Attitude Towards Physical Activity Among Under Graduate Students In Kerala

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Abstract
The study examined at undergraduate students' attitudes about physical activity and fitness exercise. The study included 230 students, 121 male and 109 female, enrolled in undergraduate programmes in arts and sciences and professional colleges. The attitude towards physical activity was measured using physical activity attitude scale for professional college students developed by Joly Thomas (2019). Data were compared to known norms and the effect of gender, type of institution, and student category on attitude towards physical exercise was tested using ANOVA. The testing of hypotheses, the results revealed that all of the subgroups in the current sample had a moderate to high attitude towards physical activity.The findings also revealed that there is a substantial interaction effect of gender and student category on physical activity, but no significant interaction effect of institution type on attitude towards physical activity among undergraduate students. The study showcased that, despite considerable differences in attitude towards physical activity between male and female students, as well as between sports and non-sports students in the state of Kerala, India, under graduate students have a recommendable attitude towards physical exercise. Ample opportunities for participation in physical activity programmes designed at various levels can turn this positive attitude into a good practise that can result in a healthy way of life.

Keywords: Undergraduate students, Attitude towards physical activity

INTRODUCTION

Everyone wants to live a healthy lifestyle because health is wealth. It is essential for everyone to maintain a reasonable degree of health, and one method to do so is through regular physical activity. Sports and exercise psychologists are continuing to investigate the elements that inspire people to exercise at all levels, resulting in improved physical and psychological health. Exercise has been identified as a proven path to physical fitness and a substantial contribution to one's overall health (O'Brien, 2005; Adeogun & Dansu 2006). According to Biddle, Fox, and Boutcher (2000), exercise has a greater impact on human happiness, posture, mood, anxiety, depression, and self-esteem.Similarly, Fox (1999) believes that exercise has the potential to be employed in the prevention of various diseases as well as to promote the positive enjoyment of life that is inherent in good healthy living.

Regular exercise has been related to longevity, and people who stay physically active or fit in their middle ages live longer than their sedentary counterparts (Karmisholt & Gotzche, 2005). It is also recommended for secondary prevention of numerous diseases (Okuneye, 2002). Benzer, Adams, and Whistler (1999) shown in their study that an active lifestyle is an important instrument for psychological, mental, social, intellectual, and spiritual wellness. Every aspect of this indicates to the relevance of physical activity in human health. Physical activity relates to any physical movement carried out by the skeletal muscles.Exercise, on the other hand, is a planned, systematic, repetitive movement of the body intended to develop or maintain physical fitness (Bulugbe & Oloyede, 2007).

Attitudes serve as catalysts for learning and improving the application of previously acquired skills and knowledge (Tsang & Chan, 1993). Because attitudes can predict behaviour (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1983), more

attention is being paid to the functions that attitudes play in the cognition-behavior pathway. As a result, developing a positive attitude towards physical activity and fitness exercise is one of the most crucial elements to living a healthy life. According to Okuneye (2002), people's physical activity habits have changed dramatically as a result of societal modernization or development. According to the Center for Disease Control, more than 60% of individuals do not exercise on a regular basis, and 25% are not active at all. This type of study validates people's attitudes on physical activity and fitness programs.

Given the numerous advantages of physical exercise and the low prevalence rates, it is essential that interventions that effectively stimulate the adoption and maintenance of an active lifestyle in a broad number of individuals be developed. Certain difficulties linked with certain illnesses will also limit the type of fitness programme in which an individual can participate.There are elements that influence physical activity, fitness, and health, according to Bouchard and Shepherd (1994). These include personal attributes (such as age, gender, socioeconomic status, personality, motivation, and attribute), physical environment (such as temperature, humidity, air quality, altitude, and climatic changes), and social environment (such as social, cultural, political and economic conditions that affect physical activity, fitness exercise and health).

Tsang and Chan (1993) observed that girls' attitudes influenced their success in physical activity in their study. They discovered that both male and female students had a positive attitude towards physical activity. Male students, on the other hand, had a greater attitude score in all age categories except 17, where both genders scored the same. Gender was found to be substantially connected to attitudes about physical activity in their study. Schutz and Smoll(1980) discovered that attitudes towards physical activity were typically positive for both sexes when they assessed the attitudes of 58 boys and 56 girls. The females, on the other hand, had a more favourable opinion towards the aesthetic sub-domain than the boys.

