ORAL: CAN AUTONOMOUS AND CONTROLLED MOTIVATION BE INCLUDED INTO THE MODEL OF MOTOR DEVELOPMENT?

*Cristina Menescardi 1 , An De Meester 2,3 , Sofie Morbée 4 , Julie Galle 3 , Leen Haerens 3 , Isaac Estevan 1

1. University of Valencia, Department of Teaching Musical, Visual and Corporal Expression, Valencia, Spain, cristina.menescardi@uv.es
2. University of South Carolina, Department of Physical Education, Columbia, USA.
3. Ghent University, Department of Movement and Sports Sciences, Ghent, Belgium.
4. Ghent University, Department of Developmental, Personality and Social Psychology, Ghent, Belgium.

Objective: To examine the role of autonomous and controlled motivation in the relationship between perceived motor competence (MC) and physical activity (PA), in addition to the relationship between actual MC and perceived MC, and Body Mass Index (BMI) and PA, according to the Conceptual Model of motor development. Method: A total of 504 students (46.2% girls, 8-12 years old) participated in this study. All students completed the Canadian Agility Movement Skill Assessment (i.e., actual MC), the Perceived Movement Skill Competence (i.e., perceived MC), the Behavioral Regulation in Exercise Questionnaire (i.e., motivation), and the Physical Activity Questionnaire for Older Children (i.e., PA). In addition, age- and sex-adjusted BMI percentile scores were computed. A structural equation modeling approach was used to investigate direct paths (a) from actual MC to perceived MC, (b) from perceived MC to autonomous and controlled motivation, (c) from motivation to PA and (d) from PA to BMI, with age and sex as covariates. Indirect (mediation) paths from perceived MC through the two types of motivation to PA were also examined. Results: Actual MC was positively associated with perceived MC (ß = .31, p p= .001), which in turn was positively related to autonomous and controlled motivation (ß = .49 and ß = .18 respectively, p p= .01). The model showed direct paths from autonomous and controlled motivation to PA (ß = .47 and ß = .17, p p= .01) and indirect paths from perceived MC through autonomous (ß = .23, p p= .001) and controlled motivation to PA (ß = .03, p p= .05). PA was not associated with BMI (ß = -.09, p = .08). Implications: This study confirms that autonomous and controlled motivation mediate the perceived MC-PA relationship. As such, it is not only important to build and develop children's actual and perceived MC, but also to foster their motivation to promote PA engagement. More
specifically, an autonomous motivation oriented towards autonomy and improvement of the perception of competence can enhance children's PA engagement.