



ROLE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN PROMOTING ACTIVE LIFESTYLES AMONG ADOLESCENTS

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the contribution of physical education (PE) to promoting active adolescent lifestyles, in terms of PE class-taking frequency and weekly levels of physical activity among 200 adolescents aged 12-18. The findings show that 70% of students take PE classes three or more times a week, thereby affirming the significance of formal physical education in promoting recurrent motion and fitness. Moreover, 75% of students achieve the minimum suggested levels of physical activity through at least two hours of weekly exercise, showing the encouraging influence of school-based PE programs towards an active lifestyle. Yet, alarmingly, 10% of students claim no frequent participation in PE, and 25% participate in fewer than two hours of weekly exercise, which indicates a subgroup of adolescents at risk of leading sedentary lifestyles. These results highlight the necessity of intervention aimed at students with lower levels of activity, in order to guarantee equal access for all adolescents to PE and opportunities for physical activity. The role of policymakers and schools is to improve PE curriculum, invest in sports facilities, and promote extracurricular physical activity in order to build healthy habits throughout life. Improving PE programs, adding fitness initiatives, and cultivating a culture of physical activity can do much to advance the health and well-being of adolescents, avoiding the risks that accompany inactivity, obesity, and related health factors.

Keywords: Physical Education, Adolescent Health, Active Lifestyles, Physical Activity Participation, Sedentary Behavior, School-Based Interventions, PE Curriculum, Extracurricular Sports.

1. INTRODUCTION

Physical education (PE) is central in the development of adolescents' lifestyle behaviors by ensuring regular participation in physical activity, developing motor skills, and overall health. Adolescence is the key period in development where lifestyle behaviors are established, and therefore introducing formalized physical education programs that will ensure lifelong participation in physical activity is essential. By taking PE, students can enhance their cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and coordination, which are needed to sustain overall fitness. Furthermore, engaging in organized physical activities enables the development of discipline, teamwork, and perseverance—attributes that are not only useful in sports but also in academics and in life. In the modern digital age, with increasing screen time and sedentary lifestyle, it has become imperative to have PE programs that encourage students to adopt an active lifestyle. Schools have a critical role to play in mitigating the ill effects of physical inactivity by providing active PE curricula that generate a sense of enjoyment and appreciation for physical activity.

Aside from the physical aspects, PE participation is also highly associated with mental and emotional health. Physical activity is proven to lower stress, anxiety, and symptoms of depression in adolescents, ensuring positive mental health outcomes. Regular exercise triggers the release of endorphins that enhance mood and cognitive function, contributing to improved focus and school performance. Additionally, PE offers a social setting where students engage with others, make friends, and learn vital communication and leadership skills. It acts as a vent for emotional outlet and stress, enabling students to cope with school pressures successfully. Nevertheless, due to limitations such as limited finances, unavailability of trained staff, and more focus on core subjects, schools find it difficult to offer suitable PE opportunities. In order to reap the full benefits of PE, schools and policymakers must incorporate physical activity into the school curriculum on a daily basis and encourage active engagement by students. By creating a culture of physical fitness, schools can play an important role in the overall development and health of adolescents, leading them to become healthy and active adults.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Chen et al. (2020) highlighted the importance of organized physical exercise in enhancing Chinese children and adolescents' health outcomes. According to their research, regular involvement in physical education (PE) helped enhance cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength, and general physical health. The students who regularly participated in PE also had a lower sedentary behaviour, which is associated with obesity and other health problems



related to lifestyle. The study emphasized that schools need to have structured, motivating, and inclusive PE classes for students with different levels of fitness. The active promotion of participation in physical activities in school was regarded as an essential first step in building healthy lifelong habits.

DiPietro et al. (2020) emphasized international initiatives to encourage physical activity and underscored the need for ongoing research and policy action to counter rising sedentary behavior among youth. Their research was consistent with the WHO Physical Activity and Sedentary Behavior Guidelines, which recommend a minimum of 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day for children and adolescents. The results highlighted the need for organized interventions both at the school and community levels to enhance participation in physical activities. The schools were advised to incorporate various forms of physical activity, such as sports, fitness classes, and leisure activities, to address the various interests and capacities. Moreover, the research emphasized public policies' contribution towards ensuring access to well-equipped sporting facilities, secure play areas, and sensitization campaigns to promote young people's participation in sport and physical activities outside schools.

