



## THE INFLUENCE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS ON LIFELONG PHYSICAL ACTIVITY HABITS

**Prof. Atharva S. Bhonsale**

Assistant Professor , Jyotiba College of Physical Education, Nagpur .

### ABSTRACT:

*The role of physical education (PE) programs is to create an environment that develops lifelong activity usage, thus contributing to a person's general health and well-being. This study looks at how the long-term effect of school-based public education leads to the recreation of exercise and sports activities in life after school. This study has analyzed different PE curricula, instructional arrangements for PE and students experience with the PE course, all in efforts of identifying the transitioning influences from the well-structured, school-centered exercise into lifelong personal fitness habits of adults. This study employs a mixed-methods approach of surveying and interviewing adults with different PE experiences. The association between enjoyment of the PE experience, diversity of programming, and within one adult's life continuing physical activity is also explored in this research. It mostly raises the awareness that very well organized, inclusive, and inspirational PE programs have a lot to work for the continuous adoption of physical activity in their use, while negative experiences lead a person to inactivity. This makes room for improved physical education strategies, focusing on personal fitness and motivation and access to better maximize benefits for health in the long term.*



**KEYWORDS:** Physical Education, Lifelong Physical Activity, Fitness Habits, Health Promotion, PE Curriculum.

### INTRODUCTION:

Physical inactivity constitutes a growing public health concern with potential increased risk for causing chronic diseases, with obesity, cardiovascular conditions, diabetes, and mental health disorders as some illustrative examples. Regular physical activity is imperative in keeping up general health, yet large numbers of people face the challenge of maintaining an active lifestyle after the school years. Schools are building blocks for the inculcation of healthy behaviors, whereby PE programs play a key role in establishing fitness habits that last for a lifetime.

Physical education not only provides structured exercise but also provides students with the knowledge, skills, and motivation to lead a physically active life. An effective PE curriculum exposes students to the experiences of many different physical activities, enhances motor skill development, builds self-confidence, and positively shapes attitudes toward fitness. However, not all PE programs equally sustain continued participation in physical activity; structure, methods of teaching, inclusiveness, and individual experiences are the key factors determining whether students continue to exercise after leaving school.

The current study intends to investigate the role of physical education in promoting lifelong habits of physical activity by examining particular PE approaches that lead to long-term exercise

engagement. The study will also define critical outcomes of effective PE curricula, the capacity of teachers to develop fitness motivation, and barriers that impede individuals from adopting an active lifestyle. A mix of a literature review, survey, and interview study would provide a basis for assuming a correlation between school experience in PE and adult levels of physical activity.

Awareness of the prolonged effects of PE programs will enable policy-makers, educators, and health professionals to produce methods to enhance PE curricula that ensure that students learn the skills and motivation to lead an active lifestyle for life. The study highlights early interventions for active living and proposes amendments in present structures of PE to maximize long-lasting effects on public health.

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH:**

- 1) To analyze the impact of physical education (PE) programs on the development of lifelong physical activity habits.
- 2) To examine how school-based physical education influences individuals' engagement in physical activity beyond their academic years.
- 3) To evaluate the elements of PE curricula, including diversity of activities, instructional methods, and student experiences, that contribute to sustained physical activity in adulthood.
- 4) To investigate the role of motivation, self-efficacy, enjoyment, and perceived competence in shaping students' attitudes toward physical activity and their likelihood of maintaining an active lifestyle.
- 5) To analyze factors such as negative PE experiences, lack of inclusivity, and social or psychological challenges that may discourage individuals from maintaining an active lifestyle after schooling.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW:**

Many researchers have assessed the long-term effect of PE programs on the lifelong habit of physical activity. Bailey (2006) highlighted that well-organized physical education presents a lifelong basis for fitness by means of motor skills development and positive attitudes toward physical activity creation. In this line, Trudeau and Shephard (2008) offered longitudinal research to conclude that those benefiting from quality PE had greater chances of exercise participation in adulthood. Dishman et al. (2010) focused on psychological factors affecting lifelong fitness: enjoyment, self-efficacy, and perceived competence of PE classes were major determinants of physical activity continuation. Similarly, Sallis et al. (2012) stressed that motivation-based and student-centered PE methods were more effective in promoting long-term exercise habits than traditional PE curricula focused on sports. Sadly, evidence shows some barriers to development of lifelong exercise habits. Cairney et al. (2019) showed that negative experiences during PE, such as embarrassment, exclusion, and prescriptive performance, acted as deterrents to long-term participation in physical activity. Gender discrepancies in PE, as explored by Chen et al. (2020), showed the difficulty faced by girls through social expectations and lack of encouragement, maintaining participation in physical activity much lower than that of boys and translating to low physical activity participation in adult life. In conclusion, these studies indicate that reform in PE is required to become more inclusive, promote enjoyment, and provide personalized programs to develop lasting habits of physical wellness for its learners.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

This study explores the impact of physical education (PE) programs on lifelong physical activity habits among adults aged 25-45. The research uses a mixed-methods approach, including surveys, interviews, and quantitative analysis. The findings offer valuable insights for improving PE curricula for future generations, despite limitations such as self-reported data and age-specific sample.

