DIE JONG KIND SE BELEWENIS VAN INTENSIEWE SPORTDEELNAME

Gawie RAUBENHEIMER & Kobus LE ROUX
Departement Opvoedkundestudies, Unisa, Pretoria, Republiek van Suid-Afrika

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to investigate the experiences of young children who participate intensively in sport. The literature study brought to light the fact that factors such as the experience of success in sport, self-image, competition anxiety, sportsmanship and spectator behaviour influence the young child’s experience of sport. A measuring instrument was developed with six main sections to measure the young child’s experience of sport. These sections are experience of enjoyment in sport, pressure to perform in sport, competition anxiety, sportsmanship, spectator behaviour and the desire to withdraw from sport. The results of the investigation showed that, broadly speaking, young children experience intensive participation in sport far more negatively than parents and coaches would suppose. Girls also experience intensive participation in sport more negatively than boys, while individual sport types are inclined to be more stressful for young children than team sports. Competition anxiety, followed by spectator behaviour and pressure to perform are experienced most negatively by young children who participate extensively in sport. Parents’ and coaches’ misperceptions of their childrens'/athletes’ experience of sport largely correspond.

Key words: Intensive sport participation; Young children; Perceptions of parents and coaches.