Abstract

Title: Children’s opinions on Track and Field and their attitudes towards the practices in athletic clubs of Prague 6 (comparative study)

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Main goals: an investigation of the attitudes and opinions towards Track and Field and athletic practices for school age children in the selected clubs in Prague 6, a monitoring of selected world and Czech popular track and field athletes and also an exploration of the knowledge of important track and field athletes by children in this age group.

Methodology: A survey was used in order to meet the main goals of this work. Four athletic clubs from Prague 6 that work with the youth were asked to participate in this survey. N = 154 completed questionnaires were collected. Questionnaires were divided into categories by gender and also by age. The interviewees were between the ages of 8 and 12. The main scope and purpose of the research was to investigate the attitudes, beliefs and motivation of children to do track and field and its various disciplines. In this study we were also interested in the children knowledge of the most famous world and Czech athletic personalities.

Results: Research has shown that there are no major differences in attitudes and opinions between the boys and girls or between the age groups. The main reason why children start with track and field is the joy of movement and fun. Respondents stated that “fun” notion is mainly related to a particular physical activity or training program and primarily presented by the personality of a coach. 51 % of children stated that they had been introduced to track and field by their parents. The study also discovered that more than half of the respondents (54 %) did another sport before they started with track and field. The main reason for leaving the previous sport was their bigger interest of track and field. Attitudes towards the athletic practices and towards the content of the training were generally positive. 85 % of respondents are mostly or always looking forward to the practices. Regarding the content of the training unit, the children are satisfied and trainings are entertaining for them. Concerning the evaluation of the disciplines, respondents have built positive attitude towards the sprints and jumping disciplines and mostly negative attitude towards the shot-put, discus, hammer and javelin throw and long-distance disciplines. The results of our research showed that children know more Czech athletes, who are still engaged in professional athletics, than the international ones.
Keywords:

attitude, beliefs, motivation, track and field, athletic prep, children aged 8-12, athletic discipline, athletic personality