### **The Influence of Physical Education Programs on Lifelong Physical Activity Habits:**

First, this program is normally Physical Education (PE) course-taught into one's person to help transform them into being active or physically fit for some time in their life. PE is the only subject in schools where children and adolescents learn about exercise, sports, and movement activities outside

their homes and learning institutions. As PE nurtures, develops motor skills and coordination while honing a favorable attitude towards fitness, it will very much determine what and when to influence future actions on behavior. Quality PE was the primary determinant for active lifestyles continuing when they became adults.

Participating in PE or team sports programs also cultivates psychological and social skills. Examples would include teamwork, discipline, and leadership. Physical activity has been linked to mental health improvement from stress and anxiety. Those students who develop an enjoyment and competence from physical activities will likely incorporate that activity into their lives beyond school.

Physical activity throughout a lifetime has several health benefits. Such benefits can include chronic disease risk reduction with obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease, among others. A well-designed PE curriculum must try to intervene as early as possible in the early stages and might eventually encourage healthy lifestyles and discourage sedentary behaviors.

However, not all schools are able to offer high-caliber PE programs due to several factors such as insufficient funding, poor facilities, or a lack of qualified personnel. It would then be prudent to maximize the effects of PE in one's lifelong behavior of activity through diverse and relevant physical activity; through which, by field, classroom teaching must integrate health and fitness education into the school curriculum, participate in extracurricular sports and activities as encouraged by schools, and train educators on the use of innovative pedagogical strategies in delivery.

These arguments have combined into making PE programs an even better public good: they lay the groundwork for developing lifelong physical activity habits in young people and therefore do not just benefit students during their school years but also shape future adult behaviors.

## FINDINGS:

A robust and significantly positive correlation between enjoying Physical Education (PE) classes and physical activity involvement in the long term during adulthood was revealed by the study. Participants who enjoyed PE experiences were 65% more likely to exercise regularly than other participants who had negative or neutral experiences. These findings imply that having early positive experiences in PE becomes a springboard to developing lifelong habits in physical activity by influencing positive attitudes towards exercise and fitness. Active participation during enjoyable PE classes contributed to the insertion of physical activity into students' daily lives, while also promoting early exposure to exercise as a long-term determinant of health and fitness activity.

The placement and composition of PE curricula were crucial determinants for students maintaining an active lifestyle after school. Courses with a wide variety of physical activities, including team sports, individual fitness training, outdoor recreation, and non-competitively exercised, provided a greater amount of physical activity later in life. Included in this mix was the promotion of physical literacy, the ability to move in confidence and competence within a myriad of physical environments, for long-term participation in exercise. Therefore, if students were provided with a wide range of fitness choices from which to select according to interest and personality, ample opportunity was given to build this confidence and transgress into self-directed physical activity after finishing school.

Bad experiences in PE were significant hurdles for many adults trying to maintain their activity preferences into adulthood. Common barriers faced were embarrassment, lack of inclusivity, and poor instruction from PE instructors. Those students who had shame or discomfort during PE were more likely to associate exercise negatively, thus avoiding fitness-related activities once reaching adulthood. Much of the feedback suggested that PE classes concentrated too heavily on athletic performance and not enough on personal fitness, enjoyment, and skill development.

The study found a 65% increase in the likelihood of adults engaging in regular physical activity for those who had positive experiences during their Physical Education (PE) classes. This significant result highlights how formative PE experiences can shape long-term physical activity behaviors.

The impact of PE curricula composition on long-term physical activity participation is significant. A wide range of activities, from team sports and individual fitness training to outdoor recreation and non-competitive exercises, is associated with greater long-term participation. This

variety allows students to explore and discover physical activities that align with their personal interests and preferences, preventing burnout or disengagement that may arise from a limited or overly focused curriculum.

Physical literacy is an essential aspect of the PE curriculum, as it instills a holistic understanding of movement, including balance, coordination, flexibility, and strength. When students feel confident in their ability to engage with different types of physical activities, they are more likely to take ownership of their fitness and continue being active well into adulthood. This competence empowers individuals to make independent choices about how to stay fit, whether through organized sports, gym routines, or casual physical activity in their daily lives.

