



SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDENTS' MOTIVATION TO PARTICIPATE IN SPORTING ACTIVITIES IN GHANA

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Abstract:

COVID-19 disrupted education and school sports which resumed after the pandemic. This study explores motivational factors influencing college students' participation in sports after the pandemic with reference to gender. The study employed a rigorous descriptive methodology and simple random sampling, with four hundred (400) college student-athletes. Principal Component Factor Analysis (PCFA) identified distinct motivational factors driving student sports engagement. Mean calculations revealed the most influential factors promoting sports re-engagement. The results indicated intrinsic motivation as the foremost factor, followed by the facility and equipment factor. To determine if gender differences exist in relation to motivation to partake in sports, an independent sample t-test was used. Male students showed slightly higher intrinsic motivation and lower facility and equipment motivation than female students. Conversely, female students exhibited higher motivation regarding facilities and equipment, but greater amotivation and external regulation compared to males. It was recommended that promotion and intervention strategies consider barriers and tailor interventions to specific needs to reduce participants' limitations to sports participation.

Keywords: college, education, motivation, sports participation, situational

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1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic, which originated in December 2019, caused significant global disruptions, particularly in the field of education. The suspension of school sports and extracurricular activities were some of the repercussions that impacted students (Lee et al., 2021; Nolan & Zbaracki, 2023; Sayyd et al., 2021; Sharland et al., 2023; Shepherd & Mohohlwane, 2021).

The pandemic's restrictions, such as social distancing and facility closures, significantly reduced social interaction in sports settings, leading to a decline in motivation, as sports became more solitary for many students (Ammar et al., 2020). Individuals became distressed and were yearning for the camaraderie, social interactions, and fitness benefits that sports once provided (Fitzgerald et al., 2021). The above picture indicates a digression of students' interest in sports. Therefore, there is a need to examine how students reactivated their interests in sports after the pandemic.

Before the pandemic, students' motivation for sports stemmed from social interactions, physical fitness, and health benefits (Varela, 2011; Warner et al., 2019). The pandemic disrupted these motivations, causing frustration and reduced motivation among students (Opoku, 2022). Even though there were frustrations, parents stepped in to support their children's home-based training during lockdowns (Elliot et al., 2021). Despite these challenges, students remained hopeful. In the post-pandemic, when bans on sports and gatherings were lifted, educational institutions organized sporting events. Contrary to expectations, student participation in sports remained high, indicating continued motivation for physical fitness and social connections (Varela, 2011; Warner et al., 2019). On the other hand, intrinsic enjoyment, social opportunities, and relationships with friends and coaches also drove students' participation (Gould et al., 2006; Ryan & Deci, 2000). This shows that students have some level of motivation for sports which calls for attention.

Despite global evidence of student sports motivation, limited Ghanaian perspective literature exists. Opoku (2022) highlighted student disappointment, frustration, and demotivation during the COVID-19 era. While Sayyd et al. (2021) emphasized elements like enjoyment and success as motivators, Opoku (2022) presented evidence to the contrary, noting students' lack of interest in sports as a result of the pandemic. This shows diverse ideas when it comes to students' sports participation as a result of the pandemic. This notwithstanding, gender sports participation has also become an issue for discussion in recent times. It is reported that males show motivation to play sports, while females face barriers (Portela-Pino et al., 2020; Sabisto et al., 2019). To address this, it requires understanding how to increase students' participation despite gender disparities.

In Ghana, as in many other countries, students engage in sports for fitness, rewards, and enjoyment (Sayyd et al., 2021). However, the pandemic limited these sports opportunities exacerbating issues related to physical inactivity among students (Opoku, 2022). In this regard, this study aims to investigate what motivates students to actively

participate in sports despite concerns arising from the pandemic. It specifically also explores the factors influencing female participation, a known challenge. The research is significant for informing resilient and inspiring sports environments to promote student well-being and reignite their interest in sports. It provides a roadmap for post-pandemic sports re-engagement. The next section of the write-up will look at a brief literature review of the study. This will be followed by the methods adopted, results, discussion, and conclusion.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Students' Motivation to Participate in Sports

Recognizing the significant benefits of school sports events for both participants and society as a whole is becoming increasingly widespread (Castro-Sánchez et al., 2019). School sports provide a platform for students to learn essential life skills, such as friendship, teamwork, and mutual respect, ultimately contributing to their usefulness in society (Camiré & Kendellen, 2016; Nolte & Roux, 2023).

