

# Climate and Motivation for Women Athletes in Palestine

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that motivate women athletes to participate in sport in Palestine and the motivational climate created by coaches and parents. Additionally, participants' commitment to sport was investigated as well as the social constraints that Palestinian women athletes face. Participants ( $n = 107$ ) included women athletes who were members of the following sport federations: soccer, volleyball, basketball, table tennis, and track and field. The athletes were asked to complete the following surveys: 1) Sport Motivation Scale, 2) the Perceived Motivational Climate in Sport Questionnaire-2, 3) the Parent-Initiated Motivational Climate Questionnaire, and, 4) the Sport Commitment Model Scale. T-test and multiple regression analysis were utilized between the variables in the study as well as descriptive statistics. The results indicated women athletes in Palestine reported more intrinsic motivation to play sport than extrinsic motivation. Also, motivational climate created by the coach was the only factor to predict women's motivation to play their sport. Finally, women athletes in Palestine are highly committed to their sport.

*Key words:* sport, women athletes, motivation

## Introduction

One of the most popular approaches to examining motivation in sport is self-determination theory (SDT) which suggests that behavior can be intrinsically motivated, extrinsically motivated, or that amotivation can exist (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci 2000a). Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in an activity purely for the pleasure and satisfaction derived from doing the activity (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Researchers found by encouraging and fostering intrinsic motivation in sport teams, a more positive social and task cohesion among the team can be created (Halbrook, Blom, Hurley, Bell & Holden, 2012). Therefore, it is critical to clearly understand the type of motivation that the players hold, particularly in reference to gender. Researchers suggested that women athletes compared to men athletes were more likely to participate in any sport activity for the intrinsic rewards (Sarrazin, Vallerand, Guillet, Pelletier & Cury, 2002).

Previous research has identified three types of intrinsic motivation: intrinsic motivation to know, intrinsic motivation toward accomplishments, and intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation (Pelletier et al., 1995). Intrinsic motivation to know implies engaging in activities for the pleasure and the satisfaction one experiences while learning, exploring, or trying to understand something new. Intrinsic motivation toward accomplishments can be defined as engaging in an activity for the pleasure and satisfaction experienced when one attempts to excel or create something. Finally, intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation operates

when one is engaged in an activity for the fun or the experience of stimulating sensation derived from one's engagement in the activity (Pelletier et al., 1995).

Extrinsic motivation pertains to a wide variety of behaviors people engage in as a means to attain some separable outcome (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Researchers have proposed different types of extrinsic motivation can be ordered along a self-determination continuum (Ryan, Connell, & Grolnick, 1992). The third dimension of self-determination theory is amotivation, which takes place when contingencies are perceived between the behavior and their outcomes. The individual is not intrinsically or extrinsically motivated but only feels incompetence and loss of control (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000).

The motivation for participating in sport and striving for improvement is likely to vary considerably from person to person (Montague, 2008). Pederson (2002) suggested that men and women had a similar pattern of sport motives and they participated in sport mainly for intrinsic reasons. Further, the type of motivational factors "intrinsic or extrinsic" depends upon the personal characteristic of the participants as well as the type and amount of sport participation and whether this sport participation is casual or intense, individual or group, coerced or chosen (Pedersen, 2002).

Fortier and associates examined the relationship of competitive and recreation sport structures and gender to athlete sport motivation (Fortier, Vallerand, Briere, & Provencher, 1995). Using a sample of 399 French-Canadian athletes (collegiate: 220; recreational: 179), the authors found the competitive athletes showed less intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation and less intrinsic motivation to accomplish than recreational athletes, while exhibiting more identified regulation and more amotivation than recreational athletes. The authors explained this finding due to the increased pressure to win experienced by the competitive athletes. Fortier et al. (1995) also found women athletes were more intrinsically motivated to accomplish and exhibited more identified regulation than men athletes, while displaying less external regulation and less amotivation than men athletes. These results are similar to those reported previously regarding extrinsic motivation (Nunez, Martin-Albo, Navarro, & Gonzalez, 2006; Vallerand &

Bissonnette, 1992). However, no statistically significant sex differences related to intrinsic motivation were found by Nunez et al. (2006). The authors explained these differences due to several factors that have affected motivation (e.g., cultural differences, socioeconomic status, and age).

