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## KEY MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS FOR STRENGTH TRAINING AMONG MATURE WOMEN

*The study of the motivational sphere for Ukrainian women is currently highly relevant and specific. The dynamics of motivational changes depend on external factors imposed by the Ukraine-Russia war, as well as internal factors shaped by the pandemic and the third year of the war. This study aims to identify key motivational factors for strength training among mature women. The study was conducted through an anonymous survey of 138 female higher education students aged 25-35. The objective was to assess their fitness motivations, general attitudes towards physical activity, and factors contributing to excess body weight. Participants were not professional athletes, and the survey was administered using Google Forms, distributed via social media. Key findings revealed that 21.7% of respondents engaged in fitness center activities, but only 13% exercised regularly. Most women (49.3%) preferred independent workouts, while 21.7% planned to start fitness training. The majority of women preferred cardio (41.3%) or strength training (32.6%). A significant proportion (33.3%) exercised to maintain physical shape, while 31.9% aimed to manage body weight, and 19.6% sought mental and emotional well-being improvements. Strength training participation was found in 52.1% of respondents, although many (53.6%) lacked proper exercise techniques. Insufficient physical activity was identified as the leading cause of excess weight, followed by overeating, poor nutrition, irregular sleep, and high stress levels. The survey also collected anthropometric data, which revealed a correlation between lifestyle factors and body weight. Conclusion. The study provides valuable insights into the motivations and challenges faced by mature women in strength training. These findings informed the development of a targeted strength training program designed to manage body weight and improve overall health.*

*Keywords: health-recreational physical activity, fitness, mature age, women, motivation.*

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

In developed nations, public health is a key indicator of societal progress, with youth health being a priority for the WHO, especially relevant for Ukraine [3, 7, 12]. Modern youth face challenges such as low physical activity, poor nutrition, harmful habits, and stress, leading to excess weight and psychosocial issues [6]. The COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing war in Ukraine have further worsened these problems, increasing anxiety and disrupting healthy behaviors [5].

Our research focuses on body weight correction in mature women, building on existing studies in health fitness, including aerobics, strength training, and body composition

correction [1, 8, 15]. While prior research has explored various fitness approaches, gaps remain in addressing comprehensive weight management strategies [2, 10, 14]. Our study aims to enhance these efforts by integrating strength fitness methods to improve body composition, overall health, and stress resilience. This highlights the practical and theoretical significance of developing more effective fitness-based weight correction programs.

### 2. ANALYSIS OF RECENT RESEARCH

Research highlights the psychological and physiological benefits of strength training for mature women. Hakman & Tivelik [3] emphasize personalized fitness programs, while Grygus &

Dolishniy [5] explore social and pedagogical factors. Samoyliuk et al. [11] analyze lifestyle influences on fitness motivation, stressing structured programs for adherence.

Kovaleva et al. [6] advocate for strength training in wellness programs, and Akimova et al. [1] highlight the need for tailored fitness interventions. Hakman et al. [2] and Hakman & Mintianska [4] focus on aqua fitness and engagement strategies, reinforcing the importance of social and psychological support.

Pantic [10] and Usachov et al. [12] discuss strength fitness structures, while Kashuba et al. [15] confirm that varied training approaches improve adherence. Overall, motivation for strength training in mature women is driven by health goals, structured programs, and social support, requiring further personalized research.

### 3. UNRESOLVED ASPECTS OF THE GENERAL PROBLEM

Despite existing research, gaps remain in understanding long-term adherence to strength training among mature women. The impact of individualized psychological support, the role of digital fitness solutions, and the influence of socioeconomic factors require further investigation. Additionally, there is limited research on the comparative effectiveness of different strength training modalities tailored to various fitness levels and health conditions. Addressing these gaps could enhance program effectiveness and sustainability.

**The aim** of the study is to identify the key motivational factors for strength fitness training in women of mature age.

