



The motivational factors of CrossFit

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Introduction

The reasons that a person chooses to begin and continue an exercise program are often unnoticed. Many facilities only ask enough questions to get the individual to sign up without actually trying to change behaviors and improve health. Some programs, however, seem to change behavior and offer motivators that cause participants to continue the programs on their own. CrossFit is an example of such a program. CrossFit is a program that appeals to both men and women by allowing participants the opportunity to enter into the Action phase of the Transtheoretical Model. The breakdown in motivation to continue CrossFit likely occurs within the Action phase of this model. Furthermore, the exercise model itself appeals to both genders by offering the social aspect to appeal to women and the high-intensity and competitions to appeal to men. This is likely the reasons that both genders continue with the program. Additionally, real testing of the progress of exercise is needed as both genders typically perceive their current physical activity is greater than it actually is (Dishman, Thom, Rooks, Motl, et. al, 2009). However, the real issue lies within motivation of genders regarding exercise. According to Li (1999), females have a higher level of intrinsic motivation and self-determination while males tend to be more externally motivated. Perhaps this is why exercise testing often is goal driven to move from one stage to the next successfully. CrossFit attempts to address this specific issue through individual personal records, competition, and record keeping.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this investigation is to evaluate the limiting motivating factors that surround the decision making process of deciding whether to maintain or quit a CrossFit program..

Methods

Participants were recruited from a local CrossFit facility in San Angelo, TX. There were 136 potential participants for the survey with only 40 responding to the survey making a 29.4% response rate. Participants varied greatly in age with 12.5% being age 18-25, 52.5% were age 26-35, 27.5% were age 36-45, 5% were age 46-55, and 2.5% were age 56 or older. The response rate of males and females was almost evenly distributed at 55% being male and 45% being female. There were four ethnicities represented by the survey: 77.5% Caucasian, 17.5% Hispanic/Latino, 2.5% Black/African American, and 2.5% American Indian/Alaskan Native. Furthermore 67.5% of participants reported being married, 9% reported having never been married, 5% reported having a significant other, and 2.5% reported separation and divorce. Additionally, 57.5% of participants had children still living at home.

Results

Out of 40 participants, only 6 respondents no longer attended CrossFit at the time of the survey. Results were evenly distributed into categories of physical activities that the six respondents enjoyed doing with no respondents answering that they did not like working out. Only 1 respondent reported to having stopped CrossFit after the first month while the other 5 reported there not being a motivational issue that caused their discontinuation. Fifty-percent of those that discontinued CrossFit only joined to get into better shape and/or lose weight. None of the respondents that discontinued CrossFit had recurring injuries that caused them to quit. However, 50% of this same group reported preferring to work out alone. An overwhelming 82.5% of all respondents reported seeing a positive change in their body while only 2.5% reported no change. All respondents reported that CrossFit motivated them to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Only one respondent reported not enjoying the atmosphere of a CrossFit class. The respondents were pretty split about the affordability of the class itself with 40% disagreeing on affordability. All respondents felt their instructor cared about them as an individual and felt their instructor was competent with instruction.

Conclusions

The overall design of the CrossFit program does seem to meet the needs of both genders with it being social and goal-oriented to meet the needs of the females and competitive and task-oriented to meet the needs of the male participants. Additionally, CrossFit provides a skills training prior to full participation to instruct participants on correct lifting procedures to help reduce the incidence of injury (Glassman, 2011). Although the prevalence of injuries for CrossFit has been seemingly high, injury was not a factor limiting participation in this study (Hak, Hodzovic, & Hickey, 2013).

However, this does not mean that the CrossFit design is perfect. The sample size for this survey was small and limited to one facility. Furthermore, the respondents that no longer participate in CrossFit were grossly underrepresented. A larger study would need to be done to draw better conclusions regarding the motivational limitations of the CrossFit design. It would be interesting to see why individuals discontinue CrossFit participation as well as how many individuals that participate in CrossFit do so because they miss team sports and CrossFit gives them an opportunity to compete.

Figure 2

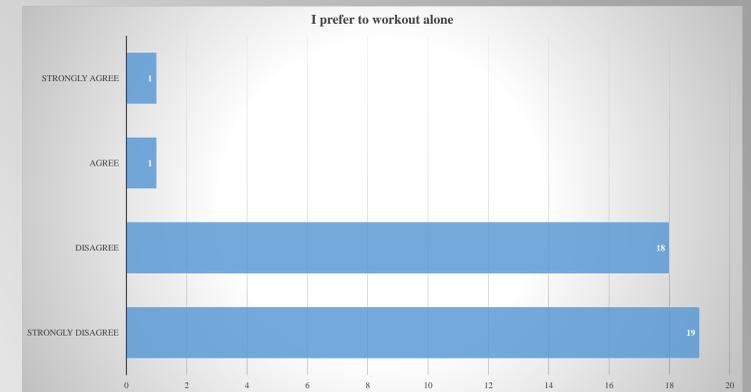


Figure 3

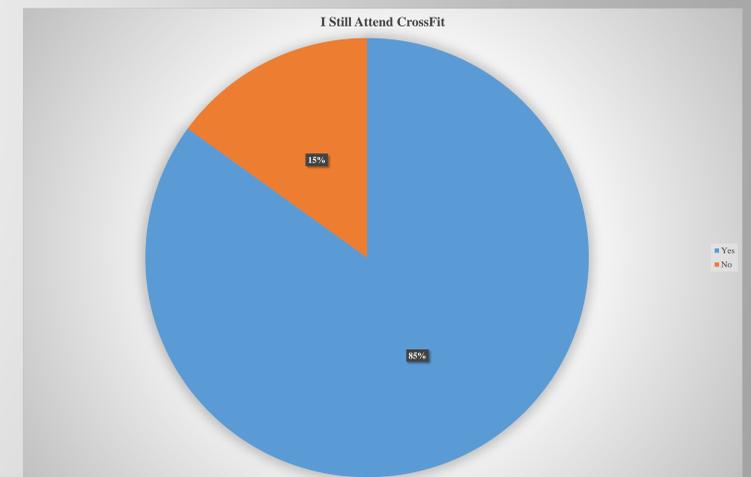


Figure 4

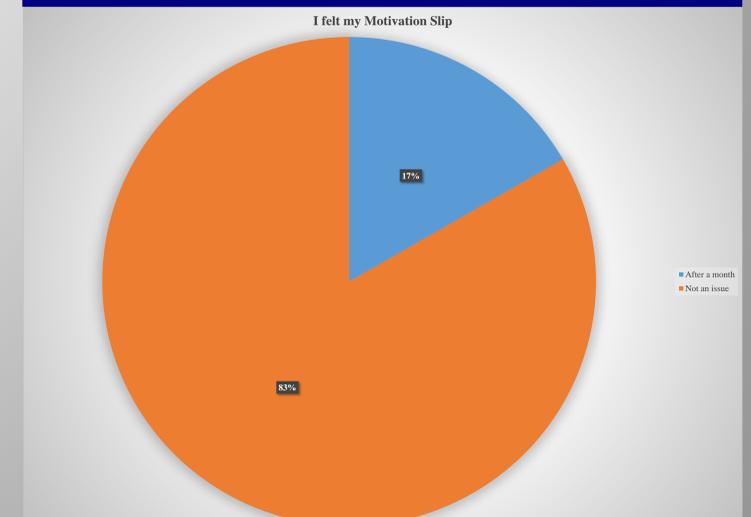


Figure 1

