

Motivation Status of Male and Female Soccer Players in Kenya's Secondary Schools

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Abstract The purpose of this study was to determine motivation status of soccer players in secondary schools in relation to gender of the participants. The study hypothesized that there would be no significant difference on motivation among soccer players in secondary schools in relation to gender of the participants. The study adopted cross sectional analytical research design. The participants were boys and girls enrolled in secondary schools from urban and suburban areas at zonal level. Stratified random sampling was used to ensure proportionate representation of both male and female soccer players from the two counties. The sampled respondents were 548 (54.7%) out of the target population of 1001. Four dependent variable were used; self-achievement motivation, self-fulfillment, social interaction and personal image motivation. The Sport Motivation Scale questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. Data was summarized in percentages, mean values and standard deviations. Hypotheses were tested using t-test at $p = 0.05$ level of significance. Findings revealed that male soccer players were significantly more motivated on the variable of personal fulfillment than the female soccer players. However, no statistically significant differences were observed between the two genders the other three variables of personal image, self-achievement and social interaction. The study recommends that teachers, trainers and coaches handling soccer players at secondary school level seek to maintain the high motivation observed by both male and female players. The study also recommends for expansion of training on psych-social aspects of teachers, trainers and coaches.

Keywords Motivation, Soccer, Secondary Schools

1. Introduction

Soccer is the most popular sport not only in Kenya but also in many countries of the World (Rahnama, 2011). The sport was introduced in Kenya by the British Colonialists at the turn of the 20th Century. It is managed by the Football Kenya Federation (FKF) founded in 1960. The Federation organizes the Kenya Premier Leagues (KPL) and the Kenya national football team. Institutions of learning also participate in competitive soccer where universities, colleges, high schools and primary schools compete in a structured way from grassroots to national and international levels. However, despite the popularity of soccer in Kenya, the country's performance in international competitions has not been impressive as it has neither excelled at the continental championships nor qualified for the World Cup for both male and female teams.

Soccer at secondary school is the foundation of competitive and elite sports. World over researchers have been interested at this level since a good foundation will lead to excellent performance at higher levels. The present study therefore sought to study soccer at this level with a gender comparison on their levels of motivation per the dependent variables. Studies have shown gender inequality in sports management, participation and competition (Kateshumbwa, 2011; Kateshumbwa, et al, 2013) and this may be the case in soccer. However, it is important to note that men have had a longer history than female in competitive soccer. For instance, the male secondary school national soccer competitions were introduced in Kenya in 1971, while the female secondary school soccer competitions at national level were started in 1998 (KSSSA, 2015). This can partly explain the apparent prominence of male soccer than women in Kenya. The purpose of the present study was to investigate if there was any gender-based difference on motivation for competitive soccer among soccer players at secondary school level in order to seek ways of improving the sport for both categories.

The desire to participate competitively in soccer may be motivated by several factors ranging from physiological, social or psychological. Shank (2009) and Funk (2012) define motivation as an internal energy that directs behavior

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towards fulfillment of personal needs. According to several scholars, psychological influence to participation is critical as the players involved have to be prepared emotionally tough (Gill et al., 1996; Kondric et al., 2013; Rintaugu & Nteere, 2011). The driving force for competitive soccer can be the innate desire to achieve competence or success (Urda & Turner, 2005). These have been well documented as sports motivation factors of achievement, personal fulfillment, social interaction and improvement of personal image (Gill, Williams, Beaudoin & Martin, 1996; Urda & Turner, 2005) under the sports motivation scale. Personal fulfillment is usually associated with achievement of self-goals which lead to an individual's self-expression (Morris, et al, 1995 and 1996; Gill, et al., 1996; Gammage, Carron & Estarooks, 2001; Urda & Turner, 2005). Social interaction refers to the desire to identify with others through sport participation (Gammage, Carron & Estarooks, 2001). Personal image has to do with the impression one leaves on other decisions (Morris, Clayton, Power & Han, 1995 and 1996). On the other hand, achievement motivation is the desire to accomplish an objective or task to success (Harackiewicz, et al. 1997). However, the levels of motivation may vary among players in relation to demographic characteristics like age, gender, location among others (Gill, Williams, Beaudoin & Martin, 1996; Ndambiri, Mwisukha & Muniu, 2013). Thus, it is important to determine whether these motivational factors may be common among soccer players in secondary schools in Kenya and how they interact with the participants' demographic characteristics of gender as envisaged by the present study.

There have been several explanations for motivation in sports by several scholars giving rise to many theories that explain sports motivation and participation. Among these include competence motivation theory developed by Harter (1992), self-determination theory developed by Ryan and Deci (2000; 2002), goal setting theory developed by Locke and Latham (1990; 2006), achievement goal theory developed by Nicholls (1984;1989) and implicit theories of ability developed by Dweck (1999; 2002). These theories have had varying explanation for peoples' participation and motivation towards sports.

