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THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SCOTTISH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS: A TOOL FOR USE IN POPULATION STUDIES.

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In order to establish concurrent validity of physical activity by 7-day recall in a student population, the minutes of physical activity estimated by the Scottish Physical Activity Questionnaire (SPAQ) were compared with minutes of activity estimated by continuous heart rate monitoring in a sample of twenty-four students. Heart rate bands for light, moderate and vigorous physical activity were established for each individual and used to establish the number of minutes spent at each activity level. This was compared with self-report data for leisure and occupational activity. Cronbach's alpha, t-test and limits of agreement analysis indicated significant differences between the two methods and poor agreement within individuals. Focus groups were undertaken to explore sources of error and difficulties in interpretation of the questionnaire. It was concluded that changes were required to improve both face and concurrent validity prior to use in population studies.

Following modification and redesign of the SPAQ for a student population the protocol was repeated in a further twenty-two students. The results indicated reduced bias of one method relative to the other and increased agreement within individuals. Internal consistency was acceptable where outliers were removed.