



EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF PHYSICAL LITERACY AND ADVENTURE IN ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract

This study aims to understand adolescent perceptions and experiences in terms of physical literacy and adventure. Two main objectives in this research; 1) Understand the views and experiences of adolescents regarding physical literacy including their attitudes towards physical activity, such as interest, motivation, self-confidence, or satisfaction in participating in physical activity); 2) Knowing how adventure activities contribute to the development of physical literacy (exploring the contribution made by adventure activities to the development of physical literacy in adolescents and how adventure experiences can help adolescents develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding of physical activity). The method in this research is qualitative. Data collection techniques using library research, interviews, questionnaires, and observation. Aspects of analysis include definitions, concepts, views, thoughts, and arguments. Sources of data in research are primary data and secondary data. The participants in this study were teenagers who are members of the Indonesian outdoor activist community. In the discussion of this research, the focus will be given to adolescents' views on physical literacy and physical activity, including their attitudes toward physical activity. The results of the analysis of adventure experiences contribute to the development of adolescent physical literacy which includes aspects of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and understanding they gain through adventure activities. The results of this research can provide valuable insights for educators, parents, or practitioners in the education and health fields to develop strategies that support the development of physical literacy in adolescents, as well as promote adventure activities as a tool to achieve these goals.

Keywords:

Physical activity, physical literacy, adventure, adolescent

Introduction

Extreme sports continue to grow and attract the attention of young adults. The young adult subculture focuses on extreme sports (Self et al. 2007), activities for the most adventurous adventure seekers related to speed, acceleration, changes of direction or exposure to dangerous situations involving great physical and mental challenges (Allman et al. 2009; Gyimóthy and Mykletun 2004; Raggiotto and Scarpi 2020; Scarpi et al. 2018). Where young adults' motivations for participating in outdoor activities vary, with some individuals seeking adventure, challenge, and physical activity; some seek wonder and awe; some seek opportunities to learn about and enjoy nature; and others seek recovery and escape from normal routines (Manfredo, Driver, and Tarrant 1996; Li and Wang 2012). The positive things that come with the involvement of young adults or adolescents in outdoor adventure recreation have been a means of building self-confidence, both in oneself and in others, as



well as mastering skills and abilities in self-regulation (Cason and Gillis 1994; D'Amato and Krasny 2011; A. Ewert and Hollenhorst 1989; Hattie et al. 1997; Kaplan and Talbot 1983; Bacon and Kimball 1989; Talbot and Kaplan 1986). In addition, the WHO declaration has a broad impact for academics to continue to study in depth the relationship between various types of recreation and the positive development of youth (Bocarro, Greenwood, and Henderson 2008; Caldwell and Witt 2011; Roberts and Suren 2010; Armour and Sandford 2013; Kurniawan et al. 2023), as well as how young people can develop comparability with the natural environment (Chawla and Derr 2012; Cheng and Monroe 2012; D'Amato and Krasny 2011; Kaplan and Talbot 1983; Talbot and Kaplan 1986). This study also demonstrates a link between childhood outdoor recreation experiences and environmental support attitudes later in life (Alan Ewert, Place, and Sibthorp 2005; Wells and Lekies 2006), a more positive perception of the environment and natural phenomena (Bixler, Floyd, and Hammitt 2002) and an interest in the environmental profession (Chawla 1999; James, Bixler, and Vadala 2010).

The natural beauty that is presented is the main attraction for fans and connoisseurs. This not only provides an opportunity for recreation but also allows for personal growth and learning in a unique or different way. Nature offers real risks, where physical abilities can be considered because the physical and emotional demands of outdoor activities differ from the routines of everyday life. In addition, there are different rules that must be followed by outdoor activities, starting from the environmental conditions surrounding the action that cannot be changed and the spiritual beliefs of the surrounding area that must be respected. Therefore, participants need special knowledge, skills and abilities related to the open natural environment, so that social interaction and interdependence are needed from the actors (McKenzie 2000).

Outdoor adventure recreation is described as "the combination of personality traits with unusual activities and certain rules that need to be observed. Individual characteristics, abilities, preferences, activity experiences, and expectations combine with activity goals, activities, real or perceived hazards, and social and environmental factors to produce uncertain outcomes (Alan Ewert and Sibthorp 2000). Therefore, a successful recreational experience depends on a person's ability to accurately assess personality and relate it to ability-tailored recreational activities (Alan Ewert and Sibthorp 2009).

