

The Influence of Social Supports to Teenagers' Overall Physical Behavior Changes Towards Physical Activity

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ABSTRACT

This research was carried out to investigate the influence of the teenagers' social supports gained that cause overall changes behaviors of them towards physical activity at the edge of the city within the district of Muar, Johor Darul Takzim. Samples of the research was total of 200, 118 of the male students and 82 of female students with age of 14.3 (SD =1.491). The result showed that the influence of the social supports to teenagers specifically on their involvement with physical activities make most significant ($P < 0.05$) consisted environment factors, physical activity benefits, self-efficacy and the barriers as well. The finding contributed implication of teenagers' behavior changes with involvement with physical activities. Suggestion future research through qualitative with longitudinal method.

Keywords: *Physical Activity, Behavior Changes, Social Supports. Teenagers.*

Introduction

The benefits of participating in the physical activity have been well-known where its' influence the health from the aspect of physiology, psychological or sociological (extract from My Health, 2006). The kindness in adulthood is part of the behavior during teenage era. The exposure of the integrity in involvement should be applied since the childhood (Dishman, Sallis & Orenstein, 1985). According to the census, 20% of the world populations are teenager (extract from Utusan Malaysia, 7 November 1997). World Health Organization (WHO) defined teenagers as those are in the range of 10 to 19 years old. In this range, it should be a stage where they are at the school to acquire knowledge. Teenage age could be categorized into two stages of age which are the earlier teenage (10

years to 14 years) and the ultimate teenage state (15 years to 19 years) (extract from Adolescent Health, 2004).

Sports or fulfillment the leisure time with physical activities is one of chance to gain social supports and able to reduce life pressure through the interaction with friends as well as generate a close relationship (Wijndaele et. Al., 2006).

Physical activities during the leisure time means that any physical exercises where the intensity is moderate or energetic which has been produced during out of the school time that is apart from 8am until 3pm (Hortz & Petosa, 2006). The involvement in an activity is the result of social change and physical environment apart from individual knowledge, attitude and skills changes (Phongsavan, McLean & Bauman, 2007). This shows that the interaction with individual factor and environments such as social politic, culture and physical environment are crucial to encourage active lifestyle in every stage of one society.

According Buchanan, Christensen & Burge (1981), physical behaviors in leisure time often became problems because it involved the entanglement of social context to determine choices especially for children and teenagers. The preference of an individual who is engage in sport is influence by the activeness of their parent as well as peers who are active in sport activities rather than the influence of passive as claimed by Wold (1992).

The involvement of the teenager is actually a result from the increasing of the parent's social and psychological in taking consideration which is associated with the changes of knowledge in the sports that they are practicing. Parent's role in sport is very vital, this is due to that parent would be the best example and plays as one of the the main socialization agents to the children (Baumrind, 1993; Bugental & Goodnow, 1998; Anderssen, Wold & Torsheim, 2005).

The permission from the parent or guidance is a part type of supports to the activeness involvement of children and teenager at any time concerned. On the other hand, Greendorfer (1992) stated that family environment which is oriented of sport as a routine where the parent participating in sport and this show the significant to the involvement of children into sports.

Peers are considering one of the most influence socialization agent during early teenage stated Brustad, Babkes & Smith (2001), especially when the learning process in the "family system" is not consistent with the biological and sociological process of teenager added McPherson, Curtis & Loy (1989). Peers played role as a motivator to the one youth athlete's success and excellence in a competition because of peers practice together in the sports and exercises (Wold, 1989). In fact, the given motivations from peers are able to encourage, instruct and frustrate an individual to perform well to meet the target and success by giving information of the ability during early teenage as well as determinant to the selection and the degree of the involvement in teenage physical activities (Smith, 1999; Weinberg and Gould, 1999; Horn and Amorose, 1998).

Self-efficacy is one of the psychological factors that able to influence the performance and individual perpetuation in the physical activities especially in sports, exercises and recreations. Self-efficacy is the self-confidence towards the self-ability performing the tasks (Bandura, 1986). Even though self- efficacy of an individual is high but with influents of the surrounding constraints, individuals' involvement might became limited with the low degree of self-efficacy in achieving the aim of the physical activeness.

