

ADOLESCENTS' PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, PERCEIVED PHYSICAL COMPETENCE, INTRINSIC MOTIVATION, AND ENJOYMENT IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION FROM GRADE 6 TO GRADE 9

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Physical activity (PA) is always a result of cognitive processes, in which social-cognitive factors appear as key determinants in the adoption process of PA. The aim of this study is to analyze adolescents' physical activity, perceived physical competence, intrinsic PA motivation, and enjoyment in physical education (PE) from Grade 6 to Grade 9. Studies about changes in adolescents' physical activity, perceived physical competence, intrinsic motivation, and PE enjoyment have not been reported in a longitudinal design among same sample, including the transition period from Grade 6 to Grade 7.

A sample of 438 Grade 6 students from Central Finland were followed up across the time period of 2007–2009. The Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Research Protocol (HBSC; Currie et al. 2002) was used to measure adolescents' self-assessed PA. Perceived physical competence was analyzed with the Physical Self-Perception Profile (PSPP; Fox & Corbin 1989). Contextual intrinsic PA motivation was measured by the Sport Motivation Scale (SMS; Pelletier et al. 1995). The SMS consists of seven subscales, comprising three types of intrinsic motivation (intrinsic motivation to accomplish things, intrinsic motivation to know, and intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation). PE enjoyment was assessed using the Sport Enjoyment Scale (Scanlan et al. 1993), in which the items were modified to represent the school PE setting. Analysis of the data was conducted with repeated measures ANOVA. Mean score differences between different measure points were analyzed with LSD-tests.

The results supported previous findings of adolescents' decreased physical activity from Grade 6 to 9. Perceived physical competence increased significantly from Grade 8 autumn to Grade 8 spring. In line with previous studies, the level of physical competence was higher within boys compared to girls. The level of intrinsic PA motivation increased especially from Grade 8 autumn to Grade 8 spring. PE enjoyment varied especially between Grade 7 autumn and Grade 8 autumn. These findings suggest that further research is required to understand the relationships of adolescents' social-cognitive motivational factors and PA in PE and leisure time.

References:

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