If we talk about nature, there are many definitions of the term nature. Every person or actor interprets nature based on the experience of interaction with nature, both in terms of its beauty and the dangers it has experienced, so the next question is how should this be interpreted about nature? Next, should nature be loved, hated, feared, or respected? Is it a place of danger, or one of pleasure or solitude? Nature as a concept is "a dynamic mental construction that is the result of a person's interaction with a constantly changing world." In addition, nature is a social construction that is formed through interactions with family and peers, local traditions, educational programs, literature, media, culture, and nature itself (Aaron and Witt 2011; Anderson and Moss 1993; Bixler et al. 1994; Cronon 1996; Greider and Garkovich 1994; Keliher 1997; Wals 1994) the connectedness of experience with nature in childhood, as well as changes in attitudes about nature and children's relationship with nature over time so that more insights are needed into how children and youth develop an understanding of nature and their environment; how these constructs change throughout childhood; and the role of influencing factors such as visits to natural sites (Mergen 2003). Wohlwill

(1983) refers to nature as "among the more elusive and nebulous concepts in our vocabulary". Although the natural world can be distinguished from the human-made environment, or separated from human activity and influence, the distinction is often not clear. For example, he asked whether cultivated fields and artificial lakes or gardens and parks in urban areas could be considered "nature". Moreover, different meanings may be attached to nature at different times throughout history and between cultures. Wohlwill proposed three views of nature: nature as a manifestation of processes of growth and change; nature as a haven from the stresses and strains of modern times; and nature as a symbol shaped by our intellect, imagination, and cultural filters. Conceptions about nature are formed through past experiences and belief systems, as well as characteristics of nature that are of concern to individuals. In addition, this conception is constantly evolving through new experiences with natural settings, changes in the built environment, ability to reduce harm and discomfort, and increased knowledge of natural areas, so there is a lot of room for different conceptions of nature to emerge." As well as, Mergen (2003) calling nature an "abstraction" and asking questions about the way we think about children's experiences in nature. Using a historical lens, she uses autobiographies from the past two centuries, as well as past and present scholarly works, to illustrate different interpretations of nature in children's lives. Wild places, for example, are usually associated with images of rivers, forests, and fields, but the assumption cannot be made that these are exclusively rural places suitable for recreational activities. Recreation and play accounts have indicated children found soil, water, and other natural elements in urban environments which include walkways, parks, schoolyards, wastelands, and other areas to explore within urban buildings. Greider and Garkovich (1994) using a symbolic interactionist perspective, describes nature as a landscape that is transformed through social interaction and cultural symbols. Humans give meaning to nature which is filtered through individual and cultural beliefs and values. Thus, the same landscape of forests, fields, crops, and the land itself can be imbued with different interpretations. Symbols and meanings are negotiated and renegotiated across time and place, and with changing self-definitions. Cronon (1996) proposes that there is not just one, but many different properties. He identified eight interpretations of nature, including nature as pure, perfect, and beautiful; commodities that can be bought and sold; "bad other people" in the form of floods, earthquakes, and natural disasters beyond human control; and often more cultural than natural, with meanings changing over time and place. Nature is a "contested field" that requires us to ask "Whose nature? Besides that, Bixler et al. (1994) surveyed interpreters in urban nature centers about the fears expressed by students on field trips to wilderness areas. The findings from this study show that young people have many ways to interpret nature. Interpretations can often be simultaneously positive and negative, and they can commonly include themes of fear and danger. Direct contact with nature has also been shown to influence this interpretation, even over short periods of weeks or days.

The difference between perception and experience in the open will provide a reflection of personal interaction with nature itself. This means that throughout the studies, children and youth conceptualize nature as plants, trees, animals, and other natural features; wild and uncultivated places; being outdoors or outdoors; life cycle processes; beauty; and not man-made. In addition, they see nature as different from the city and separate from everyday life. Some characteristics of nature are still unclear, in particular the role of humans or man-made objects in the natural environment.



Young people generally regard nature as a place of recreation, adventure, fun and attraction. They also associate it with freedom for themselves. To themselves, they offer a place to play, as well as freedom from rules, worry, and structure (Mahidin and Maulan 2012). Thus, nature is seen as a challenging and risky place to overcome (Haluza-Delay 2001).

