

A comparative study of difference in enjoyment between physically challenged and normal children

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■ ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to investigate the enjoyment and engagement in physical activity of children participating in swimming summer coaching camp programme of LNUPE, Gwalior. The participants of the study were 118 children, aged between 13 to 18. Out of them 52 were physically challenged and 66 of them were from normal stream. Physical activity engagement, enjoyment were assessed by self-report questionnaires. T-tests revealed that the normal stream children enjoyed less (93.11 ± 22.04) than the children those who were physically challenged (106.41 ± 11.00). The results indicated that children who are physically challenged involved maximum enjoyment. Children who belonged from normal stream enjoy less in comparison to the children belonging to the physically challenged stream.

■ **Key Words** : Difference in enjoyment, Physically challenged, Normal children

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Physical activity participation provides physical and mental health benefits to young people (Bouchard *et al.*, 2007). Many authors have underscored the importance of regular physical activity throughout an individual's lifespan. An appropriate amount (quantity, quality, and intensity) of exercise has been found to lead to relevant physiological and psychological benefits (Biddle *et al.*, 2004). There is, however, concern over the participation levels of young people and the links with the rise in obesity rates in particular (Samdal, 2007).

Several nations are making efforts in promoting regular physical activity to improve health and behavioural outcomes of young people and they also include people with physical disabilities. Different national and cross-national programmes, such as "Healthy People 2010" (U.S, 2000) in the USA, Paralympics game, acknowledged that physical activity is a major concern. In India, young people are also demonstrating higher levels of exercise passivity. Studies have indicated that childhood and adolescence are important periods for adopting physically active lifestyle later in adulthood (Telama *et al.*, 1997).

One of the main causes of the decreasing amount of participation in sport and physical activity is low levels of motivation. Therefore, a number of authors have emphasized the need for early interventions to promote a positive attitude toward physical activities (DiLorenzo *et al.*, 1998 and Telama *et al.*, 1997).

Research has also shown that physical activity levels decline markedly after the age of 12 in both frequency of physical activity engagement and actual participation time in sport (Telama and Yang, 2000). We can then argue that the transition period from elementary school to secondary school is an important time for the development of later activity patterns in both normal stream and physically disable children.

According to Scanlan and Simons (1992) enjoyment is an important factor in participation in sport that may lead to greater involvement in the activity. Perceived physical competence reflects the perception a person has of his abilities resulting from cumulative interactions with the environment (Harter, 1978). According to Fox (1997) perceived competence can be seen as "the statement of personal ability that