Self-efficacy is about the increasing of individuals' self-confident and developed behaviors (Dwyer, Alison & Makin, 1998). Moreover, this theory is associated to the personal factors such as the self-efficacy, surrounding factors liked the boundary and behaviors towards extreme physical activities. The level of development of individuals' self-efficacy widely depend to the surrounding influences. The surrounding means the parents, peers and coach or teachers where an individuals will imagine the behavior that they saw or heard from their parent or teachers influences on one title-holder before which give them the spirit, strength and influence keep tracks.

Prochaska & Diclemente (1983) explained that Transtheoretical Model is a model of the behavior changes designed to explain or to predict the behavioral which basically is dynamic and the behavior changes happens through interconnection series. The findings of recent research have supported the application model of the transtheoretical changes level in the domain of exercises and physical activities (Armstrong, Sallis, Hovel & Hofsetter, 1993; Booth et al., 1993). This model is designed to evaluate the process of the connection between the reasons why and how human change their behaviors. This research was venturing the contribution of social interpersonal supports and environment factors that might influence the urban teenager's participation in physical activities during leisure time as an approach to overcome and to reduce the social problems among teenager as well as to overcome inactiveness problems nationwide.

Methodology

Samples

Total of 200 school teenagers participated in this research. The samples consists of 118 male students and 82 female students that had randomized chosen. The sample was classified into two categories as earlier teenage stage (13 years old with n = 113) and the ultimate teenage stage (16 years old with n = 87) from four schools at the border of the city within the district of Muar, Johor Darul Takzim. The samples mostly from Malays with 170 students, 27 - Chinese, 2 Indian students and a student from other ethnic. In addition to that, 74 samples stated that they were active in performing physical activities and the remains 126 samples said not active. Table 1 showed that 59 percents were male respondents whereas 41 percent were females. 56.5 percents were the respondents' aged 13 years and 43.5 percents aged 16 years old with the minimum of 14.31 years old and

standard deviation was 1.49. The result of the analysis also showed that 63 percent from the respondents were inactive compared to 37 percent in active stage.

Table 1: Respondent (n=200) Demography

Demography	Frequent	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Men	118	59
Women	82	41
Age		
13	61	56.6
16	52	43.5
Mean: 14.31	SD: 1.491	
Races		
Bumiputeras / Malays	170	85.0
Non Bumuputeras	30	15.0
Activeness in Physical Activities		
Active	74	37
Not Active	126	63

Instrumentation

Survey as a method of study through questionnaires to obtain data and information. The data gained from this research interrelated to the research questions regarding the factors of the influence of teenagers' social supports in physical activities' changes behaviors. The questionnaires was adapted and modified from the Amherst Health and Physical Activity: Student Survey (www.drjamessallis.sdsu.edu/measures.html) where it was divided into four parts which were part A was about respondents' background and as for the part B about the changes of physical activity behaviors. Part C - the questions regarding the parent's support and attitude, peers and school as well as safety whereas part D was about self-efficacy. The effectiveness α of the questionnaires was so excellent that between 0.75 until 0.93. (parent's support = 0.70, peers' support = 0.669, safety = 0.683 and self-efficacy = 0.901).

Findings

Table 2 showed the total of the respondents percentage according to the different of the changes behaviors levels based on the exercises' involvement (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1993). It showed that there were 56 samples or 30.5% at the level of pracontemplation,

35 samples or 19.1% were at the contemplation level, 49 samples or 20.3% were at the preparation level, 34 samples or 15.2% were at the action level and 26 samples or 12.1% were at the maintenance level.

