

## Influence of parents' physical activity on the level of physical activity of family members on example of the 14th Ethiopian great running competitions

Dr. Biruk Hundito

*Sports Managements and Leadership, Wachemo University, College of Natural and Computational Sciences Department of sports sciences, Ethiopian*

### \*Corresponding Author

Dr. Biruk Hundito, Ass. Prof. in Sports Managements and Leadership, Wachemo University, College of Natural and Computational Sciences Department of sports sciences, Ethiopian.

Submitted:29 Nov 2022;Accepted:26 Dec 2022;Published:09 Jan 2023

**Citation:** Dr. Biruk Hundito (2022), Influence of parents' physical activity on the level of physical activity of family members on example of the 14th Ethiopian great running competitions, Adv ment yoga and phisiotherapy, 1(1) 01-05.

### Abstract

*Involvement in physical activity depends on various factors. Great importance is given to the influence of the family and other environments surrounding the man. Family creates an appropriate educational atmosphere directing human on specific actions. In undertaking research on the running events participants, it was decided to see how physically active parents affect the activity of other members of the family. In this work the method of diagnostic survey using a questionnaire was used. The participants of the running events gathered in the 14th Ethiopian great running in the year 2014 were analyzed, however, results only from those who have a family with children were used. Research has shown that the participation of one of the family members in the running events motivate other family members to take an interest in physical activity. Family welcomes the interest in running one of its members. This is reflected in the fact that they are trying to support, admire, and enjoy the runner's success. What is more, running is a frequent topic of conversations at home or meeting with friends. Respondents also have a photographic documentation of their participations in running events. This is also an element that encourages to physical activity not only family, but also friends and acquaintances.*

**Key Words:** Physical Activity, Family, Children

### Introduction

In recent years a lot of negative phenomena related to participation of children and young people in physical activity are observed. Particularly disturbing is the fact that non-participation in physical education classes is increasing. In recent years, condition of sport and recreation facilities is improving as well as the level of knowledge of teachers educated at universities. There is an increase in the possibilities of attracting young people to physical activity by increasing diversity, and knowledge about the health and educational benefits of getting involved in sport is growing. Nevertheless, we cannot take advantage of all these achievements and greater draw children and young people attention to this phenomenon and practical involvement.

A large role in changing young people's attitudes to exercise can play in family and school, and especially the physical education teacher co-operation with parents. The role of the teacher is to present the student the unlimited possibilities and use of various forms of physical activity that can be used throughout life. Moving on the ground his family free time positive behaviors learned at school is the responsibility of the parents' former students. The role of the family cannot be here replaced by other institutions. The research undertaken in the field of physical activity in family generally concerns the impact of parents' physical activi-

ty on children physical activity.

It is emphasized that the more active parents are their children have a better chance of a similar lifestyle in the future Drabik [1995], Bois & Sarrazin [2006], Pawlak [1998], Dempsey, Kimiecik & Horn [1993]. It is also stressed that the family is the basic educational environment that cannot be replaced by any institutions [Wolańska, 1994]. Although parents with older children can lose their parental authority to a teacher or a peer group, patterns of spending free time learned from the family home are permanent.

Another problem that occurs much less frequently in the study of the family is the problem of the impact of children's physical activity on physical activity in family. This applies mainly to families with young children. This phenomenon is described in the work of Staniszewski [2007], Iannotti [2005], Piech [2004, 2011], Inta Bula-Biteniece [2011], and Bironiense [2012]. In these studies, it is clear that the child especially in preschool can be a great animator of physical activity in the family. However, it is still a little studied phenomenon. In times of crisis there is a need for family studies of physical activity in the family, because as mentioned by the American Association for Leisure and Recreation, "the family that plays together is permanent."

Aim of the work and research questions:

The objectives of this study were participation in street racing gathered in the 14th Ethiopian great running. It was decided to examine whether it is a correct offer that meets the expectations of the participants and that motivates the rest of the family to undertake physical activity.

