



Lifelong Sports through the Lens of Physical Literacy: Understanding Definitions, Benefits, and Challenges

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Receive: 17/12/2023

Accepted: 15/01/2024

Published: 01/03/2024

Abstract

The participation in lifelong sports often encounters obstacles such as lack of individual motivation, inadequate knowledge and skills, as well as unsupportive environment. This article aims to address these issues by discussing the concept of physical literacy as a tool to promote participation in lifelong sports. library research method was used to understand the definition and importance of physical literacy, motor skills development, and the influence of self-confidence, motivation, and competence on participation in physical activities. The results of the library research show that physical literacy is an essential element that encourages individuals to participate in lifelong sports. This includes the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to lead an active lifestyle. Understanding the long-term health benefits of physical activity can also be a strong driver for individuals to lead an active lifestyle. The conclusion is that effective educational strategies or interventions need to be developed and implemented to promote physical literacy and lifelong sports participation. Collaboration with the government and other health organizations is crucial to create an environment that supports everyone to participate in physical activities.

Keywords: *physical literacy, lifelong sports, educational strategies, physical activity*

Introduction

Physical literacy includes four main components: fundamental movement skills, physical knowledge, positive attitudes towards physical activity (motivation and confidence), and an understanding of the importance of an active lifestyle (engagement in physical activities) (Whitehead, 2010). The development of fundamental motor skills at an early age is

very important as it can help children become more confident in participating in sports or other physical activities in the future.

Physical education helps children develop their fundamental motor skills and understand the value of physical activity (Barnett et al., 2016). Fundamental motor skills such as running, jumping, throwing and catching a ball are the foundation for

further physical activity. Through effective physical education, children can learn how to use their bodies in a safe and efficient way (Mustafa, 2023). However, physical literacy is not just about technical skills. It also involves knowledge of the health benefits of physical activity and motivation to be active on a regular basis. In other words, physical literacy encompasses the cognitive (knowledge), affective (liking or disliking the activity) and psychomotor (movement skills) aspects of physical activity.

The concept of physical literacy is particularly relevant in the current era where many people spend their time in a sedentary lifestyle. Lack of physical activity has been linked to various health problems including obesity, coronary heart disease, diabetes and several types of cancer. Therefore, promoting physical literacy can be one of the strategies to encourage an active lifestyle among the public.

There are challenges in promoting physical literacy among the general public. Watson et al. (2015) found that factors such as lack of time, lack of access to proper sports facilities or embarrassment can be a barrier for people to participate in physical activity. To overcome this, Aoyagi & Shephard (2010) suggested that more programs should be developed to encourage people of all ages to engage in regular physical activity. Physical literacy is an important concept that needs to be promoted to improve the quality of life of individuals.

Lifelong sports refers to efforts to maintain an active lifestyle through continuous participation in various forms of physical activity from childhood to old age. The main goal of Lifelong sports is to improve one's health and quality of life by promoting regular physical activity (Tremblay & Lloyd, 2010).

The importance of physical literacy and Lifelong sports has been recognized in many countries as an effective strategy to reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as

obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and improve muscle, bone and mental function (Longmuir et al., 2015). In this context, governments of countries such as Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom have adopted a comprehensive approach to promoting physical literacy through their national policies.

By understanding and applying the concept of physical literacy, individuals can build a strong foundation for a healthy and active lifestyle. Physical literacy is not just about specific sports or physical activities, but also about how individuals interact with their environment through movement activities. Therefore, physical literacy has a significant impact on the well-being of individuals and communities as a whole. Lifelong sports is an important concept that needs to be promoted for the well-being of individuals and society at large. By supporting the practice at all stages of one's life will help build

Method

The present study is a qualitative library research. The process of library research involves an investigation that engages with accepted facts, unknown elements, speculations, and the rigorous application of logical procedures. It also entails verification, evaluation, repetition, and ultimately the interpretation of findings to broaden understanding (George, 2008). This research consists of several procedures, including: (1) preparation in topic selection, (2) execution stage in searching for relevant reference sources, and (3) the stage of presenting narratives from the variety of references found (Creswell, 2014). In the preparation part of this study, a topic on physical literacy and lifelong sports was selected. The execution of the research involved searching for relevant reference sources that align with the chosen topic to gain a deep understanding. The final stage involved writing down the findings from various reference sources. The references in this study come from books and research results

from relevant journals and proceedings discussing physical literacy and lifelong sports. Data analysis in this study used a qualitative approach that includes: data condensation, data display, and drawing conclusions (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Data condensation was carried out by selecting data from findings in books or articles written by experts or researchers. These findings were then described using clear and easily understandable narratives. The final step was to draw conclusions about the research topic, which is physical literacy and lifelong sports.

