**Lack Of Physical Activity In Children**

**Introduction**

This particular essay will highlight the importance of physical activity in children and what major impact lack of physical activity can offer to the children aging from 3 to 6 years. The study will utilize the best data collection techniques on around 50 children at intervention and control groups and determine the most appropriate measure of physical activity in order to identify the impact of the intervention on the participation of children in physical activity during child care. The report will also discuss how SOFIT-P technique is suitable for the study.

**Discussion**

Physical activities considered important for the development of children and Lay a proper foundation for an active and healthy life for the children. They should learn to be physically fit right from the very beginning when they are in childcare (Sharma et al, 2011). It offers various benefit to the children including promoting healthy growth and development, building bones and muscles, improving cardiovascular fitness, improved confidence and concentration, enhanced self-esteem and promoting relaxation and much more (University of Cambridge 2015). And in order to measure the physical activities and fitness level of children between the age group of 3 to 4 for the Victorian Department of health, various data collection techniques can be used. The main purpose of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention of child participant in physical activity at childcare (Sharma et al, 2011).

**Methodology for data collection**

As we have said about, there are various data collection methods can be utilized by the private consultant for performing data analysis on behalf of the Victorian Department of health referring to the lack of physical activity in children (Honas et al., 2008). This includes observing the student in small groups or entire class by the consultant performing a particular physical activity such as swimming or running (Sirard & Pate, 2001). Furthermore, assessment stations can also be used to record data on particular students. However, one of the most effective Data Collection techniques which can be highly reliable for observing physical activity in children aging from 3 to 4 years old is SOFIT-P which is the latest version of SOFIT (System for observing fitness instruction time) which is an effective objective tool for the assessment of quality of physical education among the students (Honas et al., 2008).

In order to measure the intervention to increase the physical activity among the children, SOFIT-P technique utilize direct observation method where the consultant assess the current activities status of all the 50 children (McKenzie, Sallis & Nader, 1992). Based on the study conducted using SOFIT-P technique, the outcome which was received was highly satisfactory after observing the children perform various activities such as running, playing, climbing, etc. It has also been found out that around 85% of the children variable to pass the moderate to vigorous physical activity test. The major reason behind utilizing this particular technique is that the observation system for measuring the physical activity among children can be extremely difficult due to the varying strength and abilities of children. However, with SOFIT-P technique, the Victorian Department of health can get an accurate measurement of children's activity from a moderate to vigorous level (University of Cambridge 2015).

**Justification**

The above study is justified for various reasons. First of all, the study was performed in a group of children aging from 3 to 4 years of age in child care, and therefore, it is important to consider the burden these children may have to endure during the measurement (Sirard & Pate, 2001). The SOFIT-P measurement techniques certainly offer great relaxation to the children participating in the observation, which makes it possible to collect accurate and reliable data. Furthermore, due to the reason that the observation is being taken place at child care and not any other place, also improves the condition for data collection (Sharma et al, 2011). This is because children feel more comfortable in child care among their regular instructors as compared to a different place with no one familiar. As per Sirard & Pate, 2001, another major reason to justify the observation is that 50 children have been used for performing the measurement (McKenzie, Sallis & Nader, 1992). And since the measurement will be performed by qualified consultant, it will also provide unbiased observation which will make the study more accurate and reliable (University of Cambridge 2015). At last, SOFIT-P observation technique covers all the major aspect of observation which includes duration, frequency, intensity and volume for physical activity making it the most trustworthy method to measure the fitness of the children.

**Conclusion**

It is important to understand that there are various methods to perform measurement of the physical activity of children, however, the main reason to utilize SOFIT-P observation technique is that the observation is being made on children aging 3 to 4 years of age. The target audience can feel stress and uncomfortable which could have reduced the trustworthiness of the observation. However, with the date of division technique utilized, it provided a perfect environment for the children and allowed the observer to easily measure the intervention of physical activity of children. The particular measurement technique also covers all the important elements of physical activity which include time, frequency and intensity that would provide the most perfect result for the observation.

**References**

Sharma, S, Chuang, RJ, Skala, K, &amp; Atteberry H 2011, ‘Measuring physical activity in preschoolers: Reliability and validity of The System for Observing Fitness Instruction Time for Preschoolers (SOFIT-P’, Measurement in Physical Education and Exercise Science, vol 15, no.4, 257–273. doi:10.1080/1091367X.2011.594361

Sirard, JR and Pate, RR 2001, ‘Physical activity Assessment in Children and Adolescents’ , Sports Medicine, vol 31,no.6, pp.439-454, doi: 10.2165/00007256-200131060-00004

University of Cambridge 2015, DAPA Measurement Toolkit, viewed 21 March 2018, &lt;http://dapa-toolkit.mrc.ac.uk/physical-activity-decision-matrix&gt;

Honas, J., Washburn, R., Smith, B., Greene, J., Cook-Wiens, G., & Donnelly, J. (2008). The System for Observing Fitness Instruction Time (SOFIT) as a Measure of Energy Expenditure during Classroom-Based Physical Activity. *Pediatric Exercise Science*, *20*(4), 439-445. doi: 10.1123/pes.20.4.439

McKenzie, T., Sallis, J., & Nader, P. (1992). SOFIT: System for Observing Fitness Instruction Time. *Journal Of Teaching In Physical Education*, *11*(2), 195-205. doi: 10.1123/jtpe.11.2.195