

The Effect Of Taking Part In A Running Event On Sport Participation And Healthy Lifestyle Adoption

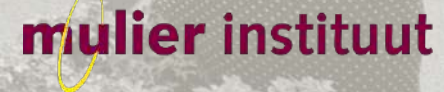
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Background



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This study is part of the RUN for HEALTH project, financially supported by the ERASMUS+ program, aiming to show how running events can be used as a mean to promote health-enhancing physical activity.




Aim and research questions

- 1) What are profiles of participants?
- 2) What are the motives for event participation?
- 3) What is the effect of participation on sports participation?
- 4) What is the effect of participation on eating, drinking, smoking?

Comparative approach:

- < 5k
- 5k and < 10k
- >10k



Post event

Literature

Legacy: planned and unplanned, positive and negative, intangible and tangible structures created through a sport event that remain in place after the event (Gratton & Preuss, 2008).

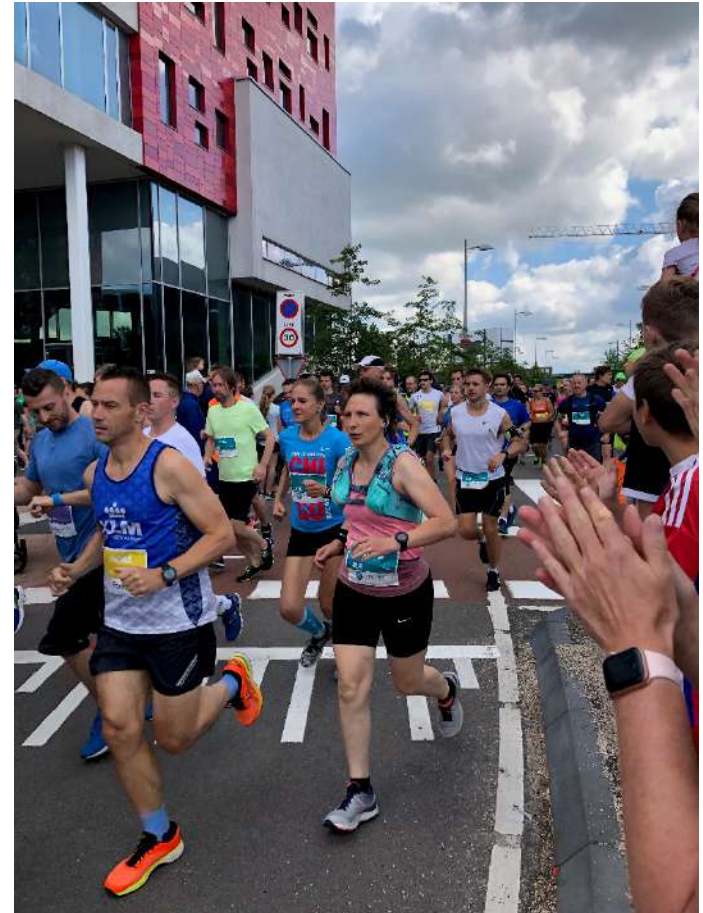
Participation in running events is seen as a strategy to promote 1) **sports participation** among participants (Alexandris et al., 2017) and 2) **a healthy diet** (Murphy et al., 2015).

There is proof that this strategy can lead to the desired results (e.g. Lane et al., 2008).

Operationalisation

Healthy lifestyle

- Sports participation
- Eating fat, sugar, sat
- Drinking alcohol
- Smoking



Methods

- Online **questionnaire** among random sample of participants of 1) Marathon Amersfoort 2019 and 2) BrandLoyalty Vestingloop 's-Hertogenbosch 2019.

<= 5k	n = 720	}	(response 33% & 29%)
> 5k and >= 10k	n = 1,045		
> 10k	n = 1,008		

- **Semi-structured interviews** were conducted with 1) organizers, 2) key event sponsors and 3) Royal Dutch Athletics Federation.



's-Hertogenbosch



Running in The Netherlands

- Popular sport, strength enclosed in its simplicity
- 10% of the population runs at least 12 times a year
- Participation of women is growing, but still more men participate
- Main facilitator is local government (public space!)
- Participation in events more often a day out
- Running belongs to athletics family nowadays
- From competing to completing
- Apps substitute for participation in events?
- Two competitions in one: the "anonymous elite runner"

1. Profile (%)

		<= 5km	>5 and <= 10 km	>10 km
Seks	Male	39	52	70
	Female	61	48	30
Age	18-34 jaar	42	34	26
	35-49 jaar	41	42	45
	50-64 jaar	15	22	26
	65-79 jaar	2	3	3
Sports participation/ week	0-2 times	33	30	16
	3 times	27	35	34
	4 or more times	40	35	50
Judgement own health	Bad	4	1	2
	Moderate	19	15	10
	Good	77	84	88

Serving the sporty?

