

## The Study of parents' attitudes toward the status of execution of physical education course in Iranian elementary schools

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### Abstract

The main objective of this research was to study the attitude of the elementary school students' parents in Tehran concerning the present status of physical education course on elementary schools. For this purpose, the personal characteristics of 300 individuals were randomly selected from among the parents whose children studying at public elementary schools in Tehran, Iran. Research method was a descriptive and the data were gathered through field method. In order to collect information, a self-made questionnaire including 15 closed questions was used. After doing data analysis, the results indicated that the parents' attitudes toward the physical education lesson were positive. There was no significant difference between the attitude of students' parents in case of execution. However, there was a significant difference between the attitude of the students' parents about the importance of physical educations and sports.

**Keywords:** Facilities, sports fields, parents, attitude, elementary schools

### 1. Introduction

Education leaders have recommended several ways for development and progress of human and to achieve perfection. One of these ways which is approved by the majority of scholars of education refers to physical education and sport. Also, in order to achieve high levels of human, our children should experience and learn self-confidence, socialization, difficulty tolerance and respect for individual and social rights and ....during the school. In order to be an effective person in various aspects of individual and social and respects the rights of others. These affairs are not possible only by learning. Unless by exercise and practice and exposure in a practical situation acquire experience (Navabi Nezhad, 1997). Physical education and sport is an appropriate opportunity for growth and development of various dimensions of personality; cognitive, emotional, social, and psychological. Children and adolescents by participating in programs of physical education and sport, develop good habits and character. Physical activity and sport in schools in terms of physical education and sport lesson and learning how to execute them are planed and this lesson more than any other lessons can develop students' awareness, knowledge, decision domain, develop self-esteem and self-purification. Five years period of primary school is compulsory for children and its main goals consist of teaching of reading, writing, arithmetic. Physical and mental education of children is done for being in harmony with the living environment (Emett, 1927).

This educational period is the most important period in all of the educational systems in the world; because, personality formation and through development more take place in this period (Fallah Ali Abadi, 2001). Among the various educational period, elementary years have vital importance in growth of children's thinking and feeling patterns. These years can lead children to the health,

compatibility, activity and vitality or depression and catching of physical and psychological disorder. Therefore, educational programs should be designed in a way that are used to activate and dynamics of children and their vitality and wellbeing. Certainly, these experiences should be provided based on the characteristics of child's growth and available knowledge about how to growth and learning of children. The main part of the school lessons' efficiency in terms of wellbeing which is the major factor of children's growth refers to physical education course in primary school years and physical education and sport teacher has responsibility to create appropriate opportunities in order to supply the children's needs (Kathryn,1997). Elementary school years are very important in child development. These years are a background that leads child to healthy and compatibility and the patterns of healthy life are taught him. Therefore, the primary school plans have more importance to lay the basis for learning and good habits.

Physical education is one of curriculum courses at different levels in most countries of the world. Mandatory or optional status of physical education course has been studied in different countries and the results indicate that this course as one of the main courses in different academic curriculum is compulsory in 92 percent of countries of world. Medical reasons and other scientific evidences in the second half of the twentieth century has provided the conditions that the physical education be considered as a necessary and unavoidable course in schools' curriculum (Hardman & Marshall).

Physical education is an essential component of education and including planned, selected and targeted motor experiences. These physical and motor activities provide opportunities for growth and development of children which is in accordance with their prepared needs and interests. Although organically and neural growth is its primary goal, physical education assist to the students' complete training in aspects of knowledge of health behavior and physical fitness (Corbin).

Wuest and Bucher, 2003 have defined physical education as an educational process in which physical activity is used as a way of helping students to acquire skills, preparedness, knowledge and positive attitude towards optimal growth and health. Physical education purposes which are in line with the public purposes of education including students' physical, mental and emotional development. These purposes which include various dimensions of child, lead to the uniqueness of physical education among the different courses (Guerpillon & Shenton, 1976).

Eliminate or ignoring of physical education programs in elementary schools (11-7 years old) which leads to limitation of the child's physical and motor activity, namely, depriving the child's normal development of social and psychological or physical. Physical education course is an important part of the general education curriculum in different educational level like in educational program of elementary school, so that elementary children through it recognize their ability, their surrounding environment and their own relationship with that. In this lesson, each child has opportunity to participate in physical activity and through that reaches to the development and growth of physical fitness and motor and athletic skills (Guerpillon & Shenton, 1976).

