Competitive Attitudes of Children and Adolescent Athletes

Senior Honors Project

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OVERVIEW

Interest
Review of Literature
Study Purpose
Hypotheses
Methods
Results
Discussion
Interest

- Coach youth cycling
- Extensive background in competition
- Certain time in which athletes become more competitive?
Review of Literature: Introduction

- Competing to win (CW) or competing to excel (CE) (Hibbard & Buhrmester, 2010)
  - CW = competing to dominate others
  - CE = competing to surpass personal goals
- CW more strongly associated with males, CE shows no gender difference (Hibbard & Buhrmester, 2010)
Physiology of the Child Athlete

- Indicators of athletic prowess
- As children enter adolescence...
  (Armstrong & Welsman, 2005)
  - Burst in peak oxygen uptake
  - Muscle proliferation
  - Growth
- Increase in strength, power, aerobic fitness (Armstrong & Welsman, 2005)
Runners and Women

- Men have greater training motivation, predisposition for enduring competitiveness (Deaner, 2013)
- Women become more competitive in events that offer money or prestige (Frick, 2011)
- Competitiveness and age are negatively related, competitiveness and personal best times positively related (Ecklund & Smith, 1994)
Youth

- As athletes become more competitive, goals become extrinsic (Ryksa, 2003)
- Competing to defeat others
Trait Competitiveness and Gender

Scaled scores to assess CW and CE (Hibbard & Buhrmester, 2010)

HCA: CW (Ryckman et al., 1990)

PDCA: CE (Ryckman et al., 1996)

GC subscale of Competitiveness Questionnaire: CE (Griffin-Pierson, 1990)

Men more CW, CE showed no gender difference (Hibbard & Buhrmester, 2010)
Conclusion

- Combinations of CW and CE athletes
- Start as CE
- Transition to adolescence (Malina et al., 2004)
  - Motor development
  - Neuromuscular maturation
  - Skeletal and muscular maturity differences
- Contribute to desire and motivation to compete
- Those competing at high level through adolescence and adulthood primarily CW
Study Purpose

To investigate whether athletes are competing to win or to excel, and to determine if there is an age or gender relation to a shift from one category to another.
Hypotheses

- Males will exhibit a higher level of CW
- CE will not show a gender difference
- Athletes will shift from primarily CE to CW around puberty
Methods

Three questionnaires, scored on Likert scale

- HCA (Ryckman et al., 1990)
- PDCA (Ryckman et al., 1996)
- Goal Orientation subscale of CQ (Griffin-Pierson, 1990)

Distributed 90
29 returned
Participants and Procedures

- 29 children and adolescent athletes
  - 13 male, 16 female
  - Mostly members of SSWSC, alpine skiers
- Informed consent and assent approved by IRB
- Scored on Likert Scale, certain questions scored in reverse
- <15 years, parents asked to fill out questionnaires
Results

- CW showed no gender difference
- CE showed no gender difference
- Athletes obtained CW at age 12
- Age not synonymous with puberty
Results

No gender difference in competitiveness found

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Sample Population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total (n = 29)</th>
<th>Child (n = 14)</th>
<th>Adolescent (n = 15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age in Years (Mean)</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score Win</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.1*</td>
<td>2.4*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score Excel</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Indicates statistical significance (p = 0.036)
Competition and Age

Average Scaled Scores

Competition Types

Win (CW)  Excel (CE)

Child  Adolescent
CW vs. CE

Average Scores Across Sample

Competition Type

- CW
- CE
Discussion

Compete to Win
Refine Skills
Compete to Excel
Acquire Basic Skills
Conclusion

- CE and CW showed no gender difference
- CW obtained at age 12
- CE and CW are not mutually exclusive
Acknowledgements

- Dr. Emily Guseman, advisor
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- Cassidy Tolman
QUESTIONS?
References


