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1 **Associations between Fundamental Movement Skill Competence,**  
2 **Physical Activity and Psycho-social Determinants in Hong Kong**  
3 **Chinese Children**

4 Cecilia H. S. Chan<sup>1</sup>, Amy, S. C. Ha<sup>1</sup>, Johan, Y. Y. Ng<sup>1</sup>, David Revalds  
5 Lubans<sup>2,3</sup>

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7 <sup>1</sup>*Department of Sports Science and Physical Education, Faculty of Education, The*  
8 *Chinese University of Hong Kong*

9 <sup>2</sup>*School of Education, The University of Newcastle, Australia*

10 <sup>3</sup>*Priority Research Centre for Physical Activity and Nutrition, The University of*  
11 *Newcastle, Australia*

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14

15 **Abstract**

16 Associations between fundamental movement skills (FMS), perceived competence,  
17 enjoyment and physical activity (PA) have not been widely investigated among Chinese  
18 school children. We hypothesised that FMS would be directly related to self-reported and  
19 objectively measured PA, and indirectly related to these outcomes via perceived physical  
20 and movement skill competence, and enjoyment. Participants were 763 primary school  
21 children (age =  $9.3 \pm 1.7$  years; 474 girls) across grades. FMS were measured for a  
22 subsample (n = 603) using Test of Gross Motor Development-2. PA using accelerometers  
23 was obtained from this subgroup (n = 238). All participating children completed a  
24 questionnaire measuring their PA participation, enjoyment, and perceived physical and  
25 movement skill competence. Structural equation modelling revealed positive associations  
26 between locomotor skills and perceived movement skill competence ( $\beta = .11$ , 95% CI  
27 [.001, .22]), and between perceived movement skill competence and objectively  
28 measured PA ( $\beta = .59$ , 95% CI [.04, 1.14]). Perceived physical competence and  
29 enjoyment mediated the association between locomotor skills and self-reported PA ( $\beta$   
30 = .08, 95% CI [.02, .12]), but not objectively measured PA. Given inconsistent findings  
31 for subjective and objective measures of PA, further mediation analyses of the  
32 association between FMS and PA may be warranted.

33

34 **Keywords:** fundamental movement skills; perceived physical competence; perceived  
35 movement skill competence; enjoyment; physical activity

36

**37 Introduction**

38 Physical inactivity is a global public health issue (Kohl et al., 2012). Fundamental  
39 movement skills (FMS) are the “building blocks” of more advanced, complex movements,  
40 including locomotor, object control and stability skills (Logan, Ross, Chee, Stodden, &  
41 Robinson, 2017). Proficiency in FMS is one of the most important predictors of  
42 children’s physical activity (PA) (Holfelder & Schott, 2014). Increasing evidence  
43 indicates that being competent in FMS is associated not only with multiple health  
44 benefits (Lubans, Morgan, Cliff, Barnett, & Okely, 2010; Robinson et al., 2015a), but  
45 also cognitive and academic outcomes (Haapala, 2013). A growing body of research  
46 supports a positive relation between FMS and PA in children and adolescents, but the  
47 strength of the association during childhood and adolescence has yet to be conclusively  
48 demonstrated (Logan, Webster, Getchell, Pfeiffer, & Robinson, 2015; Robinson et al.,  
49 2015a). Using an experimental design, Cohen, Morgan, Plotnikoff, and Lubans (2015)  
50 showed that improving children’s FMS competency mediated increases in PA. According  
51 to Harter’s competence motivation theory (Harter, 1978), actual competence precedes  
52 perceived competence, with perceived competence more directly affecting motivation  
53 than actual competence. Therefore, children who have high levels of perceived  
54 competence are more likely to enjoy PA, exert greater effort and persistence, and  
55 continue PA involvement (Harter, 1978).

56 Stodden et al. (2008) suggest that motor skill competence and PA are associated  
57 indirectly via perceived competence. Nonetheless, some studies exploring these  
58 associations have been limited by focusing only on a more general perception of physical

59 competence (Barnett, Morgan, Van Beurden, Ball, & Lubans, 2011; Crane, Naylor, Cook,  
60 & Temple, 2015; De Meester et al., 2016) rather than assessing perceptions of the same  
61 movement skills that clearly align with the actual movement skills being measured.  
62 Recent studies have investigated the association between actual and perceived movement  
63 skill competence, and moderate-to-vigorous PA (MVPA) assessed via accelerometry in  
64 English speaking children younger than 8 years old (Barnett, Ridgers, & Salmon, 2015;  
65 Slykerman, Ridgers, Stevenson, & Barnett, 2016). Although these two studies used  
66 matched assessments did not find perceived skill competence to be associated with  
67 MVPA in young children, further investigation on the specificity of these associations  
68 across childhood may help understand the contribution of different types of physical self-  
69 perceptions to children's (lifelong) activity levels (Robinson et al., 2015a).

