

STUDENTS' SPORTS ACTIVITY PREFERENCE AND THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARD PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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Abstract-Present study examined high school students' attitudes toward Physical Education Activity and their sports activities preferences. There were 1317 (603 boys and 714 girls) participants. All the participants were from 9th-12th standard from five rural districts. The Physical Education Activity Attitude Scale was used for the collection of data. The overall mean score (70.16±3.95) indicated positive attitude towards physical education activity (ATPEA) for the participants. A significant ($p < 0.01$) differences was found in attitude towards physical education activity with respect to participants' gender and Socio-Economic Status. In the item number 2, 13 and 15 Girls out classed boys. In Item, medium level SES students scored higher than students with low and high SES. Results were of indication that the students' attitude towards physical education activity was positive. There are some crucial factors like which were found to be related to students' perception, benefit, care and value about physical education and sports activities.

Key Words-ATPEA, PEAAS, Socio Economic Status

I. INTRODUCTION

Researchers indicated that children who have more positive attitudes toward physical activity are reported to be more likely to participate in physical activity outside of school (Chung and Phillips, 2002; Ding et al., 2006; McKenzie, 2003; Portman, 2003) and demonstrate higher physical activity levels (Hagger et al., 19985) than those with less positive attitudes.

With regard to children's characteristics, elementary children are found to have more positive attitudes than secondary school children (Lee, 2004; Martin, 2000; Solmon and Carter, 1995; Xiang *et al.*, 2004) and children's attitudes become less positive as they progress through their schooling (Biddle and Mutrie, 2008; Lee, 2004; Prochaska *et al.*, 2003; Xiang *et al.*, 2004). It is also found that elementary school children express very favorable attitudes toward health, fitness, enjoyment and social interaction benefits of physical activity, but do not enjoy physical activities involving hard practice and risk-taking movements (Patterson and Faucette, 1990). Lee (2004) found that the younger children possess more positive attitudes toward physical activity and show more interests toward all kinds of physical activities. However, the reliability of younger children responding to questions might need to be carefully considered due to their lower self-evaluation ability (Lee, 2004).

Gender difference is another factor that has been addressed in children's ATPEA research. In the studies comparing the differences of attitudes toward physical education between girls and boys by Birtwistle and Brodie (1991), Folsom-Meek (1992) and Hick *et al.* (2001), girls were found more favorable ATPEA emphasizing aesthetics, whereas boys were found more positive ATPEA in challenging and risk-taking activities (Folsom-Meek, 1992; Papaioannou, 1994). Specifically, Greenwood and Stillwell, (2001) reported that boys demonstrated strong interests in archery, bowling, flag football and wrestling, whereas girls preferred gymnastics, softball and volleyball (Greenwood and Stillwell, 2001). Furthermore, boys were reported to have more positive attitudes than girls toward physical activities bringing them risk-taking experiences, whereas girls were more positive than boys in

physical activities with beautiful and graceful movements (Colley *et al.*, 1994; Hick *et al.*, 2001; Parkhurst, 2000). Subramanian and Silverman (2002), however, did not find gender difference in attitudes between boys and girls toward physical education (Subramanian and Silverman, 2007).

To the knowledge of the investigators, very few studies have been conducted to examine students' attitude towards physical education activity and sports/activities preferences in Odisha state. Hence, the purpose of this study was to examine the current status of ATPEA and sports/activities preferences of the high school students in the Odisha State.

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

Ten public schools were recruited voluntarily from five districts of Odisha state (Khordha, Balasor, Sambalpur, Mayurbhanj, Puri). A total of 1,317 participants (603 boys and 714 girls) in classes 9-12 (aged 16.79 ± 1.14 yr) completed the questionnaires of the study. Two questionnaires were administered to the participants. The first questionnaire was the Physical Education Activity Attitude Scale (PEAAS). Responses were collected in 5-point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree). The second questionnaire was the Sports/Activities Preference Questionnaire developed by the researchers. All the questionnaires were administered in the presence of the principal investigator. After the questionnaires were collected, a thorough scrutiny was done and the incomplete questionnaires were eliminated. All the data were organized for the statistical analysis.

III. RESULTS

The descriptive statistics with respect to the attitude towards physical education activity of the participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Students' Attitudes-toward Physical Education Activity

Statements	M	SD
1	3.87	0.84
2	4.00	0.99
3	2.92	0.99
4	2.72	1.05
5	3.89	0.90
6	3.41	1.14
7	3.71	1.01
8	3.03	1.12
9	3.83	0.82
10	3.21	1.09
11	3.96	0.83
12	3.25	1.08
13	3.67	1.04
14	3.87	1.02
15	3.42	1.13
16	4.00	0.91
17	3.12	1.10
18	3.94	1.04
19	3.49	0.79
20	3.35	1.09
Total	M = 3.51	SD = 0.99

In statement two the mean score has been the highest (4.00 ± 0.99) maximum number of participants thought that physical education is beneficial to anyone who regularly participates in it. The second highest scored statement was sixteen (4.00 ± 0.91). In statement eleven students had third highest mean score (3.96 ± 0.83), they believed that Physical exercise is the best way to obtain a youthful looking and agile body.

