


Chapter 6

The Impact of Physical Education and Sports on Emotional Resilience and Self-Efficacy

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the pivotal role of physical education and sports in enhancing emotional resilience and self-efficacy among youth, highlighting their significance in holistic development. It draws on Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory and empirical evidence to illustrate how structured physical activity cultivates resilience through controlled adversity, teamwork, and goal-setting, while also fostering self-efficacy via mastery experiences, feedback, and psychological skills training. The chapter also explores the influence of gender, culture, and socioeconomic factors, advocating

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for inclusive, emotionally enriched curricula. Practical strategies for educators and coaches are proposed, emphasizing emotional intelligence, supportive pedagogy, and curriculum reform to embed emotional growth within physical education, ultimately preparing students for adaptive, confident, and purpose-driven lives.

INTRODUCTION

For students with disabilities, the development of emotional resilience and self-efficacy takes on particular significance as they navigate unique challenges in academic, social, and physical environments that can profoundly impact their overall well-being and future success. Adapted sports programs have emerged as a powerful intervention strategy, offering structured opportunities for these students to build psychological strength while addressing the specific barriers and needs associated with their diverse abilities (W. Zhang & Li, 2025). Emotional resilience and self-efficacy have emerged as critical attributes in the holistic development of young individuals, playing a vital role in how they respond to challenges, adapt to change, and strive toward personal goals. In a world where mental health and emotional stability are increasingly recognized as fundamental to overall well-being and success, fostering these qualities has become a central concern in education (Husain et al., 2024). A systematic literature review on the impact of participation in sport and physical activities on psychological resilience. Emotional resilience enables individuals to cope effectively with stress, recover from adversity, and maintain a balanced emotional state, while self-efficacy refers to the belief in one's capacity to execute actions required to achieve specific goals. Both traits are deeply intertwined with motivation, performance, and psychological well-being, making them essential in the formative years of life (Soylu et al., 2021). Physical education and sports provide an ideal environment for cultivating these psychological strengths. Unlike traditional classroom settings, physical activity and sport-based experiences inherently involve challenges, setbacks, teamwork, goal-setting, and opportunities for personal growth. These contexts naturally encourage students to push their limits, manage emotions under pressure, and experience success through perseverance and discipline. Whether facing the unpredictability of a competitive game or navigating the dynamics of a team, students are placed in situations that demand resilience and reinforce self-belief (Husain et al., 2024).

Modern pedagogical approaches increasingly recognize the unique potential of physical education to serve as more than just a medium for physical development. It is now viewed as a powerful tool for character building and emotional education (L. Liu et al., 2024). Through carefully structured physical education programs and sports initiatives, educators can design experiences that not only enhance physical

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