With freedom and easy access to information on recreation areas related to the outdoors, everyone has a wide opportunity to enjoy recreation in the wild. However, information regarding the need for knowledge of outdoor activities is still limited, so it is believed that young adults do not yet have limited access to outdoor activities. Veselinovska, Petrovska, and Zivanovic (2010). As for those who are sources of information regarding the needs of outdoor activities, they may have an inaccurate perception of the environment and the outdoors obtained through television, horror films, issues, and other indirect sources, where the information obtained only describes the beauty and awe of an object. nature, does not describe the process that must be passed before carrying out activities in the open (Taylor et al. 1998). Based on this information, knowledge and experience, outdoor activity actors bear several risks from the dangers of outdoor activities, such as accidents caused by drastic climate change which cannot be known. However, from some of the opinions or explanations of previous researchers, there is a lack of perspective (knowledge, skills, attitudes, and understanding) that they get through adventure activities. The topic in particular explores how adolescents perceive and experience physical literacy, including their attitudes towards physical activity, and how adventurous activities contribute to the development of physical literacy. Overall, this research is to provide insights or perspectives on how adventure activities can improve physical literacy in adolescents according to perceptions and how to ensure that these activities are enjoyed safely.

Methods

Qualitative research is an appropriate methodology for exploring the experiences and perceptions of physical literacy and adventure in adolescents because it allows for an in-depth understanding of the perspectives and experiences of the participants. Qualitative research is especially useful when studying complex phenomena that cannot be easily quantified or measured, such as attitudes, beliefs, and experiences (Sparkes and Smith 2014). The qualitative approach allows researchers to collect rich and detailed data from participants through in-depth interviews (Thorpe and Holt 2008). This allows for a deeper understanding of participants' perspectives and experiences, including their motivations for engaging in adventurous activities, the challenges they face, and the impact these activities have on their physical literacy. In addition, the qualitative approach allows researchers to explore safety issues associated with adventurous activities, which are often overlooked in quantitative studies. Through in-depth interviews, participants can express their views on the risks associated with adventurous activities and how these concerns can be addressed. Overall, a qualitative approach is appropriate for this study as it allows nuanced exploration of the experiences and perceptions of physical literacy and adventure in adolescents, providing insights that are not possible through quantitative methods.



Participant

The participants in this study were teenagers who are members of the Indonesian outdoor activist community.

Population & Sample

The sampling technique in this study used purposive sampling, because it involved selecting participants based on specific criteria that were relevant to the research question. In this case, researchers can choose participants who are active in adventurous activities. Participants can be recruited from adventure organizations, schools and youth clubs that offer this activity. In addition, determining the criteria for the sample involves selecting participants based on predetermined criteria that are relevant to the research question. For this study, participants may be selected based on age (late teens), gender, and level of physical activity. The sample size in this study was 3 (three) participants which was considered sufficient for this study on the basis of considering recruiting participants from various backgrounds to ensure diversity and various perspectives.

Instrument

The use of instruments in this study is based on definitions and concepts from various expert theories regarding perceptions and experiences regarding physical literacy and adventure. The components of each variable are: 1) adventure experience; Frequency of adventure (James, Bixler, and Vadala 2010), Type of adventure (Manfredo, Driver, and Tarrant 1996), Degree of Difficulty (Armour and Sandford 2013), Perceptions and emotions related to adventure (Greider and Garkovich 1994). 2) Perception of adventure; Courage and self-confidence (Wells and Lekies 2006), Anticipation and motivation (Roberts and Suren 2010), Uncertainty and Challenge (Cheng and Monroe 2012), Freedom and Independence (Cason and Gillis 1994), Reward and Learning (Hattie et al. 1997), Knowledge and Preparation (McKenzie 2000).

Procedure

The procedures in this study are:

Recruitment of Respondents; Some of the recruitment methods used in this study are 1) Partnering with adventure organizations, 2) Schools and communities, 3) Social media and online forums, 4) Pamphlets and posters.