A similar study to Fortier et al. (1995) examined the relationship between motivation and elite performance using 98 ( $M = 63$ ;  $F = 35$ ) Bulgarian athletes (Chantal, Guay, Dobрева-Martinova, & Vallerand, 1996). The participants' athletic performances in national and international events over the prior two years were documented and compared. The results indicated that, in comparison with less successful athletes, title and medal holders displayed higher levels of non-self-determined extrinsic motivation and higher levels

of amotivation. Furthermore, the motivation of women athletes was more strongly characterized by intrinsic motivation when compared to their men equivalents.

Additional factors, including the motivational climate created by parents and coaches, can affect an athlete's intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Motivational climate is the goal structure of the situation perceived by the athletes and is affected by significant adults such as parents and coaches. It reflects the significant features of an environment that create a task or ego involving climate (Ames & Archer, 1988). According to Waldron and Krane (2005) sport psychology researchers have been interested in how the actions of coaches and parents, such as their use of rewards, punishments, and feedback, can affect a motivational climate. For example, a motivational climate created by parents may affect children's perceptions about how their mothers and fathers viewed the importance of learning new physical activities (Papaioannou, 1992). Further, parental pressure to participate in sport has been shown to negatively affect their children's enjoyment of sport (White, Duda, & Hart, 1992).

Although research suggests that motivational climate created by parents and coaches plays a role in an athlete's motivation, sport commitment is another important variable in why an athlete participates in sport. Sport commitment is defined as a psychological state representing the desire to resolve or continue sport participation (Scanlan, Carpenter, Schmidt, Simons, & Keeler, 1993a). Zahariadis, Tsozbatzoudis and Alesandris (2006) found that there is a positive relation between self-determination and sport commitment as self-determination is encouraging of sport commitment, whereas low self-determination decreases sport commitment. Therefore, an athlete's sport commitment is a function of motivation. Furthermore, a number of researchers have recently turned to the Sport Commitment Model Scale (SCMS) to understand athletes' desire and determination to continue participation. The SCMS was developed by Scanlan and associates, to examine the reasons for individuals to continue participation in sports (Scanlan, Simons, Carpenter, Schmidt & Keeler, 1993b). The 14-item SCMS measures sport commitment, sport enjoyment, social constraints and involvement opportunities (Scanlan et al., 1993b). Sport commitment has been defined as a psychological construct representing the desire and resolve to continue sport participation. Sport enjoyment is defined as a positive affective response to the sport experience that reflects generalized feelings such as pleasure, liking, and fun. Social constraints are the social expectations or norms that create feelings of obligation to remain in the activity. Involvement opportunities are valued opportunities that are present only through continued involvement (Scanlan et al., 1993a).

### **Women's Sport in Palestine**

Between 1948 and 1967, women's sports clubs did not exist; therefore, women in the Middle East, particularly Palestine, could only practice sport in elementary, preparatory, and high schools. In the early 1970s, some sports clubs such as the YMCA in Jerusalem and the Orthodoxy Club of Beit-Jala, established women's basketball and table tennis sport teams (Younes, 1992). At that time Palestinian community colleges, which offered associate degrees, also started to set up sport recreational activities for women. In

1974, the first events for women in college, table tennis and semi-marathon, were organized. Later in the 1970s, many Palestinian community colleges were converted into universities and began offering women's teams in basketball, volleyball, table tennis, and track and field. As a result, more sports clubs established women's teams. The first official tournament for women was in basketball and was organized by the Palestinian Sports Club Union in 1990 (Younes, 1992). Consequently, women athletes started to participate in regional and international sport events. In addition, women athletes with special needs participated in regional and international Paralympics sport events (Younes, 1992).

In 1994, many sport federations in Palestine were recognized by their respective international federations, and thus, women athletes' participation abroad became more frequent and organized (Ministry of Youth and Sport, 2003). As a result, the Ministry of Youth and Sport in Palestine created a strategic plan in 1995. This plan has succeeded in co-operating with the federations of different sports to establish women's teams within most sport federations, including the Football Federation (Al-Yaziji, 2002). As a result, there are now women national teams in Palestine for basketball, tennis, handball, karate, taekwondo, fencing and athletics (Al-Yaziji, 2002).

There are obstacles facing women in sport in Palestine. For example, the lack of financial support to assist in carrying out sports activities (BZU, 2004; El-Masri, 2010) and supporting sport clubs as well as the lack of a wide base of specialized women physical education teachers in schools are considered the main obstacles for women sport in Palestine (BZU, 2004). According to Younes (2004) school curriculum offers only one physical education class of 45 minutes per week, which is not sufficient for effective sport participation. However, while boys have alternatives in terms of practicing sport in clubs, girls do not.

