

Attitude of Students Affecting Their Interest on Physical Education Activities in a Selected University, China

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ABSTRACT: The study aimed to comprehend the attitudes and interest of students at Zhangjiajie University towards Physical Education Activities. The study utilized a descriptive-comparative-correlational research method, employing a survey questionnaire. Descriptive research was centered on numerical and unchanging data as well as detailed, convergent reasoning. The study was carried out in an independent general undergraduate college in Zhangjiajie, China. A stratified random sample was taken from 8,404 undergraduate students who were enrolled during the current semester. 368 students were selected using stratified random sampling with the help of the Qualtrics Calculator for Samples. The questionnaire was divided into three parts: the demographic profile, the assessment of students' attitudes towards Physical Education activities, and the assessment of respondents' interests. The results were utilized to create a motivational strategic program aimed at improving students' interest and attitude towards participating in Physical Education activities.

KEYWORDS: Physical education, Students, Attitude, Interest, University, China

1. INTRODUCTION

Physical Education (PE) stands as a cornerstone in shaping individuals' attitudes toward physical activity, especially within educational settings. Li et al. (2014) uses an intercorrelated model to understand factors influencing attitudes and their implications for academic achievement and lifelong participation. The results show moderately positive attitudes towards PE, with significant positive associations between students' participation in PE activities and their academic achievement.

Chen and Hypnar (2019) emphasized the continuum of attitudes towards PE activities from childhood to adulthood, highlighting the importance of fostering positive attitudes during formative years. Khan et al. (2019) accentuated the holistic benefits of PE, extending beyond physical development to lifelong health and well-being.

PE encompasses structured activities aimed at educating individuals about the importance of physical activity, its benefits, and techniques for leading an active lifestyle. In fact, physical inactivity significantly increases the risk of various diseases, with mortality rates approaching those of cigarette smoking and obesity, and has been described as a pandemic due to its widespread prevalence. Thus, addressing this issue through education, access to safe exercise facilities, and promoting active lifestyles can help combat the negative effects of physical inactivity on public health. (Committee on Physical Activity and Physical Education in the School Environment et al., 2013)

In addition, Physical Literacy (PL) refers to the motivation, confidence, and competence to engage in physical activities. Assessment tools shape PL understanding and identify areas for improvement. They help educators tailor programs, helping individuals develop skills and confidence. Comprehensive and accurate assessment tools ensure proper evaluation of PL. Engaging in PE activities has been correlated with stress reduction and improved mental health. (Young et al., 2021; Wu et al., 2019).

However, negative attitudes towards PE, particularly among girls, can impede participation and effort (Mitchell et al., 2019). PE teachers play a pivotal role in fostering positive attitudes and creating supportive environments. In fact, Bauman et al. (2019) highlighted the critical role of psychosocial outcomes in sustaining physical activity across the lifespan. Despite its benefits, there exist disparities in activity levels across demographics, with boys generally exhibiting higher levels of activity than girls. Addressing these discrepancies is imperative to promote equitable participation in PE activities.

In light of these insights, understanding students' attitudes towards PE activities is paramount for promoting lifelong health and well-being. This study aims to investigate the attitudes of university students towards PE activities in a selected university in China, aiming to illuminate factors influencing participation and inform strategies for enhancing engagement and motivation.

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Research Objective

The study aims to find out the attitude and interest in Physical Education Activities among student-respondents in a university in Zhangjiajie, China.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A descriptive-correlational method of research was utilized in the study, which involved the administration of a survey questionnaire. Descriptive research was centered on numerical and unchanging data as well as detailed, convergent reasoning. The study was carried out at an independent general undergraduate college in Zhangjiajie, China. Stratified random sample was taken from 8,404 undergraduate students enrolled during the current semester. A total of 368 students were selected through stratified random sampling with the help of the Qualtrics Calculator for Samples. The updated questionnaire will include three sections: the demographic profile, the assessment of students' attitudes towards Physical Education activities, and the assessment of respondents' interests. The results were utilized to create a motivational strategic program aimed at improving students' interest and attitude towards participating in Physical Education activities.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Relationship of the Self-Assessment of the Student Respondents on their Level of Attitude Towards Physical Education Activities and the Self-Assessment of the Student Respondents on their Level of Interest Towards Joining Physical Education Activities