70 Children find PA fun and challenging when they are provided with opportunities  
71 to master skills and experience success (Weiss, 2000). Under these circumstances they  
72 will likely develop positive feelings toward PA and maintain their motivation to be active  
73 over time (Dishman et al., 2005; Owen, Smith, Lubans, Ng, & Lonsdale, 2014). Indeed,  
74 children's perceptions of competence and enjoyment of PA are essential influences on  
75 their PA participation (Fairclough, 2003). The association between FMS and PA over  
76 time may be mediated by the combined effect of these psycho-social variables. There has  
77 been research elucidating the association between FMS and PA among children and  
78 adolescents in Western countries (Holfelder & Schott, 2014). Less work has been  
79 conducted with primary school children across levels and almost none have examined the  
80 associations between FMS, perceived competence (both general perception of physical  
81 ability and specific perception relative to FMS), enjoyment and PA simultaneously in

82 Asian children. Given that popular sports in Western and non-Western contexts may lead  
83 to potential differences in children's experiences with some movement skills measured in  
84 existing assessment batteries (Bardid et al., 2016; Spessato, Gabbard, Valentini, &  
85 Rudisill, 2013), these cultural influences on motor development may affect the  
86 association between FMS and PA.

87         Considering more than half of the Hong Kong children and youth did not meet the  
88 recommended PA level (Huang et al., 2016), an enhanced understanding of the  
89 association between FMS and PA and the psychosocial variables among Chinese children  
90 will augment current literature with valuable information about the prevention of physical  
91 inactivity. This study aimed to examine associations between FMS, perceived physical  
92 and movement skill competence, enjoyment, and PA among Hong Kong Chinese primary  
93 school children using structural equation modelling (SEM). Based on Harter's  
94 competence motivation theory (Harter, 1978), and previous research (Barnett, Morgan,  
95 van Beurden, & Beard, 2008; Crane et al., 2015), it was hypothesised that FMS would be  
96 directly associated with self-reported and objectively measured PA, while perceived  
97 physical competence, perceived movement skill competence, and enjoyment of PA would  
98 mediate the association between FMS and PA.

99

## 100 **Method**

### 101 *Participants and setting*

102 A total of six primary schools from six (i.e., Central & Western; North; Sha Tin; Tsuen  
103 Wan; Wanchai; and Yuen Long) of 18 Hong Kong districts returned written principal  
104 consent to participate in the study (75% consent rate). Participants in the study were 763

105 primary 1 to 6 students (62% girls; mean age = 9.3 years,  $SD=1.7$  and mean BMI = 17.5,  
106  $SD=3.4$ ). Their parents provided written consent for the child to be included in the  
107 research and the child provided verbal assent. The university ethics committee granted  
108 ethical approval prior to the commencement of the project. Anthropometric data (height  
109 and body weight) collected by physical education teachers were used to compute the  
110 body mass index (BMI) for each participant. All of the 763 students completed  
111 questionnaires measuring PA level, enjoyment and perceived physical and movement  
112 skill competence. For FMS measurements conducted during scheduled PE classes, 603  
113 children were randomly selected from the entire sample based on their student ID  
114 numbers. A total of 571 children (40.5% boys; mean age = 9.3 years,  $SD=1.7$ ) completed  
115 all 12 FMS tests. A random sample from this subset of FMS sample was asked to wear an  
116 accelerometer device. Among those 238 agreed, 191 (40.3% boys; mean age = 9.2 years,  
117  $SD=1.6$ ) had valid data. No differences were found between the groups in terms of their  
118 basic characteristics. The Chinese version of the questionnaire was administered by a  
119 trained research assistant in a classroom setting to guide children through each question  
120 in each section.