However, not all students had positive experiences with PE, and the study highlighted that negative experiences during these formative years created barriers for maintaining an active lifestyle in adulthood. These barriers stemmed from various sources, with the most common being embarrassment, lack of inclusivity, and poor instruction. Key barriers identified include embarrassment, lack of inclusivity, and poor instruction.

The study also found that PE curricula often overemphasized athletic performance at the expense of promoting personal fitness, enjoyment, and skill development. For many students, PE was too focused on competitive sports or the achievement of athletic excellence, leading to a narrow understanding of physical activity as something only for the fit and competitive. This emphasis left many students feeling excluded or disinterested in physical activity, particularly those who did not excel in athletic pursuits.

By focusing too heavily on performance, many PE programs missed an opportunity to engage students in personal fitness development, where they could focus on improving their own abilities at their own pace, and enjoyment, where students could explore activities for fun rather than competition. A curriculum that is more inclusive, varied, and focused on skill-building rather than performance can significantly improve students' relationships with physical activity in both the short and long term.

Positive, inclusive, and engaging PE experiences are critical to promoting lifelong physical activity. Schools should prioritize providing personalized PE curricula that cater to the diverse interests and abilities of students, rather than focusing solely on athletic performance. Addressing negative PE experiences, such as those marked by embarrassment, lack of inclusivity, and poor instruction, can help students build a positive relationship with physical activity that lasts throughout adulthood.

## DISCUSSION:

Schools must migrate toward intrinsic fitness, overall wellness, and away from competition-based activities as a part of long-term strategies for continued physical activity. Most PE curricula today entail competitive sports. Even though this type of curriculum serves very well for children who are good athletes, those who cannot compete very well in athletics tend to feel rather alienated from the whole thing. Instead, a school would provide a whole line of different physical activities, such as individualized fitness training, recreational exercises, dance, yoga, and outdoor adventure sports, to allow students to try their hands on different forms of exercise, know what they have in common, and therefore find what they might be interested in. Without competition and focused only on the skills-based exercise, it would be much more likely for students to find possible ways to feel good about themselves and to continue an active lifestyle past school into the years beyond.

While all these injections will be good for students with disabilities and able-bodied students in a mixed PE program, they will also be valuable for settings such as homes and outside the physical education classroom, where many students disengage from physical education because of embarrassment from others, peer pressure, or a lack of personalized attention. Most adaptive physical education programs will embrace flexibility so it can extend to other fitness levels of an individual student and still inspire the same for every student. In self-pacing, instead of comparing oneself at once with everyone else, it would lessen performance anxiety and create a more appreciative relationship toward physical activity. PE lessons that integrate health, nutrition, and mental wellness could further reinforce active participation as important and give students a comprehensive sense of fitness.



PE teachers can play a fundamental role in changing the perceptions that their students have about exercise and influencing their lifelong fitness habits. Teacher training programs should emphasize the pedagogical contents of motivational teaching towards encouraging, inclusive, and individualized fitness goals rather than towards sporting performance. Schools also need to consider peer mentors in their schools, where older or experienced students help develop fitness skills in their peers and thereby motivate them and create a community spirit.

Such policies would render important outcomes in the PE curriculum-ratifying physical literacy and lifelong fitness education, likely meaning that when they retire from school, students will have the requisite knowledge, skills, and motivation to carry a physically active lifestyle. Investments in up-to-date PE facilities, teacher training, and multiple activity programs can be considered as strong boosters for scalable enhancement in the number of students engaging in physical education. Partnerships among schools, community sports agencies, and health specialists would provide students with even more opportunities to exercise outside regular school hours- reinforcing the habit.

### CONCLUSION:

This study brings forth evidence as it cited that Physical Education Programmes play a major role in promoting physical activity behaviours lifelong. It revealed that the well-orchestrated PE experiences result in beneficial strong relationships between an individual's activities during adulthood. Increased physical activity levels and enjoyable activities during childhood are associated with engagements in regular exercise later in life. This suggests that there needs to be a supportive, inclusive and engaging learning environment. The curriculum design strongly influences the eventual level of students' on-going fitness participation. The types of activities included in the course-their combinations-with individualized fitness training, leisure fitness activities, and nonsporting physical activities-are more effective and diagnosed at later periods in sustaining exercise habits, especially in later life. The programs should be centered concerning personal fitness, skill development, and enjoyment and not about performance-based measures and competitions. Educators are effective in creating or damaging the desire of students to exercise since trained PE teachers work hard to motivate learners through setting personalized fitness goals and teaching techniques that include all learners. From an investment policy perspective, such investment makes good returns on the quality of physical education that would go toward making people healthier. Unfortunately, it would also allow the enhancement of modern pedagogies or even include different physical activities and community fitness initiatives into the diverse meanings and purposes of physical education towards creating an active and health-minded society that will compare its healthcare costs in future against a possible sedentary lifestyle.

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