Mood disturbance, mileage, and intention to run another marathon: Experiences of marathon runners at one and two months post-marathon

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BACKGROUND
• Marathon running: Race participation has increased more than 80% since 2000 (State of Sport, 2013) with influx of novice runners.
• Marathon training: Researchers have examined the experiences of novice marathon runners during training in terms of physical and psychological adaptations and training volume, and found positive changes to both fitness and self-confidence (Boudreau & Giorgi, 2010; Lane, 2001; Lane et al., 2006; Lemm & Wirtz, 2013).
• Limitations of previous research: Little research has examined experiences of novice runners post-marathon.
• Areas for Exploration: Experiences of runners post-marathon may differ based on factors such as perceptions of success or failure (Lane et al., 2002), experience with injury (Frijer & Bishop, 2007) and marathon performance and may influence mood state and future running behavior.

PURPOSE
• The purpose of present study was to determine mood state, weekly mileage, and intention to run another marathon at 1- and 2-months post-marathon, and how injury, perceptions of goal achievement, and marathon performance impacted these variables.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
1. Did marathon runners’ mood state, weekly mileage, and intention to run another marathon change from 1-month to 2-months post-marathon?
   - Hypothesis 1: Mood state would improve from 1-month to 2-months post-marathon.
   - Hypothesis 2: Intention to run another marathon and weekly mileage would increase from 1- to 2-months post-marathon.
2. Was marathon time or number of days impacted by injury during training associated with mood state, weekly mileage, and intention to run another marathon at 1- and 2-months post-marathon?
   - Hypothesis 3: Faster marathon times and fewer injury days would be associated with less mood disturbance, higher intention to run another marathon, and higher weekly mileage at 1- and 2-months post-marathon.

PARTICIPANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Days Impacted by Injury</td>
<td>5.32 (SD = 5.06)</td>
<td>8.23 (SD = 6.57)</td>
<td>7.10 (SD = 6.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marathon Time¹</td>
<td>221.20 (SD = 38.87)</td>
<td>286.10 (SD = 46.53)</td>
<td>260.65 (SD = 53.83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful in Goal²</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *Denotes significant difference between males and females (p < .05). ¹Reported in minutes. ²Number of participants who thought they had been successful in achieving or somewhat achieving their marathon goal.

PROCEDURE & MEASURES
• As part of larger study, IRB approval and informed consent were completed prior to data collection.
• Following measures were completed at 1- and 2-months post-marathon (unless otherwise noted) via online survey.
• Psychological measures
  1. Mood state (Incredibly short form POMS; Dean et al., 1990)
  2. Intention to run another marathon (“On a scale of 1-10 how likely are you to run another marathon?”)
• Physical measures
  3. Weekly mileage post-marathon (self-report item)
  4. Days injured (recorded throughout training)
• Performance measures
  5. Marathon time (retrieved from marathon results website)

RESULTS (CONT’D)

Research Question 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>One-month post-marathon</th>
<th>Two-months post-marathon</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mood state¹</td>
<td>8.15 (SD = 4.74)</td>
<td>14.90 (SD = 4.75)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly mileage²</td>
<td>7.61 (SD = 6.25)</td>
<td>9.93 (SD = 10.70)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intention to run another marathon³</td>
<td>7.44 (SD = 2.72)</td>
<td>7.76 (SD = 3.26)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: *Denotes significant at < .05. ¹Higher score denotes more mood disturbance. ²Score denotes self-reported weekly mileage for the previous week. ³Scored on a scale of 1-10 with 1 meaning no intention to run another marathon and 10 meaning definitely going to run another marathon.

REFERENCES


CONCLUSIONS
• Inconsistent with our hypothesis, mood disturbance increased significantly from 1-month post-marathon to 2-months post-marathon and intention to run another marathon and weekly mileage were unchanged.
• Consistent with our hypothesis, marathon time and number of days impacted by injury were positively associated with mood disturbance at 2-months post-marathon.
• Inconsistent with our hypothesis marathon time and injury were not associated with intention to run another marathon or weekly mileage at 1- or 2-months post-marathon.