121

## 122 ***Measures***

### 123 *Fundamental movement skills*

124 The Test of Gross Motor Development, second edition (TGMD-2; Ulrich, 2000) was  
125 used to measure FMS competency. The test is comprised of assessments for six  
126 locomotor skills: horizontal jump, run, leap, hop, slide and gallop; and six object control  
127 skills: overhand throw, kick, underarm roll, strike, catch and dribble. The TGMD-2 is a

128 validated standardized test, commonly used to assess the qualitative aspects of FMS of  
129 children aged between three and ten (Ulrich, 2000). Measurements took place at the  
130 child's school during the scheduled PE lessons in accordance with the testing procedure  
131 outlined in the TGMD-2 Examiner's Manual (Ulrich, 2000). The test examiner assessed  
132 the 12 FMS in small groups (3-4 children) in the field and the group rotated around the  
133 stations (1 skill per station) until the assessment was completed. Five hundred and  
134 seventy-one (94.7%) students completed all 12 FMS tests. Participants who were unable  
135 to take the entire test battery were excluded from the analysis.

136         The primary researcher provided a total of six hours of training on the procedures  
137 and techniques necessary to score and interpret the TGMD-2 to the test examiners prior  
138 to research. They practiced scoring pre-recorded video clips of children's common  
139 performance patterns at different ages to compare with the ratings by the primary  
140 researcher until reaching a high degree of agreement determined by Intra-class  
141 correlation coefficient ( $ICC \geq .90$ ) (Landis & Koch, 1977). Inter-rater reliability for each  
142 individual skill using ICC was assessed following completion of training. A total of 90  
143 video-clips with different performance levels were reviewed under conditions similar to  
144 those of the actual data collection procedures. The test examiners were instructed to rate  
145 one skill trial after viewing each vignette for once or up to a maximum of twice. The  
146 ICCs across the 12 skills ranged from 0.91 (for strike) to 0.99 (for slide).

147         Preceding actual measurement of each skill, the test examiner provided a  
148 standardized demonstration video clip on a smartphone or tablet to the group of children.  
149 The use of multimedia was to ensure the accurate demonstration of the skills, thus  
150 minimising discriminatory practice commonly faced in live demonstrations (Robinson et

151 al., 2015b). Each of the 12 skills was evaluated twice on three to five performance criteria.  
152 The children performed individually the 12 skills tested. For each criterion, and for each  
153 trial, students' performance was marked as one (behavioural component presented) or  
154 zero (not presented). Scores of all criteria for the skill, and across both trials, were  
155 summed to obtain a raw score for each skill. The skill scores were then summed to obtain  
156 a locomotor subtest score (range 0-48), and an object control subtest score (range 0-48).

157

### 158 *Perceived physical competence*

159 The physical competence subscale of the Pictorial Scale of Perceived Competence and  
160 Social Acceptance for First-Second Grades (PSPCSA) (Harter & Pike, 1984) and the  
161 athletic competence subscale of the Self-Perception Profile for Children (SPPC) (Harter,  
162 1985) were administered to children attending Primary 1-2 and Primary 3-6 respectively.  
163 These scales, each with six items, measure a general perception of competence in the  
164 physical domain (e.g. general motor performance, and feel good about themselves in  
165 athletic ability). The range of scores for each item on the subscale is one to four. A score  
166 of four reflects highest perceptions of physical competence and a score of one reflects the  
167 lowest perceptions of physical competence.

168

### 169 *Perceived movement skill competence*

170 Children's perceived movement skill competence was assessed using 12 items  
171 specifically related to the actual skill competence test battery (Jones, Okely, Caputi, &  
172 Cliff, 2010; Southall, Okely, & Steele, 2004), and written in an identical format to that of  
173 the SPPC items (Harter, 1985), except that skill illustrations were also provided alongside

174 to assure that students understand what was asked in each item. For example, ‘Some kids  
175 are good at dribbling or bouncing balls’, but ‘Other kids don’t feel that they are good at  
176 dribbling or bouncing balls’. Items were scored the same as the Harter’s SPPC (Harter,  
177 1985), on a one to four scale (from low to high perceived skill competence, respectively).  
178 It was considered a valid measure to assess children’s perceived FMS competence and  
179 internal consistency ( $\alpha = 0.87$ ) has been documented (Southall et al., 2004).