Result and Discussion

Concept of Physical Literacy

Physical literacy is a concept that refers to a person's ability and knowledge about physical activity, as well as the motivation and confidence to participate in physical activity throughout life (IPLA, 2017). The concept involves three main domains: motor skills, knowledge and understanding of physical activity, and attitudes and behaviors towards physical activity (Gallahue & Donnelly, 2007). Physical literacy is about building the skills, knowledge and behaviors to lead an active life (Australian Sports Commission, 2019). Physical literacy includes holistic learning that provides children and young people with the skills and physical fitness, attitudes and emotions that motivate being active, social skills to be active with others, knowledge and understanding of how, why and when to move.

According to Whitehead (2010) physical literacy can be defined as motivation, confidence, physical understanding and motor skills as well as the ability to maintain lifelong physical activity. This means that individuals who have physical literacy not only have the technical ability to perform various types of movements or sports but also have an understanding of the benefits of these activities for their own health. The importance of physical literacy is huge. One

reason is that physical literacy plays an important role in preventing chronic diseases such as obesity and type 2 diabetes that are often associated with sedentary lifestyles (Tremblay, et al., 2000). These diseases are becoming increasingly common in many countries around the world so it is important that we all promote active lifestyles as part of prevention efforts.

In addition, physical literacy also has psychological benefits. Studies have shown that physical activity can increase self-confidence and self-esteem and reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety (Biddle & Asare, 2011). In other words, participation in sports or other types of exercise is not only beneficial for the body but also for the mind. The concept of physical literacy also influences participation in lifelong sport. Having good motor skills and an understanding of the health benefits of physical activity can encourage people to stay active throughout their lives (Mandigo, Francis, Lodewyk, & Lopez, 2009).

The development of physical literacy should begin at an early age to support future active lifestyles (Gallahue & Donnelly, 2007). In the Australian Sports Commission (2019) physical literacy guidelines in schools are influenced by several aspects: (1) culture, organization and environment consisting of: leadership, policy, environment; (2) curriculum, teaching and learning including: quality physical and health education inclusive programs co-curricular programs cross-curricular approaches, and (3) partnerships from families and local communities. Through physical education in primary schools or through community programs for children can be an effective way to foster physical literacy from an early age.

The study noted that equipping children with knowledge about the importance of exercise and balanced nutrition and providing them with opportunities to learn different types of

sports can help them develop healthy habits that will last into adulthood (Robinson et al., 2015).

Thus, the concept of physical literacy is an integral part of physical education as well as health promotion in general. Through the development of physical literacy we can help individuals appreciate the benefits of physical activity for their own well-being and empower them to be active throughout their lives.

Motor Skills in the Context of Physical Literacy

Motor skills are an important element in physical literacy. Motor skills are the basic movements needed to control different parts of the body (Gallahue, Ozmun, & Goodway, 2012). There are two main types of motor skills: gross motor skills, which involve large movements such as walking and running, and fine motor skills, which involve smaller movements such as reaching or holding something.

Motor skill development begins in infancy and continues to develop throughout life. In the early stages of life, children begin to develop their ability to control their muscles and perform simple tasks such as crawling or walking (Clark & Metcalfe, 2002). As they grow, children begin to learn to perform more complex tasks such as running, jumping, throwing and catching a ball.

In adolescence and young adulthood, individuals usually reach a peak in their physical abilities. However, with proper practice and experience, individuals can continue to improve or maintain their physical abilities into late adulthood (Haibach-Beach, Reid, & Collier, 2018; Supriyoko & Mahardika, 2018). Motor skills are essential in helping a person lead an active lifestyle. For example, one needs to have good eye-hand coordination to catch a ball while playing baseball or softball. Meanwhile, muscle strength needs to be improved to be able to do rowing sports or paddle a kayak.

In addition, it is important to know that each individual has their own

developmental rhythm. Development is influenced by many factors including genetics as well as the social and physical environment in which the individual grows and develops (Balyi, Way, & Higgs, 2013; Hakim & Mustafa, 2023).

Thus, it is important for parents and sports coaches to understand the concept of physical literacy to help children and young athletes optimize the development of their physical abilities so that they can reach their maximum potential.

