

Motivation for Exercise: Characteristics Associated with Group Versus Individual Exercise Preferences



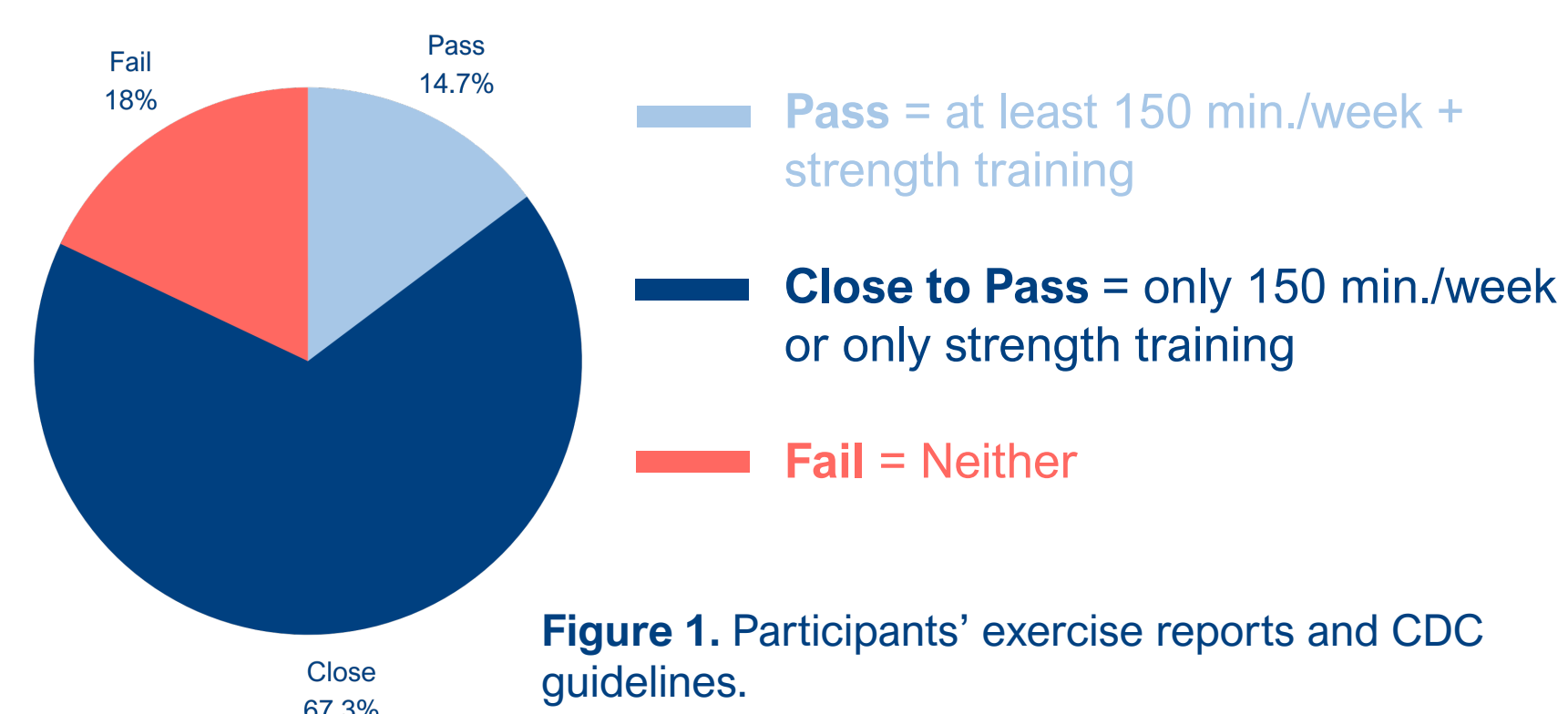
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Introduction

Background:

- Exercise is important for well-being,^[1] yet over 50% of Americans do not meet CDC exercise guidelines.^[2]



- Males tend to be more externally motivated (competition) while females tend to be more intrinsically motivated (appearance).^[3]
- Here we analyzed factors associated with a preference for exercise mode—group versus individual exercise regimens.
- Results have implications for designing programs aimed at increasing physical activity among diverse populations.

Hypothesis:

- Males are more likely to participate in group exercise, while females are more likely to participate in individual exercise.