## **2. Methodology**

This research is of descriptive and inferential type and its data were collected in the field.

### **2.1. Research population and sample**

The populations includes all students' parents, father or mother, in primary schools (grade one to grade five) in Tehran. Because of a high number of participants, clustering method was chosen for sample selection. Twenty regions of Tehran were divided to five poles of northern, southern, western, eastern and central. Then, in each part, one region was selected randomly. Region 1 in northern part, region 19 in southern part, region 8 in eastern part, region 9 in western part and region

6 in central part were selected. Then, two public primary schools, a girls' school and a boys' school, were selected randomly. Then, 30 students from all grades were selected randomly and 300 research questionnaires were sent to their parents. 256 of parents returned the questionnaires and in fact those 256 comprised the sample.

### 2.2. Data collection tools

The questionnaire selected for the purpose of this study had 15 close-ended questions including personal information and the research questions and Likert scale including very high, high, moderate, low, very low and yes/no choices were used for evaluating and scoring of each question: 5 was allocated to very high and 1 to very low.

### 3. Results and Discussion

Among 256 people participated in this study, 27.3% were male parents and 72.7 % were female parents. 13.33% of the parents had under diploma education, among which 10% were male parents while 14.5% were female parents. Further, 38.8 % had diploma degree, among which 24.3% were related to male parents and 45.7% were female. Also, 9/4 % of parents had higher diploma education including 8.6% of fathers and 9.7% of mothers. Furthermore, 27.7% of parents had bachelor's degree (41.4 % among fathers and 22.6% among mothers). Regarding those parents having master's degree, 8.2 % included this group, among whom 15.7% were fathers and 5.4% were mothers. Finally, 1.6 % of parents had PhD degree including only 2.2% of mothers. It should be pointed out that only 8.6 % of the participants has some experience in athletics.

**Table 1. Data related to the children's participants**

Child	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency
Male	144	56/3	56/3
Female	112	43/8	100
Total	256	100	-

**Table 2. Data related to the participants' educational degree**

Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Under diploma	34	13/3
Diploma	102	38/8
Higher diploma	24	9/4
Bachelor	71	27/7
Master	21	8/2
PhD	4	1/6
Total	256	100

**Table 3. Data related to occupational position of the participants**

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency
Housewife	152	59/4	59/4
Employee	104	40/6	100
Total	256	100	-

**Table 4. Data related to sports and championship background of the participants**

Championship background	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency
Yes	22	8/6	8/6
No	226	88/3	91/1
No answer	8	3/1	100
Total	256	100	-

**Table 5. Frequency (F) and percentage (%) of the participants toward question 1 to 3 of the questionnaire (The importance of physical education)**

Question	Very low		Low		Moderate		High		Very high	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
To what extent, do you emphasize sports	4	1.6	28	10.9	99	38.7	78	30.5	17.2	44
To what extent, do you do exercise?	7	2.7	40	19.1	90	35.2	70	27.3	37	14.5
To what extent, do you emphasize morning exercises at school?	2	.8	11	4.3	43	16.8	81	31.8	78	30.5

**Table 6. The descriptive statistics of the participants toward question 4 to 11 of the questionnaire (Execution)**

Question	Very low		Low		Moderate		High		Very high	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
To what extent, does the execution of physical education course improve psychical aspect?	4	1/6	7	2/7	18	7	89	34/8	135	52/7
To what extent, does the execution of physical education course improve creativity?	0	0	4	6/1	17	6/6	85	2/33	143	9/55
To what extent, does the execution	0	0	2	8	10	9/3	91	5/35	145	6/56

of physical education lead to the learning of athletic skills?										
To what extent, does the execution of physical education improve social and emotional spirit?	0	0	7	7/2	27	5/10	80	3/31	137	5/53
To what extent, does the execution of physical education lead to happiness?	4	6/1	4	6/1	19	4/7	56	9/21	166	8/64
To what extent, are you satisfied with the execution of physical education course?	29	3/11	30	7/11	98	3/38	64	0/25	30	7/11
To what extent, do you agree with physical education extracurricular?	6	3/2	9	5/3	42	4/16	99	7/38	94	7/36
To what extent, do you check the performance of physical education course in comparison to other courses	24	4/9	58	7/22	99	7/38	54	1/21	17	6/6