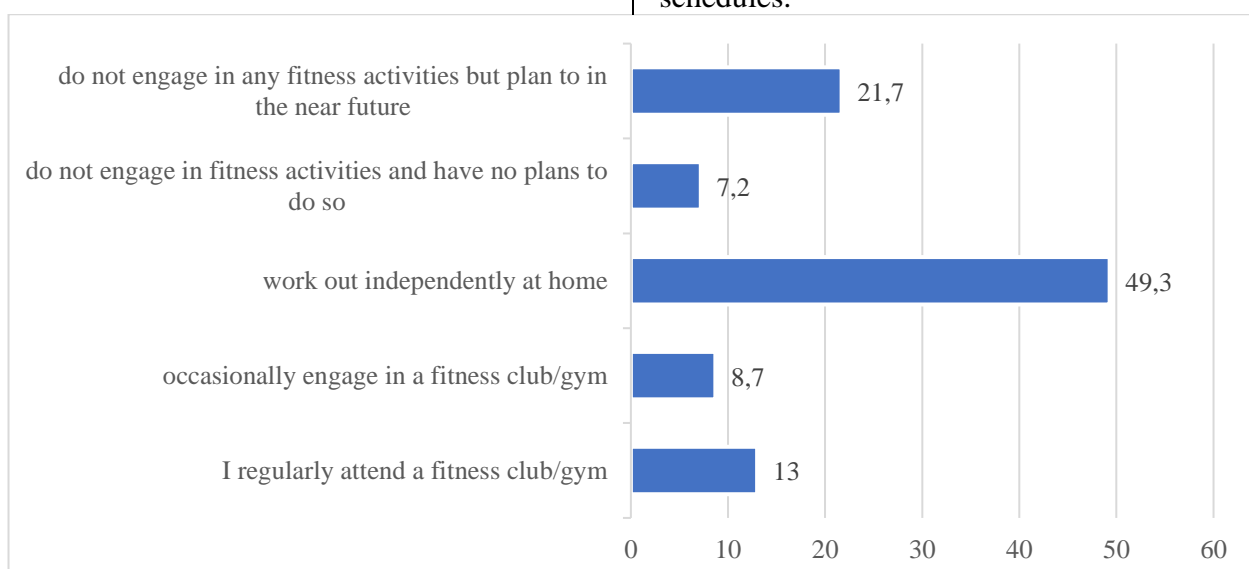
### 4. PRESENTATION OF THE MAIN MATERIAL OF THE RESEARCH

During the initial phase of our pedagogical experiment, we conducted an anonymous survey among female higher education students aged 25 to 35. The objective was to assess their level of interest, motivations, and general attitudes toward fitness, while also identifying potential causes of excess body weight among mature women. A total of 138 participants, none of whom were involved in professional sports, took part in the study.

The survey was carried out using the online tool Google Forms, with invitations distributed via social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram.

By analyzing the anonymous responses to 22 structured questions, we were able to draw several conclusions at this stage of the pedagogical experiment. These insights guided the formulation of our research objectives and helped shape the development of a strength fitness program for body weight correction among mature women.

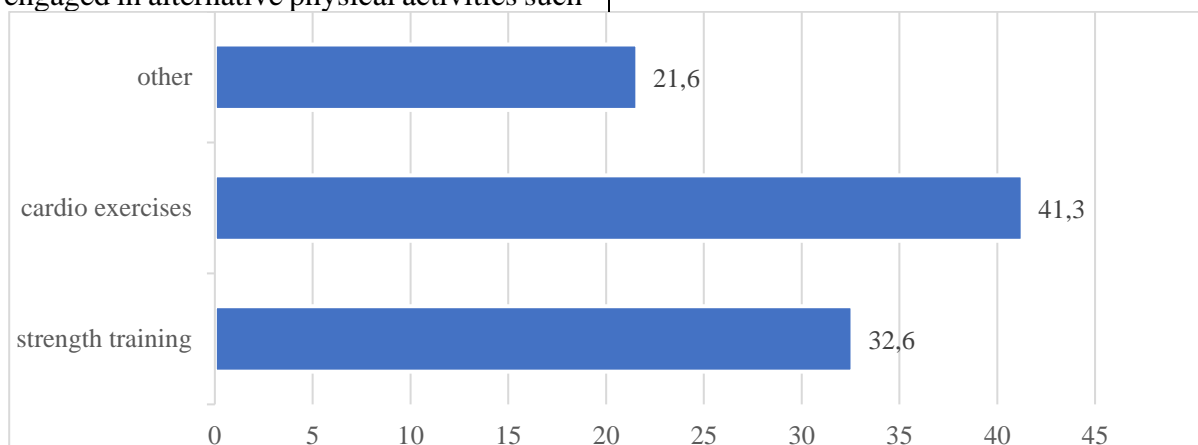
One of the primary findings (Fig. 1) was that 21.7% of respondents were currently engaged in fitness center activities, although only 13% exercised regularly. Additionally, 49.3% preferred independent workouts, while 21.7% planned to start fitness training or enroll in a gym. Only 7.2% of surveyed women reported no engagement in sports and had no future plans to participate in any physical activities. This data suggests a positive overall trend, as contemporary mature women express an increasing interest in physical activity despite their busy daily schedules.