Another obstacle facing women's sports in Palestine is the resistance, which comes from a combination of conservative social traditions and religious fundamentalism which varies from one city to another (Montague, 2008). For example, the majority of people in the conservative and religious society in Palestine still views women's football as something of an aberration. According to Montague (2008), one coach explained how difficult it is to be a coach for girls in a conservative society like Palestine. The coach also added some cities are very conservative and totally off-limits for recruitment.

The Palestinian society is very conservative, with religion and family having a great impact on women's sport participation. Walseth and Fasting (2003) found the different interpretations of Islam greatly affect, whether directly or indirectly, the ways women participate in sport in Egypt. The same could be applied to the Palestinian society due to the similarity between the two countries in term of religion and culture. Moreover, parents also have great influence on their daughters' involvement in sport. Some parents are noticeably culturally sensitive to sport and prefer their daughters to spend their free time at home (Cortis & Muir, 2007). Furthermore, there are certain cultural and religious requirements that must be fulfilled in order for the majority of women to play sport in Palestine. These requirements consist of dress code (i.e., accommodating the different sports dress rules to Muslim women's dress codes), family expectation and responsibilities (i.e.,

permitting families members to attend their daughters training and activities), and facilities used only by women (i.e., planning in the future to have facilities that are only used by women) (Cortis & Muir, 2007).

Finally, the movement restrictions between cities in Palestine make it impossible for the sport teams to practice together (Montague, 2008; El-Masri, 2010). Thus, the players travel to another Middle Eastern country like Egypt to meet for practice. Additionally, the ring of the checkpoints that surrounds the city of Bethlehem in Palestine prevents the players from practicing on a grass pitch which is only 10 miles away from the city and instead they practice on a nearby concrete court (Montague, 2008).

### **The Significance of the Study**

Women in Palestine face many obstacles to participate in sport from their parents and the society. These obstacles vary from one city to another in West Bank, Palestine. Besides, women in professional leagues (federations) face gender bias in their participation in sport. Despite that, there are women athletes in the Palestinian sport federations who were able to face all these obstacles and have the motivation to continue their participation in sport. Few studies address women sport in Palestine (Younes, 2004; Al-Masri, 2008). When examining the motivational climate for women athletes in sport federations in Palestine, there is almost no research (Ministry of Youth and Sport, 2003). With this gap in research, it is understandable why the obstacles are still present, and why women's sport in Palestine has progressed slowly. However, by understanding the different kinds of motivation women athletes experience and the obstacles they are facing, perhaps then more opportunities for empowering women to be athletes should be afforded to them. The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that motivate women to participate in sport on a professional level in Palestine; that is, whether they are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. A secondary aim of this study was to examine if the motivational climate created by coaches and parents affected women athletes' motivation to play sport on a professional level. The third aim was to investigate if there was a difference in commitment between the athletes from the north and south of West Bank, Palestine.

### **Method**

#### **Participants**

A total of 107 women athletes from the following sport federations took part in this study: 1) soccer, 2) volleyball, 3) basketball, 4) table tennis, 5) swimming, and 6) track and field. Participants ranged from 10 to 25 years of age. The majority (63%) of the sample was from the south of Palestine and the remainder was from the north.

#### **Instrumentation Description**

The Climate and Motivation for Palestinian Women's Athletes survey has four subscales: 1) Sport Motivation Scale, 2) the Perceived Motivational Climate in Sport Questionnaire-2, 3) the Parent-Initiated Motivational Climate Questionnaire, and, 4) the Sport Commitment Model Scale.

The Sport Motivation Scale (SMS) was utilized to assess various components of intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation,

and amotivation toward sport (Pelletier et al., 1995). The SMS is a 28- item questionnaire containing seven subscales that assess three types of intrinsic motivation (Intrinsic Motivation to Know, Intrinsic Motivation Toward Accomplishments, and Intrinsic Motivation to Experience Stimulation), three forms of extrinsic motivation (Introjection, Identification, and External Regulation), and an Amotivation subscale. Respondents completed the SMS using a 7-point Likert scale with 1 signifying "does not correspond at all" and 7 representing "corresponds exactly". Cronbach's Alpha scores for the SMS scale, intrinsic motivation subscale, extrinsic motivation subscale and amotivation subscale were .91, .88, .88, and .75 respectively. Thus, scores were highly reliable as a measure of these three types of motivation.