**Table 7. Statistical indices of parents' respondent to importance of physical education and sports**

Parents	Mean
Father	3.58
Mother	3.42
Total	3.46

**Table 8. A comparison of the respondents' approach toward the execution of physical education course in schools**

Parents	Mean
Father	4.03
Mother	3.92
Total	7.95

#### 4. Discussion and conclusions

Only about 47.7 percent of the subjects give importance to the exercise in their personal life and 41.8 percent of subjects do exercise for health. The results are not in harmony with findings of Mozafari (2005) in which over 70% of the subjects had participated in sport activities for your health. This shows that the knowledge and education has deep effect in humans' actions. So, there is a continuous need to advertisement and recognizing the importance of sport in society. 76.1% of participants give importance to morning exercise at school in level of high and very high. In research done by Mozaffari (2005), over 70 percent of principals and physical education teachers have reported that they give importance to morning exercise. Therefore, it seems that there was a harmony in thinking of principals and teachers and parents towards morning exercise.

A positive point to be noted here which refers to giving importance to morning exercise of students, because hereby the deficit hours of sports is somewhat reduced. Due to the positive and significant impact of morning exercise on the students' body and soul, and the importance that parents give to that, it is recommended that the morning exercise to be mandatory at schools and every day a time is allocated to its implementation. There was significant difference among the participants' view toward the importance of sport and physical education. Fathers gave more importance than mothers. This finding was not consistent with the findings of Mozaffari. This result is probably due to that fathers have more freedom than mothers and do more exercise than them and recognize the positive aspects of sport.

The majority of parents above the 32% have declared low and very low their supervision rate on the proper implementation of this course. Perhaps this was due to the lack of necessary information and awareness about the positive and inevitable results and effects of sport and physical education which has been proven by countless studies and researches.

Officials and experts should perform comprehensive planning by positive advertisement and the media to promote awareness and positive attitudes of students' parents to physical education and sports.

Due to the positive views of parents to physical education and sport, it is suggested that, special lectures are arranged by experts of this course to give more information to students' parents. In order to explain the importance of physical education and sport to parents in various dimensions based on research results and also by this way take advantage of their assistance and cooperation in advancement of this lessons in schools. More than 86 percent of parents believe that teaching and performing of physical education and sport would strength their child's physical dimensions. More than 86 percent of parents believe that teaching and performing of physical education would strength their child's happy and cheerful mood. More than 36 percent of parents have evaluated strengthen of their responsibility sense by physical education and sport teacher as high and very high. More than 84 percent of parents lead to strengthen of their child's social and emotional capacities. These findings are consistent with the below reviewed research: Kouze chiyan 1997, states that the elementary periods are the most sensitive stages of growth, formation and development of personality of students and one of the best healthy, productive, useful and inexpensive means refers to performing of physical activity. In research results of Mozaffari (2005), over 50 percent of teachers have assessed the implementation of physical education and sport to strengthen the physical dimension and injury prevention, improving understanding and knowledge, learning exercise skills, emotional development and social reinforcement in full extent. Guerpillon and Shenton (1976) have introduced one of the fundamental skills of physical education in the elementary schools of France as a development of basic skills, physical fitness and participate in recreational programs. Davis (1997), in considering physical education programs of China, noted that good results have been obtained from physical education programs such as the creation of responsibility and awareness toward the importance of physical fitness of themselves and other community members. There was no significant difference among the participants' view towards the implementation of this course. As a result, participation in motor and sport activities leads to the creation of happiness and cheerful spirit, group collaboration, creation of healthy habits, development of emotions, social support etc. These effects are due to the achievement of physical exercise and sport's goals that over 80 percent of parents have luckily confirmed this matter and have described its effect as high and very high. This caused happiness because the awareness of parents and society from this fact lead to the creation of positive attitudes and achievement of physical education and sport's goal. In addition, Ismaili in his Ph.d dissertation proposed the original principle in scheduled physical education and sport and

stated that the philosophy of positive attitude to physical education can be regarded as one of these prerequisites.

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