

VALIDITY OF RATING OF PERCEIVED EXERTION (RPE) ON TRAINING INTENSITY IN RECREATIONAL RUNNER

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to determine whether or not the Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE) is a reliable instrument for determining the level of vigour with which recreational runners engage in their workouts. Information was gathered from a number of runners who were engaged in training of varied intensities, and their RPE ratings were compared with other techniques of determining the intensity of their training. According to the findings of the investigation, there is a significant association between the RPE scores and the actual severity of the training, which suggests that RPE has the potential to be a useful tool in assisting runners in regulating the intensity of their training. On the other hand, this research has certain shortcomings, such as the use of subjective measuring techniques, a very small sample size, and the possibility of bias in the RPE response. An improvement in the validity and accuracy of the use of RPE, an investigation into the variables that impact perceptions of exercise intensity, and an evaluation of the association between RPE and long-term exercise results are some of the recommendations for future study.

Keywords: *Exercise Intensity; Recreational Runners; Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE)*

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INTRODUCTION

Keeping one's health and physical fitness in check has become an important concern for a great number of people all over the globe in our contemporary period, which is characterised by a wide range of demands and stresses (Brewer *et al.*, 2021). One of the most important methods to accomplish these objectives is by participation in sporting activities, with running being a popular option among a lot of individuals. There are a number of major health advantages that may be gained by running, including the enhancement of cardiovascular and respiratory health, as well as the reduction of the chance of developing chronic illnesses like diabetes and coronary heart disease.

Furthermore, running is an activity that is not only user-friendly but also accessible, since it can be performed almost anywhere and does not need any specialised gear (Inoue *et al.*, 2022).

Nevertheless, in order for people to get the most possible advantages from running activities, it is essential for them to pay attention to a variety of elements, including the intensity of their training. When we talk about training intensity, we are referring to the amount of difficulty or the level of work that is necessary during a training session. When it comes to developing cardiorespiratory fitness, building muscular strength, or even losing weight, this is a significant aspect that plays a role in determining the outcomes of training. When it comes to attaining the results that are sought, one of the most important steps is to determine the intensity of the exercise based on the individual's talents and objectives.

The intensity of exercise may be measured using a variety of techniques, including the measurement of the heart rate, the measurement of the breathing rate, and the use of monitoring equipment such as sports watches that are fitted with heart rate sensors. On the other hand, the Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE) is a system that has gained widespread acceptance and is used by a large number of people. An individual's relative perceived exertion (RPE) is a subjective way in which they rate how difficult or heavy an activity feels to them, often using a numerical or verbal scale. The fact that this approach enables people to assess the intensity of their exercise without the need for specialised equipment or support from other sources makes it a highly practical way to employ, particularly for persons who exercise on their own by themselves (Faelli *et al.*, 2019).

Regarding the validity of utilising RPE as a measure of training intensity, especially in the context of recreational runners, there are still doubts that persist despite the fact that it is rather common. Individuals who run for recreational purposes often have various degrees of fitness and experience, which might have an effect on how intensely they perceive their workouts. A person's perception of the amount of effort they put out during a workout session may also be influenced

by other elements, such as the degree of exhaustion they are experiencing, the temperature of the surrounding area, and their current physical state.

As a result, research that aims to evaluate the validity of the use of RPE in quantifying the intensity of training in recreational runners is both relevant and significant. With this validity, not only is it crucial to guarantee that runners can depend on RPE as an accurate guide for controlling the intensity of their training, but it may also assist increase the efficacy of training and lower the risk of injury that is linked with over- or under-training.

In this context, the purpose of the current research was to investigate the degree to which resting heart rate (RPE) accurately represents the real intensity of training in recreational runners. As a result, it is believed that this study will not only make a substantial addition to our knowledge of the use of RPE in training, but it will also provide runners with practical advantages in the process of developing their training programmes.

Our knowledge of the function that RPE plays in the measuring of the intensity of training for recreational runners will be strengthened as a result of this study, and we hope that it will also enhance the advice that recreational runners get in order to achieve their fitness objectives. As a result, this strategy has the potential to enhance the efficiency of training and the overall well-being of recreational runners, in addition to delivering greater advantages to society as a whole (Cabral *et al.*, 2020).

