

## Identifying Incentives of Male Employees in the National Iranian Drilling Company for Taking Part in Sport Activities: A Case Study in Ahvaz, Iran

Zeinab Fakhar<sup>1\*</sup>, Abdorrahman Mehdi Pour<sup>2</sup>, Tahereh Azmsha<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Physical Education & Sport Sciences, Shoushtar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shoushtar, Iran; <sup>2</sup>Sport Management. Physical Education and Sport Science Faculty, Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, Iran

\*Email: Zainabfakhar24@yahoo.com

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### Abstract

The aim of this study was to consider motivations and driving factors of male clerks in the National Iranian Drilling Company in terms of sport participation. The study type was descriptive survey, which was done via field method. Statistical population of the current study consisted of all male clerks of the National Iranian Drilling Company in Ahvaz, who were 500 according to a census. Statistical sample was determined to embrace 217 people according to the Morgan table. To determine incentives of employees for sport participation in this study, a realized questionnaire of 22 items was used. To determine validity of this questionnaire, construct validity was used, and to determine construct validity, exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis were used. Test coefficient of KMO=0.84 showed fitness of questionnaire data. Using methods of descriptive statistics and average inferential statistics, standard deviation, one sample t test, Freedman and regression tests, and using statistical software SPSS 16 and AMOS 18, data analysis was done. Results showed that motivating factors affect sport participation of male employees in the National Iranian Drilling Company. Respectively, the factor of health, recreational factors, factor of social balance and organizational factor are effective in creating motivation in male employees of the National Iranian Drilling Company for taking part in sport activities.

**Keywords:** sport participation of men, sport motivation, employees of the National Iranian Drilling Company

### Introduction

Today, incentive of the world's people for taking part in sport activities is not to achieve high degrees and achieve Olympic motto (faster, higher, stronger<sup>1</sup>), but to obtain health, excitement, social relations, and preventing diseases, which are among major reasons for taking part in sports (Mirghafuri et al, 2009). That is because in today's world, capability, economic force, and wellbeing of every country depends on optimum use of the country's facilities and human resources. In this regard, the more capable, motivated and healthier human forces working in different parts, the greater progress and success of that country in various economic and social fields will be. One of the main influential principles in preservation and rehabilitation of human resources in every organization is management and control of mental pressures and prevention of job exhaustion in work environment (Khoresh et al, 2009).

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<sup>1</sup> Citius, Altius, Fortius

In many of organizations, despite good salaries and benefits, there have still been reports of job stress, fatigue, and low motivation for doing duties as well as employees' exhaustion, that have eventually led to low efficiency and client dissatisfaction. Studies in this regard have shown that in organizations where there are failures in providing services related to sport recreations, behavioral aberrations such as underworking, bad-temper, irritability, low commitment, boredom in doing job, and fatigue expression are noticeable. This is the reason why managers of organizations spend a lot of expenses for sport participation of personnel under their responsibility as they believe that regular and organized sport plans have great impact on improving organizations' services (Naderian Jahromi and Hashemi, 2009).

Results of studies performed in recent decades regarding economic, psychological, and social functions of physical activities and sports have had the effect that some managers in different organizations, with knowledge of different benefits of sport programs in work environment, have started to implement physical development programs and sport recreational activities for their staff. In this regard, Shephard does not consider responsibility of organizations in a healthy society limited to over-increasing production of goods and providing profitable services, but he believes that organizations' managers must consider attention to physical and spiritual health of their staff as a prerequisite for achieving organizational goals, and they must stress it as equivalent to production and productivity (cited by Khoresh et al., 2009).

Since individuals' participation in sport activities is voluntary and it is mostly done in leisure times, successful expansion of these programs requires that programmers and policy makers be aware of different participation incentives and perhaps more importantly participation manner and reasons of people's participation in sport programs, because incentive is considered the key to every job and activity, and it can provoke, boost, and guide individuals' behaviors or control and stop them (Naderian Jahromi and Hashemi, 2009).

