

STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY- A STUDY OF GENDER & CASTE DIFFERENCES

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the differences in attitude towards physical activity of college students in relation to their gender and caste group. The sample consisted of 400 students comprising set of 100 each of Scheduled and Non-Scheduled Caste boys, and of Scheduled and Non-Scheduled Caste girls aged between 18 to 23 years. The Physical Activity Attitude Scale (PAAS) constructed by J. Bhullar (1976) was utilized to collect the data from the sample. The 'mean' and 't-test' were used for statistical treatment of the data. The mean score disclosed the differential attitude on both parameter- gender and caste. While the mean score for boys at 275.58 was higher than that of girls 266.65, the same figure for Non-Scheduled Caste students was 273.60 in comparison with the Scheduled Caste students with mean score of 268.63. The t-ratio between boys and girls was quite significant with score of $t = 2.95$. The same figure for Non-Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Caste students was insignificant with $t = 1.63$.

Keywords : activity preferences, Attitudes Toward Physical Education Activity, Perception, value of program, Physical Education, , theoretical framework

Introduction

Human body is one of the most beautiful as well as the most complex thing nature has created. The intelligent ways in which this unique creation acts, reacts and interacts is a rare extraordinary phenomenon. The same idea is indicated in the following shloka from the Veda—

'sharirmadhyam khalu sadhanam'

(Sound body is prime means of any religious duty.)

It has been accepted that physical activity is the main cause of Physical Activeness. Physical Activity has been defined by the US Department of Health and Human Services as 'Any bodily movement that is produced by the contraction of skeletal muscles and that substantially increases the amount of energy you expend'. (USDHHS, 1996).

Therefore, it should be an essential part of life. *Ajay Kumar* (2008) expressed that Physical Activeness depends on mainly two factors. One is balanced diet which gives us required energy to do the daily work. Other is the Physical Activity which has come in the new educational, systematic & scientific form of discipline as Physical Education. Harold M. Barrow(1983) defines *Physical Education as "an education of and through human movement where many of the educational objectives are achieved by means of big muscles activities sport, games, gymnastics, dance and exercise"*¹

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Physical education is necessary for the total development of human beings and to stay healthy and active for a longer time by delaying ubiquitous biological senescence. Physical Education gives us a scientific knowledge related to the body movements through different types of physical activities like games & sports. Physical Education activities that include inter alia, Games & Sports are the most potent factor in keeping an individual physically healthy, active and mentally alert.

Kothari Education Commission (1964-66) emphasized that physical education activities and sports do contribute not only to physical fitness and health but also to physical efficiency, mental alertness and development of certain qualities like perseverance, team spirit and many other values of life processes and high achievements.

Commenting on the importance of Physical Activities, *Robinson and Shaver (1969)*² had shown that sports participation in general is positively correlated with the development of psychological, physical and physiological well-being and the people who are active in a variety of ways in such activities tend to report a higher degree of emotional well being, life satisfaction, perceived happiness and physical fitness.

*C.E. Willgoose (1984)*³ views that physical education should be part of every individual's total education. Vigorous activity is a physiological necessity for optimum health and well being. Through physical education, a person learns the satisfaction and joy of movement, exercise and activity. The individual acquires adequate physical movement skills and maintains muscle tone as well as cardio-vascular efficiency. Participation in physical education provides a means to maintain and extend endurance, strength and flexibility. It can also be a physically beneficial and socially acceptable means to release tension; but more than that, it can be a social participation in which one can grow to know one's self.

It is clear from the literature that the development of an acceptable level of physical fitness which would help to attain certain healthy personal and psychological characteristics and a better healthy living are universally accepted as a goal of physical education programme. Physical educators and teachers have postulated that social acceptance and educational conditions in addition to physical education activities and games provide excellent media through which better physical fitness, personality characteristics, values, adjustment in different areas and attitude could be developed. Here, attitude is the root factor to develop such qualities. It is imperative to conduct an attitudinal evaluation of youths towards physical activity. With this avowed objective, the investigator made an attempt to study the varying attitude on gender and caste basis towards the physical activities, since no such study was conducted with this approach in Indian condition.

Statement of the Problem

"Students' Attitude towards Physical Activity: A Study of Gender & Caste Differences"

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the students' attitude towards physical activities.

Hypothesis

Following is the hypotheses which were being tested through empirical studies:

1. There would be significant difference between the attitudes of boys and girls towards physical activity.
2. There would be significant difference between attitudes of non-scheduled castes and scheduled castes students towards physical activity.

Delimitations

Taking into consideration the time and the resources available with the investigator, the study has been

limited to the following aspects:

1. The sample consists of students of graduate classes, who are studying Physical Education as a compulsory subject.
2. The sample consists of the boys and girls aged between 18 to 23 years.
3. The study is further limited to the student of different colleges affiliated to the M.J.P. Rohilkhand University, Moradabad, and U.P.
4. The study is further limited to the Moradabad Region only which comprises four districts of Rampur, Bareilly, J.P.Nagar and Moradabad.
5. The study is further limited to the following scale: Physical Activity Attitude Scale (PAAS) developed by J. Bhullar (1976)⁴.
6. The Study is further limited to the set up of significance level 0.05.

Variable

Independent Variable

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Gender – | A. Boys | B. Girls |
| 2. Caste – | A. Non-Scheduled Caste | B. Scheduled Caste |

For the purpose of this study, the scholar divided the total population into two categories i.e., Scheduled Caste (SC) and Non-Scheduled Caste (NSC).