Respondent Character; The characteristics of the respondents in this research plan are teenagers who are active in adventure activities, therefore respondents must meet the criteria 1) Age: Respondents must be teenagers, usually between the ages of 13 and 19 years, 2) Level of physical activity: Respondents must be actively involved in adventure activities, 3) Experience in adventure activities: Respondents must have experience with adventure activities to provide insight into their experiences and perceptions, 4) Diversity: consider recruiting respondents from various backgrounds to ensure multiple perspectives.



Research Approach; 1) In-depth Interviews: This approach involves direct interaction between the researcher and the respondent with the aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of individual experiences, perspectives and thoughts. In-depth interviews allow researchers to explore complex issues and obtain rich and detailed information (Sparkes and Smith 2014), 2) Participant Observation: This approach involves the researcher being actively involved in the life and activities being observed, by the goal is to understand the social and cultural context and gain insight into the practices and interactions that occur within it. Participatory observation allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of individual experiences and behaviors in real contexts (Mulyadi 2013), 3) Document Analysis: This approach involves collecting and analyzing written documents such as reports, notes, letters, and other materials relevant to the research topic. Document analysis allows researchers to understand the historical context, policies, and developments relevant to the research topic (Mardiyantoro 2019).

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis in this study is using software ATLAS.ti.

Result

In discussing this research, it is focused on the views (perceptions and experiences) of adolescents on physical literacy and adventure. The results of the analysis of adventure experiences contribute to the development of adolescent physical literacy, including aspects of the knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding they gain through adventure activities. For more details, it can be seen in the description as follows.

Adventure Experience

The adventure experience variable based on several components proposed for this variable includes: *Adventure frequency*; Based on the results of the interviews, data was obtained that adventure activities carried out by some people in one year averaged 2-5 adventures. As the answer from one of the participants;

"It has become a mandatory agenda in my life that I do adventurous activities in one year at least 5 times a year" (P2)

Adventure frequency in the adventure experience variable refers to how often a person is involved in adventurous activities or new experiences. The purpose and objective of adventure frequency is to measure the degree to which a person is actively involved in new adventures and explorations.

Adventure type; the direction and purpose of this component is to identify the types of adventures they have had. Like the participants' answers regarding this component;



"Most forms of adventure that I do are playing in the water such as rafting, canoying, kayaking" (P1)

"Adventure activities that I do randomly, sometimes mountain climbing, rock climbing and rafting" (P2)

Based on the interview data it is known that the types of adventures undertaken by some of the participants are extreme adventures. The conclusion on this component is that the type of adventure in the adventure experience variable refers to various types of adventure activities or experiences that a person can experience. The purpose and objective of this type of adventure is to classify and understand the variety of adventure experiences carried out by individuals.

Degree of difficulty; in this component regarding the evaluation of the level of difficulty or challenges faced by someone in the adventure. The participants' answers regarding this component is:

"One of the biggest challenges in the adventure world for me is rock climbing, why rock climbing because at first I didn't expect more in this world but in fact the world of climbing is so challenging for me that it creates many desires that are more extreme than usual adventures" (P2)

The level of difficulty was described by the participants as the level of difficulty experienced was more heterogeneous or all aspects of which were that the adventure path was challenging due to the influence of weather and climate, the cost of adventure was so expensive, and mental readiness had to be trained. The conclusion on this component, namely the level of difficulty of adventure, is to measure the level of challenge faced or required in dealing with an adventure experience.

Perceptions and emotions related to adventure; This component concerns the feelings that arise when involved in an adventurous activity. The answers from the participants regarding this component;

"Yes, I am very enthusiastic about an adventure, where there are emotional changes, especially in terms of excitement and enjoyment" (P2)

The perception and emotion components related to adventure bring up various information so that cumulatively it is known that there are interesting things when adventuring. The aim and purpose of adventure-related perceptions and emotions is to understand how adventure experiences influence individuals' perceptions of themselves, the environment, and the experience.

Adventure Perception



Courage and self-confidence; Identify beliefs in facing challenges in adventure. The answers from the participants regarding this component;

"The way I build is to make myself brave based on a reference or a motivator and also a belief" (P2)

Regarding the extent to which the level of courage and self-confidence clarifies perceptions of adventure that apart from being self-motivated, external motivation is also needed, for example a mentor. The purpose and objective of courage and confidence related to adventure is to understand the extent to which a person feels confident and courageous in facing the challenges associated with adventure.