Motivational climate created by the coaches and the parents was assessed in this study. First, the Perceived Motivational Climate in Sport Questionnaire-2 (PMCSQ-2) was used to measure two high- order scales of motivational climate; the task-involving climate subscale had the ego-involving climate (Newton, Duda, & Yin, 2000). Task involving climate has three subscales: Effort/Improvement, Important Role, and Cooperative Learning. As well, ego involving climate has three subscales: Intra-Team Member Rivalry, Unequal Recognition and Punishment for Mistakes (Newton et al., 2000). This scale consists of 33 items; we selected 21 of the original 33 items in order to reduce the length of the overall survey. Items with the highest standardized factor loading from each subscale were selected (Newton et al., 2000). Respondents normally complete the PMCSQ-2 by using a 5-point Likert scale with 1 signifying "strongly disagree" and 5 representing "strongly agree," but a 7-point Likert scale was utilized in the present study to allow for the use of standard 7 point responses for all survey instruments (Andrew, 2004). A study by Colman, Norris, and Preston (1997) examined changing a survey scale from 5-point scale to 7-point scale, examining comparability, equivalence, and estimation in both directions (i.e., between 5-point and 7-point scales and between 7-point and 5-point scales). The results support the equivalence of changing a survey scale in linear regression equations. Cronbach's Alpha scores for the PMCSQ-2 scale, task-involving climate subscale and Ego-involving climate subscale were .83, .90 and .85 respectively. Thus, scores were highly reliable as a measure of these two types of motivational climate created by the coach.

Next, the parent-initiated motivational climate questionnaire was taken from White et al. (1992) adaptation of Papaioannou's (1992) scale. The questionnaire has 28- items and contains three subscales labeled Worry Conducive Climate, Success Without Effort, and Learning-Oriented Climate. The researchers developed 14 questions specifically asking the participants about their mothers and the same 14 questions were written asking the participants about their fathers (White et al., 1992). To reduce the length of the overall survey, 18 of the original 28 items were selected measuring three dimensions of parental-initiated motivation (nine questions for the mother and the same nine questions for the father). Items with the highest standardized factor loading from each subscale were selected (White et al., 1992). Respondents normally complete the parent-initiated motivational climate questionnaire by using a 5-point Likert scale with 1 signifying "strongly disagree" and 5 representing "strongly agree," but a 7-point Likert scale was

utilized in the present study to allow for the use of standard 7 point responses for all survey instruments (Andrew, 2004). Cronbach's Alpha scores for parent-initiated motivational climate, mother subscale and father subscale were .89, .80 and .84 respectively. Thus, scores were highly reliable as a measure of the motivational climate created by the parents, both father and mother.

The Sport Commitment Model Scale (SCMS) was utilized to evaluate the determinants of sport commitment (Scanlan et al., 1993b). Sport commitment is described as a psychological state representing the drive and/or desire to continue sport participation (Scanlan et al., 1993a). The 14-items SCMS measure sport commitment, sport enjoyment, social constraints to continue participating in the sport activity, and involvement opportunities afforded by continued participation (Scanlan et al., 1993b). Nine of the original 14 items were selected in order to reduce the length of the overall survey. Three items from sport commitment subscale as well as sport enjoyment subscale were selected. Items with the highest standardized factor loading were selected (Scanlan et al., 1993b). All the items (3 items) from the social constraints subscale were selected. The involvement opportunities subscale questions were not used due to the irrelevance of the items in this subscale to the items used in the questionnaire. For example, "Would you miss your friends in your sport if you left the program?" Respondents completed the SCMS by using a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 signifying "not at all/none or nothing" and 5 representing "very much or a lot," but a 7-point Likert scale was utilized in the present study to allow for the use of standard 7 point responses for all survey instruments. Cronbach's Alpha scores for the SCMS, sport commitment subscale, sport enjoyment subscale and social constraints subscale were .78, .84, .92 and .86 respectively. Thus, scores were highly reliable as a measure of these three types of commitment. Finally, demographic questions were administered that incorporated the following items: the name of the participant's village/city, years of playing the sport overall, and the number of coaches the participant had during playing experience.