Methods

Participants:

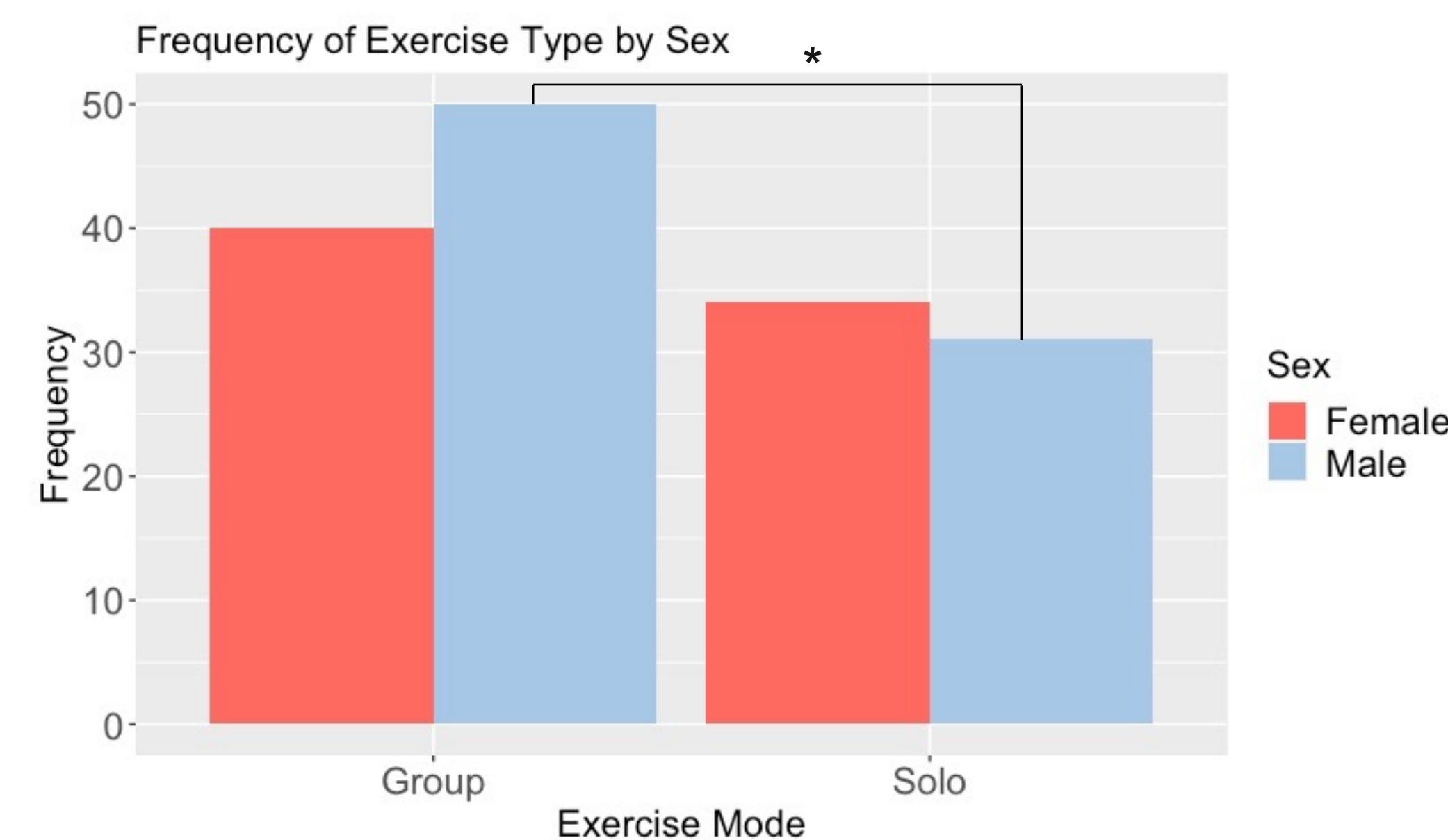
- Volunteers (n=163, 53.37% males, 85.37% White, 74.84% non-Hispanic, average age = 35.80, SD = 11.5)

Survey Materials:

- Administered through Mechanical Amazon Turk
- The 5-part survey consisted of demographics, an exercise mode and frequency questionnaire, a Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI), a 24-Item Behavioral Regulation in Exercise Questionnaire (BREQ-3), and a 51-Item Exercise Motivation Inventory (EMI-2).

Results

- In a chi-square test of independence analyzing sex differences in preferred exercise mode, there was **no significant effect**, $X^2(1, N = 155) = 0.93, p = .33$ (refer to **Figure 2, Table 1**).
- In a chi-square test of independence analyzing male-only differences in preferred exercise mode, there was a **significant effect**, $X^2(1, N = 81) = 4.46, p = .03$ (refer to **Figure 2, Table 1**).
- In a T-test analyzing sex differences of minutes per session, there was **no significant effect**. Females averaged less minutes ($M = 74.50, SD = 35.73$) than males ($M = 85.90, SD = 37.79$), $t(152.81) = -1.93, p = .06$ (refer to **Figure 3**).
- In a T-test analyzing sex differences and days per week of exercise, there was **no significant effect**. Females ($M = 4.04, SD = 1.38$) and males ($M = 4.27, SD = 1.53$) averaged similar results, $t(152.98) = -1.00, p = .32$ (refer to **Figure 4**).



