Determinant of Psychological Markers of Physical Activity Habituation Among 10–12 Years Old Children

N A Wahat, M N Jawis, H A Hashim, N S Bistamam

Exercise and Sport Science Programme, School of Health Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Bertam, Penang, Malaysia; Sports Science Unit, School of Medical Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Bertam, Penang, Malaysia

Numbers of studies has been done to determine physiological effect of physical activity (PA) on children’s health throughout the life. However, few studies were done to determine psychological effects and markers towards PA specifically among Malaysian children. It is important to determine the motivational cues in performing the exercise behaviour among children, therefore help to sustain their PA throughout the life. The aim of this study was to investigate the psychological correlates of PA and to provide evidence of psychological markers of PA habituation among children. Three hundred and eighty children (age 10.5 ± 0.5 years old) were randomly recruited from district of Kota Bharu, Kelantan, Malaysia primary schools. Subject’s height and weight (BMI) followed by PA-Q was obtained during the test visits. Results indicated that physical education enjoyment showed positive correlations with intention (r = 0.47, p < 0.01), attitude (r = 0.44, p < 0.01), subjective norms (r = 0.48, p < 0.01), behavioural control (r = 0.47, p < 0.01), habit strength (r = 0.49, p < 0.01) and the sustainability of doing PA outside the school (r = 0.23, p < 0.01). These data suggest that children PA is positively correlates with enjoyment experienced during physical education lesson during the school. Moreover, intention to perform exercise was positively correlates with attitude, subjective norm and behavioural control. Therefore, it can lead to the automaticity to perform the exercise behaviour regularly and increase the sustainability to carry it out throughout the life.