Table 2: The level of Physical Behavior' Changes among Teenagers (n = 2000)

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Pracontemplation (PC)	56	30.5
Contemplation (C)	35	19.1
Preparation (PR)	49	23.0
Action (AX)	34	15.2
"Maintenance" (MN)	26	12.1

Table 3: The Overall Changes of Physical Behavior according to Genders

Gender	PC	CP	PR	AX	MN	Total (n)
Male	26 (46.4%)	16 (45.7%)	33 (67.3%)	25 (73.5%)	18 (69.2%)	118
Female	30 (53.6%)	19 (54.3%)	16 (32.7%)	9 (26.5%)	8 (30.8%)	82
Total	56	35	49	34	26	200

The comparison of overall changes level of the physical activities' behavior between the genders was using the intersect tabulation method. Based on the Table 3, for the male samples, there were 26 of them at the level of pracontemplation, 16 samples were at the contemplation level, 33 samples were at the preparation level, 25 samples were at the action level and 18 samples were at the "maintenance" level. On the other hand, for the females, there were 30 samples at the level of pracontemplation, 19 samples were at the contemplation level, 16 samples were at the preparation level, 9 samples were at the action level and 8 respondents were at the "maintenance" level.

The findings showed that the percentage of the sedentary females (pracontemplation and contemplation level) were 53.6 percents and 54.3 percents that was higher than male respondents which were 46.4 percents and 45 percents respectively. Nevertheless, males were more ready to be engaged in the physical activities compared to

the females. The percentage of males who were engaged actively and frequently in the physical activities was 73.5 percent which was higher than the females tha only 26.5 percents.

Table 4 showed the differences of male whom gained social supports were fully grown than females and peers toward the changes of the teenager behavior as well. ANOVA to show the differences of parent and peers’ supports toward the level of behavior changes was significant which was $F = 8.195$, $p < 0.001$ for parent’s supports and $F = 9.790$, $p < 0.001$ for peers’ supports resulted.

Table 4: The Differences of Parent and Peers’ Social Support toward the Changes of Teenager Behavior

Variables	Min	Sd	F	P
Parent’s Support			8.195	0.001
Pracontemplation	2.24	1.031		
Contemplation	2.34	0.921		
Preparation	2.84	1.148		
Action	3.05	1.194		
Maintenance”	3.46	0.942		
Peers’ Support			9.790	0.001
Pre-contemplation	2.29	2.292		
Contemplation	2.68	2.685		
Preparation	2.97	3.142		
Action	2.14	2.970		
“Maintenance”	3.86	3.865		

*significant at the p level<0.001

Table 5 showed the mean from seven factors of social supports that influence the behavior changes of teenagers’ physical activities were self-efficacy, surrounding, and social obstacle, psychosocial difficulty, personal problem, physical and social advantages. It found that there were significantly result of five out of seven efficiency factors, psychosocial difficulty., personal problem and physical with social advantages. The rest two of them were physical advantages $F(4,195) = 4.23$, $P < .05$ and social advantages $F(4,195) = 3.582$, $P < .05$. This finding illustrated that teenagers used more social supports and difficulty factors to make changes in their physical involvement nowadays.

Table 5: Min on the T-Score and HSD Turkey for the Significant of the Stages of Changes, Social Support in Making Decision

Variables	Level					F	sig(p<.05)	HSD Turkey
	PC (sd)	C (sd)	PR (sd)	AX (sd)	MN (sd)			
Efficiency	2.88 (.68)	2.94 (.80)	3.31 (.68)	3.21 (.68)	3.73 (.72)	7.767	0.001	PC<C,PR,AX,MN
Psychosocial Difficulty	2.21 (.68)	2.51 (.91)	1.95 (.70)	2.03 (.83)	1.85 (.61)	4.162	0.001	PC<C PR<PC,C,AX,MN
Personal Problem	2.02 (.67)	2.14 (.64)	1.71 (.73)	2.00 (.85)	1.69 (.47)	3.041	0.050	PC<C PR<PC,C,AX,MN
Physical Advantages	3.95 (.74)	4.03 (.61)	3.88 (.66)	4.21 (.72)	4.50 (.64)	4.230	0.001	PC<C,PR,MN PR<PC,C,AX,MN
Social Advantages	3.59 (.84)	3.80 (.67)	3.94 (.71)	3.91 (.75)	4.23 (.71)	3.582	0.001	PC<C,PR,AX,MN

Discussion

The objective of this research is to investigate the influence of teenagers' physical activities involvement with social supports. Apart from that, this research also to gain clear findings regarding exercises or physical activities by teenagers especially at the border the city within the district of Muar, Johor Darul Takzim. Moreover, determination of significant differences from the aspect of social supports on overall sports behavior changes by samples based on genders.

