



Determinants of Attitude Towards Physical Activities Among Senior Secondary Students in Haryana

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Abstract

Attitude towards physical activities plays a decisive role in determining adolescents' participation in sports, exercise, and fitness-related behaviors. During the senior secondary stage, students experience intense academic pressure, social expectations, and lifestyle transitions, all of which influence their orientation toward physical activity. The present study examines the determinants of attitude towards physical activities among senior secondary students in Fatehabad district of Haryana. Using a quantitative survey design, data were collected from 1000 students studying in Classes XI and XII through stratified random sampling. A standardized attitude inventory was employed to measure students' cognitive, affective, and behavioral components of attitude. The study analyzed the influence of gender, residential background (rural–urban), availability of school facilities, and level of sports participation on students' attitudes. Statistical analysis using descriptive statistics, t-tests, and analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed that attitude towards physical activities is not uniform but shaped by a complex interaction of personal, social, and institutional factors. Male students, urban students, and regular sports participants demonstrated significantly more positive attitudes. Availability of adequate school facilities emerged as a strong determinant of favorable attitudes. The findings underscore the need for supportive school environments, inclusive physical education practices, and targeted policy interventions to strengthen physical education at the senior secondary level.

Keywords: Attitude, Physical Education, Adolescents, Sports Participation, Haryana

1. Introduction

Physical inactivity among adolescents has emerged as a major educational and public health concern worldwide. Regular physical activity during adolescence contributes significantly to physical fitness, psychological well-being, emotional stability, social competence, and prevention of lifestyle-related diseases. Despite these well-documented benefits, participation in physical activities among adolescents has declined substantially in recent years. This decline is particularly evident at the senior secondary level, where academic pressure, competitive examinations, and career-oriented expectations dominate students' daily routines.

In India, rapid socio-economic changes, urbanization, technological advancement, and increased screen time have drastically altered adolescents' lifestyles. Many students now spend long hours engaged in sedentary activities such as online learning, social media, gaming, and digital entertainment. As a result, physical education and sports are often perceived as secondary or non-essential, especially during Classes XI and XII. This shift has serious implications for adolescents' health, fitness, and overall development.

Attitude towards physical activities is a critical psychological factor influencing participation behavior. Attitude reflects students' beliefs about the value of physical activity, their emotional responses to participation, and their willingness to engage in sports and exercise. A positive attitude fosters motivation, enjoyment, and sustained participation, whereas a negative attitude leads to avoidance, disinterest, and physical inactivity. Attitudes formed during adolescence tend to persist into adulthood, shaping lifelong health behaviors.

Senior secondary education represents a transitional phase in which students experience heightened academic stress, identity formation, and social reorientation. Attitudes toward physical activities developed during this stage often become stable and enduring. Understanding the determinants of these attitudes is therefore essential for promoting active lifestyles and holistic development.

Haryana provides a meaningful context for such investigation. While the state has a strong sporting legacy, disparities exist across districts with regard to sports infrastructure, gender norms, and institutional support. Fatehabad district, characterized by a mixed rural–urban population and varying levels of school facilities, offers an appropriate setting for examining how personal, social, and institutional factors interact to shape students' attitudes toward physical activities.

2. Conceptual Framework

The present study conceptualizes attitude towards physical activities as a **multidimensional construct** comprising three interrelated components:

1. **Cognitive Component** – beliefs, perceptions, and knowledge about physical activities and their benefits.
2. **Affective Component** – feelings, emotions, enjoyment, or anxiety associated with participation.
3. **Behavioral Component** – intention, willingness, and readiness to participate in physical activities.

Attitude is not formed in isolation; rather, it is shaped by a combination of determinants operating at different levels. In this study, determinants are grouped into three broad categories:

2.1 Personal Determinants

These include individual characteristics such as gender, interest in sports, and previous participation experience. Gender-based socialization often influences exposure, encouragement, and confidence in physical activities.

2.2 Social Determinants

These include peer influence, cultural norms, and societal expectations. Adolescents are highly influenced by peer approval and social acceptance, which can either promote or discourage participation in physical activities.