**Fig. 1. Attitudes of mature women towards fitness and physical activity (n=138), %**

The analysis further revealed that the majority of women preferred cardio workouts (41.3%) and strength training (32.6%). Less than 1% engaged in alternative physical activities such

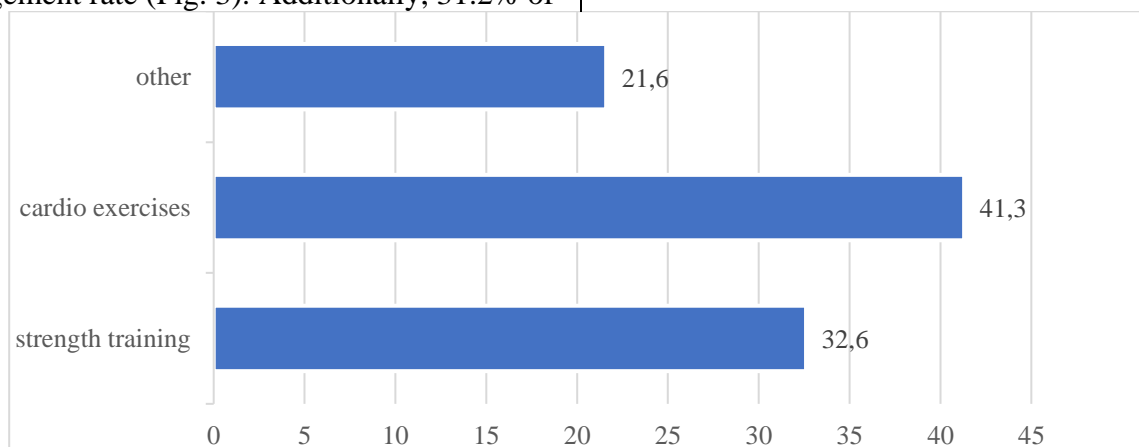
as swimming, dancing, volleyball, stretching, yoga, horseback riding, karate, or walking (Fig. 2).



**Fig. 2. Types of physical activity practiced by mature women (n=138), %**

Evaluating the participants' daily physical activity levels, we found that most of them maintained a moderate (58.7%) or high (13.8%) level of activity, resulting in a combined 72.5% engagement rate (Fig. 3). Additionally, 31.2% of

respondents balanced their studies with employment in diverse fields such as hospitality, administration, entrepreneurship, retail, and creative professions.



