
Ryan and Connell (1989) have demonstrated that different types of behavioural regulation can be located on a continuum of perceived autonomy or perceived locus of causality. The present study applied their formulation in the context of school physical education (PE) and examined the relationships of perceived autonomy, perceived competence and goal orientations with intrinsic interest across two PE activities. School students aged 12-14 years (N=85), completed an adapted version of the Self-Regulation Questionnaire (Ryan & Connell, 1989) and measures of perceived competence and intrinsic interest separately for two PE activities. They also completed the Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire (Duda & Nicholls, 1989). Students appeared to be differentially motivated for the two activities due to different perceptions of autonomy. Structural equation modelling analysis showed that perceived autonomy and task orientation had direct effects on intrinsic interest for both the activities. Perceived competence however, was positively associated with intrinsic interest only for one of the activities. The implications of the results for the practice of physical education are discussed.