### Procedures and Statistical Analysis

The researcher mailed the Climate and Motivation for Palestinian Women's Athletes survey to the Ministry of Youth and Sport in Palestine. The Ministry of Youth and Sport, which was established in 1994, is the official organization in charge of sports in Palestine. It is responsible for planning and supervising youth and sports activities in accordance with the national sport plan as well as with the Olympic Committee. The questionnaires, along with IRB approved parental consent forms and a clear list of instructions created by the researcher on how to administer the questionnaires, were then mailed by the Ministry to the respective coaches at the following sport federations: 1) soccer, 2) volleyball, 3) basketball, 4) table tennis, 5) swimming, and, 6) track and field. After receiving affirmative parental consent, the coach at each federation distributed the questionnaire to the athletes who then completed and returned them to the coach. The federations then mailed the completed questionnaires back to the Ministry of Youth and Sport. The swimming federation chose not to participate in this study. The researcher then collected the questionnaires from the Ministry. During the survey process, two reminder phone calls were made to the coaches by the Ministry of Youth and Sport,

and 41% of the questionnaires were returned. The questionnaires were translated from English to Arabic and adequate translation procedures were followed using the parallel back- translation procedure (Brisling, 1986).

T-Test analysis was utilized to determine if women athletes in Palestine were intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to play sport on a professional level. Multiple regression analyses were utilized to determine how much coaches and parents affect women athletes' motivation; whether intrinsically or extrinsically, to play sport on a professional level. Descriptive statistics were computed to determine how committed women athletes are to their sport. A t-test was utilized to determine if women athletes from the north were more committed to their sport than women athletes from the south of West Bank, Palestine. Finally, Pearson correlation analyses were utilized to determine a correlation between the sport commitment subscale, sport enjoyment subscale and the years of playing sport as well as the number of the coaches each player had since they started playing their sport.

### Results

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that motivate women to participate in sport on a professional level in Palestine; that is, whether they are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. A secondary aim of this study was to examine if the motivational climate created by coaches and parents affected women athletes' motivation to play sport on a professional level. The third aim was to investigate if there was a difference in commitment between the athletes from the north and south of West Bank, Palestine. It was hypothesized that: 1) Women athletes in Palestine were intrinsically motivated rather than extrinsically motivated to participate in sport; 2) Coaches and parents do affect the motivational climate of women athletes in Palestine; and, 3) Women athletes in the northern region of Palestine were more committed to their sport than women athletes from the southern region.

The sample featured a total of 107 women athletes. The majority (63%) of the sample were from the south of the country and the remainder (37%) from the north. Years of playing sport ranged from two to 14 years ( $\bar{x} = 4.9 \pm 2.3$ ). The number of coaches each player had since they started playing their sport ranged from one to 20 coaches ( $\bar{x} = 2.6 \pm 2.7$ ).

Table 1 displays the mean and standard deviation of the four subscales of the Climate and Motivation for Palestinian Women's Athletes survey. The lowest observed mean was  $\bar{x} = 3.56 \pm 2.04$  (i.e., Father Learning) and highest was  $\bar{x} = 5.71 \pm 1.05$  (i.e., sport commitment). The Father Learning subscale had the highest variability among all subscales (%CV ~ 57%) and the intrinsic subscale had the lowest variability (%CV ~ 15%).

T-test analysis was utilized to determine if women athletes in Palestine were intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to play sport on professional level. The result showed there was a significant difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation with mean difference of 0.4063 and 95% CI between 0.22 and 0.59. Women athletes in Palestine reported more intrinsic motivation to play sports ( $\bar{x} = 5.60 \pm 0.86$ ) than extrinsic motivation ( $\bar{x} = 5.18 \pm 1.04$ ); with p-value = 0.0001.

**Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of Climate and Motivation for Palestinian Women's Athletes Survey Subscales**

Variables	N	M	SD
<b>Motivation</b>			
Intrinsic	104	5.6067	.86354
Extrinsic	107	5.1790	1.04039
Amotivation	103	3.8228	1.46346
<b>Climate by coach</b>			
Task climate	107	5.2946	1.09598
Ego climate	107	4.2270	1.34467
<b>Climate by parent</b>			
Mother Learning	107	5.6324	1.23958
Mother Worry	107	4.9315	1.19900
Mother Success	107	3.6916	1.84101
Father Learning	107	5.4766	1.51866
Father Worry	107	4.7243	1.42531
Father Success	107	3.5607	2.04334
<b>Commitment</b>			
Sport commitment	107	5.7134	1.05155
Enjoyment	107	5.6075	1.28678
Social	107	4.2648	1.83761
Valid N (listwise)	102		

In examining the effects of coaches and parents on women athletes' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (dependent variables) to play sport on a professional level, the authors first utilized blockwise multiple regressions with coach variables first entered, father variables second entered and then mother variables entered to demonstrate how the variances were explained by each block. Then for a parsimonious model, we used the stepwise selection and compared the results.

