

The Motivation for Physical Activity at Night (A Case Study on Semarang Runners Community)

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Abstract

In the era of modernization, the ever-increasing activities have left individuals with less time to rest and exercise and thus have impacted on their health. Busy work hours have forced people to use their night times to keep their bodies healthy. The purpose of this study is to analyze the motivations (physical, psychological, and social) of Semarang Runners Community members behind their night physical activities. The research design is a descriptive qualitative case study adopting purposive and snowball sampling techniques. Using the first seven informants as the data sources (1 the key and six other the main), the results showed the physical motivations are to lose weight and maintain health, the psychological motivations to channel hobbies and recreation and to relieve stress and the social motivation to add more friends. The study concludes physical motivations of losing weight and maintaining health to be the first motivations of becoming a member of the Semarang Runners community, which are followed by the psychological motivation on the second and the social motivation the last.

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INTRODUCTION

Physical activity is a stressor for the human body. Almost all organs respond to exercise stress. In acute situations, exercise produces bad effects on health. Conversely, however, regular exercise can also lead to healthy, organic adaptations. Regular or periodical exercises produce changes in the tissues, cells, and proteins in the immune system, in such ways that they promote mood increase, tension relief, relaxation, self-confidence boost, sexual function enhancement, work-behavioral improvement, and reductions of anxiety and tension (Nursalam, 2007).

In the process of modernization, the ever-growing activities of the society have reduced an individual's time to rest and exercise freely and, certainly, brought negative impacts on their health. Many individuals for occupational reasons cannot spare time in the morning or afternoon and only have a little time at night to exercise, and thus nighttime exercises become the remaining choice amidst their super busy schedules (Francesco, Miller, and Lockley, 2010).

The morning, with its freshest air and best sunlight exposure, is, in fact, the impeccable choice of time for exercise. However, when one can not afford to take morning exercises, it does not harm the health to take it in the time between the afternoon and the evening when several conditions are met: it is not done too late at night; it does not disrupt the need of the time and quality of sleep, and; it leaves an interval of about 1 to 1.5 hours between the time of exercise and sleep (Maharani, 2014).

Busy work hours indeed have compelled people to manage their nighttime in attempts to staying healthy and in shape. Exercise has become the stimulative agent for functional developments in physical, spiritual, and social dimensions. These are visible especially in the younger generation who actively participate in sports rather than those who do not, where anatomical-anthropometric structures and physiological functions, emotional stability and intellectual intelligence, as well as ability to

socialize within environments become more notable (Giriwijoyo, and Sidik, 2013).

As its form can only be observed in behavioral manifestations, motivation is abstract psychological energy. As a psychological process, it is a reflection of the magnitude of the interaction between the cognition, the experience, and the need. In the subject of physical education and sports, hence, there is the adage: "there is no achievement without motivation" (Husdarta, 2010).

Established on September 11th, 2013, Semarang Runners Community has set the regular schedule on Tuesday and Thursday nights, starting at 19.00 West Indonesian Time. The running routes are divided into two: the 8 Kilometers or the long route and the 5 Kilometers or the short route, changing each time according to an agreement. On Tuesday the starting point is Telkomsel Grapari, while on Thursday night Semarang City Hall. The followers on Facebook Social Network up to March 10th, 2018 had reached 4,547, but the members actively taking part in the events are approximately 100. Soegiyanto (2010, 2013) in his research, states that community participation in sports activities in Semarang is classified as low and that the frequent physical activity here is healthy walking. Based on the description above, the researcher intends to propose the research title "Motivation behind Physical Activity at Night: A Case Study on Semarang Runners Community in 2018".

METHODS

The research applies the qualitative descriptive method in the analysis of the case study. The focus of this research is the motivation behind the night exercises of Semarang Runners Community members about physical, psychological, and social dimensions. The study takes seven initial informants as the data sources, in which 1 becomes the key informant, and the other six the main informants. The sampling adopts the purposive and snowball techniques, whereas the instruments used are interview guides, voice recording devices (handphones), and digital camera image/video recorders. The

data collection combines in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The process of data analysis includes examining the results of interviews and observations, data trimming by abstraction, compiling by units, checking validity, and interpreting data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Physical Motivations

In-depth interviews have revealed physical reasons for taking the night run are to lower body weights and to keep in shape.