Beyond improving mental, social, and physical health, sports also enhance students' academic performance and their role as responsible members of society (Castro-Sánchez et al., 2019). To realize these achievements, students require motivation, which can be shaped by various sports motivational profiles, including access to fitness opportunities, suitable sports resources, and adequate supervision (Sayyd, 2021).

Examining students' motivation to engage in school activities, Feng et al. (2022) conducted a study evaluating key factors influencing the academic performance of medical students preparing for clinical practice. The study found that intrinsic motivation and identified regulation were the primary motivational profiles among medical students at different internship sites. However, external regulation was found to be a crucial factor affecting students' academic performance in the Chinese Clinical Medicine Level Test (CMLT). It has been suggested that improving the quality control of the clinical learning environment and strengthening medical administration could effectively ensure the quality of clinical medical education.

While Feng et al.'s (2022) work provides valuable insights into motivation, various authors have identified additional motivational elements relevant to our investigation. One such element is the significance of well-equipped and well-maintained sports facilities, as emphasized by Sayyd (2021) and Bolarinwa (2021).

Access to proper sports equipment, playing fields, and training facilities can significantly enhance the overall sports experience for students. According to Sayyd et al. (2021), sports programmes and sports facilities play a highly influential role in sports participation, with sports facilities positively supporting student use ($\beta = 0.265$, $t\text{-value} = 5.425$). However, sports programmes provided by universities have an even greater positive and significant effect on student participation ($\beta = 0.403$, $t\text{-value} = 6.024$). Notably, empirical evidence from a bootstrapping test confirmed that sports facilities and programmes were significant and positive predictors of student sports participation

(Sayyid et al., 2021). These findings align with previous studies by Black et al. (2019) and Bolarinwa (2021), who also emphasized the significant impact of sports facilities on students' participation and health improvement. This underscores the importance of adequate sports facilities and equipment, as insufficient or outdated facilities may hinder the development of school sports programmes. Schools with limited space or subpar facilities might struggle to accommodate diverse sporting activities, which can negatively affect student participation levels. Consequently, school administrators and other stakeholders must prioritize the provision of suitable and innovative sports facilities and programmes to enhance students' sports participation.

Exploring various factors affecting students' motivation to engage in sports, gender dynamics come into focus. A study by Portela-Pino et al. (2020) justified gender-based differences in sports participation. The study delved into adolescents' attitudes toward physical exercise and the relationship between obstacles and motivations for adopting physical exercise habits. It was noted that boys generally exhibit higher motivation for sports compared to girls, except in areas related to weight body image, and agility or flexibility, where females excel. However, men tend to have more motivators than women (Hickey & Mason, 2017). This disparity is attributed to women reporting more barriers to sports participation (Moschny et al., 2011; Sabiston et al., 2019). To encourage greater female participation in sports, addressing these barriers is imperative, as it can significantly enhance female involvement in sports activities.

To understand students' sports motivation, Self-Determination Theory is used (SDT). This theory guides our understanding of students' sports motivation. SDT outlines four motivations: intrinsic, internal regulation, external regulation, and amotivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Intrinsic motivation is the core, driven by pure enjoyment. External regulation involves tangible rewards, motivating students universally (Teixeira et al., 2012). Internal regulation is akin to intrinsic motivation, being interest-driven (Alexandris et al., 2002; Candela, 2014).

To apply SDT to sports, prioritize intrinsic motivation by making sports enjoyable and skill-focused (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Encouraging autonomy, competence, and positive relationships also promote participation (Gunasekare, 2016). In this respect, recognizing extrinsic motivators while emphasizing values and personal growth aids in creating a holistic sports environment to bolster student motivation and long-term participation.

The study addressed these research questions:

- 1) What motivational factors influence College of Education Students' involvement in sports in Ghana?
- 2) How does gender influence students' motivation in sports?

3. Material Methods

3.1 Study Design

The study employed a survey design of the descriptive type. While the goal of the survey design is to gather information, opinions, or feedback from respondents on specific

research questions in a standardized and organized manner, it provides a structured method for collecting data from a large number of respondents efficiently (Roy et al., 2016). It allows for the standardization of questions and response options, ensuring that all respondents are asked the same questions in the same way. This consistency helps reduce bias and ensures data reliability (McColl et al., 2001). In the study, participants were asked to answer the same questionnaire about the subject matter of students' motivation to participate in sports.

