

## **COMPARING TWO MODELS OF SPORT PARTICIPATION MOTIVATION AMONG YOUNG ADOLESCENT FEMALE SPORT PARTICIPANTS**

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This study examined the role of physical self-perceptions, friendship quality, and self-worth in predicting participation motivation among young adolescent female sport participants. Weiss (2000) proposed a model of physical activity motivation, based on Harter (1987; 1999), where perceptions of physical competence and social relationships in sport predict self-esteem, which in turn predicts sport enjoyment and physical activity behavior. In contrast, some research has suggested that social and self-perceptions in sport are stronger predictors of affect and motivation than the global construct of self-esteem (i.e. Smith, 1999). This study tested two alternate models where 1) physical self and friendship quality perceptions predict global self-worth, which subsequently predicts sport enjoyment and commitment and 2) global self-worth and enjoyment/commitment are two distinct outcomes of friendship and physical self-perceptions. Female team sport participants (n=227) between the ages of 11 and 14 participated in this study. Descriptives indicated high levels of enjoyment and commitment. A six-factor confirmatory factor analysis (EQS, 1998; ML Robust) on the Sport Friendship Quality Scale (Weiss & Smith, 1999) indicated a acceptable fit to the data, CFI = 0.88, RMSEA = 0.08. The two models were compared using structural equation modeling. Although the measurement model was acceptable, examination of the path coefficients indicated that neither model fit the data well. There were weak relationships between friendships qualities, commitment and perceived competence.