180

### 181 *Enjoyment in physical activity*

182 Enjoyment in PA was measured by a 16-item (PACES) using a 5-point Likert-type scale  
183 (1 = “Never”; 2 = “Almost never”; 3 = “Occasionally / sometimes”; 4= “Almost every  
184 time”; 5 = “Every time”). The PACES was found to be a valid and reliable measure of  
185 enjoyment of PA in children and adolescents (Eather, Morgan, & Lubans, 2011; Liang,  
186 Lau, Huang, Maddison, & Baranowski, 2014; Motl et al., 2001). The 16 bi-polar  
187 statements begin with the stem “when I am physically active ...” and end in statements  
188 regarding affective responses (e.g. “... I enjoy it”; “... I feel bored”). The responses were  
189 summed to give a total score ranges from 16 to 80. Higher PACES scores reflect greater  
190 levels of enjoyment.

191

### 192 *Self-reported physical activity*

193 The Physical Activity Questionnaire for Older Children (PAQ-C) (Kowalski, Crocker, &  
194 Donen, 2004) has been identified as a valid instrument to assess PA during the last seven  
195 days in children (8–14 years of age) from culturally diverse populations (Crocker, Bailey,  
196 Faulkner, Kowalski, & McGrath, 1997; Janz, Lutuchy, Wenthe, & Levy, 2008; Wang,

197 Baranowski, Lau, Chen, & Pitkethly, 2016). PAQ-C comprises of nine items, each  
198 question is scored between 1 (low) and 5 (very high PA) and the average score of all  
199 items constitutes the PAQ summary score that can be compared between groups or time  
200 points. PAQ-C is designed to provide a general estimate of PA levels in children's  
201 participation in different physical activities, as well as activity during PE, lunch break,  
202 recess, after school, in the evenings and at weekends. PAQ-C serves as a cost-effective  
203 and easy-to-use instrument for gaining insight into PA types and domains, but it does not  
204 directly capture the absolute level of PA or specific estimates of time spent across  
205 different levels of PA intensity (Voss, Dean, Gardner, Duncombe, & Harris, 2017). It is  
206 common to establish its validity against objective measures of PA such as accelerometers  
207 ( $\rho = 0.47$  for total PA and  $\rho = 0.49$  for MVPA) (Janz et al., 2008). PAQ-C score was  
208 related to accelerometry-based MVPA ( $r = 0.33$ ) in Hong Kong Chinese children (Wang  
209 et al., 2016).

210

### 211 *Moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA)*

212 MVPA was objectively measured for seven consecutive days using ActiGraph GT3X+  
213 accelerometers. Following standardized accelerometer protocols (Troost, McIver, & Pate,  
214 2005), a total of 238 participants were randomly selected to wear the devices.

215 Accelerometers enable the collection of real-time data on the frequency, duration and  
216 intensity of all activities. They are relatively small and lightweight, provide a reliable and  
217 valid measure ideal for assessing children's PA (Corder, Ekelund, Steele, Wareham, &  
218 Brage, 2008; Loprinzi & Cardinal, 2011). Accelerometer data was collected and stored in  
219 15-s epochs (Evenson, Catellier, Gill, Ondrak, & McMurray, 2008), and the Evenson et

220 al.'s MVPA cut-point ( $\geq 2296$  counts $\cdot$ min $^{-1}$ ) was used to categorize children's PA into  
221 moderate-to-vigorous intensity activity and minutes spent in this activity intensity. The  
222 Evenson cut points provided acceptable classification accuracy to estimate time spent in  
223 MVPA in children (Area under the receiver operating characteristic curve [ROC-AUC =  
224 0.90]) (Troost, Loprinzi, Moore, & Pfeiffer, 2011). Participants were included in the  
225 analysis if they had valid data, defined as a minimum of three days including a weekend  
226 day with at least ten hours (600 minutes/day) of total wear time recorded. Non-wear time  
227 was defined as strings of consecutive zeros equating to 20 minutes (Cain, Sallis, Conway,  
228 Van Dyck, & Calhoun, 2013). A total of 191 (80.3%) students met wear-time criteria.

229

### 230 **Data analysis**

231 The hypothesised structural relations between multiple independent and dependent  
232 variables were tested using SEM. It was deemed an appropriate technique for testing the  
233 fit of a hypothesised model with the observed data through goodness-of-fit statistics  
234 (Byrne, 2013). Before performing SEM, covariance and correlation matrices were  
235 obtained to allow better estimate the direct and indirect effects among the variables in the  
236 model (Table 1).

