

## MOTIVATION OF MARATHON RUNNERS IN POLAND

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### Abstract

**Introduction.** In recent years, the growing number of marathon runners in the world has raised questions about the factors which motivate them. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the motivations of runners and to examine how sex, age, level of experience, and number of kilometers run per week affect motivation. **Material and methods.** Motivation was assessed in 240 subjects using a questionnaire (the Polish adaptation of the Motivations of Marathoners Scales), which was completed during the three biggest marathons held in Poland in 2016. **Results.** The results revealed that in general people taking part in marathon races were primarily motivated by health and well-being, women had greater endorsement of health and psychological motives, and younger runners were motivated by competition, personal goal achievement, and self-esteem. The importance of the last two motives decreased with experience. Personal goal achievement and life meaning were predictors of training volume. Surprisingly, weight concern was a predictor of lower weekly training mileage. **Conclusions.** The present findings indicated that particular motives differed between females and males and between younger and older participants. The research results are going to help to develop effective techniques to enhance exercise motivation, depending on age, sex, and training characteristics.

**Key words:** running, marathon, endurance training, motivation, sport psychology