For intrinsic motivation (see Table 2), the first block (coach variables) explained 12% of the variances ( $p < .01$ ). The second block (father variables) explained an additional 1.5% of the variance although it was not a significant increase in  $R^2$ . The coach and father blocks together explained significant proportion of variances ( $p < .05$ ). The third block (mother variables) explained an additional 1% of the variance. However, the proportion of variance explained by the all three blocks became insignificant ( $p > .05$ ).

The small sample size with many predictors in the model

may be the reason for this aberrant pattern. However, the whole population from which the sample was taken was approximately 140 participants at the time the study was conducted. Out of eight predictors in the model, Task was the only significant variable. In other words, coaches' task involving climate (where efforts are rewarded and cooperation is valued and mistakes are considered part of the learning) had positive and significant effects on women athletes' intrinsic motivation to play professional sports. Moreover, adjusted  $R^2$  also shows that the addition of father and mother variables did not add to the explanatory power of the model. In search of a parsimonious model, the authors then used the stepwise selection. It presented the model with one predictor (Task), which alone explained 12% of the variance in intrinsic motivation. Adjusted  $R^2$  shows that this simple model is the best fitting model.

Similar analyses were conducted for extrinsic motivation (see Table 3). The coach variables explained 11% of the variance ( $p < .01$ ). When the father and mother variables were added, the increase in the proportion of variance explained was minimal and insignificant.

Again, stepwise method presented the best fitting model, which included only one predictor, Ego. In other words, coaches' ego related climate (where recognition is only given for a talented athlete, emphasizing on intra-team rivalry and mistakes are punished) had positive and significant effects on women athletes' extrinsic motivation to play professional sports. Women athletes' perception of their family support was not significantly related to both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. For both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, only one variable turned out to be a significant predictor making this a simple regression rather than a multiple regression (Pedhazur, 1997).

Descriptive statistics were computed to determine how much committed women athletes were to their sport. Results showed that women athletes were highly committed to sports with mean response of 5.19 out of 7.0. Of the three subscales, sport commitment was the highest ( $\bar{x} = 5.71 \pm 1.05$ ), followed by sport enjoyment ( $\bar{x} = 5.60 \pm 1.28$ ) and social constraints ( $\bar{x} = 4.26 \pm 1.83$ ).

A t-test was utilized to determine if women athletes from the north were more committed to their sport than women athletes

**Table 2. Results of Multiple Regression on Intrinsic Motivation**

	Block 1 (Coach)			Model 1 (Blockwise - enter)			Block 3 (Mother)			Model 2 (Stepwise)		
				Block 2 (Father)								
	b (s.e.)	$\beta$	T	b (s.e.)	$\beta$	T	b (s.e.)	$\beta$	t	b (s.e.)	$\beta$	T
Intercept	4.21 (.48)		8.77**	4.24 (.50)		8.55**	4.25 (.55)		7.76**	4.18 (.40)		10.57**
Task	0.27 (.07)	0.34	3.67**	0.24 (.09)	0.31	2.83**	0.23 (.09)	0.30	2.68**	0.27 (.07)	0.34	3.69**
Ego	-0.01 (0.06)	-	-0.10	0.00 (.07)	0.00	0.004	0.01 (.07)	0.01	0.10			
Father Learning				0.08 (.08)	0.14	1.02	.06 (.09)	0.10	0.67			
Father Worry				-0.10 (.08)	-	-1.19	-0.12 (.11)	-0.20	-1.17			
Father Success					0.16							
Mother Learning				0.03 (.05)	0.07	0.60	0.09 (.09)	0.22	1.07			
Mother Worry							0.04 (.11)	0.06	0.38			
Mother Success							0.02 (.13)	0.02	0.12			
R <sup>2</sup> (R <sup>2</sup> change)	0.118** (0.118**)			0.0132* (0.014)			0.141 (0.009)			0.118** (.118**)		
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.101**			0.088*			0.069			0.109**		