Interviews

“You see a shift in physical fitness. Partly because people are less trained and partly because older people participate, for which running is simply too hard. Then the discussion is [should we organize] a walking tour?” - *Event organizer*

“You can see that it has become a general trend to practice running as a recreational sport” - *Event organizer*

“The number of women increases, compared to men. But women train more diverse.” - *Event organizer*

“In general, we focus on the sporty people. Not really on the competitive runners.” - *Event organizer*

2. Motivation (factor analysis)

Rotated Component Matrix ^a					
	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
To get fit	.911
Improve my health	.933	.113	.094	.	.087
To adopt an active lifestyle	.897	.133	.105	.099	.105
To run with friends/ family	.066	-.068	.038	.747	-.089
To interact with other runners	.064	.130	.136	.810	.218
To be in a social environment	.119	.166	.169	.757	.292
Prove to others that I can do it	.200	.137	.816	.094	.128
To earn the respect of my peers	.204	.151	.795	.109	.179
To compete with myself	.064	.609	.414	-.202	-.005
To compete with others	-.042	.216	.678	.155	.082
To improve my mood	.400	.586	.168	.234	.051
To improve my self-esteem	.387	.581	.305	.144	.072
To feel a sense of achievement	.149	.704	.336	-.089	.088
To have fun	-.027	.659	-.210	.315	.189
For the thrill of it	.047	.625	.195	.056	.401
Participate in a famous / interesting event	.087	.226	.211	.092	.791
Visit a famous / interesting city	.132	.083	.089	.167	.815

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

2. Motivation (factors)

	≤ 5 km	>5 and ≤ 10 km	>10 km
Health motive	2,9	2,7	2,4
Social motive	3,0	2,7	2,5
Competition motive	2,2	2,1	2,0
Excitement motive	3,4	3,4	3,5
Experience motive	2,4	2,4	2,4

3. Effect on sports participation (%)

	<= 5km	>5 and <= 10 km	>10 km
Not at all	42	48	58
	10	12	13
	27	24	18
	16	13	9
Extremely	6	2	3

4. Effect on eating, drinking, smoking (%)

		<= 5km	>5 and <= 10 km	>10 km
Eating fat and/or less sugar and/or salt	Much less	13	7	7
	Slightly less	22	23	19
	About the same	61	69	73
	Slightly more	2	1	0
	Much more	1	0	0
Drinking alcohol	Much less	16	5	10
	Slightly less	15	18	17
	About the same	66	76	71
	Slightly more	1	1	1
	Much more	1	0	0
Smoking	Much less	30	26	25
	Slightly less	4	2	2
	About the same	62	72	72
	Slightly more	1	0	0
	Much more	2	0	0

Interviews

“Running unilaterally is quite an injurious sport. It is much better to do different types of training.”
- *Event organizer*

“I think running events convince people to become active. At least for some months per year.”
- *Sponsor*

“About lifestyle I don't know. People probably will keep smoking a cigarette and drink a beer. But so what?” - *Event organizer*

“It is our goal to stimulate to do sports all year round.”
- *Athletics Federation*

We organize events throughout the whole year, such as park runs. Every month we communicate to the target groups that they can join.”
- *Event organizer*

“The moment you run, you are more conscious about your body. About your diet, your condition. Running is healthy, but running marathons is not healthy.” - *Sponsor*

Leveraging by third parties



Runners - also those who are not part of a club or association - can register for our free newsletter (including running advice). 70.000 people are currently being reached. - *Athletics federation*



Conclusion

- Longer distance: more men, older participants, higher sports participation.
- Longer distance: proportion with health motive shrinks.
- Roughly half of participants say they will participate in sports more often after the event, % shrinks when distance is longer.
- Roughly one third of participants say they will eat healthier, drink and smoke less, % shrinks when distance is longer.
- Need for leveraging: organizer organizes, partners should use momentum for leveraging.

Thank you!

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Peter Eldert
Ellis Middelkamp
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