3.2. Participants

The participants for this study were College of Education Student-Athletes who took part in the 11th Biennial Colleges of Education Sports Festival in November 2022 in Kumasi, Ghana. This August Sports Festival aimed at unearthing sports talents at the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. A sample size of four hundred (400) respondents was used for the study. To get this size, a simple random sampling technique was used to select eighty (80) students from each of the five (5) zones consisting of NORTH, VOLTA, ASHBA, EGA, and CENWEST. According to Saunders et al. (2012) simple random sampling technique (sometimes called the "method of chance") involves selecting a smaller group of participants (the sample) from a larger group of participants (the population). This method uses random sampling so that everyone in the total population has an equal chance of being selected. The results of the research can be generalized due to the representativeness of this sampling technique with little significance of bias (Gravetter & Forzano, 2011). In all, the participants included 218 males and 182 females in the study.

College students in Ghana represent a diverse group in terms of age, background, and interests. They are at a stage where they have more autonomy and independence in their choices compared to secondary school students. This diversity makes them an interesting and dynamic population to study. College is a pivotal time when students transition from adolescence to adulthood. It is a period marked by increased freedom and responsibility. Understanding their sports participation during this transition can shed light on their evolving priorities and motivations.

Additionally, promoting physical activity and sports participation among college students is crucial for their overall health and well-being. It is a stage where habits are formed, and addressing any decline in sports engagement can have long-term benefits for their health. Finally, college students often face the challenge of balancing academic demands with extracurricular activities, including sports. Therefore, investigating their participation in sports can provide insights into how they manage these competing priorities.

3.3 Instrument

Structured questionnaires were adapted and used for the study. Specifically, questions concerning motivation were adapted from Feng et al. (2022) whereas questions related to sports facilities and equipment were also adapted from Bolarinwa (2021).

These questionnaires were used in the studies of motives to participate in sports by Feng et al. (2022) and Bolarinwa (2021) and showed high reliability of 0.73 and 0.89 respectively. The questionnaires were divided into three (3) parts of A, B, and C. Part A dealt with the demographic information of the participants. This information included; the gender, sports discipline, age, and academic level of the participants. Likewise, section B also got information about the research variable (motivation) involving questions such as; because I think sports activity is interesting.... while Section C looked at sports facilities and equipment such as; I play sports because my school has equipment like jerseys. The questionnaires contain 25 items ranging from "1" strongly disagree to "7" strongly agree with the exception of demographic information.

The structured questionnaire items were coded into SPSS version 26 and a principal component factor analysis (PCFA) was performed to group the items to demonstrate whether the items shared a common variance. Items that shared common variance were categorized as a single construct, while those that did not share common variance were removed. The items deleted were "because I feel I have to do it and because sport is something I have to do". The results of the factor analysis revealed five (5) components.

The factors were named; amotivation and external regulation ($\alpha = 0.78$), facilities and equipment ($\alpha = .77$), intrinsic motivation ($\alpha = .69$), good/pleasant feeling ($\alpha = 0.51$), and fun/equipment ($\alpha = .40$). The factors (good/pleasant feeling = 0.51) and (fun/equipment = 0.40) had low Cronbach's alpha and were rejected for further analysis. However, the remaining three factors were used for the final analysis. This decision was made based on the recognition made by Hair et al. (2017) who noted that variables with low factor loadings should be deleted. The overall reliability coefficient was found to be 0.78, which was high for a study among human participants (Vaske et al., 2017). Means, standard deviations, and alphas of all items and factors are displayed in Table 2.

3.4. Preliminary Testing of the Questionnaire

Although the questionnaires were modified, they were given to an expert in the field of motivation to participate in sports to check for grammatical problems and make necessary corrections. Similarly, for reliability, the instruments were pretested among 30 CENWEST student-athletes for an alpha value of .75. Athletes who were involved in the pre-test were not included in the main study because there could be repetition of responses that could affect the results of the study.

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

Prior to the period of data collection, a letter was sent to the Secretariat of the College of Education Sports Association (COESA) to seek permission and approval to talk to the student-athletes. Consent forms were given and signed by each participant. It was made clear to participants that their participation was entirely voluntary and that there was no financial compensation for doing so. After getting the approval, a captive audience whereby participants met at one place (competition dining hall) to answer the

questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered with the help of two research assistants. To ensure cooperation, the researchers explain the purpose of the study to the participants.

The participants were asked to participate in the study voluntarily and be free to stop answering the questionnaires at any point in time. Answering the questionnaires lasted for 20 minutes. Participants were thanked after the completion of the questionnaires.