\*  $p < .05$       \*\*  $p < .01$

**Table 3. Results of Multiple Regression on Extrinsic Motivation**

	Block 1 (Coach)			Model 1 (Blockwise - enter)			Block 3 (Mother)			Model 2 (Stepwise)		
				Block 2 (Father)								
	b (s.e.)	$\beta$	T	b (s.e.)	$\beta$	T	b (s.e.)	$\beta$	T	b (s.e.)	$\beta$	T
Intercept	4.31 (.57)		7.53**	4.41 (0.60)		7.39**	4.36 (0.66)		6.62**	4.08 (0.32)		12.95**
Task	-0.04 (.09)	-0.04	-0.47	-0.01 (0.10)	-0.01	-0.08	-0.02 (0.11)	-0.02	-0.14			
Ego	0.26 (.07)	0.33	3.61**	0.28 (0.08)	0.36	3.36**	0.28 (0.08)	0.37	3.36**	0.26 (0.07)	0.34	3.64**
FatherLearning				-0.04 (0.09)	-0.05	-0.39	-0.06 (0.10)	-0.09	-0.62			
Fatherworry				-0.02 (0.10)	-0.03	-0.24	0.00 (0.13)	0.00	0.02			
Fathersuccess				-0.01 (0.06)	-0.02	-0.18	-0.02 (0.10)	-0.05	-0.23			
Motherlearning							0.08 (0.13)	0.09				
Motherworry							-0.07 (0.15)	-0.08	-0.50			
Mothersuccess							0.01 (0.11)	0.02	0.12			
R <sup>2</sup> change	0.114** (0.114**)			0.120* (0.006)			0.123 (0.004)			0.112**		
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.097**			0.076*			0.052			0.104**		

\*p&lt;.05

\*\*p&lt;.01

from the south of West Bank, Palestine. Results showed there were significant differences in the sport commitment subscale between athletes from the north and south with a mean difference of 0.4644 and 95% CI between 0.03 and 0.90; and there were significant differences in the sport enjoyment subscale between athletes from the north and south with a mean difference of 0.9404 and 95% CI between 0.49 and 1.4. Results also suggested there were significant differences in social constraint subscale between athletes from the north and south with mean difference of -1.465 and 95% CI between -2.21 and -.72.

Finally, Pearson correlation analyses were utilized to determine a correlation between the sport commitment subscale, sport enjoyment subscales and the years of playing sport as well as the number of coaches each player had since the started playing their sport. The results indicated no significant correlation between years of playing sport and the two subscales (sport commitment subscales and sport enjoyment subscale). Results also indicated no significant correlation between sport commitment subscale, sport enjoyment subscale and the number of coaches each player had.

### Discussion

The results indicated that women athletes in Palestine engaged in a particular sport activity for a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic reasons. However, women athletes in Palestine were more intrinsically motivated to play sport. These results are similar to those reported previously (Pedersen, 2002; Pelletier et al., 1995; Vallerand & Bissonnette, 1992). According to Pelletier et al. (1995) when people are intrinsically motivated and self-determined, they are more involved in the activity itself and thus display better performance. Therefore, women athletes in Palestine who are intrinsically motivated may perhaps be eager to become more proficient in their sport. In addition, they may be more willing to face the obstacles in their society that prevent them from either participating in their favorite sport or continuing this participation. Such motivation and commitment are important in a conservative society like Palestine where women face many obstacles from their families and society that eventually force many of them to quit sport. It is important to cultivate intrinsic motivation among the girls who are already playing sport as well as those who are not playing sport but are contemplating future participation.

However, having intrinsic or extrinsic motivation to play sport

is not enough in a conservative country like Palestine. Women athletes in Palestine need a climate that facilitates their participation and motivates them to continue participating in sport. Although the results showed that all the variables (of the climate created by the coach and parents) do contribute to women athletes' motivation; however, only the task and ego-involving climate created by the coach were the significant predictors. Results demonstrated that intrinsic motivation is positively associated with the task-involving climate created by the coach. While extrinsic motivation is positively associated with the ego-involving climate created by the coach, coaches in Palestine can enhance the intrinsic motivation of their women athletes when they create a task-involving climate. This is consistent with the Waldron and Krane (2005) study which also suggested that coaches would do well to emphasize effort, learning, and improvement (task involving climate) as the key to success instead of emphasizing intra-team member rivalry, unequal recognition, or/and punishment for mistakes (ego-involving climate). For example, women athletes in Palestine who are intrinsically motivated believed their coaches emphasized the importance of self-improvement rather than outplaying others and emphasized effort rather than winning by rewarding athletes when they tried their best.

In addition, women athletes in Palestine believed that their mothers and fathers did not affect their motivation to play sport, whether it was intrinsic or extrinsic. However, White et al. (1992) stated that parents had a great influence on their child's reaction to their sport experience. The present finding could be related to the nature of the Palestinian society; as a religious and conservative society that views sport for girls as an aberration. Therefore, most parents do not appreciate the idea that their daughters are playing sport on the professional level. Thus, it may be important to study in-depth parents' effects on women athletes' motivation in Palestine particularly on young athletes. According to Lopiano (2004), if a girl does not play sports by the time she is 10 years old, there is a less than a 10% chance that she will be involved in sports when she is 25 years old.

