

Testing a model of social influences and self-perceptions as predictors of adolescent physical activity behaviour.

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This study examined parent and peer influences, physical activity competence, and interest, importance, and usefulness value beliefs as predictors of adolescent physical activity using an expectancy-value (EV) model (Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). Adolescents (N=857) aged 15 to 18 years completed a questionnaire consisting of scientifically supported measures. First, multivariate analyses with follow-up ANOVA's were conducted to examine gender differences. Boys reported significantly greater physical activity competence and values, number of active peers, best friend role modeled behaviour, and engagement in physical activity compared to girls. Girls reported significantly greater parent role modeled behaviour and emotional support compared to boys. Correlation analyses also revealed a number of gender differences in the relationships among study variables. Main analyses were conducted separately for boys and girls. Using structural equation modeling, measurement and structural models supported the EV tenets (Boys: RMSEA=.06, CFI=.94, IFI=.94, NNFI=.93, SRMR=.06; Girls: RMSEA=.07, CFI=.95, IFI=.95, NNFI=.94, SRMR=.06). However, mediation analyses revealed an alternative direct effects model as being superior for boys (RMSEA=.06, CFI=.95, IFI=.95, NNFI=.93, SRMR=.06) and girls (RMSEA=.06, CFI=.95, IFI=.95, NNFI=.94, SRMR=.06). In this model, parent and peer influences were significant predictors of competence and value, the direct paths of competence and peer influence to physical activity were significant, and the model accounted for 42% (girls) and 47% (boys) of the variance in physical activity. The

findings from this study highlight the importance of accounting for the indirect yet important contribution of parent influence and direct effects of peer influence on adolescent physical activity. With some modifications, the expectancy-value model is a strong predictive framework to examine physical activity behaviour during adolescence.