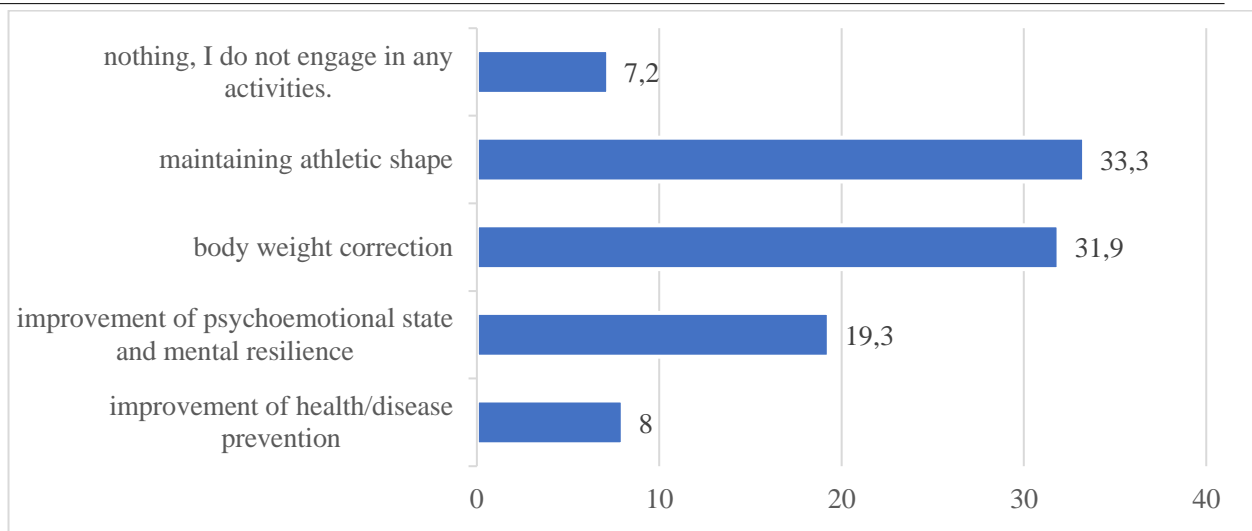
**Fig. 3. Daily physical activity levels among mature women (n=138), %**

To better understand the underlying motivations for engaging in fitness, we examined the survey responses in detail. The data revealed that 33.3% of respondents exercised primarily to maintain their physical shape, while 31.9% aimed to manage their body weight through fitness—whether to reduce excess fat or enhance their physique and posture. Additionally, 19.6% of respondents cited improvements in their mental and emotional well-being as a major factor driving their fitness participation (Fig. 4).

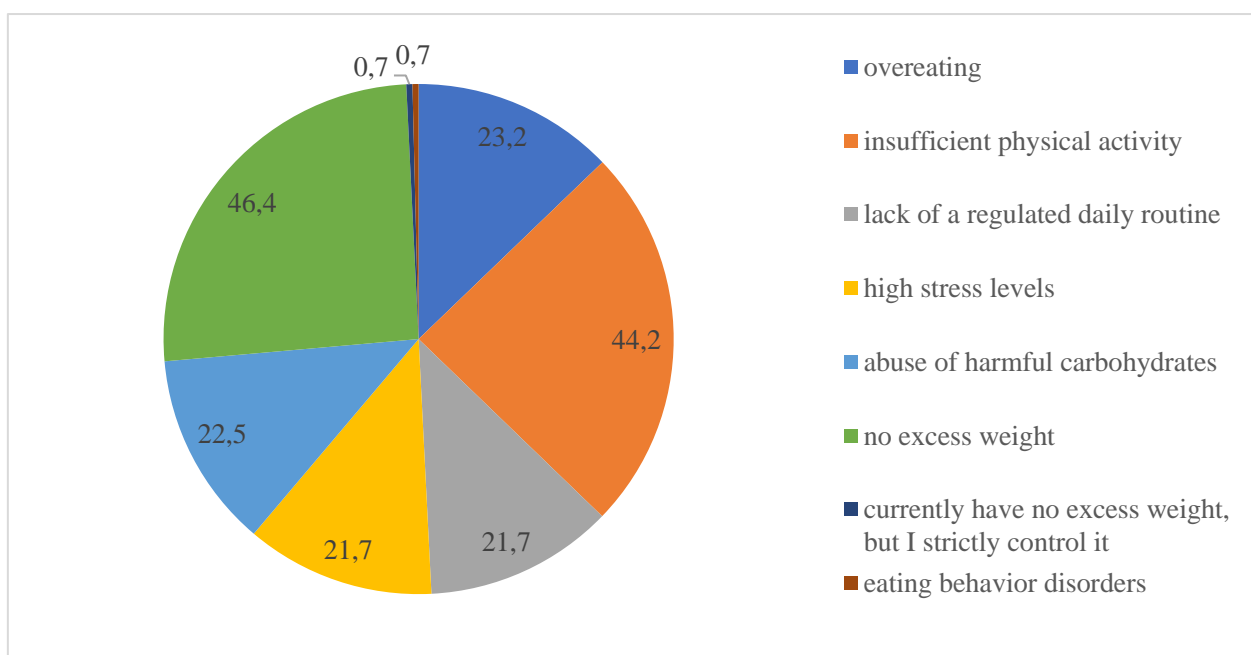
Regarding strength training specifically, 52.1% of mature women reported prior engagement, with 39.1% having participated in the past and 13% currently practicing disciplines

