HOW SOCIAL PHYSIQUE ANXIETY EFFECTS ON LEISURE TIME PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OF SCHOOL STUDENTS

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According to Hart et al (1989) some individuals with high level of social physique anxiety (SPA) may avoid participating in physical activity as a result of their concerns about their presentation of their physique and others may be motivated to engage in activity with desire to improve their physical appearances. The aim of this study was to examine how the impact of SPA on physical activity in leisure time context are mediated by the approach and avoidance motivational orientations and physical self-esteem.

The participants in this study were 553 school students at age of 12-18 years. Social physique anxiety was measured by Social Physique Anxiety Scale (SPAS, Hart, et al., 1989) and motivational orientations (mastery and performance approach / avoidance) by Achievement Goals Questionnaire for Sport (Conroy, et al., 2003). Physical activity was assessed by Leisure-Time Exercise Questionnaire (LTEQ; Godin and Shepherd’s 1985). Also the physical self-esteem was estimated by subscale from Physical Self Description Questionnaire (PSDQ; Marsh et al. 1994).

The mediation effect of motivational orientations was tested using structural equation modeling.

The fit indices of the model showed a moderately good fit as NNFI and CFI indexes (0.87 and 0.88) were lower the cutoff value 0.90, although RMSEA was on acceptable level (0.069; CI 0.065-0.073). The model accounted for the 20% of the variance in physical activity. SPA was negatively related to physical self-esteem and to the mastery and performance approaches and positively to avoidance approaches. From motivational orientations the mastery and performance approaches were positively related with physical activity. The model, where the effect of mastery approach on the physical activity was fixed to zero accounted significantly less of the variance in physical activity (11%) than the initial model. Also, in this restricted model a significant negative direct effect of SPA on physical activity evoked. This indicated that the motivational orientation on mastery approach was responsible for the direct effect from SPA to physical activity and confirmed the mediation effect of it. From an applied perspective, this finding may help physical educators to overcome the problem related to the social physical anxiety as one type of potential barrier to physical exercise participation among school students.

References

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