised sports structured for competitive experience decrease positive experience particularly the younger children and those beginners. This finding confirms the earlier studies (Buonamano, Cei & Mussino, 1995) that older children were more diverse in their participation motives. The F-test on age, gender and years of experience identify achievement and status motive items as very significant motives. Organised sport with little modification may perhaps be more relevant to the competence of the upper

secondary students group. Hockey therefore would be more exciting, meaningful and rewarding for the Under-18 group and not the Under-15 group.

Social motives which include teamwork, team spirit, affiliation and friendship showed progression in relation to age. Therefore, there is a need to look into the sensitivity and perception of the older group particularly on fitness-related motive items including "staying in shape". Positive perception of the game which emphasised teamwork and team spirit will negate competition anxiety and stress, and at the same time enhance social competency.

5.22 Promoting skill development and co-operation as fun and enjoyment.

In this finding, fun motives and excitement motive were only moderately rated in importance. There is the suspicion that these motive items were closely related to skills and team co-operation. A similar conclusion was found by Wankel & Kreisel (1985) who state that "improving skills", "doing skills" and "excitement of the game" were the most important enjoyment factors. Hence there is reason to suspect that fun motives had been allied to skills improvement and team orientation.

For team training or hockey lessons in physical education classes, skill improvement and team interaction to foster enjoyment and fun is necessary. Progress in skill training must take into account team and individual competency. In hockey training, setting up of multi-stations for training may be an effective and positive strategy which provides positive feedback and enhance skills and enjoyment, taking into consideration the ability of individual players. Players of different abilities and physical competence are able to

demonstrate different skills and this would eliminate the motive to compare their competence among their peers and at the same time encourage teamwork and team spirit.

5.2.3. Promoting intrinsic motivation.

A player who is intrinsically motivated is mostly likely to maintain the activity (Fox & Biddle, 1991). Ryan (1992) concluded that intrinsic motives particularly concerning enjoyment and competence appear to be factors that are associated with greater adherence. Hastie (1998) found that girls enjoyed playing hockey and enjoyed the format of the unit because it gave them “fun”. Fun includes a skill dimension and a social dimension which came from improvement and being part of the team. It is therefore consistent with our finding of these two motive items. It is suggested that the inherent joy in playing the game provides the motivation and improve self-esteem. Thus overemphasis on the competitive part of the game may be detrimental to participation. Feeling of mastery and competence is vital to self-esteem and thus affects participation. When competition was meant to be a task mastery, players are found to be motivated to try. However, if competition is meant to seek comparison with their peers, players who continuously failed would experience an adverse effect on their self-perception. Competition should strictly be based on skill development level, age factor and the task difficulty. Many competitions were organised without giving due consideration to these variables.

Rewards can be intrinsically motivating or detrimental depending on how this incentive is used. Rewards in the form of competency such as awarding of certificate and inclusion of its achievement in the form of overall performance in school may motivate

he players to improve and excel for themselves. Despite the difficulty of instilling the sense of health as a participation motive, it should not be abandoned. There is a suspicion that reward has a connotation of extrinsic value and therefore lowly rated by the respondents. Rewards in terms of skill development or social dimension are intrinsically motivating.

5.2.4 The role of coaches

Coaches and physical education teachers play a critical role in the motivational process. Understanding sport participation is necessary for them to influence the psychological development of the young athletes towards sport participation. In many cases, coaches coached to win while physical education teachers require students to push for fitness in physical education classes to satisfy the authority or themselves. As children's motives for participation are skill improvement and team orientation, activities or training should be for mastery attempt and team building. Among the strategies that can be utilised by coaches may include skill progression and progressive small games related to the skills taught. The task for achievement should not be too difficult neither should it be too hard for the hockey players. A positive feedback will enhance self-perception and continuation of the game. Coaches were evaluated favourably by players when they provide technical instruction than general encouragement (Petchlichkoff, 1993). The importance rating of coaches in this finding indicates that the motive is of moderate importance and hence a further need to study the role of coaches in participation motivation context. Studies cited by Petlichkoff (1993) had indicated that trained coaches were more effective in enhancing positive experience thus attrition rates

are far lesser than untrained coaches. Coaching clinics would emphasise and develop a positive approach to coaching.

Coaches should also structure the sport programmes or training in order to increase participation and to enhance self-esteem of the players, particularly for the younger and less experienced players. They should provide a healthy sport environment for all to play, regardless of ability.

5.25 Further research in sport participation.

There is a need for theoretical and academic studies of sport participation motivation. As this study only entails the study of hockey players, studies on other sports should provide invaluable data and information. Moreover, studies on conceptual framework of sport participation may also be taken to consolidate empirical studies.

In Malaysia, there is an urgent need to increase sport participation for variety of reasons. They includes increasing the number of sport participants at school level, making sports fun for children so as to make them continuously active in sports for health reasons, and making sports a way of life for all.