237

238 \*\*\*\*Table 1 near here\*\*\*\*

239

240 The analyses were conducted using MPLUS 7.0. The root mean square error of  
241 approximation (RMSEA), with associated 90% confidence interval, the comparative fit  
242 index (CFI), and the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) were calculated to

243 evaluate model fit (Byrne, 2013). The interpretation of what constitutes good fit varies  
244 across studies (Marsh, Hau, & Wen, 2004). In the current study, RMSEA less than or  
245 equal to .08, and CFI greater than .90 were considered indicative of adequate fit (Byrne,  
246 2001). The chi-square statistics ( $\chi^2$ ) for model fit was also presented in the manuscript.  
247 However, this test is sensitive to sample size and therefore was not used to determine  
248 model fit.

249 Random assignment of items to parcels was conducted with the perceived  
250 movement skill competence (three four-item parcels) and enjoyment in PA (four four-  
251 item parcels), in order to reduce the number of parameters that would be estimated  
252 (Figure 1). Parcelling of items in SEM is common, and can have important impact on  
253 parameter estimation and statistical conclusions (Bandalos & Finney, 2001). By summing  
254 together two or more items and using the resulting sum as the basic unit of analysis is  
255 desirable since more than about four items per latent variable in SEM often creates  
256 serious problems of model fit (Bandalos & Finney, 2001).

257 The hypothetical model in Figure 1 consisted of four observed variables -  
258 locomotor skills, object control skills, self-reported PA and MVPA; and three latent  
259 variables - perceived physical competence (six indicators: PPC1 - PPC6), perceived  
260 movement skill competence (three indicators: FM1- FM3), and enjoyment (four  
261 indicators: EN1 - EN4). The model included paths that emanated from locomotor and  
262 object control skills to each of the two latent variables (i.e. perceived physical  
263 competence and perceived movement skill competence), and from each of the three latent  
264 variables (i.e. perceived physical competence, perceived movement skill competence and  
265 enjoyment) to PA (i.e. self-reported PA and MVPA). In addition, locomotor skills or

266 object skills were hypothesized to operate through perceived physical competence,  
267 perceived movement skill competence and enjoyment to influence on PA (i.e. indirect  
268 effects). The model included children's age, gender and BMI as covariates to account for  
269 their influence on all of the latent constructs and indicators.

270

271 \*\*\*\*Figure 1 near here\*\*\*\*

272

## 273 **Results**

274 The descriptive statistics of the sample are provided in Table 2. Hypothesized paths and  
275 standardized parameter estimates are shown in Figure 2. The model provided an adequate  
276 fit to the observed data, RMSEA = .047, 90% CI [.04, .05], CFI = .94, SRMR = .046.

277 After adjusting for child age, gender and BMI, significant associations were found  
278 between (a) locomotor skills and perceived physical competence ( $\beta = .16$ , 95% CI  
279 [.08, .25]), and perceived movement skill competence ( $\beta = .11$ , 95% CI [.001, .22]); (b)  
280 perceived physical competence and enjoyment ( $\beta = .50$ , 95% CI [.10, .90]); (c) perceived  
281 movement skill competence and MVPA ( $\beta = .59$ , 95% CI [.04, 1.14]); and (d) enjoyment  
282 and self-reported PA ( $\beta = .02$ , 95% CI [-.35, .38]). FMS competency (both locomotor and  
283 object control skills) had no direct effect on children's PA (neither self-reported nor  
284 objectively assessed PA).

285

286 \*\*\*\*Table 2 near here\*\*\*\*

287

288 \*\*\*\*Figure 2 near here\*\*\*\*

289

290           After adjustments for age, gender and BMI, only the indirect effect of locomotor  
291 skills on self-reported PA through perceived physical competence and enjoyment was  
292 significant ( $\beta = .07$ , 95% CI [.02, .12]). Object control skills did not have an indirect  
293 effect on either self-report PA or MVPA through perceived physical competence,  
294 perceived movement skill competence and enjoyment.

295

## 296 **Discussion**

297 This study reported the associations between FMS, perceived physical and movement  
298 skill competence, enjoyment in PA, self-reported and objectively measured PA among  
299 Hong Kong Chinese children. While previous studies have found a positive association  
300 between FMS competency and PA in children (Cohen, Morgan, Plotnikoff, Callister, &  
301 Lubans, 2014; De Meester et al., 2016) and adolescents (Barnett et al., 2011), this direct  
302 relationship was not observed in the study sample. Alternatively, perceived competence  
303 and enjoyment mediated the association between movement skill competence and self-  
304 reported PA (but not objectively measured PA). There is little research in this area  
305 investigating the mediating effects of enjoyment or perceived competence among  
306 children (Cohen, Morgan, Plotnikoff, Hulteen, & Lubans, 2017). To the authors'  
307 knowledge, this study is the first to assess perceived physical competence, perceived  
308 movement skill competence, and enjoyment of PA as potential mediators of the  
309 association between FMS and PA among a large sample of Hong Kong primary-school  
310 aged children.