Eklblom-Bak et al. (2018) studied long-term effects of adolescent PE and free time physical activity and concluded that early participation in formal exercise programs had a definite effect on physical performance, metabolic health, and mental well-being in adulthood. Their study showed that adolescents who vigorously took part in school-based PE lessons, organized sports, and extracurricular physical activities tended to continue with an active lifestyle during adulthood. Further, research has shown that children engaging in diversified physical activity developed greater coordination, motor skills, and general fitness, leading to increased physical activity participation throughout their life. This research reaffirmed the need to implement active habits from an early age to guarantee lasting health advantages and promoted schools embracing holistic and exciting PE curriculums to equip students with the skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle after school.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employed a descriptive study design with 200 adolescents sampled and PE attendance and physical activity levels examined through structured questionnaires. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze data, with findings presented on attendance patterns, activity levels, and engagement gaps.

3.1 Research Design

The current research utilizes a descriptive research design to examine the contribution of physical education (PE) towards fostering active lifestyles in adolescents. The design is appropriate for the exploration of patterns of PE participation and physical activity levels among students and the determination of possible gaps in participation. The research is based on quantitative data gathered using standardized surveys to determine the frequency of students' participation in PE, weekly physical activity levels, and sedentary behavior.

3.2 Data Collection

Data was gathered for this research through a structured questionnaire that consisted of closed-ended and multiple-choice questions. The questionnaire addressed areas like the number of PE lessons attended weekly, the length of exercise done per week, and screen time behaviors. The questionnaire was conducted in selected schools, and answers were captured anonymously to ensure confidentiality and honest response.

3.3 Sample Size

The survey was carried out on a sample of 200 adolescents aged 12-18 years from schools. The sample was drawn with random sampling so that a balanced representation of students with different degrees of physical activity participation would be obtained.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed through descriptive statistics, i.e., frequency distribution and percentage calculations, with results being shown in tables and graphs. Physical Education Class Attendance (Table 1 & Figure 1) indicated attendance trends and gaps and revealed that the majority of students attended PE on a regular basis, while some had little or no attendance. Weekly Levels of Physical Activity (Table 2 & Figure 2) divided students by exercise time and found that though most achieved desired activity levels, some were inactive, highlighting the necessity for enhanced engagement strategies.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1 shows the frequency of participation in PE classes among 200 adolescents. A majority of students (40%) attend PE sessions 3-4 times a week, and 30% participate in PE sessions five or more times a week. A fewer percentage (20%) participate in PE sessions only 1-2 times a week, and 10% indicate no regular attendance in PE sessions.

Table 1: Participation in Physical Education Classes

Frequency of PE Classes per Week	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
1-2 times	40	20%
3-4 times	80	40%
5 or more times	60	30%
No regular PE classes	20	10%

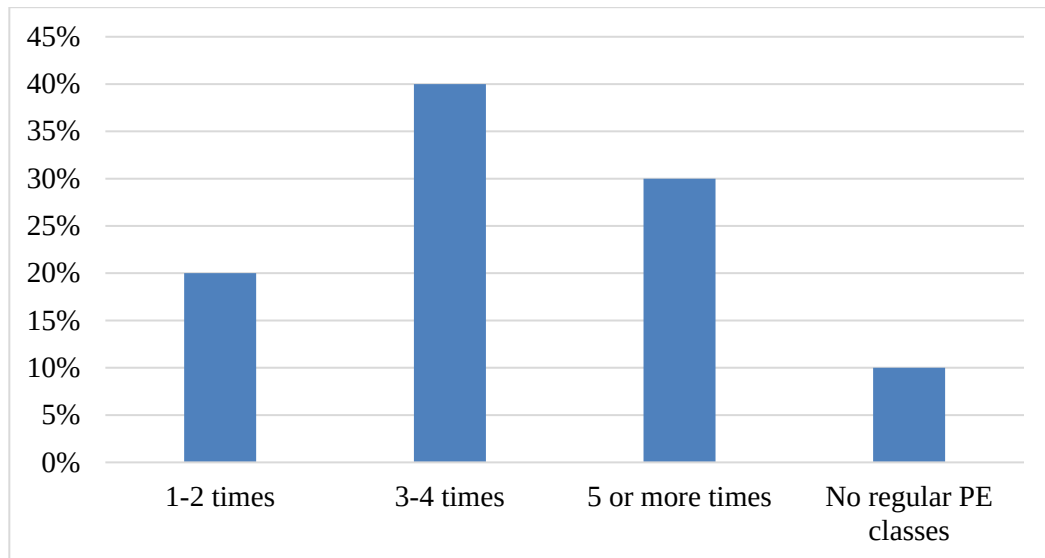


Figure 1: Graphical representation of Participation in Physical Education Classes