Sport psychologists have considered different types of motivation with certain concepts including progress incentive, rivalry incentive, internal incentive, external incentive, etc. Incentive for sport participation considers personal differences for taking part in sport activities, because, depending on personal differences and different sport fields, motivation type of people in achieving goals (sport goals) has a special importance (Fouladian et al, 2009).

A lot of studies have been performed concerning sport participation incentives. Statistical society for these studies have generally consisted of women, students, and citizens and the number of studies that specifically considered male employees' incentives for taking part in sport activities, is limited.

Among studies carried out in this regard works of Ajibua, Olorunsola, and Bewaji (2013) can be mentioned, who stated the main factors affecting participation of employees of higher education institutes as personal incentive, interest, and influence of peers. Also in study of Deans et al (2012) on handicapped amputees, it was found that these people have less participation in bodily activities that lead to obtaining health and only a small minority of handicapped amputees show incentive for acquiring health via sport. Results of researches by Egli et al (2011) showed that male students most often engage in sport activities with incentive of inner factors, or in other words due to need for power, rivalry and challenge, and Masten et al (2010) have, in their study, mentioned development and maintenance of physical abilities and maintaining bodily health as the main factors for sport participation incentive of Slovenia's armed forces staff. In this regard, in a national research project that involved a statistical society consisting of managers, laborers, university faculties, students, and physicians, Australian Bureau of Statistics (2007) concluded that motivation of Australian people for doing sport activities was first physical fitness and then enjoying life and life welfare.

Also, Kamaradin and Fauzee (2007) considered perspective of 80 students regarding kinetic activities and sport. According to their results, enjoying practice and reduction in stress and pressure were the major reasons of participation for female and male students in kinetic and sport activities. Sirard et al (2006), too, concluded in a study on students of high schools that for boys, driving factors in sport participation involved rivalry, social benefits, and physical fitness, respectively.

Among researches conducted in Iran concerning identification of sport incentives of male employees, works of Qodrat Nama and Heydari Nezhad (2013) on students of Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz can be addressed in which they stated physical health as the main motivation for sport participation in both girls and boys. Parsa Mehr (2011) also performed a study on students of the field of physical training in Yazd University and found that three variables of sport enjoyment, personal investment, and participation opportunities are connected with continuous participation. Nourbakhsh et al (2010) announced the most important incentive for participation of elderly men and women of the city of Tehran in bodily activities as physical preparation. Also, in describing people's inclination to kinetic and sport activities in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mozaffari et al (2010) suggested such factors as obtaining mirth and succulence, strengthening body and soul, obtaining self-confidence and having good behavior and temper as the most important incentives of men and women for participation in kinetic and sporting activities. Results of works of Naderian Jahromi and Hashemi (2009) on people above the age of 16 showed that participation of men in sport activities, is mostly done with incentives of getting skill, success, superiority, health, and bodily strength, whereas women mostly engage in sport with incentives of bodily fitness and beauty, obtaining health, and mental hygiene and finding friends. Ramazani Nezhad et al (2009) also considered incentives of participants in public sports in the city of Rasht and they concluded that the most important motivations for men and women in sport participation is to acquire health, bodily fitness, enjoyment, and mirth as the first priority and after that, the incentive of improving job and life relations, prevention and remedy of illnesses and social interaction. Attarzadeh Husseini and Suhrabi (2009) mentioned getting joy and succulence among the most important reasons and incentives of participation of male and female citizens of the city of Mashhad, and Fouladian et al (2009), in their study on athlete students of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, concluded that there is a significant direct relationship between components of sport orientation (tendency to victory and goal-orientation) and components of sport participation incentive. As regards this, works of Ahadi Kareshk (2008) on faculty members of Shahid Chamran University showed that motivations of preserving health, enjoyment and acquiring mirth and succulence, spiritual and mental peace, success in works, and weight control are the most important stimuli for staff's sport participation. Motamedin et al (2007) considered reasons of Tabriz citizens' participation in public sports as acquisition of soul and body health, prevention of different diseases, and prevention of weight decrease. Also, Vaez Mousavi (1996) considered the factor of health as the most important stimulus of soldiers for sport participation, and Nourbakhsh and Mazare'ei (2006) considered acquisition and enhancement of skills as the most important incentive of male athlete students for sport activities.