These findings have been relevant to Hoare, Stavreski, Jennings, and Kingwell (2017) were the results on motivations behind physical activities showed a most frequent choice of response were to lose or maintain body weights, avoid illnesses and manage health, and keep appearances.

By definition, physical activity is any body movement that requires energy, whereas an exercise is a planned and structured physical activity that involves repetitive body movements and aims to improve physical fitness (Khomarun, Nugroho, and Wahyuni, 2014). Physical activity causes energy release or calorie burning (Indonesian Ministry of Health, 2016), and this is in line with the interview results that informants lost weight after routine night runs.

In his research, Hafid (2017) argues that significant correlations exist between the fatigue levels of night physical activities and events of insomnia in the case of futsal players. Also, Myllymäki, Kyröläinen, Savolainen, Hokka, Jakonen, Juuti, Martinmäki, Kaartinen, Kinnunen, and Rusko (2011) has shown how sleep had been the most crucial moment for an individual to recover from daily burdens. Overall, regular physical activities can improve sleep qualities, but the effects of acute exercises on sleep were not well-defined. In the recommendation on healthy sleep, intensive exercises are not recommended during the last 3 hours preceding sleep time, although not tested experimentally enough. The previous study has demonstrated irrelevant results on how heavy exercises during the night disrupt sleep qualities.

This is in line with recent interview results where no informants reported to have suffered from insomnia after night runs.

Psychological Motivations

Among other things, recreation and stress relief are found to be the psychological reasons underlying the night run participation. According to Gunarsa (2008), recreation has been one of the three needs most pursued in taking sports. This is also in line with the informants' statements.

Nurmalina (2011) points out that the advantages derived from taking part in physical activities include the increase of mood and reductions of anxiety, stress, and depression (with the last three promoting weight increase). This is reinforced with Informant Septian's statement that "*It eliminates stress*" and informant Angelika's words that "*It makes me happier, gives me better mood; I can 'push' the maximum speed higher as a stress release, and the result is, I can feel the freshness more radiant.*"

These findings are supported by the release from Indonesian Ministry of Health which lists the psychological advantages of such participation, including self-confidence boost; sportive and responsibility building; stress control, and; anxiety and depression reductions. In line with these findings, Kusuma (2016) states factors influential to enthusiasms for weekend recreational sports include physical and psychological conditions, family relationships, home situations, socio-economic status, jobs, occupational satisfaction and motivations, job benefits and residential environments. Hoare, Stavreski, Jennings and Kingwell (2017) supported these findings in that most frequent choice of response on the reasons behind physical activities was to elevate moods.

According to Nurmalina (2011), good health, lower body weights, fitness, challenges, and better moods are initial determinations influential to physical activities participations. In the shifting of time, these will gradually change into recreation, leadership management, routine, and social reasons.

Social Motivations

As also applies in Semarang Runners Community's case, people are motivated to social tendencies: to get to know each other and make new friends. This is why there are always some members doing the runs despite any obstacles.

Robbins, and Judge (2015) on Maslow theory of needs state that a person's needs are attached to a hierarchy where the physiological needs inhabit the lowest level, and the self-actualization needs the highest. These are the basic human needs according to Maslow: Physiological Needs, Security and Safety Needs, Social Needs (Affiliation or Acceptance Needs), Esteem Needs, and Self-Actualization Needs. The Social Needs (Affiliation or Acceptance Needs) include affection, belonging, acceptance, and friendship. All motivational theories are associated with the formulation of human needs. According to Siagian (2012) motivational processes are schematical in our lives, where needs always arise, and those concerned feel the urge to satisfy them. A need can only be categorized as one if it causes tension in the person concerned. The more critical the nature of the need is, the higher the tension is caused. This tension is what encourages the person to do something, a solution to stop the tension from continuation. Therefore, a successful quest for a solution is satisfied a need. This will reduce tension, but does not eliminate it, because the same need will arise sooner or later, perhaps in a new form and perhaps with different intensities – hence the saying “there is no end in satisfying one's needs.”

CONCLUSION

Conclusively, lowering body weights and maintaining good health are the physical motivations of the members of Semarang Runners Community to do night physical activities. In the psychological dimension, channeling a hobby, recreation, and stress elimination also become motivations, along with socializing for making new friends from the social dimension.

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