Scheduled Caste populations are those population who have been certified by the State or Central Government in light of the Indian Constitution. Rest of population has been categorized as Non-Scheduled Caste.

Dependent Variable

Attitude towards Physical Activity

Method

Sample of the Study

The subjects for this study were 200 boys and 200 girls selected from 8 different colleges of Moradabad region. 100 boys and 100 girls were taken each from the Non-Scheduled Caste category and the Scheduled Caste category. These colleges from the M.J.P.Rohilkhand University were selected through lottery system.

Tool

As a tool, 'Physical Activity Attitudes Scale' of J. Bhullar (1976) was used.

Sampling Technique

'Stratified Random Sampling' was used to select the subject for the purpose of collecting data for this study.

Data Collection

For sampling the students, office record from each college was checked and a list of graduate class students was prepared. These students were treated as the subjects for the empirical study and they were requested to write their response on the inventories. Instructions given in the manual were followed. No time limit was prescribed to the subjects to complete the Physical Activity Attitude Scale, but it was categorically

mentioned that subjects should try to fill in the responses preferably within 20 minutes. The investigators conducted the testing programme and collected data in different colleges on the same pattern.

Statistical Technique

The 't-test' was used for testing the hypotheses.

Data analysis, results & discussion:

In the present study, the data obtained from four hundred (400) subjects on the basis of their responses on Physical Activity Attitude Scale, were tabulated and analyzed using "mean and t-test" statistical techniques.

The results are presented in table no. 1 to 4.

Table No.1

Mean Scores of Attitude towards Physical Activity of Boys and Girls

Gender	N		Mean
	NSC + SC	= T	
Boys (A ₁)	100 + 100	= 200	275.58
Girls (A ₂)	100 + 100	= 200	266.65

Table No.1 represents the mean scores of Attitude towards Physical Activity of boys and girls of selected college students. With a mean score of 275.58, boys show more favorable attitude among boys towards physical activity in comparison to the girls with mean score of 266.65.

Table No. 2

Mean Scores of Attitude towards Physical Activities of Non-Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Caste Students

Castes	N		Mean
	Boys + Girls	= T	
Non-Scheduled Caste (B ₁)	100 + 100	= 200	273.60
Scheduled Caste (B ₂)	100 + 100	= 200	268.63

Table No. 2 represents the mean scores of Attitude of Non- Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Caste students towards Physical Activity. Non-Scheduled Caste subjects with mean score of 273.60 is favorably disposed towards the Physical Activity in comparison with the attitude of Non-Schedule Caste with a mean score of 268.63.

Table No.3

Mean Score of Attitude towards Physical Activity of Non-scheduled Caste and Scheduled Caste Boys and Girls

	Non-Scheduled Castes		Scheduled Castes	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Number	100	100	100	100
Mean	276.50	270.70	274.66	262.60

Table No.3 represents the mean score of attitude of Non-Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Caste boys and girls towards physical activity. The mean for Non-Scheduled Caste boys is found to be 276.50; whereas for Scheduled Caste boys, the value was 274.66 . The respective mean value for the Non-Scheduled Caste girls and Scheduled Caste girls was found to be 270.70 and 262.60 respectively. Thus the mean score of Non-Scheduled Caste boys shows more favorable attitude in comparison with that of Scheduled Caste boys and Non-Scheduled Caste girls shows more favorable attitude as compared to Scheduled Caste girls.

Table. 4

Significance of Difference Between the Attitude of Students towards Physical Activity on the Basis of Gender and Caste Wise

Variable	Subject	N	Mean	SD	T-ratio
Gender (A)	Boys	200	275.58	29.140	2.95*
	Girls	200	266.65	31.320	
Caste (B)	N-SC	200	273.60	31.405	1.63
	SC	200	268.63	29.520	

* Significant at 0.05 level of Confidence

Table No. 4 reveals that there is a statistically significant difference between the attitude of boys and girls. However, the attitudinal difference that exists is not significant between non-scheduled and scheduled caste students.

The finding of present study is dissented from the findings of the study conducted by J. Bhullar (1976) on Male and Female students. Bhullar had measured attitudes on a physical activity attitude scale constructed and standardized by him which consisted of 70 items. Scoring was done on the basis of Scale Product Technique by giving weight for each response category in the Likert fashion and then multiplying the same with scale value of the statement.

In the present study, the obtained value of 't'-ratio is 2.95, which is quite high in comparison to the value of 't'-tabulated. Hence, we can say that there is significant gender difference between attitude of boys and girls towards physical activity.

Table No.4 further reveals that for caste (non-scheduled caste and scheduled caste), the value of 't'-ratio is 1.63 which is less than the value of 't'-tabulated. This indicates that there is insignificant statistical difference between attitude of the non-scheduled caste and scheduled caste towards physical activity.

The first hypothesis stands complemented from the empirical study while the second one stands unproven at 0.05 level of confidence.

Conclusion

The present study has indicated that the majority of the boys respondents had more favorable attitude towards physical activity in comparison to girls respondents. Similarly the majority of non-scheduled caste students also held favorable attitude towards physical activity in comparison with scheduled caste students, on the basis of obtained mean scores. Significant difference has been found between boys and girls. However, the attitudinal difference between non-scheduled caste and scheduled caste students was found insignificant towards physical activities.

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