The overall objective of the work prompts to put forward the following research questions:

1. What were the motives of practicing running and taking part in running competitions?
2. How other family members refer to the interest of the runner?
3. Do participation in running events and practicing running motivates other family members to engage in physical activity?
4. What brings to life of the respondents practicing running and participating in running competitions?

### Material and methods

In this work the method of diagnostic survey using a questionnaire was used. The participants of running events gathered in the 14th Ethiopian great running in the year 2014 were analyzed, however, only those who have a family with children. The questionnaire that was used in the study contains 20 questions, including 10 additional questions. The questionnaire was distributed at the time of entry to the list of participants starting in the

race. Time for a peaceful and anonymous questionnaire completion at home was provided. Collection of the questionnaires occurred during the 14th Ethiopian great running event. Studies included a total of 100 people, from all participants of 40,000 runner by using simple random sampling (lottary0 method. The Ethiopian great running is a round of several running competitions at distances from 10 km to the half marathon. For research this Ethiopian great running was selected because in addition to the competitions for adults' races over shorter distances for children are also included. This created an opportunity to participate in the running for both parents and their children. Individuals who participated in the study already have large training experience, and for many years participated in running events.

### Results

Among those who have encouraged respondents to run were the parents and teachers of physical education. But the greatest impact had colleagues and friends (table. 1) Respondents in large part began to practice this form of physical activity after school so the high position of colleagues and friends is not surprising. During childhood the greatest impact on forming leisure activities results from family, followed by school and in the subsequent years family and school losing its" influence and authority to the individual's peer group.

**Table 1: People encouraging individuals to practice running**

Variables	Percentage (%)
parents	5%
Physical Education teacher	28%
other teachers	6%
mass media	11%
friends	31%
others	19%

Highly important is the fact that as many as 62% of respondents have a sports background. Frequently practiced disciplines are running and some physical activities. As it is seen formation of sporting habits in childhood has an impact on leisure behavior in

later years. According to the survey 29% of respondents take an active part in events from 5 to 10 years, and 23% of respondents over 10 years [table 2]

**Table 2: The period during which the subjects participated in running events**

Variables	Percentage (%)
1-5 years	21%
5-10 years	29%
10-20 years	23%
20-30 years	12%
30-40 years	9%
40-50 years	6%

Running events in the Ethiopian great running already have a tradition and their organization is improving also the number of participants from year to year increases. As a result more and

more events are sponsored and adapted to the needs of the athletes, which is why the majority of respondents take part in them more than 10 times a year.(table3)

**Table 3: The period during which the subjects participated in running events**

Variables	Percentage (%)
1-3 times a year	59%
4-6 times a year	14%
7-10 times a year	15%
more than 10 times a year	12%
30-40 years	9%
40-50 years	6%

Running races participants very often benefit from help and advice on training from his fellow runners. In addition, they also

derive a lot of information of the numerous guides and books that help them prepare for the event( table 4)

**Table 4: Sources of information on training methods**

	Percentage (%)
fellow runners	35%
reading magazines and books	14%
mass media	29%
I don't take advice	14%
coach	12%
Other	6%
	4%

In conducting the study it was decided to see how participating in the Ethiopian great running events affects the activity of family members, especially their children. The research shows that some members of the surveyed family especially children currently practiced physical activity (65%). The main physical activity disciplines that the male children were engaged in are physical activities and running. Female children were primarily

engaged in running and gymnasium activates as their choice for physical activity. Moreover, as the majority of respondents declared family members also go with them to the running events (67%). Most frequently they leave with their children. It can be said that the participation of fathers or mothers increases the willingness to participate in such( table 5)

**Table 5: Participation of family members in joined trips to running events**

Variables	Percentage (%)
wife/husband	32%
children	54%
siblings	14%

However, looking at active participation in running events, it is seen that 38% of family members actively participate in these events (Tab. 6). The others are spectators.

**Table 6: Participation in running events of family members of surveyed runners**

Form of participation	Number of participants	Percentage (%)
Active participation	38	38%
Passive participation	62	62%

According to respondents, the family very positively relates to their love of running [91%]. They are obviously aware of the benefits that come from running. This is shown by the fact that they support them, and experience with them their successes and failures, and above all, they are support, which they can always count on.