		Computed r	Sig	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Level of Interest Towards Joining Physical Education Activities	Motivation	0.88	.00	Rejected	Significant
	Determination	0.89	.00	Rejected	Significant
	Goal Setting	0.93	.00	Rejected	Significant
Over-all Level of Interest	Over-all Level of Attitude	0.94	.00	Rejected	Significant

The computed correlation coefficients (r values) between the self-assessment of student respondents on their level of attitude towards Physical Education (PE) activities and their level of interest towards joining PE activities reveal strong positive relationships across various dimensions. The significant correlation coefficients, all of which are close to 1, indicate a robust and consistent association between attitude and interest, as supported by the rejection of the null hypothesis (Ho) in each case.

Firstly, the correlation between the level of interest towards joining PE activities and motivation is computed at 0.88, with a significance level of .00, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This implies a significant positive relationship between students' motivation levels and their interest in participating in PE activities. It suggests that students who report higher levels of motivation towards PE also exhibit a greater interest in actively engaging in these activities.

Similarly, the correlation between level of interest and determination is computed at 0.89, with a significance level of .00, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates a substantial positive relationship between students' determination and their interest in joining PE activities. Those with a high level of determination towards PE activities also tend to express a higher level of interest in participating in these activities.

The correlation coefficient between level of interest and goal setting is computed at 0.93, with a significance level of .00, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis. This signifies a robust positive relationship between students' goal-setting tendencies and their interest in joining PE activities. Students who actively set goals for themselves in the context of PE also express a higher level of interest in engaging in these activities.

The overall level of interest in joining PE activities demonstrates a strong positive relationship with the overall level of attitude towards PE activities, with a computed correlation coefficient of 0.94 and a significance level of .00, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This comprehensive correlation suggests that students with a positive overall attitude towards PE activities, encompassing motivation, determination, and goal-setting, are highly likely to exhibit a heightened interest in actively participating in these activities.

These findings imply that students who possess positive attitudes towards PE activities in terms of motivation, determination, and goal setting are more inclined to express a greater interest in joining these activities. The strong positive relationships across these dimensions underscore the interconnectedness of attitude and interest, highlighting the importance of cultivating a positive mindset and motivational factors to enhance students' engagement and participation in PE activities. The rejection of the null hypothesis in all cases reinforces the notion that the observed relationships are statistically significant and not due to random chance.

IV. CONCLUSION

The implications of the study's results for encouraging student engagement and participation in Physical Education (PE) activities are substantial. Initially, the significant positive connections noted between students' attitudes towards PE and their desire to participate in these activities highlight the significance of nurturing optimistic outlooks and motivational elements. Insights like these could have been used by educators and policymakers to create interventions focused on fostering motivation, determination, and goal-setting habits in students. This would have improved their overall attitude towards PE and subsequently boosted their interest and active involvement in these activities.

Furthermore, the correlation coefficients among different dimensions of attitude towards PE and interest in participating in PE activities indicate a strong connection and mutual support. This emphasized the necessity of comprehensive approaches in PE curriculum development and implementation, focusing on more than just physical skills but also on cultivating students' intrinsic motivation, perseverance, and goal-setting capabilities. Through the implementation of holistic approaches that tackle these linked elements, educational institutions were able to establish nurturing atmospheres that enabled students to foster optimistic outlooks towards PE and nurture a lasting dedication to physical activity and wellness. Overall, the implications highlighted the crucial role of PE in enhancing comprehensive development and cultivating a mindset of health and fitness among students.

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