3.6 Data Analysis

After collecting the data, the data were screened, coded, and entered into a computer using IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. The data screening was done by running simple frequencies and percentages to ensure that there were no missing or multiple values.

Both descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (independent sample t-test) were employed to analyse the data. The descriptive statistics comprising percentages, means and standard deviations were used to determine the demographics percentages and most potential motivators for student-athletes to participate in sports. An independent sample t-test was used to check gender variations concerning the different types of students' motivation to play sports.

4. Results

The study included 400 participants, with 54.5% being males and 45.5% being females. This gender distribution shows a slight majority of male participants. In the context of motivational factors, this distribution can be considered when interpreting the differences in motivation between male and female students.

Participants were categorized into different age groups. The largest age group consisted of students aged 18 to 22 (48% of participants), followed by those aged 23 to 27 (44.8%), followed by 3.8% from 28 to 32 with the remainder 3.0% aged 32 and above. None of the responses contained any missing data. Participants were engaged in various sports disciplines, with athletics (29.3%) and football (27.5%) being the most popular. Hand games such as; handball, netball, and volleyball, and a racket game such as; table tennis recorded 17.5%, 15.3%, 8.8%, and 1.8% respectively.

Participants were also distributed across different academic levels. Level 200 had the highest representation (36.8%), followed by level 300 (36.3%). Lower percentages of students were in level 400 and level 100 with percentages of 16.3% and 10.8 % respectively.

A summary of demographic information can be found in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variables		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	218	54.5
	Female	182	45.5
	Total	400	100
Sports discipline	Athletics	117	29.3
	Football(soccer)	110	27.5
	Handball	70	17.5
	Volleyball	35	8.8
	Netball	61	15.3
	Table Tennis	7	1.8
	Total	400	100
Age	18-22years	195	48.8
	23-27years	178	44.5
	28-32years	15	3.8
	Above 32years	12	3.0
	Total	400	100
Level	Level 100	43	10.8
	Level 200	147	36.8
	Level 300	135	36.3
	Level 400	65	16.3
	Total	400	100

4.1 Principal Component Factor Analysis (PCFA)

A principal component factor analysis (PCFA) was conducted to determine the validity of the variables used in the study and to further examine whether the items shared a common variance.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sample adequacy was 0.729, higher than the commonly accepted value of 0.600. Bartlett's test of sphericity indicated ($X^2 (210) = 3306.935, p < 0.001$). The commonalities of the items were higher than 0.500, confirming the sharing of common variance with the other items. The PCFA divided all items into five components except for two items that did not share variance with the other items. The total variance explained by the factors was found to be 69.4%. To determine the grouping of the items, the results from the rotated components matrix performed with varimax rotation were used and displayed in Table 2.

4.2 Summary of the Analysis of the Main Components of the Situational Motivation Questionnaire

Extraction methods: the main component factor. Rotation methods: Varimax Kaiser normalization (KMO = 0.729). The number of factors was determined by extracted eigenvalues > 1 .

Table 2: PCFA Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

Component						
Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	$\alpha = 0.78$
I don't know, I do not see what sporting brings me.	0.771					0.781
I do sports, but I am not sure it is a good thing to pursue.	0.761					
Because I do not have any choice.	0.751					
There may be good reasons to do sporting activities, but personally, I do not see any.	0.732					
I do sports activities but I am not sure if it is worth it.	0.681					
I am always permitted to use the sports facilities owned by my school.		0.764				0.777
Sports facilities outside my school premises are adequate for use.		0.738				
My school has available equipment such as jerseys for use.		0.721				
My physical education tutors and coaches instruct me to use the sports facilities in my school.		0.653				
Because I think that sporting activity is interesting.			0.608			0.692
By personal decision.			0.659			
Because I think sporting activity is good for me.			0.64			
Because I am doing sporting activity for my own good.			0.611			
Because I am supposed to do it.			0.689			
I feel good when doing it.						0.513
I think the sporting activity is pleasant.						
My school has appropriate sports facilities such as standard athletic oval and football fields to be used.					0.516	0.401
Because I believe that sports is important for me.					0.286	
Because sports is fun.					0.181	

The overall Cronbach's Alpha of the 21 items was 0.78. To determine the internal reliability of the scales, Cronbach Alpha reported the following for the five main factors; amotivation and external regulation ($\alpha = .781$), equipment and facilities ($\alpha = .777$), intrinsic motivation ($\alpha = .692$), good/pleasant feeling ($\alpha = .51$) and fun/equipment ($\alpha = .40$).