There was also a considerable disparity between males and girls. Girls outperformed boys in the aesthetic sub-domain, whereas boys outperformed girls in the vertigo sub-domain (Telema & Lasko, 1997). Patterson and Faucette (1990) discovered a substantial difference between genders in the attitudes of fourth and fifth grade students regarding physical activity and fitness exercise. Boys scored much higher on the vertigo sub-domain, while girls scored significantly higher on the aesthetic sub-domain. They came to the conclusion that males and girls may have different attitudes about various components of physical activity and fitness exercise. Folsom-Meek (1992) discovered that girls had significantly more positive attitudes towards physical activity and exercise than boys in the social, health and fitness, and aesthetic sub-domains, whereas boys had more positive attitudes in the vertigo sub-domain when comparing upper elementary school children's attitudes towards physical activity and exercise using third through sixth grade students.

There can be different factors that influence people's attitudes towards physical activities. The researchers developed a design to explore the attitude of under graduate students in Kerala, and to identify the effect of gender, the type of institution, and their level of sports participation on attitude towards physical activity. Three hypotheses were formulated: 1. There will be a significant difference in attitude towards physical activity between students from professional colleges and students from arts and science colleges; 2. There will be a significant interaction effect of gender on attitude towards physical activity; and 3. There will be a significant interaction effect of student category on attitude towards physical activity.

RESEARCH METHODS

To accomplish the purpose of the study, the researchers selected gender, type of institution and category of student as independent variables while physical activity was the dependent variable. Employing randomization sampling technique, a total of 220 undergraduate

students drawn fromarts and science and engineering colleges in Kottayam District of Kerala, India participated in the study. They comprised of 129 male &109 female under graduates selected from different arts and science and professional colleges. The age range of the subjects was between 18 and 22 years. Questionnaire was used for the collection of data, namely theattitude towards physical activity, which was developed by Joly Thomas (2019). It can be seen that the internal consistency of the items in the tool is high, as Cronbach's Alpha is 0.825. The correlation of theitems is positive and high. Hence the scale is highly reliable.The instrument is a five- point Likert scale which participants indicates the relative strength of agree mentor disagreement on each item using the follow in scoring system1- Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Undecided, 4- Agree, and 5- Strongly Agree. The reliability of the scale was 0.81 and validity of the scale was 0.85.The questionnaire was administered to the participants through online forms having assured them of confidentiality in the treatment of their responses. To test the hypothesis that were formulated by the researchers, Analysis of Variance was used as the statistical tool. The results at 0.05 level of significance are detailed below.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 1 Status of Attitude towards Physical Activity among College Students

Institution			Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Arts and Science College	Non-Sports	Female	125.43	9.20	23
		Male	135.67	13.90	15
		Total	129.47	12.21	38
	Sports	Female	131.00	13.87	32
		Male	135.00	11.66	49
		Total	133.42	12.65	81
	Total	Female	128.67	12.35	55
		Male	135.16	12.11	64
		Total	132.16	12.59	119
Professional College	Non-Sports	Female	131.69	10.88	26
		Male	132.10	12.67	20
		Total	131.87	11.56	46
	Sports	Female	133.32	12.15	28
		Male	139.70	13.10	37
		Total	136.95	13.00	65
	Total	Female	132.54	11.48	54
		Male	137.04	13.35	57
		Total	134.85	12.62	111
Total	Non-Sports	Female	128.76	10.51	49
		Male	133.63	13.13	35
		Total	130.79	11.85	84
	Sports	Female	132.08	13.04	60
		Male	137.02	12.44	86
		Total	134.99	12.88	146
	Total	Female	130.59	12.03	109
		Male	136.04	12.69	121
		Total	133.46	12.65	230

As per the norms of the selected questionnaire the total as well as the sub groups of participants belongs to the category of students with moderate and high attitude towards physical activity, which has a class interval of mean score with 118 -132 and 133 to 148 respectively. Among the sub groups both non-sports and sports female students in arts science college, total female students in arts and science and professional colleges, total students in arts and science (N= 119) and total non-sports students (both male and female) in professional college were found with a moderate attitude towards physical

activity. Both non-sports and sports male students in arts and science college, total male students in arts and science college, both female and male sports students in professional college, and total students in professional college were identified as students with high attitude towards physical activity. The total female students (N= 109) participated in the survey were found to have moderate attitude towards physical activity whereas the total male students (N= 121) were identified to have a high attitude towards physical activity, as per the norms.