The current study was based on the competency Motivation Theory (CMT). The theory explains youth and children participation in sports on a wider scope compared to other motivational theories (Harter 1978, 1981). The theory is grounded on the perception that people have an inner desire to be competent. Therefore, an individual will attempt an activity so that he or she can master it. If it proves to be successful, then the person tends to be motivated to continue doing the activity. The theory specifically states that young people are driven into participating in activities in which they hope to achieve competence. The youth, for instance, may get attracted to a particular sporting activity because it makes them feel competent. Over time, studies (Klint &

Weiss, 2014; Roberts, Kleiber & Duda, 1981) targeting youth participation in sports have been based on this theory. According to Klint and Weiss (2014), the desire to enjoy the feelings of competence is part of the reasons that make children to participate in sport. Competency motivation theory explains well the interaction of achievement motivation/ success in youth sports based on the study variables of gender and objective. The objective of the study was to determine motivation (achievement/ success, personal fulfillment, social interaction and improvement of personal image) status presented by Urda and Turner (2005) of soccer players in secondary schools in relation to gender of the participants.

The findings of this study on motivational levels of secondary school soccer players may enable their coaches devise appropriate techniques of motivating them in training and competition. The study may enrich literature on the subject of psychological dimension in sport training and competition, as well as serve as reference material for researchers in the same field.

2. Methodology

The study adopted a cross-sectional analytical research design encompassing basics of descriptive and analytical elements. An adapted version of the Sports Motivation Scale (SMS) was used to measure the variables under study in relation to the variable of gender of the participants. The motivation variables included personal image, personal fulfillment, personal self-achievement and social achievement/interaction. Participants were boys and girls participating in the Kenya Secondary School Sports Association soccer tournament at zonal level in the preceding year. A total of 40 public schools, that is, 20 girls and 20 boys in the urban county and 51 schools from the rural county where 36 girls and 15 boys schools (total of 91 schools, 1001 soccer players) formed the target population of the study. The sample for the study consisted of 548 (272 female and 276 male), representing 54% of the target population. The details on are shown on Table 1.

An adapted version of the Sport Motivation Scale (SMS) that has been widely used in similar studies (Briere, et al, 1995) was used to collect data for the study. The original version of SMS was created in 1995 (Briere et al., 1995). It has been tested and confirmed to have a cronbach alpha of 0.97 (Pelletier et al., 1995). The questionnaire has 20 items which are categorized into four motivational factors of personal image (items 1-6), achievement (success) motivation (items 7-13), personal fulfillment (items 14-17) and social motivation (items 18-20). The scale is based on a five-point likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The test-retest was used to determine the reliability of the instrument which yielded a reliability index of 0.70 indicating a satisfactory measure.

Table 1. Counties, Gender, Target Population and Schools and Sample Size for Schools and Population on Motivation and Gender among Soccer Players

counties	Gender	Target schools	Target population (X 11)	Sample size schools (54%)	Sample size population
Nairobi	Girls	20	220	10	110
	Boys	20	220	10	110
	Sub-Totals	40	440	20	220
Kakamega	Girls	36	395	18	198
	Boys	15	165	8	88
	Sub-Totals	51	560	26	286
	Totals	91	1001	46	506

3. Findings

The present study analyzed motivation for competitive soccer under four main motivation factors of personal self-achievement (success), personal fulfillment, social interaction and personal image. Each of these four motives was analyzed against demographic variables of gender of the participants.

The study sought to find out if top soccer players in secondary schools in sampled Counties were motivated for participation in competitive soccer by the four variables on the SMS of personal image, personal self-achievement/success, personal fulfillment and social achievement/interaction in relation to gender. The results are shown on Tables 1.

Table 2. Paired t-test from SSP on Motivation in Relation to Gender of the Soccer Players

Motivation Factor	Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	Sig
Personal Image	Female	3.31	0.90	-1.56	0.12
	Male	3.43	0.87		
Personal Self-Achievement (Success)	Female	3.47	0.56	0.59	0.56
	Male	3.44	0.57		
Personal Fulfillment	Female	3.49	0.80	-4.10	0.001
	Male	3.75	0.71		
Social achievement/Interaction	Male	3.73	0.91	-1.79	0.07
	Female	3.86	0.84		

N = 548, df = 546, p < 0.05

The results presented on Table 2 show that the mean values of the responses were all above the midpoint, indicating a higher mean for both male and female players. This implies that soccer players were driven by the motivation for competitive soccer by all the four parameters of personal image, self-achievement, personal fulfillment and social interaction. From the table it appears that male soccer had higher means in the three aspects (personal image, personal fulfillment and social interaction) while the female had one high mean on self-achievement.