As a pioneer industry, Iranian oil industry has practiced extensive activities in the field of sport for a long time, so that it can firmly be claimed that many sport fields were introduced by the oil industry in the country. For example contemporary to oil production in the country's southern oilfields, sport was somehow introduced into this industry, and the fields of golf, badminton, and tennis were activated for the first time in Iran and the oil industry. Sport and physical training department of Iranian Oil Company, as administrator of health in the oil industry, has always had a special consideration for developing physical force, boosting healthy morale in individuals, especially personnel of oil industry and their families, development and generalization of sport and

coordinating sport activities and healthy recreations and also creation and development of sport centers (news agency of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), 2014).

Given the fact that over 80 percent of Iran's economy depends on economy resulted by oil (NIOC, 2014), health of the personnel employed in the oil industry and their attention to sport are especially important. For this reason, the goal of this study was to consider motivations of male staff of the National Iranian Drilling Company in sport activities, so that by identifying and prioritizing these factors as well as programming and investing according to personnel sport motivations, their increasing participation and presence in sport fields will hopefully be witnessed.

### **Methodology**

This study was a descriptive survey performed via field research. Statistical society for the current study consisted of all male staff of the National Iranian Drilling Company in 2013, who made up 500 people based on a performed census. The statistical society's size was determined equal to 217 according to the Morgan Table. After distributing the questionnaire among the determined sample, only 195 questionnaires were returned that were usable for this study, as they made up statistical society of this study.

### **Measurement tool**

To determine motivations of male staff of the National Iranian Drilling Company for sport participation, this study made use of realized questionnaire of 22 items. For determining validity of this questionnaire, construct validity was employed, which was in turn determined using exploratory factor analysis and confirmative factor analysis. Test coefficient of KMO=0.84 exhibited fitting of questionnaire data. Level of significance for Bartlett's test was statistically meaningful ( $\text{sig}=0.0001$ ). Therefore, data for performing factor analysis was suitable. In this analysis, via the method of principal component analysis (varimax rotation) and eigenvalues more than 1, 4 factors were extracted. From the four extracted factors, first, second, third, and fourth factors constituted 22.26, 14.89, 11.83, and 8.54 of the whole variance, respectively. Also, the sum of variances presented by these four factors was 57.53. To determine which factors are confirmed in questionnaire, after performing exploratory factor analysis with the SPSS software program, confirmatory factor analysis was done using AMOS software program to determine confirmed factors. In this section, different types of possible models for orientation of test material on factors given theoretical fundamentals, performed backgrounds, as well as results of exploratory factor analysis were investigated and contrasted. Comparison of models was performed according to criteria of goodness of fit. To evaluate the extent to which the mentioned model fitted obtained data, in addition to criteria of  $\chi^2$  (chi-square) and critical value of sample size, we relied on three fit criteria too. Insignificant  $\chi^2$  shows fitness of the model with data. Also, when sample size is big, other statistical criteria more efficiently show fitness of model. Hence, a  $\chi^2$  criterion of 2 or less imply a suitable fitness. The three other important criteria of fitness include goodness of fit, comparative fitness, and mean of standard residues. The model was studied in this research. In this model, four factors were obtained in accordance with the exploratory factor analysis model, with each item being placed in one of the factors. Obtained criteria in this model are as shown in Table 1.

