Promoting Participation in Sport and Physical Activity for Japanese High School Students

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Teaching/Learning - Teaching strategies/methods (Youth Sport) Monday, June 4, 2018
20-minute oral presentation (including questions) 8:30 AM
Room: Sable A

Abstract 2018-128

Introduction

Previous research revealed that children’s fitness level and time in sport and exercise has become polarized (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2012). Over 20 percent of female junior high school students replied that they either ‘dislike’ or ‘hate’ sport and exercise (Japan Sports Agency, 2016). The participation rate of girls’ in sport and physical activities declined from junior high school to senior high school and reached the bottom at 18 years old which marked 33.7 percent (Japan Sports Agency, 2015). In contrast, Sport England launched a campaign called “This Girl Can” in 2014 and succeeded in raising the rate of women’s sport and exercise participation. In addition, Sport England conducted the online survey that the sample was representative of the English population of 14 to 25 year olds based on gender, age, ethnicity, disability, region, education and working status. A total of 1,997 young people completed the survey. The young people were asked about their lifestyles, including friendships, role models, social media habits, commitments and interests. It also asked questions about sport and exercise – how physically active the young people were, what activities they do and their attitudes to being active. The young people were also asked a wide range of attitude statements covering other areas of their lives, beliefs, ambitions and fears. Demographic elements, including age, gender, income, education and family were also included. As a result, Sport England has developed a thorough understanding of different types of young people (Sport England, 2014). Digital carried out factor analysis and structural equation modeling to understand and summarize the relationship between various attitude statements from the questionnaire. The results of this analysis were then used in the latent class analysis from which a six-segment solution was derived.

Therefore, the purposes of this study were to develop the Japanese version of the survey, and conduct the research to understand Japanese young generation’s situation in terms of sport and physical activities by a new approach that Sport England has conducted.

Method

The research data of Sport England were analyzed. From the analysis result, pilot study (300 Japanese high school students) was conducted to develop new survey items for Japanese context. Confirmatory factor analysis was performed with the collected data to calculate each individual’s emotional score and rational score. The results of this analysis were used in the latent class analysis for this study. The items used in the latent class analysis were eight attitudinal factors and seven items on motivations in life. In addition, the latent class analysis takes into account: gender, age, education, and sport engagement score.

The second survey was conducted with 2,000 high school students in Japan. Exploratory factor analysis was carried out to reveal latent structure of the factors behind various attitude statements to sports and exercises, including current level of physical activity, sport is part of who I am, my friends and I talk about sport a lot, I am good at most sports, sport and exercise are really good ways to reduce stress, I am conscious of my health and fitness, and I feel guilty if I have not exercised for a while. One factor with eigenvalue greater than one was obtained. We then examine a latent class analysis with several attitude factors (self-confidence, self-contentment, being productive, sense of freedom, desire to win, family influence, perception of sport, and fear of judgment), several motivations in life (achieving goals, being successful, competing, developing myself as a person, doing something worthwhile, improving my appearance, and staying healthy), gender and the factor score.

Result and Discussion
According to the results of reanalyzing the data of Sport England (Mera, Y., et al., 2017), it was confirmed that two latent factors which were emotional engagement with sport and rational engagement with sport existed, and several goodness of fit indicate for this model such as GFI (0.979), AGFI (0.951), CFI (0.980) and RMSEA (0.058), which indicate that this model was appropriate.

The results of the pilot study and the second survey for Japanese samples revealed that only one engagement factor with sport was found. In addition, 6 personalities were obtained by each latent class analysis. However, the types of 6 personalities were different from the English results. Further results will be discussed in the conference.