In statement 18 the students had fourth highest mean score (3.94 ± 1.04), in which the students believed that without physical education, high school education would collapse. Students felt that physical exercises bring them fun and relaxation and are their essential daily activities and hence the fifth highest score was statement 5 (3.89 ± 0.90). The overall mean score for of the questionnaire was 70.160 ± 3.948 which indicated that the students had a positive attitude towards physical education activity.

Among the total population 30% of the students preferred to participate in team sports; 12% of students preferred to participate in individual sports; 8% of the students were interested in dual games; 18% of the students were interested to engage them in aerobic exercises; 12% of students were willing to participate in weight lifting; 10% of student participants preferred to participate in dance classes; only 6% of the subjects preferred to participate in outdoor adventure activities; very few students preferred to participate in martial art classes (4%). Preferences of the students' physical education activity is illustrated in figure 1.

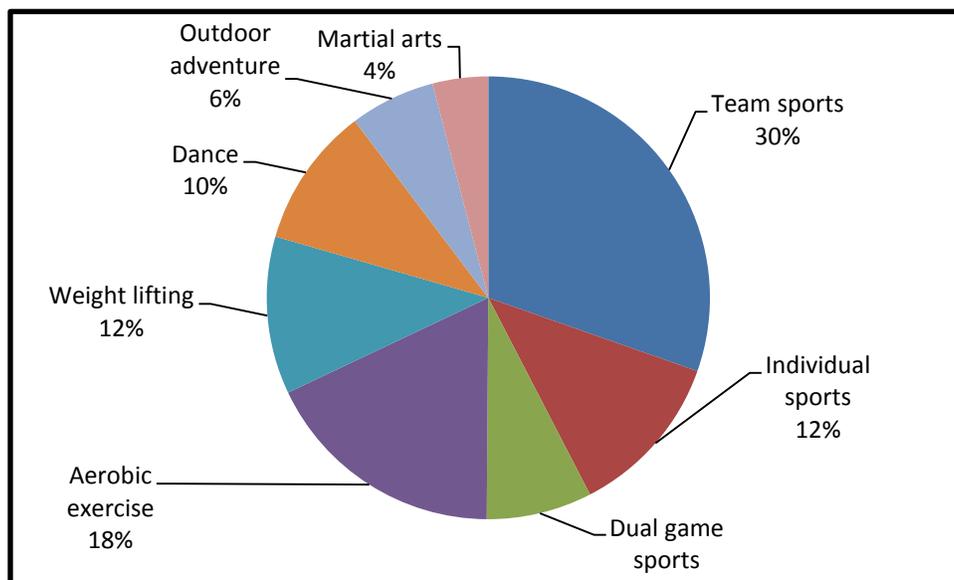


Figure 1. Preferences of the students' physical education activity

Table 2 Mean Comparisons of attitude toward physical education activities of participants with respect to gender and social economic status

Factors	N	M	SD	P Value
Gender				
Statement 2				0.003
Male	603	3.81	0.90	
Female	714	3.92	0.79	
Statement 13				0.011
Male	603	3.59	1.10	
Female	714	3.73	0.98	
Statement 15				0.006
Male	603	3.33	1.18	
Female	714	3.50	1.08	

Table 2 displays that significant gender differences were found in the statement 2, 13 and 15. In statement 2, female students ($F = 8.62$) scored significantly ($p = 0.003$) higher than those of male students. In statement 13, the female students ($F = 6.46$) scored significantly ($p = 0.011$) higher than those of males. For statement 15, the female students ($F = 7.49$) scored significantly ($p = 0.006$) higher than those of male students. The f value required for significance was at 1 degree of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 3 Mean Comparisons of attitude toward physical education activities of participants with respect to socio economic status

Factors	N	M	SD	P Value
Socio economic status				
Statement 19				0.003
High	159	3.21	0.87	
Middle	978	3.44	0.78	
Low	180	3.38	0.76	

In relation to socio economic status of the students, only in statement 19 there was a significant difference found ($p = 0.003$, $df=2$) with f value 5.73. Mean values are displayed in the table 3.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The students' attitude towards physical education activity in the study was found to be positive. Importance of Certain factors are found to be evident from the outcome of the study such as benefits of physical education classes, degree of seriousness of the physical education classes, perception of students towards physical education activities, and total value attached to the physical activities and physical exercises. Most of the students' sport preference is: team sports, individual sports and dual game sports.

As found in many of the previous studies, both male and female participants show positive and similar attitude towards physical education activity. The finding of this study is consistent with most previous studies. In specific, the female participants in the current study show more positive attitudes than their male counterparts. Students have regarded physical education classes as important as other academic classes.

If we can change attitude of school children towards physical education and can make daily physical activity a part of their life, then we can achieve a long way in reduction of the risk the hazards of a sedentary lifestyle. On the basis of the findings of the study, it can be concluded that, the solutions are lying in a multiple dimensional relationship between school environment, economic realities, and educational policy.

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