Higher values for comparative fit index and goodness of fit index (e.g. over 0.90) are desired and they compare fitness of the assumed model with the independent model, whereas a lower value for RMSEA leads to a model with better fit. As observed, indices represent fitness of model and therefore, fitness of the questionnaire is confirmed. In the current study, to determine reliability of the research's questionnaire, the method of Cronbach's alpha was used, which was equal to 0.88 for the whole questionnaire, showing desired reliability coefficient of the mentioned questionnaire. Also, reliability of each of the micro-scales of health and wellbeing, social interaction, recreational

factors, and organizational factors is equal to 0.77, 0.79, 0.82, and 0.82 respectively. To determine extent of sport participation, 10 questions were used in this study, with items specifying activity place, number of sessions per week, hours per session, sport field, team membership, etc.

**Table 1 . Model's fitness criteria**

Criterion	Value
$\chi^2$	389.67
$\chi^2/df$	1.69
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.044
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	0.91
Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)	0.93
Comparative fit index (CFI)	0.92

### *Methods*

First, required permissions were obtained from related managers, and the questionnaires were distributed among statistical samples, completed and collected. Also, respondents were assured that their response would be considered confidential and would be used only for research goals.

### *Statistical method*

Mean and standard deviation were used as descriptive statistics, one-sample t test was employed to analyze sport participation stimuli, Freedman test was used to determine priority of stimuli, and regression test was used to make connections between sport participation and sport participation stimuli, as inferential statistics. Data analysis was performed via statistical software SPSS 16 and AMOS 18. Level of significance in all study hypotheses has been assumed as ( $\alpha=0.05$ ).

### 2-4. study findings

Table 2 shows sport participation for male staff of the National Iranian Drilling Company.

**Table 1. Frequency distribution of sport participation for male employees**

Sport participation	Frequency	Percentage
Once in a week	131	67.2
Once in a week or more	31	15.9
Once in year or more	5	2.6
Never exercise	22	11.3
Error	6	3.1
Total	195	100

**Table 2. Frequency distribution and standard deviation regarding sport participation stimuli**

Factor	Micro-scale	Number	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation
Sport participation stimuli	Health and wellbeing	184	2	5	4.21	0.53
	Social interaction	190	1	5	3.45	0.80
	Recreation (enjoyment and succulence)	183	1	5	4.06	0.65
	Organizational	181	1	5	2.82	0.81
Total	All micro-scales above	168	1	5	3.62	0.54



As shown in table 2, 67.2 per cent of subjects exercised once or more in a week; 15.9 per cent exercised once or more in a month; 2.6 per cent exercised once or more in a year; 11.3 per cent never exercised. Mean, standard deviation, maximum and minimum values concerning sport participation stimuli have been shown in table 3.

As seen in table 3, factors of health and wellbeing, social interaction, recreation, and organization have means of 4.21, 3.45, 4.06, and 2.82 respectively. Also, the factor of health and wellbeing is the most important factor affecting participation stimuli with a mean of 4.21, whereas the factor of organization has the least importance with a mean of 2.82. Table 4 shows results of one-sample t test for determining sport participation stimuli of male staff in the National Iranian Drilling Company.

**Table 3. One-sample t test used to determine sport participation stimuli of male staff in the National Iranian Drilling Company**

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Test value	Degree of freedom	Observed t	Level of significance
Stimuli	3.62	0.54	3	167	14.89	0.001

As observed in table 4, average of respondents answering questions concerning stimuli is 3.62, which is higher than theoretical mean value (3), and this difference is significant statistically. In other words, motivating factors (stimuli) are effective in sport participation of male staff of the National Iranian Drilling Company. To consider position of each of stimuli micro-scales in sport participation of male employees of the National Iranian Drilling Company Freedman was used.

**Table 4. Prioritizing stimulating factors in sport participation of male employees of the National Iranian Drilling Company**

Micro-scale	Questions	Average rate	Priority	Degree of freedom	$X^2$	Level of significance
Stimulus	Health and wellbeing	3.42	Average rate	3	313.30	0.001
	Social interaction	2.15	3			
	Recreation factors	3.16	2			
	Organizational factors	1.26	4			

As observed in table 5, the factor of health and wellbeing, with a mean of 3.42, is the most important priority and the factor of organizational factor, with a mean of 1.26, has the least priority in sport participation of male employees of the National Iranian Drilling Company in terms of motivating factors.