	Group	Solo
Female	40	34
Male	50	31

Table 1. Reported preference of group vs individual exercise regimens between males and females.

Figure 2. Reported preference of group vs individual exercise regimens between males and females.

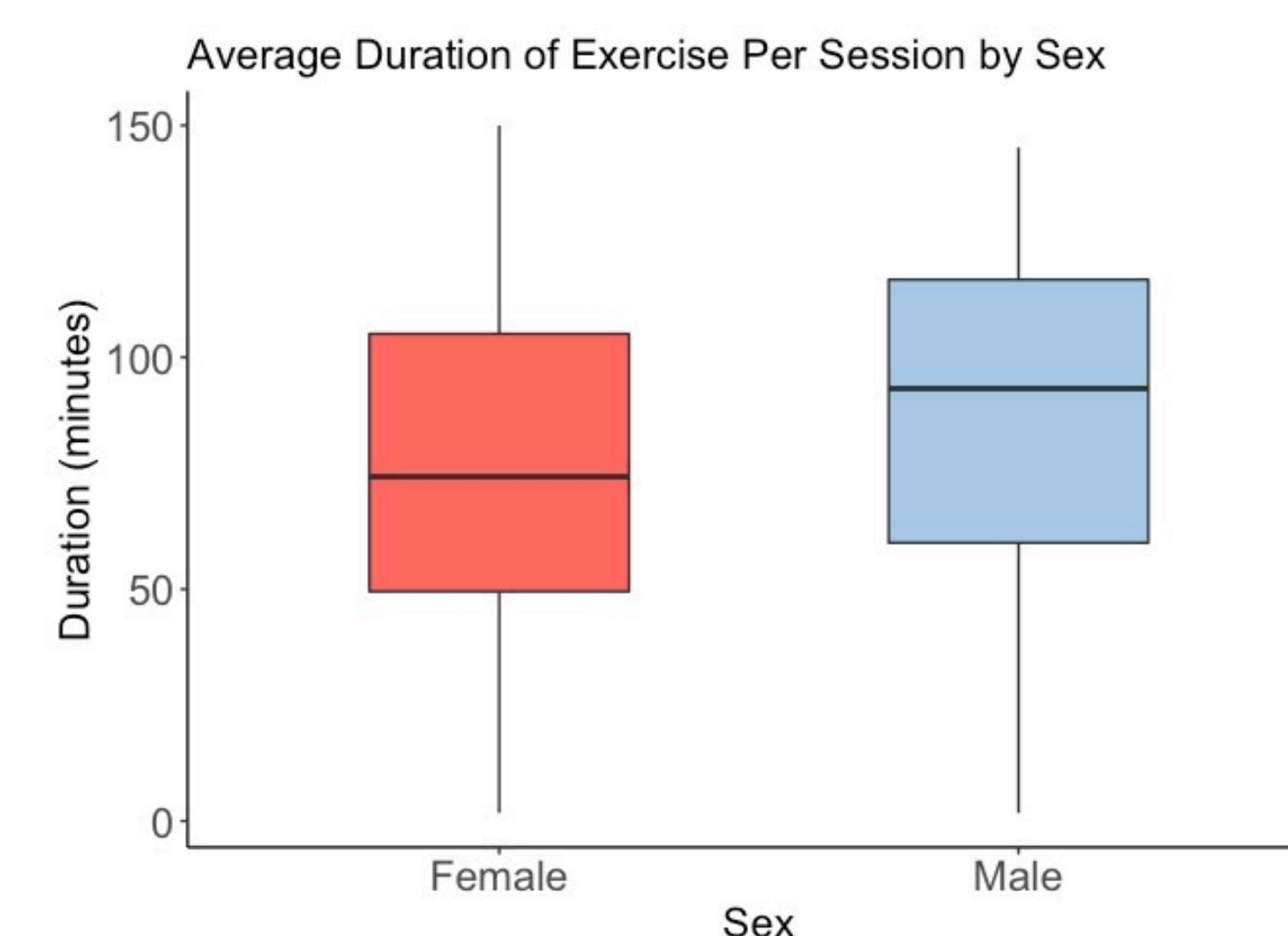


Figure 3. Reported average minutes per session of exercise between males and females.