Finally, the results showed that women athletes in Palestine are highly committed to their sport and also enjoy participating in sport; however, women athletes from the north of West Bank are more committed and enjoyed participating in their sport more than women athletes from the south. Moreover, the results showed

that athletes from the north reported less social constrain from their parents than athletes from the south. In other words, women athletes from the north are not committed to their sport because they want to please their parents but because they are enjoying it. In addition, Montague (2008) reported there are differences between cities from the north and the south of West Bank in terms of conservatism and the will to have more women engage in sport. This finding is important because it highlights important facts that should be considered when establishing new strategies to engage more women in sport in Palestine as well as how these strategies can use different ways to approach the parents and the society depending on their geographic location.

Furthermore, although the results showed that women athletes are highly committed to their sport and also enjoy participating in sport, the social and cultural obstacles women athletes are facing have forced many of them to stop playing their favorite sport. Women athletes in Palestine in this study believed that their mother, father, and society played no role on either encouraging or discouraging their participation in sport. However, due to culture and family stress, the women soccer team has already lost two first-team players to husbands who demanded their wives give up soccer (football) for duties in the home (Montague, 2008). Furthermore, women in Palestine have been competing at the international level since 1994 and this participation has been progressing slowly since then (Younes, 2004). And although there are women national teams for basketball, tennis, handball, karate, taekwondo, and fencing, women national tournaments in these different sports are rarely held (Al-Yaziji, 2002). Without understanding these obstacles, it is suggested that women athletes' participation in sport in Palestine will become more difficult and infrequent.

It is essential to investigate the parents and the society view and influence on women's sport in Palestine to be able to change it. Such changes could be done by educating youth at schools about the importance of playing sport for both genders and by conducting more research regarding women's sport which, in both cases, may result in having a new generation who values and plays sport at both professional and non-professional levels. Currently, there are very few studies that address the history of women's sport in Palestine and its teams' participation in regional and international tournaments (Al-Masri, 2008; Younes, 2004). When examining the motivational climate for women athletes in sport federations in Palestine, there is almost no research (Ministry of Youth and Sport, 2003). With this gap in research, it is understandable why the obstacles are still present, and why women's sport in Palestine has progressed slowly.

## **Conclusion**

As the results of this study have suggested, women athletes in Palestine in the sports federations are more intrinsically than extrinsically motivated to participate in sport. This motivation can be enhanced by factors in the home and sport environments. Women athletes believed their coaches provided them with the desired level of task-involving climate, and therefore, influenced their intrinsic motivation that reflected generalized feelings such as pleasure, fun, and enjoyment. Thus, the coach has the capability to influence the athlete's desire to continue sport participation (Andrew, 2004). However, surprisingly, women athletes in this

study believed that their parents played no role in their motivation to play sport.

The significance of the findings of this study is that if Palestinian women athletes are intrinsically motivated to play sport and their coaches play an affirmative role in continuing to participate in sport, then perhaps more opportunities for empowering women to be athletes should be afforded to them. Currently, there is no national policy that supports women athletes' right to participate in sport in Palestine, although women in Palestine are allowed to play sport on the professional level (sport federations). The results of this study may encourage officials in the Palestinian sport federations, mainly the football federation, to continue their work to achieve gender equity, to address women's rights to play sport, and to have equal opportunities (compared to men athletes) in sport activities, perhaps even creating a policy similar to Title IX in the United States.

## **Limitations**

This study was designed to investigate women athletes in several sport federations in Palestine. In some federations, all the women athletes were from one or two cities due to the popularity of some sports in certain cities, or due to the tradition in other cities. This resulted in not having a representative sample and thus limits the generalizability of this study. Also, women athletes in the sport federations do not necessarily represent all women who participate in sport in official leagues. Different forms of participation in sports exist, including reasons such as leisure.

## **Recommendations for Future Research**

Future studies should incorporate other populations such as women athletes who participate in sport for other reasons such as leisure, to support the generalizability of results. Also, there is a need to investigate other samples to compare the sport motivation scale factors depending upon other variables, such as the reason for participating in sport (e.g., competition, fun, coaching and leaderships styles). Future studies could also compare the sport motivation for women athletes between individual and team sports. Finally, future studies should look at the governmental policy that promotes equality between girls and boys sport teams.

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