In relation to motivation element of personal image, male soccer players portrayed a higher mean (Mean = 3.43 ± 0.87)

than female soccer players (Mean = 3.31 ± 0.90). However, the paired t-test results (t = -1.56, df = 546, p < 0.12) revealed no significant difference in desire for personal image across gender. This indicates that regardless of gender, both male and female players had similar motivation for personal image towards playing competitive soccer.

With regard to the need for Personal Self Achievement (Success), female athletes had higher mean (mean= 3.47 ± 0.56) than the male athletes (mean= 3.44 ± 0.57). However, paired t-test (t = 0.59, df = 546, p > 0.56) showed no significant difference between male and female players on personal self-achievement.

Female soccer player had a lower mean (Mean = 3.49 ± 0.80) than the male players (Mean = 3.75 ± 0.71) on the motivation variable of personal fulfillment. To determine if the responses differed significantly across gender, paired t-test was computed and it revealed significant difference (t = -4.10, df = 546, p > 0.00) in the responses of the male and female soccer players in favor of male soccer players. Hence, the male soccer players were more motivated for competitive soccer by the need for personal fulfillment than the female players.

Results of motivation for social interaction showed that male soccer players were more motivated by this variable (Mean = 3.86 ± 0.84) than their female counterparts (Mean = 3.73 ± 0.91). However, the paired t-test results (t = -1.79, df = 546, p < 0.07) showed no significant difference between the male and female players.

4. Discussion

The present study analyzed motivational factors under four variables, namely personal image, self-achievement, personal fulfillment and social interaction. Based on the mean values that yielded from their responses, all the soccer players were highly motivated for competitive soccer by the four variables of motivation. Specifically, no statistically significant differences were observed between the two genders the other three variables of personal image, self-achievement and social interaction. However, statistical significant difference across gender was observed on the motivation variable of personal fulfillment.

The finding that the players' motivation by personal image,

self-achievement and social interaction did not significantly differ in relation to their gender can be attributed to the view that being youth, both male and female players' desire and ambition to excel in their undertakings did not differ to a large extent. Bandura (1997); Gaston-Gayles (2005); Mouratadis et. al (2008); Murcia et al (2010); Waldron and Dieser (2010) noted that youth are usually attracted to sports due to reasons that include fun, enjoyment, improving skills, learning, being with friends, success, winning and health. Weiss and Petlickhoff (2017) categorized major motives for participation of sports as competence (to learn and improve skill), affiliation, fitness, material gain and fun. The two support the current study on motivation as desire for respondents to acquire skills where improving skill and competence have been highlighted.

The findings of a study by Kondric, et al (2013) on the variable of motivation for personal image appear to concur with the findings of the current study; they found that students involved in Tennis in Selected European countries were motivated by the desire for social status (personal image). Motivation for personal image is portrayed here in the motives of popularity and social status. Similarly, Weiss and Petlickhoff (2017) analyzed various motives of participation in sports as affiliation (to make friends and be part of a team), fitness (to be physically active), material gain (allowances), recognition, competence (to learn and improve skills) and fun.

As the case with the findings of the current study, other researchers have reported similar outcomes on motivation for social interaction and sport participation. For example, Gathwe (2007) found the need of "being with friends" as one of the driving factors for secondary school students participation in swimming in Nairobi, Kenya. This is comprehended in a study by Gill *et al.*, (1996) where women were more motivated to participate in running, exercise, cardiac rehabilitation programmes and sports by the desire to socialize than men. This finding disagrees with the current study where differences across gender were found to be insignificant probably due to difference in geographical and cultural settings of the two studies. However, the findings by Kondric, et al (2013) are in agreement with this study on the revelation that students participate in sports due to motivation to make friends emphasizing the socialization aspect. Further, Amado *et al.*, (2015) reported on mean differences based on gender where male athletes perceived greater parental pressure than females. The study had suggested that it is necessary to decrease parental pressure towards their children in sport with the aim of making them more motivated and enjoy in order to promote positive benefits. This is unlike the current study that found no significant difference between male and female students. It has been established that socialization brings about social acceptable behaviors since it athletes to learn their strength and weaknesses which is necessary for team effort. It also allows hostile players to channel their aggressiveness in a useful way (Sherill, 1993).

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

From the findings of the study, it is concluded that both male and female players were highly motivated on the four elements of personal image, self-achievement, personal fulfillment and social interaction. However, there was a significant difference on the motivation basis of personal fulfillment in favor of the male players indicating a bias towards male participants on this factor. Thus, both male and female soccer players have a similar dimension in motivation for participation apart from personal fulfillment.

The study recommends that teachers, trainers and coaches handling soccer players at secondary school level should use various motivation techniques seek to maintain the high motivation among both the male and female players. Additionally, there is need to enhance female players' motivation towards personal fulfillment to match the one among the male players. Future studies should investigate on how teachers, trainers and coaches of secondary school players will acquire more knowledge in sports psychology to enable them build on the base of motivation and other psychological factors during training of soccer players at secondary school level.

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