Anticipation and motivation; Evaluate the participants' roles and desires in adventure activities. The answers from the participants regarding this component;

"In every adventure that I participate in, motivation and specific goals arise for myself, this is also what makes me always enthusiastic" (P2)

It is in this component that the desire to fight fear as well as enthusiasm and enthusiasm will give encouragement in adventurous activities. The intent and purpose of adventure-related anticipation and motivation is to understand the expectations, expectations, and drives that influence individual participation and involvement in adventure.

Uncertainty and challenges; Identify the readiness of participants in adventure activities. The answers from the participants regarding this component;

"A concrete example that I have experienced is the first multi-pitch climb with a climbing path of around 200m, the way I deal with it is that I realize that I am ready and want to be there, so I have to be brave" (P2)

Uncertainty and challenges in the perception of adventure based on the answers from the participants are known to be activity management. The purpose and objective of adventure-related uncertainties and challenges is to understand how individuals respond to and deal with the uncertainties and challenges that arise in the context of adventure.

Freedom and independence; Identify participants in taking a stand on adventure activities. The answers from the participants regarding this component;



"Yes, I have experienced that, the way to deal with it is to think calmly" (P2)

At the level of freedom and independence felt by individuals in undergoing new adventures or experiences. The purpose and objective of adventure-related freedom and independence is to understand the extent to which individuals feel they have autonomy, control, and freedom in living their adventures.

Knowledge and preparation; Identify the knowledge and readiness of participants in carrying out adventure activities. The answers from the participants regarding this component;

"Preparing tools, equipment and physical. Opening small notes about what will be done."(P3)

Refers to an individual's level of knowledge and readiness before they embark on a new adventure or experience. The purpose and objective of adventure-related knowledge and preparation is to understand the extent to which individuals are prepared and have the necessary knowledge before engaging in an adventure.

Discussion

On the topic "Exploring Experiences and Perceptions Regarding Physical Literacy and Adventure in Adolescents," the discussion will focus on how adolescents perceive and experience physical literacy and the contribution of adventure activities in developing their physical literacy. Views regarding physical literacy in adventurous adolescents illustrate that physical literacy includes knowledge, skills, attitudes, and adolescent understanding of physical activity. Adolescents with good physical literacy have a better understanding of the importance of physical activity, knowledge of different types of physical activity, motor skills related to physical activity, and a positive attitude towards participation in physical activity (Guthold et al. 2020). In addition, physical literacy in adolescents plays an important role in influencing their physical and mental health. Adolescents who have good physical literacy tend to have an active lifestyle, have better adaptability, and experience sustainable health benefits throughout their lives (Rudd et al. 2020). Adventure experiences and the development of physical literacy in adventurous youth illustrate that adventure activities, such as hiking, mountain climbing, or mountain biking, can make an important contribution to the development of adolescent physical literacy. Through adventurous experiences, youth have the opportunity to develop aspects of physical literacy such as; 1) Knowledge: Adventure activities introduce youth to knowledge about the natural environment, natural diversity, navigation, safety, and outdoor survival skills (van Putten and Blom 2022); 2) Skills: Through adventure, youth can develop physical and cognitive skills, such as orientation skills, use of maps and compasses, ability to set up tents, and survival skills in the wild (O'Neill, O'Sullivan, and McCreesh 2021); 3) Attitude: Adventure experiences can help adolescents develop positive attitudes toward physical challenges, mental resilience, self-confidence, ability to deal with uncertainty, and independence (Mitten et al. 2018); 4) Understanding: Through adventure, youth can gain an understanding of the importance of physical activity in maintaining their health



and well-being and developing a better relationship with nature (Bauer 2021). In addition, adventure experiences can also increase adolescent motivation to participate in regular physical activity and strengthen their involvement in physical activity throughout adolescence and adulthood (Brymer, Davids, and Mallabon 2014).

Conclusion

By exploring adventure experiences, youth have the opportunity to develop their physical literacy through the knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding gained from these adventure experiences. This can provide long-term benefits for their physical and mental health and lead to an active and healthy lifestyle. Furthermore, the results of this research can provide valuable insights for educators, parents, or practitioners in the fields of education and health to develop strategies that support the development of adolescent physical literacy, as well as promote adventurous activities as a means to achieve these goals.

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