

(Dis)similarity of children's and parents' perception of parental support and its relation to children's physical activity: A cross-sectional study with parent-child dyads

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Purpose: A large amount of studies examined different parental influences (e.g. parental support) on children's health behaviors. Literature shows that parents are "gate keepers" of children's engagement in physical activities. However, there is a lack of studies that addressed the (dis)similarity of children's and parents' perceptions of parenting behaviors especially in the physical activity (PA) context. The aim of this study was a) to examine the difference between children's and parent's perception of parental support, b) how both perceptions are related to children's behaviour, and c) how the perceptions are interrelated with children's and parent's psychosocial determinants of PA.

Methods: Two hundred eighty three parent-child dyads took part in the study. The children (51.9% female) had a mean age of 10.74 years ($SD=1.34$). Children's PA, children's and parents' perception of parental support, and their psychosocial factors (e.g. self-efficacy) were assessed with questionnaires. The difference between the child and parent report were tested with paired t-tests. Agreement between children and parents rating was quantified using the mean bias (mean child - mean parent) and intra-class correlation coefficient (ICC). Path analysis and structural equation modeling (SEM) were performed to analyse the interrelations between parental support, psychosocial factors and children's PA. A bootstrapping procedure was used to test direct and indirect effects.

Results: Children's and parent's perception of parental support significantly differed ($p<.05$). The $ICC=.39$ reflected a poor agreement, the mean bias was $M=.12$ ($SD=.81$). Path analysis revealed that only children's perception is associated with children's PA ($\beta=.26$, $p=.02$). The applied model showed an acceptable fit ($\chi^2=117.42$, $df=80$, $p=.004$; $\chi^2/df=1.47$; $CFI=.97$; $RMSEA=.03$, $CI .02/.04$, $p=.99$) and explained 15% of the variance in children's physical activity. The model revealed that parents' as well as children's perceptions of parental support are with parents' psychosocial factors. Furthermore, parents' psychosocial factors are directly related to children's psychosocial factors and indirectly to their physical activity.

Conclusions: The results showed that there is a meaningful dissimilarity in the perception of parental support from children's and parents' view. In further analyses we will explore how similarity and dissimilarity within parent-child dyads is related to children's PA.