311           The findings generally indicate that being able to perform locomotor skills  
312 competently is important for enhancing perceptions and enjoyment experienced in PA, in  
313 turn increasing PA engagement in children. This confirms previous studies in the  
314 Western population that locomotor skills may have a greater influence on children's PA,  
315 in comparison to object control skills (Khodaverdi, Bahram, Stodden, & Kazemnejad,  
316 2016; Williams et al., 2008). In the current study, this finding may reflect the cultural  
317 specificity of the skills included in the TGMD-2. For example, the locomotor skills (e.g.,  
318 jump, hop, and run) included in the TGMD-2 are prominent in physical activities like  
319 running, dancing and jumping rope. They are more widely popular among Hong Kong  
320 school children than many team sports (e.g., cricket, baseball, and hockey) that often  
321 require object manipulation skills. A recent review of global data on child and adolescent  
322 participation in sport and leisure-time physical activities has demonstrated that there is  
323 diversity in popular sports and activities around the globe (Hulteen et al., 2017).  
324 Therefore, it is important to note that traditional FMS might not be appropriate or  
325 relevant across different cultures and countries. Further research in non-Western contexts  
326 is warranted.

327           In contrast with our findings, two longitudinal studies conducted with Australian  
328 children demonstrated that object control proficiency developed in primary schools  
329 predicted subsequent engagement in adolescent PA (Barnett, Beard, van Beurden, Brooks,  
330 & Morgan, 2009; Barnett et al., 2008), and a positive self-perception was a mediator of  
331 this association (Barnett et al., 2008). One recent study conducted with Canadian pre-  
332 schoolers (Crane et al., 2015) also found that object control skills were more closely  
333 related to MVPA than locomotor skills, but perceived competence did not mediate the

334 association. The inconsistent results observed in these previous studies (Barnett et al.,  
335 2008; Crane et al., 2015) may be that they did not align measures of actual and perceived  
336 competence to examine their associations with PA (Robinson et al., 2015a). It is likely  
337 that children may have different perceptions of their ability in movement skill and sport-  
338 related or outdoor games.

339         In the current study, we measured both perceived physical competence and  
340 perceived movement skill competence (based on the TGMD-2), but only the latter was  
341 significantly associated with MVPA. This finding provides preliminary evidence that  
342 perceptions of movement skill competence may also influence children's activity levels.  
343 Increasing research has aligned the measures of actual and perceived movement skill  
344 competence to investigate their association with objectively measured PA (Barnett,  
345 Ridgers, & Salmon, 2015; Slykerman et al., 2016). In contrast, no association between  
346 perceived movement skill competence and MVPA was found for young children (4-8  
347 years old) in these studies. Our results extend previous knowledge in that, perceived  
348 rather than actual skill competence is more important to MVPA in older primary school  
349 children. More importantly, it provides support for the inclusion of perceived skill  
350 competence to match with the assessment of actual movement skills in future studies.  
351 Further investigations of the development of perceived movement skill competence in  
352 children and its mediating role between FMS and PA may help better understand the  
353 association (Barnett et al., 2015).

354         It should be noted, however, that inconsistent findings were found between  
355 different PA measures in the current study. Perceived FMS was associated with MVPA,  
356 but not for self-reported PA. This discrepancy highlights the importance of providing

357 comparative objective measures of PA (Kavanaugh, Moore, Hibbett, & Kaczynski, 2015),  
358 and calls for valid and reliable PA measures to increase precision and accuracy in  
359 detecting associations of PA with actual and perceived competence among children. Yet,  
360 the mediation of physical competence and enjoyment was observed only for self-reported  
361 and not objectively measured PA. The strength of associations may have been  
362 systematically overestimated for self-report PA measures because of social desirability  
363 bias in children (Adamo, Prince, Tricco, Connor-Gorber, & Tremblay, 2009). The  
364 difference is also likely due to inflated method variance when both PA and psychosocial  
365 correlates are assessed using self-report measures (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff,  
366 2012). However, it is argued that statistical techniques such as SEM can be used to  
367 control method biases (Podsakoff et al., 2012).

