

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN MOTIVATION IN PE

As a result of compulsory physical education lessons, exercise is likely to be driven by external regulation to some extent. However, extrinsic motivation may still result in positive outcomes if the external factors driving behaviour are taken on board as personally valued and meaningful (Deci, Eghrari, Patrick, & Leone, 1994). Introjected regulation has received attention as a means to encourage more autonomous functioning in adolescents in relation to exercise (Standage, Gillison, & Treasure, 2007).

Gillison, Osborn, Standage, & Skevington (2009) discovered that sport and exercise played very different roles in the lives of adolescent boys than of girls and that they are affected by introjected motivation differently. They found that sports and exercise formed a large part of boys' social life. In fact, boys' reported self-generated perceptions of having obligations towards peers to stay involved in group sporting activities and relied on their involvement in these activities to obtain peer approval and to enhance their sense of self-worth. Conversely for girls, sport and exercise was separate from their social lives. If they were engaged in regular sport and exercise, this tended to be either alone, or with separate, sport-specific peers rather than their existing friends. The reasons for exercise were mainly due to the failure to attain health and fitness outcomes (i.e., via a sense of guilt). Gender role perceptions are also an important factor in gaining peer acceptance (Crissey, 2006; Malcom, 2003), as they may find exercising as unfeminine or unattractive.

Internalize Value of PE

Help adolescents to internalize the value of compulsory PE to become more self-determined in their motivation towards exercise behaviour. Teachers can do so through 3 ways (Deci, et al., 1994), namely:

- Providing a meaningful rationale,
- Acknowledging the students' feelings
- Conveying choice

De-emphasise female gender roles

For girls, being confident in one's gender role or considering gender role to be unimportant to encourage participation of adolescent girls in sports and exercise. (E.g. Use of examples to show that being successful in sports does not necessarily mean they are less feminine or attractive.)

Create suitable class conditions to encourage engagement

With the understanding that boys and girls are motivated differently, resources permitting, create class conditions that take into account these differences e.g. for boys, create conducive social environments for them to participate in sports and exercise such as group or team activities. For girls, creating competence-enhancing conditions, encourage socializing (e.g. forming of groups) and providing sound rationale (e.g. the importance of being healthy) could be effective in encouraging girls to be more active.

KEY DEFINITIONS

Extrinsic motivation: Four distinct types of extrinsic regulation are defined which vary in the degree to which they are self-determined. From the least to the most self-determined these are: external regulation (i.e., acting to avoid punishment or gain rewards), introjected regulation (i.e., acting to avoid feeling guilty, or to obtain contingent self-worth), identified regulation (i.e., acting as one feels it is personally important) and integrated regulation (i.e., behaviours that contribute to defining who one is)(Ryan & Deci, 2000)

Introjected regulation is considered to be a relatively controlling form of motivation in which behaviour is regulated by internal sanctions and/or pressures that are directed towards attaining reward (e.g., ego enhancement and pride) or avoiding punishment (e.g., guilt and shame) (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In observational research, introjected regulation has been associated with short-term but not with long-term behavioural persistence (Pelletier, Fortier, Vallerand, & Briere, 2001).

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