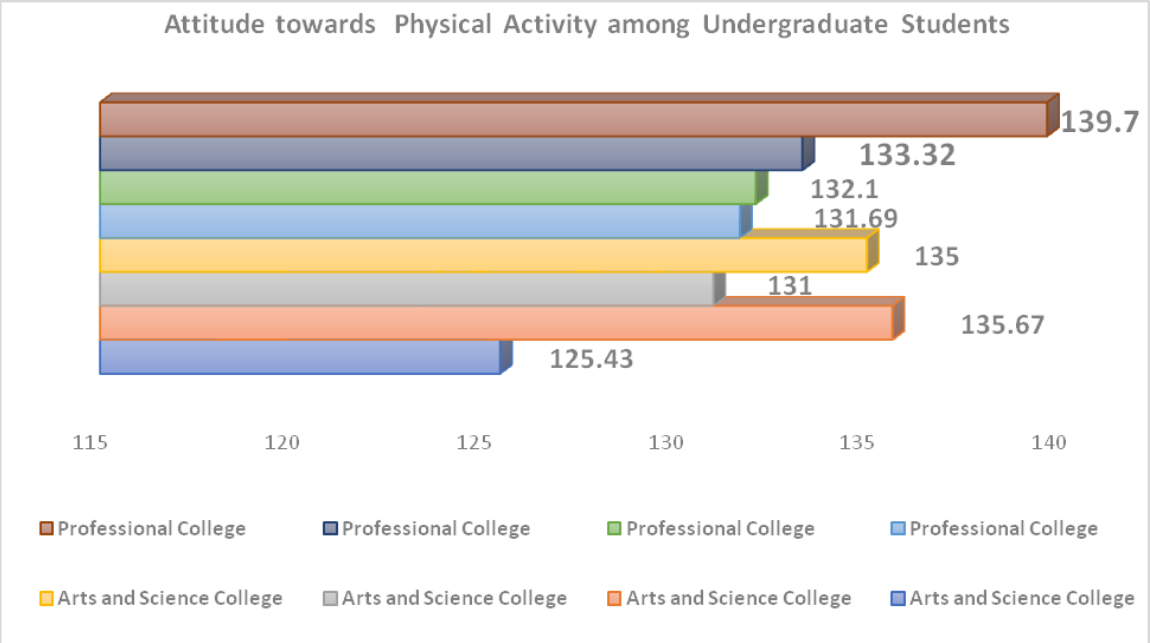

Table 2 ANOVA on between selected Independent Variables

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power[b]
Institution	301.53	1	301.53	2.02	.157	.009	.293
Category of Student	637.90	1	637.90	4.26	*.040*	.019	.538
Gender	1411.72	1	1411.71	9.43	*.002*	.041	.864
Institution * Category of student	59.99	1	59.99	.401	.527	.002	.097
Institution * Gender	176.98	1	176.98	1.18	.278	.005	.191
Category of Student * Gender	.213	1	.213	.001	.970	.000	.050
Institution * Category of Student * Gender	475.94	1	475.94	3.18	.076	.014	.427

Table 2 presents the difference in attitude towards physical activity with respect to the selected independent variables such as institution (Arts and science and Professional College), category of students (non-sports and sports students), Gender (Male and Female) and the interaction effects of these independent variables. The analysis revealed that the category of students belonging to non-sports and sports differ significantly (F= 4.26, $p < 0.05$) in attitude towards physical activity. It was also found that the male and female students differ significantly (F= 9.43, $p< 0.05$) in attitude towards physical activity. The type of institution and the any of the interaction effect of the selected independent variables did not show any significant difference in the dependent variable.

Table 3 Estimated Marginal Means on Attitude towards Physical Activity among different category of students

Dependent Variable	Category of Student	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Attitude towards Physical Activity	Non-Sports	131.22	1.36	128.54	133.91
	Sports	134.76	1.03	132.72	136.79

As per the norms on attitude towards physical activity, the non-sports students belong to the moderate category with a mean score of 131.22 whereas the students actively involved in sports belong to the category of high attitude towards physical activity with a mean score of 134.76.

Table 4 Pair wise Comparison on Attitude towards Physical Activity among different category of students

Dependent Variable	Category of Student		Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.[b]	95% Confidence Interval for Difference[b]	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Attitude towards Physical Activity	Sports	Non-Sports	3.533*	1.711	*.040*	.161	6.905

Based on estimated marginal means
*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.
b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Least Significant Difference (equivalent to no adjustments).

The pair wise comparison plots evidence for a significant ($p<0.05$) mean difference (3.533) in attitude towards physical activity between sports and non-sports students. With this we can conclude that sports students have a better attitude towards physical activity than that of non-sports students.