Lifelong Sports: Definition, Benefits and Challenges

Lifelong sports is a concept that refers to participation in regular physical activity throughout one's life cycle (Feil, Allion, Weyland, & Jekauc, 2021; Lufthansa, Artanty, Rohmah, Saputro, & Fadoli, 2023). The goal of Lifelong sports is to promote long-term health and well-being and prevent chronic diseases.

The benefits of Lifelong sports are substantial. Regular physical activity can reduce the risk of various diseases such as coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and some cancers. In addition, physical activity also has psychological benefits including improved mood and reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety (Warburton, 2006).

There are challenges in encouraging participation in Lifelong sports (Amalia, Nasrulloh, Amajida, Delano, & Shafi, 2023). One of the main challenges is the lack of motivation or interest in many people to participate in regular physical activity (Teixeira, Carraça, Markland, Silva, & Ryan, 2012). This can be due to a variety of factors including lack of time, access to good sports facilities or the perception that exercise is difficult or unpleasant.

It is also important to remember that an individual's need and ability to exercise will change with age. For example, children may be more interested in games and sports that involve their friends; while adults may be more interested in exercises that can be done at home or in the gym; while older

people may require lighter exercises and focus more on maintaining motor function and flexibility (Baert, Gorus, Mets, Geerts, & Bautmans, 2011).

To promote Lifelong sports, it is crucial to encourage a culture that values and supports physical activity at all stages of life (Côté & Hancock, 2016). This includes quality physical education in schools as well as community programs designed to encourage participation in sport and physical exercise for all age groups.

Research has also shown that parents play an important role in shaping their children's attitudes and behaviors towards sport (Edwardson & Gorely, 2010). It is therefore important for parents to model positive physical activity and support their children in participating in sport and physical exercise.

However, it is also important to remember that there are several potential barriers to participation in lifelong sports including injury or other health conditions (Suryobroto, Budayati, & Anugrah, 2022); lack of access to facilities or equipment; and social factors such as stigma or discrimination. Strategies to overcome these barriers should therefore also be an integral part of efforts to promote lifelong sports (Allender, Cowburn, & Foster, 2006).

It is therefore important for all of us - including governments, schools and health organizations - to work together to create an environment that supports participation in lifelong sport. This involves making sports facilities accessible; educational programs about the benefits of physical activity; and other efforts to make sport fun and accessible to everyone regardless of age or physical ability.

Implementation of Physical Literacy in Lifelong Sports

In the context of lifelong sport, physical literacy can help encourage active participation in sport and physical exercise at all stages of life. In the early stages of life, physical education in schools has an

important role in the development of physical literacy. Through this education, children learn about different types of physical activities and how to perform them safely and effectively (Mu'arifin, Mashud, & Mustafa, 2022).

When entering adolescence and young adulthood, the challenge is to maintain the level of physical literacy that has been built during childhood (Longmuir & Tremblay, 2016). Research shows that many adolescents and adults have low levels of physical literacy (Hardy, Reinten-Reynolds, Espinel, Zask, & Okely, 2012). To address this, training programs for adults may be needed to help them update their skills or learn new skills.

In late adulthood, the benefits of physical literacy become more apparent. For example, older people who have a good level of physical literacy are usually able to maintain their mobility and independence for longer than their less fit peers (Barnett et al., 2016).

However, there are challenges in applying these physical literacy principles at all stages of life. These include a lack of understanding of what physical literacy is and how to develop it; a lack of access to quality sport or exercise programs; and social or cultural barriers such as stigma or discrimination (Edwards, Bryant, Keegan, Morgan, & Jones, 2017).

Overcoming these challenges requires public education efforts on the importance of physical literacy and ways to develop these skills. We also need to work with governments and other health organizations to create an environment where everyone feels encouraged and supported to participate in physical activity.

Thus a comprehensive and collaborative approach to promoting physical literacy and lifelong exercise can help create a healthier and more active society. Through proper education, collaboration and support, we can inspire individuals to embrace an active lifestyle and enjoy its long-term health benefits.

Conclusion

Physical literacy is the skills, knowledge and attitudes that enable a person to participate in physical activity throughout life. Fundamental motor skills are essential in the development of this physical literacy and should continue to be developed throughout one's life. Confidence, motivation and competence also play an important role in encouraging an individual's participation in physical activity. Understanding the benefits of physical activity for general health and well-being can be a strong incentive for individuals to lead an active lifestyle. The concept of Lifelong sports including its long-term health benefits should be widely promoted as part of physical literacy education. While there are challenges in encouraging lifelong participation in sport, the application of physical literacy principles can support active participation at all stages of life. Effective educational strategies or interventions should be developed and implemented to promote both physical literacy and lifelong sports participation.

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