Abstract

Objective: to examine if those adolescents who dislike physical education classes get better results on academic and cognitive performance than their peers. Methods: participants included 4,226 adolescents from the AVENA, AFINOS and UP&DOWN studies. Physical education enjoyment was assessed with a 7-point Likert scale. Cognitive performance in the AVENA study was assessed using the Spanish version of the SRA Test of Educational Ability. Academic performance in the AFINOS and UP&DOWN studies was assessed through Mathematics and Language grades and the average of both subjects. Results: in the AVENA study we found differences in verbal ability among girls who dislike physical education and their peers (P = 0.033). In the AFINOS study, boys who dislike physical education had higher scores in Language than their peers (P = 0.024). In the UP&DOWN study girls who disliked physical education had higher scores in Language and in the average of Language and Mathematics than their peers (P < 0.001). Conclusion: in the AVENA and AFINOS studies adolescents who disliked physical education had similar results in cognitive and academic performance than their peers, but in the UP&DOWN study girls who disliked physical education showed higher results in academic performance than their peers.

Keywords