To study the connection between sport participation of male employees and motivating factors, the multiple regression analysis exam was used in a stepwise method, the results of which have been presented in table 6 and table 7.

**Table 5. Total results of multiple regression analysis between sport participation and stimulating factors**

Source of variations	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean of squares	The F ratio	Level of significance	R	R <sup>2</sup>
Regression	12.44	4	3.11	3.65	0.022	0.40	0.16
Residue	136.34	159	0.85				
Total	248.78	163					

**Table 6. Coefficients of multiple regression via stepwise method obtained between sport participation and stimulating factors**

Sources	Non-standard coefficients		Standard coefficients	t-value	Level of significance
	Beta	Standard error	Beta		
Constant	2.79	0.59		4.70	0.001
Health and wellbeing	-0.33	0.173	-0.192	-1.99	0.047*
Social interaction	-0.006	0.121	-0.006	-0.053	0.958
Recreation	0.042	0.153	0.030	0.276	0.783
Organizational	-0.020	0.110	-0.018	-0.185	0.853

Results of multiple regression analysis exam show that from among driving factors, the factor of *health and wellbeing* ( $t=-1.99$ ,  $p=0.047$ ), is significant and has a linear relation with the variable of criterion, and it is suitable for predicting sport participation of male employees in the National Iranian Drilling Company.

### Discussion and conclusion

The aim of the current study was to identify driving factors of male employees in the National Iranian Drilling Company in sport activities. Results of the research showed that 67.2 per cent of subjects only exercised once or more in a week and 11.3 per cent of them never exercised. Also, results of one-sample t test (table 4) showed that stimulating factors are effective in sport participation of male employees of the National Iranian Drilling Company and based on the results of Freedman test for determining position and role of each one of motivating factors' micro-scales in employees' sport participation, the factor of *health and wellbeing* was the most important incentive and the main factor that drove male employees to take part in sport activities in the National Iranian Drilling Company. These results are in agreement with those of works of Qodrat Nama and Heydari Nezhad (2013), Ramazani Nezhad et al (2009), Ahadi Kareshk (2008), Mo'tamedin et al (2007), Vaez Mousavi (1996), and Masten et al (2010) in terms of priority of the factor of health and wellbeing compared with other driving factors in creating incentive for participation in men's sport participation. Conformity of mentioned findings in terms of importance of the motivation of health and physical fitness in sport participation of male employees can be justified with regards to the health belief model. According to Gill (2000), according to the health belief model, commitment of each person to preventive behaviors (e.g. sport), depends on severity

of the possibility of disease and benefits estimation as well as related cost. An individual who senses seriousness of disease and susceptibility to danger and understands that benefits of preventive measures are more than negative points involved, will most probably engage in health-enhancing activities.

In the works of Parsa Mehr (2011), Mozaffari et al (2010), Attar Zadeh Husseini and Sohrabi (2009), the most important cause of subjects' tendency has been suggested as acquisition of joy and succulence and sport enjoyment, and in the works of Naderian Jahromi and Hashemi (2009), Nourbakhsh and Mazare'ei (2006), the factor of acquiring skill and its improvement have been suggested. Also, in studies of Fouladian et al (2009), tendency for victory and goal-orientation have been suggested. The studies just mentioned are incompatible with the current work in terms of the most important factor and priority of subjects for sport participation.

According to the prioritization of driving factors in tendency of male employees of the National Iranian Drilling Company, the second factor that most affected people's inclination to sport participation was the factor of recreation including acquisition joy and succulence, feeling of power and youthfulness, interest in movement and mobility, forgetting about daily problems of life and enhancement of life quality. These results, along with those of the works of Ahadi Kareshk (2008), and Australian Bureau of Statistics (2007), agreed with current study, in terms of position of recreational factors among other driving factors.