such as shaping, body pump, and free weight exercises (dumbbells, barbells). However, a critical issue was identified: 53.6% of respondents engaged in strength training without acquiring proper exercise techniques.

Examining the potential causes of excess body weight, Fig. 5 highlights the most frequently cited factors. The leading reason (44.2%) was insufficient physical activity throughout the day. Other contributing factors included overeating (23.2%), excessive consumption of fast carbohydrates and processed foods (22.5%), irregular sleep patterns (21.7%), and high stress levels (21.7%).



**Fig. 4. Motivational factors for fitness engagement among mature women (n=138), %**



**Fig. 5. Primary causes of excess body weight among mature women (n=138), %**

Through the survey, we also collected anthropometric data, which allowed us to calculate participants' BMI, analyze the obtained figures, and identify factors influencing excess body weight. Based on BMI calculations, the respondents were categorized into five groups: Significant underweight, Mild underweight, Normal weight, Overweight, First-degree obesity.

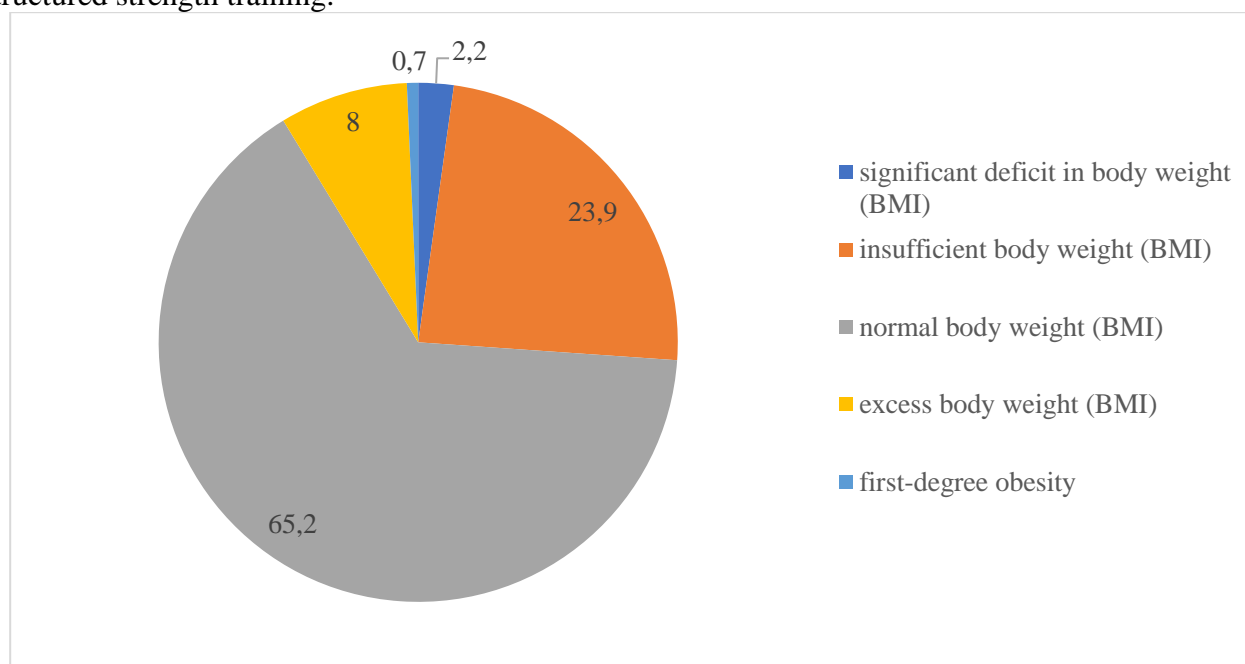
Further analysis of responses revealed strong correlations between body weight and lifestyle factors such as physical activity, diet, sleep quality, and stress levels. For instance, 67% of underweight respondents (BMI below 16) admitted to inadequate food intake, whereas 80% of women with normal BMI followed a more balanced diet. Among overweight participants,

50% maintained an average eating pattern, while 36% engaged in frequent overeating.