Practicing running makes respondents admired, supported and

recognized by their friends; respondents seem to be very ambitious individuals who are able to overcome any adversity. Spouses, children and closest friends enjoy every gained award, cheer, support, and are frequently during the competition with them.

Running becomes an inseparable theme in the life of a runner; this is why the topic of running is discussed, both at home and during meetings with friends [table. 7].

**Table 7: The frequency of talking about running**

Variables	Percentage (%)
every day	22%
once a week	16%
during family meetings	38%
seldom	6%
hardly ever	12%
in other circumstances	6%

Family very warmly welcomes the running of one of the family members. In addition, this can be seen often by all members of the family who also take part in such events. In this way the family has a chance to spend a lot of time with each other and integrate.

Motives of taking part in physical activity are also interesting. In addition to health, which turned out to be the main motive a significant role also had: the rivalry with others, improving their performance, test their abilities, desire to win prizes, willingness to travel, make new acquaintance

**Table 8: The most common reasons for taking part in the running events**

Variables	Percentage (%)
competition	17%
checking myself	22%
travelling	3%
better results	17%
awards	7%
making new friends	5%
others	6%
health	23%

Participants in running events reported that they gained a lot from running. Some people quickly and easily gain new acquaintance thus enlarging the circle of his friends and often stay friends for entire life. Moreover, many people learn about beautiful Ethiopian regions, which have interesting culture and natural beauty.

A lot of positive memories come from a number of running event pictures that are stored in family albums. According to research, 59% of respondents have such a photographic documentation at home. Photos are preserved for posterity and friends to be able to present their achievements in the future.

### Discussion

Although there are voices that undermine the role of family in the education for instance Harris [1998], who say that everything that parents provide for the formation of a child's personality are genes, and the peer group completes the rest, but most scientists assigns family a leading role in this field. It was observed that children whose parents are active are more likely to an active lifestyle. They were six times more active than children of inactive parents. If mothers were only active then their children were twice more active than in families where the mothers were inactive. In the case of father's activity relationship was even greater children were three and a half times more active in the families of active fathers [Moore, et al., 1991]. The results show how important the issue is to provide leisure patterns from parents to children. This creates proper educational situations, builds parents authority in the eyes of children and integrates family. This should be taken into account when creating a concept for promo-

tion of physical activity at different levels. The family should be regarded as an essential part of this system. This is an important issue because as Sas-Nowosielski [2009] research shows parents are not perceived by the surveyed young people as individuals leading an active lifestyle, do not take with them the exercise and give it a marginal place in family activities. Family education in this regard may stop this negative process. According to Sallis and Pate [2001], the stronger relationship between physical activity of parents and children can be expected when parents will not only encourage children to movement but will regularly take part in it together with the child.

### Conclusions

1. The participation of one of the family members in the running events motivates other family members to take an interest in physical activity. This is reflected both in the joint running trips to events as spectators as well as the active participation in the events [67% of family members go to event and 38% actively participate in them]. This fact should be used for creating systems encouraging people to exercise.
2. Family welcomes the interest in running of one its members. This is reflected in the fact that they are trying to support, admire, and enjoy their successes. Running is a frequent topic of conversations at home or meeting with friends. It is also an element that encourages physical activity not only family, but also friends and acquaintances. Respondents also have a photographic documentation of their participations in running events.
3. Respondents point out that their interest in running arouses a positive public perception. Acquaintances and friends admire

them, and are keenly interested in their achievements. This is also important to promote an active lifestyle.

4. An interesting and important is the fact that the participants of events do not focus only on running, but they do appreciate that through running they can visit an interesting region and they can make new friends. Cognitive element provides the additional value which physical activity gives the respondents. Such values should be encouraged at different stages of education. It is also important for family recreation and may encourage other family members to be active.

5. The element of competition which the participants emphasized is worth noting, although health was the most important, but the competition, improving the results and the desire to win prizes also has many supporters. It seems that it is necessary to create more similar situation when the participation is more important than excessive desire to sport. This may encourage more people to participate, those who, because of lower abilities are not participating in the events for fear of losing.

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