# Motives for Sports and Exercise Therapy during the Treatment of Depression

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## **Objectives**



Studies indicate the effectiveness of physical activity in the treatment of depression [1]. Taking individual conditions into account, sports and exercise therapy (S&ET) can be used as a standalone or complementary treatment during part-time or full-time inpatient treatment. However, current data indicate that only 23 % of patients in Germany make use of it during their treatment [2]. Thus, there is a need for further research on motivational psychological aspects for S&ET participation. It can be assumed that it is important for the initiation and maintenance of physical activity to take individual patient preferences into account. Furthermore, women and men differ in their motivation for sports and exercise [3]. The present study therefore investigates gender differences in motives for S&ET during part-time or full-time inpatient treatment of depression.

#### **Methods**



psychotherapeutic and psychosomatic hospital motives for S&ET of female and male patients aged 35 to 64 years with the main diagnosis of depression (F32/F33) have been recorded using the Bernese Motive and Goal Inventory in Leisure and Health Sports (BMZI) [4] since May 2021. The survey was conducted within 7 days after admission to the part-time or fulltime inpatient setting.

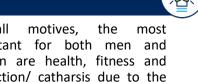
Table 1: Description of sample.

Characteristics	Men ♂ Women ♀ $n = 91$ $n = 49$		р		
age M (SD)	47,98 (8,06)	50,67 (7,55)	.0500ª		
setting					
full-time	19 (21 %)	21(43 %)	- <.006 <sup>b</sup> **		
part-time	72 (79 %)	28 (57 %)	<.006		

Note: a Mann-Whitney *U*-Test; b  $\chi^2$ -Test; \*\* p < .01

References: [1] Repple, J., Opel, N. (2021). Sport und körperliche Bewegung bei unipolarer Depression. Der Nervenarzt, 92, 507-514. doi: 10.1007/s00115-021-01113-0. [2] Brehm, K., Dallmann, P., Freyer, T., Winter, K., Malchow, B., Wedekind, D., ... Ströhle, A. (2019). Angebot und Inanspruchnahme von Sporttherapie in psychiatrischen Kliniken in Deutschland. Der Nervenarzt, 91, 642-650. doi:10.1007/s00115-019-0782-7. [3] Pfeffer, I. & Rank, K. (2016). Motive körperlich-sportlicher Aktivität in Abhängigkeit von Geschlecht und Geschlechtsrollen-Selbstkonzept. Leipziger Sportwissenschaftliche Beiträge, 57 (1), 9-27. [4] Schmid, J., Gut, V., Conzelmann, A. & Sudeck, G. (2018). Bernese motive and goal inventory in exercise and sport: Validation of an updated version of the questionnaire. PLoS ONE, 13 (2), e0193214. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0193214.

### **Results**



Motives		M	SD	p
contact -	8	2,74	0,95	.220ª
	9	2,53	1,02	.220*
body/ appearance	8	3,42	1,16	.979 <sup>b</sup>
	2	3,37	1,33	.979-
competition/ performance	8	2,19	1,93	<.001 <sup>b***</sup>
	2	1,60	0,77	<.001
distraction/ catharsis	8	3,72	0,87	.648 <sup>b</sup>
	2	3,80	0,88	.046
health -	8	4,29	0,72	.283 <sup>b</sup>
	2	4,37	0,79	.203
fitness	8	4,20	0,85	.531 <sup>b</sup>
	9	4,20	0,95	.551-
aesthetics	8	2,40	1,07	.437 <sup>b</sup>
	2	2,27	1,16	.45/~

Of all important for both men and women are health, fitness and distraction/ catharsis due to the highest mean scores. Compared to women (M = 1,60, SD = 0,77)men (M = 2,19, SD = 1,93)reported significantly mean scores for the competition/ performance motive Whitney U-Test: z = 3.987: p < .001). There were no further significant gender differences.

Table 2: Mean scores of motives according to BMZI of men (n = 91)and women (n = 49).

Note: a t-Test; b Mann-Whitney U-Test; \*\*\* p < .001

#### **Conclusion**



Significant gender differences were found only for the motive competition/ performance, although this motive rated lowest on average. The absence of further gender differences could be due to the fact that gender differences could be of less importance for S&ET in the treatment context. On average health, fitness, and distraction/ catharsis were rated highest by both genders. This is consistent with typical symptoms during depression, which involves distraction from negative thoughts as well as recovering physical fitness to cope with everyday life. Further studies should investigate other motivational psychological variables influencing participation in S&ET during treatment.