Additionally, sleep patterns played a significant role. Both underweight women (67%) and those with first-degree obesity (100%) reported experiencing disrupted and inconsistent sleep cycles, despite the fact that their total sleep duration fell within recommended norms (5–8 hours).

Ultimately, this survey of 138 mature women provided a comprehensive understanding of their fitness motivations, weight-related concerns, and lifestyle habits. The findings helped us define the key components of a targeted strength training program aimed at effective body weight management in mature women. Consequently, we decided to focus on developing a customized fitness program that integrates modern domestic

strategies for weight correction through structured strength training.



**Fig. 6. Distribution of respondents by BMI category (n=138), %**

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

In the exploratory phase of a pedagogical experiment on the motives for fitness engagement in youth and causes of excess body weight in mature women, an anonymous survey of 138 respondents from various higher education institutions was conducted. The results showed a positive trend in youth interest in sports, with main motives being: 1) maintaining athletic shape (33.3%), 2) body weight correction and improving posture (31.9%), and 3) enhancing

emotional well-being and resilience (19.6%). Causes of excess weight in mature women were identified as insufficient physical activity (44.2%), overeating (23.2%), excessive fast food intake (22.5%), poor sleep (21.7%), and high stress (21.7%).

The prospects for further research will focus on developing and testing strength fitness programs for mature women to promote their harmonious development, encourage regular physical activity, and improve health.

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#### Анотація

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#### КЛЮЧОВІ МОТИВАЦІЙНІ ФАКТОРИ ДЛЯ СИЛОВИХ ТРЕНУВАНЬ СЕРЕД ЖІНОК ЗРІЛОГО ВІКУ

*Дослідження мотиваційної сфери для українських жінок є наразі надзвичайно актуальним та специфічним. Динаміка змін мотивації залежить від зовнішніх факторів, наві'язаних війною між Україною та росією, а також від внутрішніх факторів, сформованих пандемією та третім роком війни. Метою цього дослідження є виявлення ключових мотиваційних факторів для силових тренувань серед жінок зрілого віку. Дослідження проводилось через анонімне опитування 138 студенток вищих навчальних закладів віком 25-35 років. Метою було оцінити їх мотивацію до фітнесу, загальне ставлення до фізичної активності та фактори, що сприяють надмірній вазі. Учасниці не були професійними спортсменками, а опитування проводилось за допомогою Google Forms, розповсюджених через соціальні мережі. Ключові результати показали, що 21,7% респонденток займаються в фітнес-центрах, але лише 13% займаються регулярно. Більшість жінок (49,3%) надають перевагу самостійним тренуванням, а 21,7% планують розпочати тренування. Більшість жінок віддають перевагу кардіо (41,3%) або силовим тренуванням (32,6%). Значна частина (33,3%) займається фітнесом для підтримки фізичної форми, 31,9% — для контролю ваги, а 19,6% шукають покращення психоемоційного стану. Участь у силових тренуваннях зафіксовано у 52,1% респонденток, але багато з них (53,6%) займалися без належної техніки виконання вправ. Нестача фізичної активності була визначена як основна причина надмірної ваги, наступними факторами стали переїдання, неправильне харчування, нерегулярний сон та стрес. Опитування також включало антропометричні дані, які показали кореляцію між факторами способу життя та вагою. Дослідження надає цінні відомості про мотивацію та виклики, з якими стикаються жінки зрілого віку під час силових тренувань. Отримані результати сприяли розробці цільової програми силових тренувань, орієнтованої на управління вагою та покращення загального стану здоров'я.*

*Ключові слова: оздоровчо-рекреаційна фізична активність, фітнес, зрілий вік, жінки, мотивація.*

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