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Associate Professor Dr. Hairul is a Deputy Dean of Research, Innovation, Industry – Community Engagement and a lecturer in Exercise and Sports Science Programme, School of Health Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia. He graduated from Springfield College, MA USA with a Master degree in Sport Psychology in 2003 and a PhD from the University of Western Australia in Sports & Exercise psychology in 2007. His areas of research interest include the use of psycho-behavioral techniques in sports performance and health enhancement, particularly progressive muscle relaxation. He also has a deep interest in psychometric development and validation. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hairul has over 250 publications in the form of journals manuscripts, conference proceedings, books, book chapters, and newspaper articles. From 2014 to 2018, he wrote a weekly newspaper article in *Mingguan Malaysia Bersama Psikologi* column in which he addresses issues related to emotional and mental health from various aspects, especially exercise and mental health. He successfully obtained 29 research grants either as a principal investigator or a co-investigator. Associate Professor Dr. Hairul is actively involved in the national coaching certification board as an academic advisory board member, He also provides regular consultations for private and governmental agencies such as National Sports Council and State Sport Council as well as sports associations particularly in sports and exercise psychology. Besides academics, his is passionate about volleyball in which he is actively playing and coaching.

ABSTRACT

EXERCISE HABIT STRENGTH: CONCEPT AND MEASUREMENT

The importance of habit in daily life functioning cannot be undermined. From the moment we wake up, many daily activities such as brushing teeth, washing up, preparing breakfast, getting dressed, drive a car and many others are the function habit. Habits have been defined as a learned sequence of acts that have become automatic responses to specific cues, and are functional in obtaining certain goals or end-states. Once formed, habit reduces and eliminate the deliberate decision making process involving an act or a behaviour. Promoting exercise habit has been one of the interests of exercise psychologists and health psychologists. Indeed, the interest is fostered by the known benefits of habitual exercise. In fact, a growing evidence exists outlining the benefits of habitual exercise on multiple domains including physical, psychological and social benefits. However, despite its acknowledged benefits, the prevalence of physical activity is low and the pattern of physical activity is declining across ages. Indeed, increased physical inactivity among adolescents can be observed worldwide. Thus, understanding the formation of exercise habit and measuring it is an important precursor to promoting exercise habituation. This presentation will discuss the concept of exercise habit strength, the instrument that can be used to measure the construct and its psychometric properties, and the potential areas that can be pursued within this line of research.

Key Words: Validity, Reliability, Exercise habit strength