Also, works of Naderian Jahromi (2009) and Ajibua et al (2013), Masten et al (2010), Sirard et al (2006), Parsa Mehr (2011), Mozaffari et al (2010), who have stated factors other than recreational factors as the second priority of driving factors in sport participation of subjects, are not compatible with this part of the current study.

According to the results of this study, driving factors related to social interaction such as freedom from solitude and boredom, belonging to group, making friends, acquisition of self-confidence made the third priority in creating motive for participation in sport activities of male staff in the National Iranian Drilling Company. Results of this part of study agree with works of Ajibua et al (2013), who considered the most effective factors in participation of staff in governmental higher education institutes as interests and influence of peers, in terms of position of the factor of social interaction. Also, these results are not compatible with the works of Ramazani Nezhad et al (2009), who stated acquisition of health and physical fitness, joy and succulence in the first priority and then motivation of enhancing job relations and life, prevention and remedy of diseases and social interaction, respectively as the most important motives for men and women's sport participation. Furthermore, the results do not agree with works of Sirard et al (2006), who considered rivalry, social benefits, and physical fitness among driving factors of sport participation for male students of high schools in terms of position of the factor of social interaction.

It seems that probably, one of the reasons that have had the effect that staff consider the factor of social interaction in driving to sport activities less important compared to the factor of health and recreation, is the effect of physical bodily form in social interactions. Social psychologists (cited by Salehi and Rahmani, 2010) have found that people consider visual attractiveness coupled with personal desirable traits such as intelligence, capability, and social acceptance. This is the reason why many of individuals are concerned of how others evaluate their physical appearance within sport drills. This concern affects type of activities people engage in and where and with whom they exercise and how much they enjoy from sport activities. People with a lot of concern regarding others' perception about their body shape, might avoid engagement in sport activities due to fear of leaving a negative social image in others' minds and the stress caused by embarrassment.



Results of research in section of prioritizing stimuli micro-scales showed that respectively, factors of health and wellbeing, recreation, social interaction, and organization affected development of motives in male staff of the National Iranian Drilling Company for participation in social activities. These results show that male staff of the National Iranian Drilling Company more often exercise with incentive of acquiring health and wellbeing including prevention of illnesses, having a fit physique, discharging extra energy, reducing muscular pains, and prevention from solitude and depression, and less often do they engage in sport activities for such reasons as being recognized by managers, close connection with colleagues, going to sport camps and Competitions, winning sport ranks for the organization, and taking part in group bodily activities in the organization to boost teamwork morale for participation in physical activities. These results differ from works of Fouladian et al (2009), Naderian Jahromi and Hashemi (2009) and Egli et al (2011) due to dissimilarity in importance of organizational factors such as superiority and rivalry and success. Possibly, the reason for this incompatibility can be considered as different age, job, and different concerns of subjects, as the mentioned studies have been conducted on societies of students who, due to age conditions, have a stronger incentive of tendency to superiority, rivalry and acquiring success compared with statistical society of the current research. Also, it can be stated that personnel who spend 9 working hours behind office desks and are often afflicted with inactivity side-effects more often engage in sport activities with motivations of illness recovery and/or acquisition of health rather than going to sport camps and competitions. Of course, it is worth noting that managers and programmers of sport affairs in the organization should encourage staff for sport activities using such measures as holding matches, using experienced sympathetic coaches, coordinating drill hours with leisure time of the staff, providing free sporting clothes, and/or granting awards in case of staff's success, thus creating a sense of competition and success acquisition in their personnel, so that the personnel participate in regular sport drills with more seriousness and motivation.

Given the fact that over 80 per cent of Iran's economy lies upon oil-produced economy and since more motivated and healthier human force employed in various parts will lead to progress and success of the country in different economic and social fields, to prevent exhaustion of personnel in the National Iranian Drilling Company, authorities should try to correct their organizational structure, thus propelling them to physical and mental health and acquisition of more success, by creating more incentive in the personnel.

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