Based on the findings, teenagers' involvement in the physical activities constantly and actively was still less satisfaction. Overall, more than two-over-three percentage of teenagers did not fulfill the fixed guideline of physical activity participation which was moderate exercise for thirty minutes or five times a week (Pate et al. 1995; Kemper et al., 2000). Only 15.3% of male teenagers and 9.8% of female teenagers involved actively in physical activities. Where else, there were 22.0% of male teenagers and 36.6% of female teenagers moderately involved. It showed that teenagers overall changes behaviors especially involvement in physical activities was still at the low level, this finding was in line with previous research's findings that been done by Ministry of Health (1998); Omar Fauzee (2002); Tan Kar Heng (2000); Ang Ha Loon (2002) and Hafidzah (2004). More concentration should be given to the teenagers who were in the preparation level (>50%) because they could further actively involve and reached to the higher level if they had been given enough supports or motivation by surrounding facilities and parents' attention.

The finding also depicted that the male percentage was higher at the action and the “maintenance” level compared to the females, this showed that male teenagers were more active and frequently participated in physical activities rather than the female teenagers who used to be inactive and sedentary, this finding was consistent with the report by United States Department of Health and Human Services (1996), stated that the involvement in physical activity is more obvious among male teenager that is highly educated. According to Omar Fauzee (1999) and Ang Ha Loon (2002), this scenario occur might because of females’ perception that they are not active and weak in sports compared to the male who obviously more active and dominant and influences the females’ perception to the negative changes of behavior and attitude. In other words, this situation encourages the female teenagers to the sedentary lifestyle and refuse to make any changes.

In the context of physical activity behavior, teenagers at the pre - contemplation level was not serious and did not think to change their lifestyle pattern whereas the teenagers at the contemplation level started to made consideration regarding the advantageous to be involved in exercises (Cox, 1998). Therefore, parents, peers, teachers and coaches have to play a vital role in educating and supporting these sedentary teenagers to make changes toward positive and active behavior.

The comparison that had been made through ANOVA analysis showed that there were consistent perpetuate from the level of behavior changes from the social supports for all variables of behavior process except for personal problem. The obvious mean differences between two levels for all the process of changes showed that teenagers intend to begin the behavior changes as well as to move from the contemplate level and achieve the higher active level. There were only five out of seven variables that showed the significant differences between the changing processes. The two variables were the environment and the social obstacles did not influence teenagers in involving themselves in the physical activities.

Where else, the parent’s supports are very important and functioning as an generator in influencing the early growth of a teenager especially in their psychomotor skills and interest toward physical activities and eventually encouraged them to participate or to get involve during adult time (Causin, 1993). Peers’ influence also play an important role to attract teenagers’ interest in participating in the beneficial activities such as study and recreation (Malaysia Education Ministry, 2003).

Conclusion

Based on the implication and the growth of chronic disease and health problems, the teenagers should realize the important of participating healthily and actively in physical activities or sports. Other than that, high self-confidence to possess a healthy body as well as to instill a determination and a standpoint so that the individuals can participate in physical activities at any conditions and any time concerned. Thus, all educators and

parents should implant the enthusiasm to keep active in practicing the healthy lifestyle continually in order to produce a healthy generation globally. This research could be a guideline or motivation for the parents to encourage their children to be more involved in physical activities beside to produce active humans who are balanced physically, mentally, emotionally and intellectually.

Recommendation

Based on the research's discussion and conclusion, the researcher has made a few recommendations for the further research which is more appropriately research with longitudinal method in the future so that in order to explore deeply the involvement of social supports in the physical activities behavior of the Malaysian teenagers involved.

The collection of data that related to the real and precise behavior changes can be obtain from time to time by involving the samples who have similar basic factors such as their background and physical activities level. Then, the further research that involved the comparison between the different stages of changes such as the pre-contemplation level and the contemplation level also need to be conducted in the form of qualitative by using the Transtheoretical model.

Apart from that, the parents, Physical Education teachers and coaches innovative to create a specific intervention to boost up the self-efficacy in order to increase the teenagers' confidence level in the exercises and the practice of healthy and active lifestyle.

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