

PHYSICAL LITERACY AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN SWEDISH PRESCHOOL CHILDREN – A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

Author(s): DERAKHTI, M., Institution: MALMÖ UNIVERSITY, Country: SWEDEN, Abstract-ID: 1591

INTRODUCTION:

There are substantial evidence for the numerous positive health benefits of physical activity (PA) [1]. At the same time, PA-levels in European and Swedish children are insufficient [2]. Inadequate PA-levels, and associated noncommunicable diseases, are regarded as one of the most significant public health challenges confronting us. Hence, it is important to understand how we can promote ways for children to reach adequate PA-levels. Physical Literacy (PL), a theory with potential benefits for PA-behaviors and health, has garnered increasing attention over the last few years. Encompassing physical, affective, and cognitive dimensions PL is often described as an individual's capacity, confidence, and motivation to partake- and engage in PA [3]. The early childhood years are suggested for PL promotion since this period is regarded as crucial for PA-behaviors, future health, and the opportunity to reach most children via school settings. However, the assessment and status of PL in young children, specifically in Sweden, is at best scarce. Consequently, research is required to assess PL and its connection to PA-levels in young Swedish children.

METHODS:

The data for this study will be derived from hip-worn accelerometers (GT3X+, Actigraph) worn for 7 days to assess PA-levels, as well as a modified version of the Canadian Preschool Physical Literacy Assessment to assess PL. The study will include 412 preschool children, aged 3-6, from 20 preschools. The data will be analyzed and presented via descriptive statistics, and multi-level linear regression models will be used to determine associations between total- and intensity stratified PA-levels and PL.

RESULTS:

Tentatively, the results of this study are expected to provide: 1) a picture of PL and PA in Swedish preschool children and the connection therein; 2) much-needed data for the fields of PL and early childhood research; 3) Indications on effectiveness of PL for promoting PA; and 4) guidance for future research in PL.

CONCLUSION:

With individual, and public health advancements in mind, there is ample reason to enhance our understanding of the relationship between PL and PA-levels of Swedish preschool children, as well as, adding data to the PL-field. The present study has the potential to contribute to these objectives.

References:

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