

RESEARCH SUMMARY

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON PARTICIPATION IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR ADULTS AND ADOLESCENTS

PROF ROCHELLE EIME, DR JACK HARVEY,
MELANIE CHARITY, DR AURELIE PANKOWIAK,
PROF HANS WESTERBEEK



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Background

Sports management and public health physical activity stakeholders need to understand changing patterns of participation to inform strategic developments for participation.

Aim

To investigate changes in the frequency and duration of participation in sport and physical activity in Australia from pre-COVID-19 to during-COVID-19, broken down by the specific type of activity and by gender, age and region.

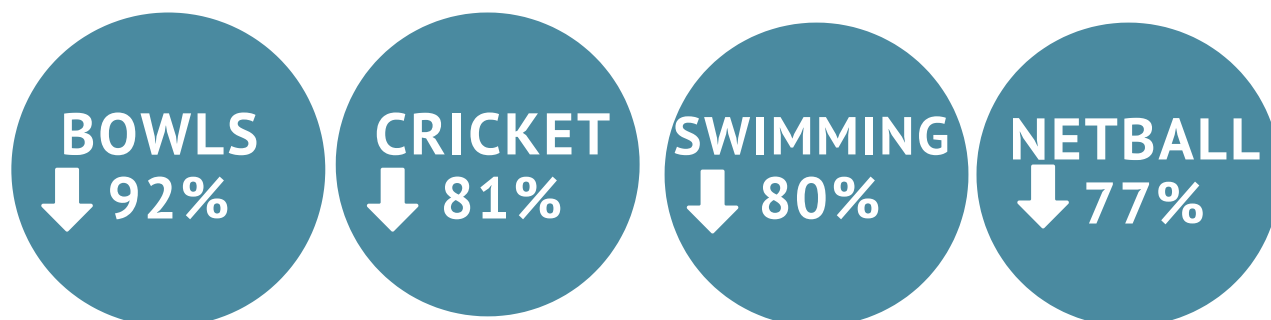
The greatest decline in participation during COVID-19 was in team sports, and the decline was greater for men than for women.

Methods

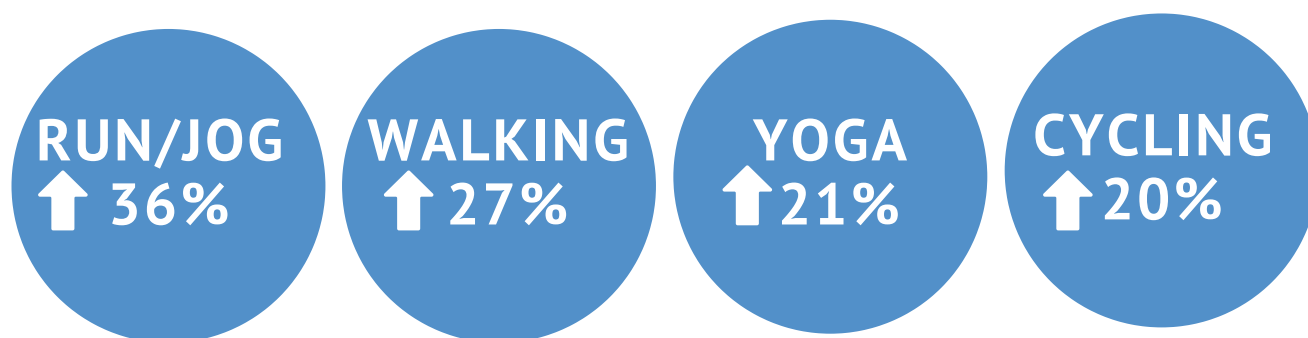
During the first pandemic restrictions and lockdowns in Australia in May-June 2020, 6,140 survey respondents provided information about the types, frequency and duration of the sport and physical activity they participated in prior to and during COVID-19 restrictions. Differences between mean values were analyzed.

Results 6,140 survey participants, 4724 adults, 560 adolescents. Across all activities the average frequency of participation declined by 35% for men/boys and 24% for women/girls. Duration in participation declined by 60% for men and 59% for women

FREQUENCY OF PLAY PRE-COVID V COVID



Increased frequency of individual activities and mainly for women and girls



The decline in participation frequency and duration was greatest for those who did not identify as a man or woman (61% and 75% respectively).

Discussion

Even before COVID-19, societal patterns of participation in sport and physical activity were changing from organized, competitive, and structured activities to activities with more time and place related flexibility, with more social options and more informal participation.

It is important that providers of sport and physical activity opportunities recognize changing consumer behavior and preferences in developing strategies to promote participation in sport and physical activity

How will sport respond to getting these men back in the game, and women back from home-based yoga?



Contact: Professor Rochelle Eime
r.eime@federation.edu.au