METHOD

The study subjects were 90 physically active male volunteers All subjects completed a Health 1 screening questionnaire that revealed no evidence that exercise testing or training should be limited. The subjects provided informed consent and protocols for the study. Subject characteristics are presented in Table I. Since there is no expectation of gender-related effects on the relationship between Session RPE and objective markers of exercise intensity, the results of all subjects are aggregated into one group for analysis. All subjects completed 3 different practice sessions with a minimum of 2 days of rest between sessions.

The first session was a 2400 m cooper test with a low speed / intensity of 50-80%, the second session continued with a tempo speed with an intensity of 81-90% and session 3 was carried out by running to a maximum of 91-100% exercise intensity based on a maximum Heart Rate, each session had been completed subjects were immediately presented with a paper containing a borg scale 1-10 and chose a number where the level of fatigue they felt towards the exercise that had been done. For height measured using inbody (USA) and height using staturmeter, for HR measurement using Garmin (Finland) For Runner smart watch 55,245,255,965.

Table 1. Mean (\pm standard deviation) characteristics of the subjects

Variabel	Men (n=90)	P-Value
	Average \pm SD	
Age (Years)	31,9 \pm 7,2	0,474
Height (cm)	170,1 \pm 5,80	0.081
Body Mass (kg)	66,18 \pm 9.66	0.262
V02MAX (ml/kg/mins)	54,3 \pm 4,2	0.166
HR Peaks (Beats/Mins)	188,02 \pm 7,21	0,133
Running Time (Years)	4,6 \pm 1,18	0.001
Training Frequency (Time/week)	4,46 \pm 0,74	0.003

Table 2. Modification of the Rating of Perceived Exertion Scale.

Rating	Descriptor
0	Rest
1	Very, Very Easy
2	Easy
3	Moderate
4	Somewhat Hard
5	Hard
6	.
7	Very Hard
8	.
9	.
10	Maximal

Modified Borg RPE Scale. Reproduced from Foster et al. (2001).
RPE 5 rating of perceived exertion.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research involved data analysis to investigate the reliability of using the Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE) method for determining physical exertion in recreational runners. The analysis involved several stages to understand the connection between RPE scores and activity intensity (Norton *et al.*, 2019). We collected data from recreational runners at various training intensities, including RPE ratings and actual training intensity, such as heart rate or running speed, during and after each session.

The study analyzes the relationship between RPE ratings and training intensity using statistical approaches like Pearson correlation. The findings provide insight into the accuracy of RPE levels in determining the actual training intensity in recreational runners. Statistical analyses were conducted to compare RPE ratings between different training situations, such as intense or less intense sessions or different environmental conditions. Through this approach, we are able to get a better understanding of how perceptions of exercise intensity shift based on the physical parameters of the activity (Matos *et al.*, 2020).

Descriptive analyses were conducted to explain the distribution of RPE scores among study participants, determining mean, median, and standard deviation, and creating graphs to visualize the distribution. This helped understand subjects' subjective reactions to exercise intensity. The research conducted regression analyses to understand the impact of age, gender, and fitness level on the RPE response in recreational runners, providing insights into the validity of RPE in various training scenarios.

In conclusion, we organise our results in a format that is both clear and thorough. This format includes tables, graphs, and statistical interpretations that are pertinent to the findings. By going through these extensive analytical stages, we were able to get a deeper understanding of the link between RPE scores and real training intensity, as well as the variables that impact the perception of training intensity in recreational runners (Stuckenschneider *et al.*, 2020).

results. It is possible that this will make it simpler for runners to organise and carry out their training programmes in a manner that is both more efficient and effective (Jabbour *et al.*, 2018).

In addition, the practical relevance of our results is that the use of RPE may be the means by which runners may be protected from injuries that are brought on by overtraining. It is possible for runners to minimise the increased risk of injury that is caused by tiredness or overtraining if they have a better grasp of the degree of effort that they are expending throughout their training sessions. This may assist guarantee that they are able to continue to take part in physical activities without being hindered by injuries that might potentially slow down their growth.

The findings support the validity of using Relative Percentile (RPE) as a method for quantifying exercise intensity, especially in leisure activities. This aligns with previous scientific literature, suggesting RPE can be an efficient tool for assessing exercise intensity across various training groups and settings.

