



HOW TO DETERMINE THE PLACE PROVIDED TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL? AN ATTEMPT TO IDENTIFY OBJECTIVE VARIABLES

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INTRODUCTION

In the fight against sedentariness, recent meta analyses underlined the determining role of school as a foundation for physical activity (PA) promotion in children and adolescents (Biddle et al. 2012). Consequently, active schools projects are implemented worldwide. They combine actions on several parallel axes with the physical education (PE) teacher as a corner stone. One of the challenges of such interventions is to follow the modifications and measure their effects. Moreover, it seems that practitioners and researchers still need an instrument to ascertain the real place provided to PA in a school. The aim of this presentation consists in describing the development, validation and testing of an instrument designed to provide such feedback.

METHODS

This study respects a qualitative approach and, by its step by step process, could be considered as an action research approach. Its main goal is to produce an audit instrument rather than providing data. Five successive steps were designed: Analysis of the literature in order to select the main dimensions to analyze; Development of a provisional tool based on objective items;

Pilot study; Validation by a group of 13 experts; Testing of the final version in a school.

RESULTS

The analysis was focused on the school policy and involved the principal, the PE teacher and the classroom teachers. 335 items were identified and spread across six dimensions. The experts underlined the validity and completeness of the instrument. For the practitioners, participating to the data collection is a means to become aware of what the school (should) propose.

CONCLUSION

This study points out the large range of variables involved in the development of a PA school project, and bring forward the limitation of an assessment using objective data. It underlines that an audit process contributes to a more relevant perception of the reality. Practitioners would also be interested by an easier-to-use tool.

REFERENCES

- Biddle, S.J.H., Brehm, W., Verheijden, M., & Hopman-Rock, M. (2012). Population physical activity behaviour change: A review for the European College of Sport Science. *European Journal of Sport Science*, 12, 4, 367-383.