


Motivation and Performance in Physical Education: An Experimental Test

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to analyse, experimentally, the relationships between motivation and performance in a lateral movement test in physical education. The study group consisted of 363 students (227 boys and 136 girls), aged between 12 and 16, who were randomly divided into three groups: an experimental group in which an incremental ability belief was induced, another experimental group in which an entity ability belief was induced, and a control group where there was no intervention. Measurements were made of situational intrinsic motivation, perceived competence in executing the task and performance. The results revealed that the incremental group reported higher scores on the situational intrinsic motivation scale. The entity group demonstrated better performance in the first test attempt than the incremental group but, in the second attempt, the performance was similar in the different groups. Perhaps the initial differences in performance disappeared because the incremental group counted on improving in the second attempt. These results are discussed in relation to the intensity with which the teacher conveys information relating to incremental ability belief of the pupil to increase intrinsic motivation and performance.

Key words: Implicit ability beliefs, intrinsic motivation, performance, self-determination theory, students

Key Points

- The incremental group showed more situational intrinsic motivation.

- The entity group showed higher performance in the first test attempt, but significant differences disappeared in the second attempt.
- It seems that this incremental belief and greater intrinsic motivation made the students trust they would improve their performance in the second attempt at the lateral movement test.

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