368         Due to logistics challenges, accelerometer data was only obtained in a subsample  
369 which may have prohibited detecting a significant association between FMS and MVPA.  
370 Further, children in densely populated city of Hong Kong with limited space for PA, may  
371 be more often to engage in sedentary behaviours and habitual PA (i.e., light- to moderate-  
372 intensity PA) than MVPA. It is thus possible to further investigate and determine the  
373 association between FMS and PA using objective measures that may offer a more  
374 accurate indication of actual PA involvement at different intensity levels (i.e. light,  
375 MVPA, and vigorous PA). Although much of the research has been focused on MVPA,  
376 there is some support for the associations among FMS, sedentary behaviour and light- to  
377 moderate- intensity PA (Foweather et al., 2015; Gu, 2016; Johnstone, Hughes, Janssen, &  
378 Reilly, 2017).

379 Utilising Harter's competence motivation theory, this study recruited a large  
380 sample of children across the primary school years (P1–P6) to investigate the associations  
381 between FMS, perceived physical and movement skill competence, enjoyment, self-  
382 reported and objectively measured PA (Harter, 1978). This research goes beyond existing  
383 knowledge by examining the potential mediating effects of enjoyment and perceived  
384 movement skill competence on the association between FMS and PA, which may help  
385 translate the theoretical links to applications for effective skill learning and PA behaviour  
386 change in different settings. The strengths of this study lie in the use of a comprehensive,  
387 process-oriented battery to assess children's FMS competence, and matched measures of  
388 actual and perceived movement skill proficiency. Children's PA levels were obtained  
389 using both objective (accelerometers) and subjective (questionnaires) measurement  
390 techniques. Confounding variables were controlled in all analyses.

391 Some methodological limitations need to be acknowledged. As with all cross-  
392 sectional studies, the data in the current study were collected at one specific period and  
393 therefore causation cannot be established. Although SEM controlled for age, BMI, and  
394 gender, the results of the potential mediating effects of enjoyment and skill perceptions  
395 on the association between FMS and PA remained insufficient for making a confident  
396 causal inference. Experimental and longitudinal studies can strengthen a directionality  
397 argument. Considering the fact that estimation of the model may be affected by the  
398 potential presence of multicollinearity (Vatcheva, Lee, McCormick, & Rahbar, 2016),  
399 caution should be warranted when interpreting the preliminary results found in this study.  
400 Another potential limitation is that social support as an important construct in Harter's  
401 competence motivation theory was not measured in the current study.

402           The results of the study supported the conclusions drawn by a review, indicating  
403 that perceived competence plays an increasing influential role in the promotion of PA  
404 engagement across childhood (Babic et al., 2014). Further, findings from the current  
405 study highlight that both general perceptions of physical competence and specific skill  
406 perceptions appear to be important determinants of PA in children. Perceived physical  
407 competence might be viewed as a multidimensional construct and thus, future research  
408 could seek to combine multiple assessments of physical self-perceptions to investigate  
409 the association between FMS and PA. Simultaneously, there has been growing evidence  
410 regarding the use of process and product assessments to provide a holistic assessment of  
411 children's FMS competence (Logan, Barnett, Goodway, & Stodden, 2017; Rudd et al.,  
412 2016). Towards a better understanding of the examined relationships, it may be  
413 particularly important to consider using a wider range of test batteries to capture  
414 children's motor competence.

415           Given the rising levels of physical inactivity (Hallal et al., 2012), accompanied by  
416 a growing concern in many countries about declining FMS proficiency in children across  
417 all ages (Bardid et al., 2016; Foweather, 2010; Hardy, Barnett, Espinel, & Okely, 2013),  
418 mediation analyses are warranted to explore the underlying mechanism to further define  
419 the associations between FMS and PA at different intensities (i.e. light, MVPA, and  
420 vigorous PA) as well as time spent in sedentary behaviours. The current study contributes  
421 to the literature by utilising both objective and subjective measures of PA when  
422 investigating their relationships with psychosocial variables among children. In  
423 conclusion, the results of this study help improve the present understanding of the

424 association between FMS and PA in primary children as well as inform the design of  
425 future effective FMS interventions.

426

#### 427 **Disclosure of interest**

428 The authors report no conflicts of interest.

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