These results show that a large proportion of teenagers (70%) have PE classes three or more times per week, indicating that organized physical education is an integral part of their weekly schedule. Yet the fact that 10% of students do not have regular PE classes indicates concerns regarding inequities in physical activity provision, which may lead to lower levels of fitness and more sedentary lifestyles. Schools and policymakers must ensure that all students receive regular physical education to promote a healthier and more active lifestyle.

Table 2 shows the frequency of weekly physical activity among 200 adolescents. Most students (45%) take part in 2-4 hours of physical exercise every week, with 30% having participated in five or more hours of physical activity. Nonetheless, 25% of the students exercise for less than two hours every week, reflecting a quite inactive part of the sample.

Table 2: Weekly Physical Activity Levels

Weekly Exercise Duration (Hours)	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Less than 2 hours	50	25%
2-4 hours	90	45%
5 or more hours	60	30%

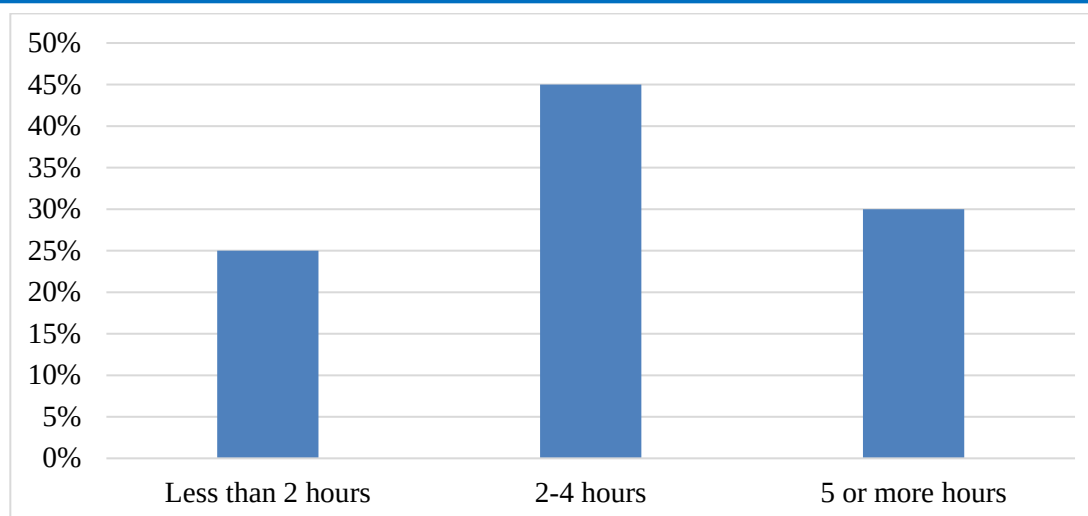


Figure 2: Graphical representation of Weekly Physical Activity Levels

The implications of these results indicate that although a high percentage of teenagers (75%) achieve the recommended level of physical activity, a quarter of them do almost no exercise and are thus at greater risk of developing such health problems as sedentary lifestyle diseases. Students with low levels of activity should be encouraged through schools and communities to undertake formal physical exercise and sporting activities.

5. CONCLUSION

The study results point to the importance of physical education in the development of active lifestyles among teenagers. The majority of students (70%) attend PE classes three or more times per week, and 75% physically exercise at least two hours a week, reflecting an encouraging trend in physical activity. Yet the fact that 10% of the adolescents have no PE classes at all and 25% exercise for fewer than two hours a week is a cause for concern regarding inactivity and associated health problems. Such inequalities indicate that, although most teenagers are assisted by organized PE programs, a considerable number are still vulnerable to inactive lifestyles that contribute to chronic disease. To do this, schools and policymakers need to provide equal access to PE classes, introduce specific interventions for less active students, and provide an environment that supports lifelong physical activity behavior. Promoting regular participation in PE and extracurricular sport will be critical in creating healthier and more active generations to come.

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