Table 3: Factors, Descriptive Statistics (Mean-M and Standard Deviation-SD) and Cronbach's Alpha- α

Factor	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cronbach Alpha- α
Amotivation / External Regulation	1	7	3.34	1.585	.781
Facility / Equipment	1	7	4.15	1.550	.777
Intrinsic Motivation	1	7	5.50	1.166	.692

From Table 3 above, and based on descriptive statistics, it could be observed that College of Education students in Ghana rate all the factors above 3.5 out of 7.0 except amotivation and external regulation. However, intrinsic motivation is the highest factor followed by facility and equipment. This indicates that, despite the restrictions, students are intrinsically motivated, and with the provision of sports facilities and equipment, they will be more motivated to play sports.

4.3 Motivation Based on Gender

With respect to gender, inferential statistics (independent sample t-test) were performed to determine a significant difference in motivation for sports. The results of the intrinsic motivation factor showed that $t(398, 1) = 2.430$, $p = 0.02$. That is, male ($M = 5.62$, $SD = 1.075$) and female ($M = 5.34$, $SD = 1.254$). This shows a statistical difference between the intrinsic motivation of male and female students. Compared to female students, male students were intrinsically motivated to play sports. Likewise, the facility and equipment factor revealed $t(398, 1) = -2.474$, $p = 0.01$. That is, male ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 1.587$) and female ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 1.489$). Therefore, there is a statistical variation between the facility and the equipment of the students to play sports. However, it is confirmed that female students are motivated by sports equipment and facilities compared to their male counterparts. With the amotivation and external regulation factor, $t(398.1) = -4.301$, $p = 0.01$. That is, male ($M = 3.03$, $SD = 1.496$) and female ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 1.616$). Therefore, there is a statistical difference between male and female students' amotivation and external regulation. Female students lack motivation to play sports but are encouraged when external factors are provided.

A summary of the independent t-test can be found in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Inferential Statistics (Independent Sample t-test)

	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	Degree of freedom	P
Amotivation / External Regulation					
Male	3.03	1.496	-4.301	398	0.01
Female	3.70	1.616			
Facility and Equipment					
Male	3.98	1.587	-2.474	398	0.01
Female	4.36	1.489			
Intrinsic Motivation					
Male	5.62	1.075	2.430	398	0.02
Female	5.34	1.254			

5. Discussion

The study intends to investigate the motivational factors and drivers influencing College of Education Students' involvement in sports after the pandemic. Motivation plays a pivotal role in determining students' commitment to sports participation. Consequently, understanding the various motivational profiles is essential. While the outbreak of COVID-19 restricted school sporting activities, students' motivation to play sports remains supreme as sports pose a lot of benefits to students. The results of the study unveiled that College of Education students in Ghana have provided ratings above 3.5 out of 7.0 for all the motivational factors considered in the study except amotivation factor. This indicates that, on average, students have some level of motivation and interest in playing sports.

From the results, the intrinsic motivation factor is rated the highest among the motivational factors. This suggests that students have a strong internal drive or personal interest in participating in sports despite the restrictions. This finding is somewhat consistent with the study by Feng et al. (2022). In a study by Feng et al. (2022) it was found that although external regulation is a crucial factor in influencing students to perform school activities, intrinsic motivation is the primary motivational profile among medical students in different internship sites. In a situation in which the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted school sporting activities, it is a positive sign that students are motivated from within to engage in sports activities to obtain its benefits. This behaviour exhibited by students of the College of Education in Ghana reflects the assertion of the Self-Determination Theory, which assumes that an intrinsic factor of motivation leads students to engage in sports (Alexandris et al., 2002; Gunasekare, 2016). For example, in a situation where students intrinsically participate in sports out of their own will and interest, rather than being driven by external incentives (Candela et al., 2014).

In sports participation, high motivation is widely accepted as a basic prerequisite for athletes to fulfill their potential, which can be influenced by sports equipment and facilities (Sayyd et al., 2021). Sports facilities and equipment are integral parts of the sports infrastructure that provide the necessary environment and tools for individuals to engage in various sports and physical activities. The presence of sports facilities (e.g.

soccer fields and volleyball courts) and equipment (e.g. jerseys and running shoes) can significantly motivate students to play sports for several reasons, including social engagement and physical fitness (Camiré & Kendellen, 2016). These resources allow students to explore their interests, improve their fitness, and experience the many benefits of sports and physical activity (Top et al., 2020). In addition to these benefits, students ranked facilities and equipment as the second highest-rated motivation factor. This suggests that students believe that access to better sports facilities and equipment can further increase their motivation. In accordance with the study of Bolarinwa (2021), it was supported that the availability of sports facilities and equipment in schools significantly motivates students to play sports. The results are further consistent with the idea that improving sports infrastructure can positively influence student involvement in sports (Sayyd et al., 2021).

