ADOLESCENT ATHLETES’ SELF-DETERMINATION IN SPORTS

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ABSTRACT
This study used the self-determination theory to investigate gender, age groups and locality differences in adolescent athletes’ intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and amotivation in sports. A cross-sectional study was conducted on 205 (131 male, 74 female) athletes from the under 15 and 21 years age groups (15.53 ± 2.37 years). The participants completed the Sports Motivation Scale. Results found main age effect for intrinsic F(1, 197) = 9.15, p < 0.05 and extrinsic motivation F(1, 197) = 6.96, p < 0.05 and main gender effect for intrinsic F(1, 197) = 10.58, p < 0.05 and extrinsic motivation F(1, 197) = 11.52, p < 0.05. However, there is no locality effect for all subscales. There are no significant interaction effect between gender, age group and locality for intrinsic motivation F(1, 197) = 0.03, p > 0.05, extrinsic motivation F(1, 197) = 0.11, p > 0.05, and amotivation F(1, 197) = 0.44, p > 0.05.

KEYWORDS: adolescent athletes, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, amotivation

INTRODUCTION
Understanding motivation, its antecedents and associations with behavior through the self-determination theory have generated insights into the motives underlying learners’ engagement in physical education and sports.

The self-determination theory focuses on the degree to which human behaviors are self-determined based on three innate psychological needs (autonomy, competence, relatedness) which played a central role in motivated behavior. The varying types of motivation have been defined according to the degrees in which the type of motivation reflects self-determination. The various types of motivation fall at different points along a self-determination continuum. This continuum runs from high to low levels of self-determination, as ones moves from intrinsic motivation to extrinsic motivation to amotivation. Intrinsic motivation is defined as the doing of an activity for its inherent satisfactions rather than for some discrete consequence. It is the highest degree of self-determination and refers to situations in which individuals freely engage in activities that they find interesting and enjoyable and which offer the opportunity for learning. Extrinsic motivation refers to a situation where an individual engages in an activity for an instrumental purpose as a means to an end and not for their own sake. It is a behavior that is regulated by rewards and constraints where sports is performed not for fun but to attain rewards or to avoid negative consequences. Amotivation is defined as absence of motivation or intention to act. The more self-determined motivation tends to contribute to positive outcomes (e.g., concentration, effort, positive affect) than the less determined motivation.