2.3 Institutional Determinants

These include school facilities, availability of trained physical education teachers, and institutional emphasis on physical education. Schools play a central role in shaping students' experiences and attitudes toward physical activities.

This conceptual framework guides the analysis of how these determinants interact to shape senior secondary students' attitudes toward physical activities.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

A **quantitative descriptive survey design** was employed to examine determinants of attitude toward physical activities among senior secondary students.

3.2 Population and Sample

The population comprised senior secondary students (Classes XI and XII) studying in government and private schools of Fatehabad district, Haryana. A sample of **1000 students** was selected using **stratified random sampling**, ensuring proportional representation of gender and residential background.

Table 1: Distribution of Sample

Variable	Category	N
Gender	Boys	500
	Girls	500
Locality	Rural	500
	Urban	500
Total		1000

3.3 Tool Used

A standardized **Children's Attitude Towards Physical Activity Inventory** was used to measure students' attitudes across cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. Higher scores indicated more positive attitudes.

3.4 Statistical Techniques

Data were analyzed using:

- Mean and Standard Deviation
- t-test for two-group comparisons
- Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for multi-group comparisons

4. Analysis of Determinants

4.1 Gender as a Determinant

Table 2: Gender-wise Comparison of Attitude Scores

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Boys	500	75.10	8.20	
Girls	500	69.90	8.60	8.94*

*Significant at 0.05 level

Male students exhibited significantly more positive attitudes toward physical activities than female students. Social encouragement, greater exposure, and cultural acceptance of male sports participation may account for this difference.

4.2 Residential Background as a Determinant

Table 3: Rural–Urban Comparison of Attitude Scores

Locality	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Rural	500	70.30	8.50	
Urban	500	74.70	8.10	7.86*

*Significant at 0.05 level

Urban students demonstrated significantly more positive attitudes, reflecting better infrastructure, organized sports exposure, and institutional support.

4.3 School Facilities as a Determinant

Table 4: Attitude Scores Based on Availability of School Facilities

School Facilities	N	Mean	SD
Adequate	350	77.80	7.40
Moderate	350	72.60	8.10

Inadequate	300	67.90	9.00
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ANOVA results indicated a significant difference among groups ($F = 42.18$, $p < 0.05$), confirming that school facilities strongly influence students' attitudes.

4.4 Sports Participation as a Determinant

Table 5: Attitude Scores by Level of Sports Participation

Participation Level	N	Mean	SD
Regular	300	79.20	7.20
Occasional	400	73.10	8.00
Non-participants	300	66.10	9.20

Regular participation emerged as the strongest determinant of positive attitude, indicating a reciprocal relationship between participation and attitude formation.

5. Discussion

The findings of the study clearly demonstrate that attitude toward physical activities among senior secondary students is shaped by multiple interrelated determinants. Gender-based differences highlight the influence of socialization patterns and cultural norms on adolescents' engagement in physical activities. Similarly, rural–urban disparities reflect structural inequalities in infrastructure and opportunities.

School facilities emerged as a powerful institutional determinant, reinforcing the importance of supportive environments in shaping positive attitudes. Students exposed to adequate facilities and trained teachers experienced greater enjoyment, motivation, and confidence. Sports participation further strengthened positive attitudes by providing experiences of success, social interaction, and recognition.

These findings support the view that attitude toward physical activities is not merely an individual trait but a socially and institutionally constructed outcome.

6. Conclusion and Implications

The present study concludes that attitude toward physical activities among senior secondary students in Haryana is influenced by a complex interaction of personal, social, and institutional determinants. Gender,

residential background, availability of school facilities, and level of sports participation significantly shape students' attitudes.

To foster positive attitudes and sustained participation, schools must prioritize physical education, invest in infrastructure, and adopt inclusive, student-centered practices. Policymakers should address rural–urban and gender disparities through targeted interventions, teacher training, and facility development. Recognizing attitude as a key lever for behavioral change is essential for promoting active lifestyles, adolescent well-being, and holistic education.

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