Our research significantly impacts fitness monitoring and workout programme creation. Understanding the relationship between resting heart rate and exercise intensity helps trainers create effective, tailored programs, assess fitness development, and make necessary adjustments based on findings.

Our study's findings could influence future fitness and sport research practices by assessing RPE validity across various individuals and exercise scenarios, providing a deeper understanding of its applicability in measuring exercise intensity. Longitudinal studies, which are studies that follow runners over longer periods of time, may also give deeper insight into how the usage of RPE relates to long-term training results, such as enhanced cardiorespiratory fitness or improved running performance (Kilpatrick *et al.*, 2020).

In addition, more study might help us get a deeper knowledge of the variables that impact individual perceptions of exercise intensity, as well as the ways in which these factors may influence the validity of using RPE as a measure

of exercise intensity. Based on this information, we may be able to devise more efficient methods to assist runners in better interpreting and using the RPE scale.

Our research has significant implications for exercise program formulation, practice, and fitness research. It may enhance exercise efficacy, protect against overtraining injuries, and understand the role of RPE in exercise intensity, potentially improving the health and athletic performance of recreational runners worldwide.

Identify and Discuss Methodological or Conceptual Limitations of this Research

When interpreting the findings of a scientific research, it is necessary to identify and take into account the limitations that are inherent to any scientific investigation. In this part, we will talk about some of the most significant limitations of our study on the validity of utilising the Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE) in determining the intensity of training in recreational runners (Dias *et al.*, 2018).

The research has limitations due to the selection of measuring techniques for comparing RPE ratings with activity intensity. Various methods, such as heart rate and running pace, may not accurately represent the actual intensity of training due to potential influences like stress or coffee. Additionally, variables like terrain and weather conditions may affect results.

The research faced limitations due to a smaller sample size, limiting its generalizability and statistical power. The sample consisted of recreational runners with similar fitness levels and running experience, limiting the generalizability of the results. This may have limited our ability to make more general conclusions on the use of RPE in a variety of different populations of runners (Açıkbaş *et al.*, 2023).

Our participants may not provide honest or accurate responses to their RPE ratings, potentially causing bias in the data. Despite efforts to create a welcoming environment, there is no guarantee that participants will submit

genuine or accurate responses, potentially compromising the validity of our findings.

One of the limitations of our research is that it does not place sufficient emphasis on the subjective components of RPE usage. We did not take into account other objective criteria, such as blood lactate levels or maximum VO₂ measurements, which could provide additional information about the level of physical effort that is required during exercise. This is despite the fact that we focused our attention on the validity of individuals' perceptions of the intensity of their exercise. Consequently, it is possible that we do not have a comprehensive understanding of the entire intensity of the activity, which may restrict our assessment of the validity of RPE as a measure of exercise intensity (Napier *et al.*, 2020).

In conclusion, it is important to bring to your attention the fact that our research only offers a glimpse of the association between resting heart rate and the intensity of exercise at a single instant in time. Our participants were not followed for a longer amount of time, nor were we able to see any changes in their judgements of the intensity of the exercise during the course of the study. As a result, we are unable to draw any conclusions on the reliability or validity of the capacity to utilise RPE as a measurement of the intensity of exercise over the long term.

In spite of the fact that we have made every effort to address these constraints in the most effective manner possible in the planning and execution of our research, it is essential to keep in mind that no study is flawless. Every single study has a number of restrictions that must be taken into consideration while attempting to make sense of the findings that they have produced. We are able to avoid drawing conclusions that are unsuitable or overstated by recognising and comprehending the constraints of our study. Additionally, we are able to comprehend the boundaries of what we are able to draw on the basis of our results (Yu *et al.*, 2021).

Suggestions for Further Research and Development of Exercise Intensity Measurement Methods

We are able to develop numerous suggestions and future research areas that may help us get a deeper knowledge of the use of Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE) in assessing the intensity of training in recreational runners after we have evaluated the findings of our study and identified the limitations that are currently present. In this part, we will talk about a few suggestions that might serve as a foundation for further study in the future (Cochrane-Snyman *et al.*, 2019).