Table 5 Estimated Marginal Means on Attitude towards Physical Activity among different Gender

Dependent Variable	Gender	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Attitude towards Physical Activity	Female	130.362	1.180	128.036	132.688
	Male	135.617	1.239	133.176	138.059

As per the norms on attitude towards physical activity, the female students belong to the moderate category with a mean score of 130.362 whereas the male belong to the category of high attitude towards physical activity with a mean score of 135.617.

Table 6 Pair wise Comparison on Attitude towards Physical Activity among different Gender

Dependent Variable	Gender	Mean Difference		Std. Error	Sig.[b]	95% Confidence Interval for Difference[b]	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Attitude towards Physical Activity	Male	Female	5.255*	1.711	.002	1.883	8.627

Based on estimated marginal means.
*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.
b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Least Significant Difference (equivalent to no adjustments).

Table 6 revealed that the male and female students differ significantly ($p <0.05$) in attitude towards physical activity with a mean difference of 5.255. This confirms that male students have a better attitude towards physical activity than that of female students.

DISCUSSION

The results of the descriptive analysis of the dependent variable, all of the participants, regardless of their varied classifications based on independent variables, had a moderate to high attitude towards physical activity. The trend can be attributed to their age, opportunities, facilities, and knowledge to participate in physical activities. It can also be stated that an increase in options for the aforementioned community might considerably transform this good attitude into a right habit of exercising physical exercise in daily routine. Ample guidance and understanding offered on campus about physical exercise can

also have a substantial impact on favourable outcomes among college students.

Omoloyo et al. (2013) investigated university undergraduate students' attitudes regarding physical activity and fitness exercise. According to the findings, pupils who have profited from fitness training have a more positive attitude towards physical activity than those who have not. The likelihood that students will employ their abilities and strengths is determined by their attitude towards such physical activities. If the children have a good attitude about the activity, they will be interested in engaging in it.

Furthermore, engaging in numerous exercise and physical activities can lead to sense of autonomy and competence, which causes delight, excitement, trills, and other pleasurable emotions. In this regard, it is clear that physical activities can be inwardly and extrinsically motivating. On the other side, some people do not participate in physical activity or fitness if there is no financial incentive, but others participate in fitness routines because they are forced to. Many people do not engage in physical activity because they associate it with emotions of incompetence and embarrassment, as well as anxiety and pressure. This finding endorses up the findings of O'Brien (2005), Adeogun and Dansu (2006), Armstrong and Biddle (1991), Karmisholt & Gotzche (2005), and Okuneye (2005).

The analysis of variance among the three independent factors revealed that the dependent variable is influenced by the student category and gender. The type of institution and any combination of these independent variables had no effect on undergraduate students' attitudes towards physical activity in Kerala. The more time spent by sports students, regardless of their level of accomplishment, may be the result of more opportunity to participate in physical activities, which may be a contributing element in changing non-sports students' attitudes about physical activity.It can also be interpreted as a beneficial result of engagement in sports. The discovery also emphasises the significance of mass participation in physical activities through programmes such as community sports, sports for all, recreational sports, and leisure time sports. It can also be construed as a sportsperson's daily routine should be seen as a driving factor in establishing a healthy lifestyle for an individual. As a result, the study's findings are thought-provoking for parents who want to involve their children in competitive and non-competitive sports.

The recent study's findings also indicate that there is a substantial variation in attitude towards physical exercise among undergraduate students in Kerala based on gender. This finding is consistent with prior investigations by Schutz and Smoll (1980), Telema and Lasko (1997), and Patterson and Faucette (1990), although Tsang and Chan (1993) findings contradict the findings of this study. In contrast, Omoyolo et al (2013) found no significant interaction effect of age and gender on physical activity. Their findings revealed that there is no statistically significant difference between boys and girls in terms of physical activity intensity and duration.

CONCLUSION

The present study which is to examine sample had a positive attitude towards physical exercise, however there is a significant difference in the average score of attitudes towards physical activity between male and female students. According to the norms of the research tool utilised, the majority of male and female undergraduate students in the current study had a positive attitude towards physical activity. The study also found a considerable difference in attitude towards physical activity between sports and non-sports students enrolled in a graduate programme in Kerala, with sports students having a positive attitude towards physical exercise and non-sports students having a negative attitude. Male sports students in professional universities had the highest average attitude towards physical activity of any subgroup in the current research sample, followed by non-sports male students in arts

and science institutions. Non-sports female students from arts and science colleges had the lowest average of the dependent variables.

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