Despite the positive effects, the factor of amotivation and external regulation were rated lower than other motivational factors, suggesting that students are less motivated by external factors or may experience some degree of demotivation. It is important to address motivation and extrinsic regulation to create an environment where students feel more intrinsically motivated to participate in sports. The observation that students are intrinsically motivated and value access to better facilities and equipment is valuable information for educational institutions and policymakers. This means that investing in sports facilities and equipment could be an effective strategy to increase student motivation and participation in sports. However, addressing amotivation and external regulation is also essential to ensure that students are motivated for the right reasons and have a positive sporting experience.

The results of the independent sample t-test indicate that there is a statistically significant difference in the motivation to play sports between male and female students. On average, male students seem to be slightly more intrinsically motivated to play sports than female students. This is consistent with the claim that men tend to have more motivators than women (Hicky & Mason, 2017). Similarly, Portela-Pino et al. (2020) also noted that boys generally show higher motivation for sports compared to girls, except in areas related to weight and body image. The discussed study shows that even if male students are slightly intrinsically motivated to play sports, female students are more motivated to use sports facilities and equipment. The results of an independent sample t-test for the factor of facility and equipment indicate that there is a statistically significant difference in motivation regarding facility and equipment between male and female students. Surprisingly, female students seem to be slightly more motivated in this regard compared to male students. However, it is important to note that the difference, while statistically significant, may not be practically significant because the mean scores are relatively close.

For the amotivation and external regulation factor, the results show a statistically significant difference in amotivation and external regulation between male and female students in sports. Female students report a higher level of amotivation and external regulation on average compared to male students. This means that female students may

experience more demotivation or external pressure in relation to sports participation. Consistent with other studies, the limited opportunities, lack of leadership opportunities, and development of masculine features that have been attributed to girls explain why women participate in sports to a much greater extent to a lower extent than men (Sabiston et al., 2019). Promotion and intervention strategies should take into account barriers and tailor interventions to specific needs to reduce participants' limitations to physical activity.

Considering all three motivational factors together, the study reveals that there are gender differences in various aspects of motivation related to sports participation. Male students appear to have slightly higher intrinsic motivation and lower equipment and facility-related motivation compared to female students. On the other hand, female students report higher motivation regarding facilities and equipment, but also a higher level of amotivation and external regulation compared to male students. This observation is consistent with a study that acknowledged that in sports participation, women face more barriers to sports participation compared to men (Moschny et al., 2011). According to Moschny and colleagues, the belief that there are no suitable opportunities for sports was a barrier with 15.6% for men, while the percentage of female participants was twice as high at 30.3%. The researchers further reported that lack of transportation concerned 29.0% of women, while it was the least important for male respondents with 7.1%.

6. Conclusion

The study looked at what motivates College of Education students to play sports after the pandemic, specifically focusing on gender differences. It found that while male students are motivated from within, female students are more influenced by having proper sports facilities and equipment. This challenges the idea that males are generally more motivated to play sports than females. The findings suggest that despite the pandemic's impact, students still have motivation for sports. Males are driven by personal motivation, while females are more influenced by access to sports facilities. To improve sports participation, we need to encourage intrinsic motivation and ensure good sports facilities and equipment for both genders.

The study's significance lies in challenging traditional beliefs about gender-based sports motivation, showing that both male and female students are motivated differently in sports. It also highlights that despite the challenges of the pandemic, students maintain a level of interest in sports. Understanding the roles of intrinsic motivation and access to proper sports facilities and equipment is crucial. These findings can shape future strategies to support and encourage sports participation among students of all genders.

However, the study has limitations. It only considered views from student-athletes, excluding non-athletes. In this light, the findings cannot be extrapolated, although the study provides insight into the views of college students on what motivates them to play sports. Future research should involve both groups using mixed methods to have extensive views on the subject matter. Also, it did not explore broader factors like

socioeconomic status, culture, or religion, which might affect sports motivation. Future studies should consider these factors for a better understanding of the area. Addressing these limitations in future research is crucial to developing a more inclusive and comprehensive understanding of sports motivation among students.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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