

Relationships between Motor Skills and Self-Perceived Athletic Competence in a Sample of Primary School Children

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Abstract : The study aims to examine the relationships between motor abilities, self-evaluation of athletic competence, and demographic characteristics in a sample of late-childhood participants. Defined as physical elements that enable the movements, motor skills are classified according to movement precision as gross and fine motor skills. Across their development, children enhance their ability to coordinate the limbs to produce different actions. In educational settings, they perform various instructional activities that involve the improvement of their athletic prowess and are taught how to strengthen their gross and fine motor abilities. Also, in relation to their activities, children tend to evaluate themselves differently across the various domains of their life. Starting from childhood, athletic competence is one of the area-specific evaluations of competence that refers to one's ability to do well at sports, including outdoor games. Method: The sample consisted of fifty-eight primary school children, thirty girls, and twenty-eight boys, with ages between 8-10 years. The Bruininks-Oseretsky test of motor proficiency was used to assess both gross and fine motor skills in eight specific areas (fine motor precision, fine motor integration, manual dexterity, bilateral coordination, balance, running speed and agility, upper-limb coordination, strength). Athletic competence self-perceived was assessed with one of the six subscales of the Self-Perception Profile for Children. Results: Were examined both the relationships between each motor skills scale and subscales and between motor skills and general self-perceived athletic competence. Results indicated correlations between the athletic competence and four motor skills subscales depending on the gender and age of the children. The findings of the study were discussed related to the possibility to improve children's physical proficiency in educational settings according to the level of self-perceived athletic competence.

Keywords : gross motor skills, fine motor skills, athletic competence, self-evaluation, children, education

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