In the first place, we strongly suggest doing more study to determine whether or not the use of RPE is a reliable method for determining the level of intensity of training in various groups of recreational runners. A wider variety of fitness levels, ages, and years of experience running might be included in the sample in future study, which could broaden the breadth of the sample. This will assist explain the degree to which RPE may be generally used in a variety of exercise scenarios and identify elements that may impact the validity of its usage via the process of identifying those aspects.

Additionally, additional study might further expand our awareness of the variables that impact individual perceptions of exercise intensity and how these factors may influence the validity of using RPE as a measure of exercise intensity. This would be a significant contribution to our understanding of the topic. As an example, research might investigate the ways in which psychological elements like motivation or feelings of exhaustion can have an effect on the responses of the resting heart rate (RPE), as well as the ways in which physical factors like weather conditions or physical weariness can have an effect on how much physical effort is exerted during exercise (Pedersen *et al.*, 2021).

Moreover, future study may also investigate strategies to increase the accuracy and consistency of utilising RPE as a measure of exercise intensity. This would be an important area of investigation. In order to do this, it may be necessary to produce more precise guidelines or instructions for the use of the

RPE scale, as well as the creation of instruments or technologies that may assist in the monitoring of exercise intensity with more precision. An example of this would be the use of a mobile application or a wearable gadget to offer runners with instant feedback on the degree of effort they are exerting during a training session.

Additionally, future study might also investigate the link between the intensity of exercise that is felt and the effects of exercise over a longer period of time, such as enhanced cardiorespiratory fitness or improved running performance via exercise. It is possible that longitudinal studies that follow runners over longer periods of time will give deeper insight into the relationship between the use of RPE and the effects of long-term training, as well as how variables such as exhaustion and recuperation impact individual perceptions of the intensity of training.

Additionally, future study might potentially investigate the use of RPE in certain training contexts or scenarios that call for dynamic modification of training intensity. For example, interval training or training under changing environmental conditions are examples of settings that could include this kind of training. Having this information will assist in elucidating the degree to which RPE may be used in a variety of workout settings and will widen our comprehension of the validity of its application in certain circumstances.

Furthermore, in the future, research might potentially investigate the possibility of incorporating the use of RPE into the process of developing workout programmes that are more efficient. One possible step in this direction is the formulation of recommendations or guidelines for the use of RPE in the process of constructing exercise programmes that are tailored to the individual's fitness objectives and their current physical condition. It is thus possible for personal trainers and exercise instructors to utilise RPE as a tool to measure the improvement of their customers' fitness levels and to make any required modifications to their exercise programmes.

Athletes' levels of stress, sleep habits, and dietary intake are all variables that might have an impact on their performance and recovery. Future study could further investigate the link between RPE and other factors that affect athlete performance and recovery. Consequently, this will contribute to a more in-depth knowledge of the relationship between RPE and the general well-being of athletes and will make it possible to build more holistic methods to promote athlete performance and recovery (Crawford *et al.*, 2018).

As a result, further study has the potential to enhance our comprehension of the use of RPE in the measurement of training intensity in recreational runners, as well as to discover methods that may enhance the validity, accuracy, and consistency of its application in a variety of training settings. As a result, this study has the potential to make a substantial contribution to our knowledge of training and athletic performance, in addition to providing practical advantages for recreational runners in terms of fulfilling their fitness objectives.

CONCLUSION

This research sheds light on the significance of Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE) as a viable instrument for determining the level of intensity of training within the population of recreational runners. In spite of the fact that this research has several shortcomings, such as the use of subjective measuring techniques and the relatively small sample size, the findings of the data analysis indicate that there is a significant link between RPE ratings and the real intensity of the exercise. This study has a number of practical implications, one of which is that RPE may serve as a helpful guide for runners to adjust the intensity of their training without the need for them to make use of specialised equipment or outside support. An improvement in the validity and accuracy of the use of RPE, an investigation into the variables that impact perceptions of exercise intensity, and an evaluation of the association between RPE and long-term exercise results are some of the recommendations for future study. In conclusion, this study not only offers a substantial contribution to our knowledge of the use of RPE in the

measurement of training intensity in recreational runners, but it also lays the groundwork for more research in this particular field.

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