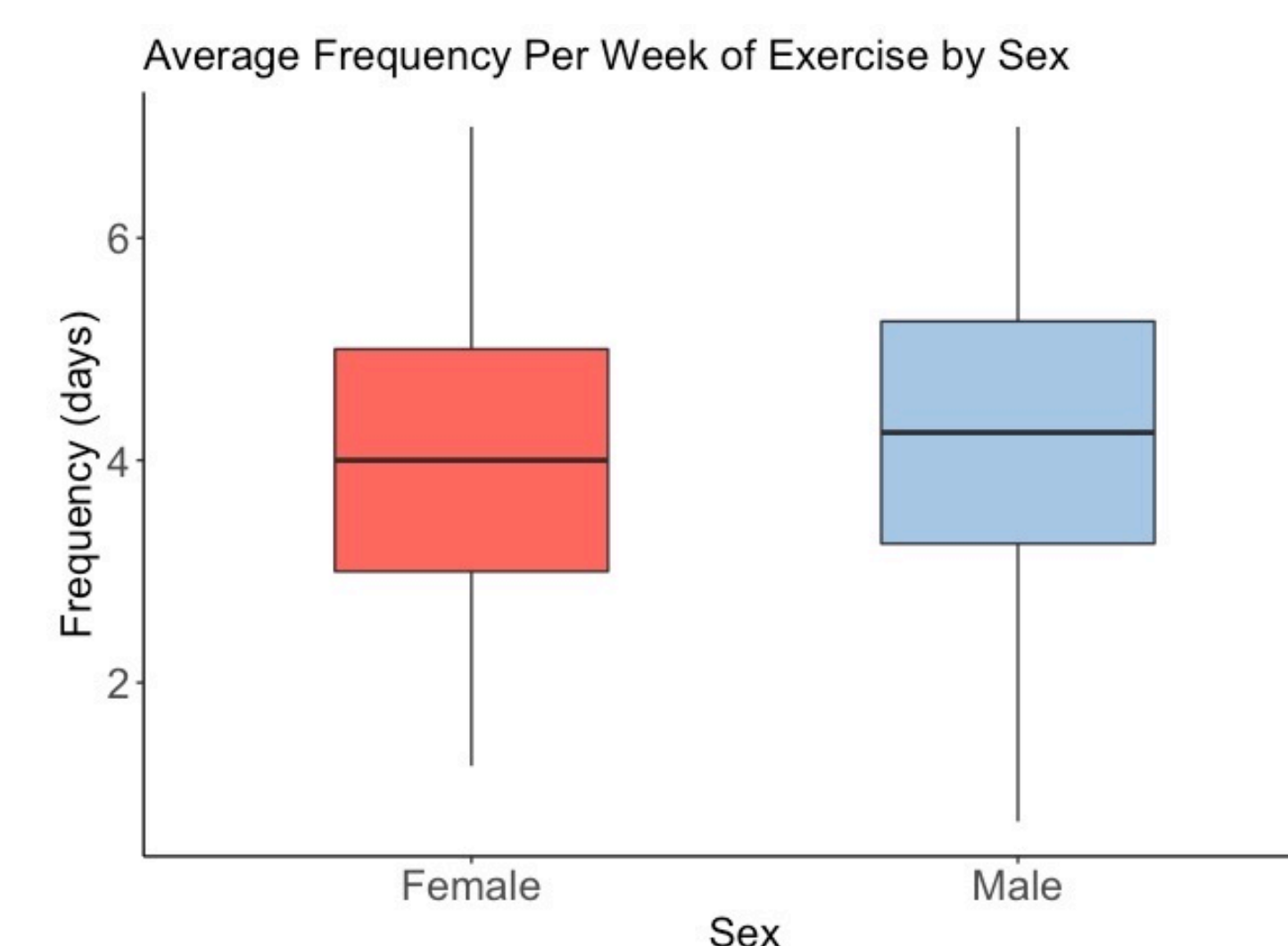


Figure 4. Reported average days per week of exercise between males and females.

Discussion

- Male motivations for exercise are best established in group settings where competition is instigated.
- The balance of female exercise preferences may be due to the versatility of addressing intrinsic motivations.

Limitations:

- Self-report measures may not have allowed for a completely accurate recollection of exercise regimens.
- Analyzing minutes per session revealed large standard deviations due to a lack of specificity in exercise regimens.
- Trends of motivation between sexes do not apply to all individuals.

Future Directions:

- Analyses of BREQ-3 and EMI-2 are currently underway.
- Preliminary analyses indicate sex was not a significant factor in exercise mode. This may be due to the vast complexities of individual preferences outside of general trends.
- Further research is needed regarding the nature of preferences for specific exercises and female motivations.

References

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- Weman Josefsson, K., Johnson, U., & Lindwall, M. (2018). Short report: Moderations in exercise motivation – gender and age moderates the relations of motivation quality and exercise behavior. *Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine*, 6(1), 93–103. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21642850.2018.1462706>