

Senior Research Paper

**Relationship Between Previous Physical Education Experience
in School and Current Activity Level**

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Introduction

The purpose of this research was to find the relationship between adult's previous physical education experience in school and their current physical activity levels. With the "No Child Left Behind Act" (2001) placing more pressure on schools to increase scores in the general subjects of Mathematics, Reading, and Writing, it is important that students are still getting an education on how to be physically active. If they know how important physical activity is they will live healthier lifestyles and be a productive member of society.

This topic is important to our group and the community because in order to be advocates for keeping physical education in schools it is important to know if the programs are effective. We hope to find model physical education programs and study what they do to make students stay physically active throughout their lives.

We are hoping to find a positive correlation between being physically active now and having a positive past physical education experience in the school setting. The members of this group are interested in this topic because we are all majoring in health and human performance and hope to teach others the benefits of physical activity throughout life.

Review of Literature

"The Effects of Physical Education Requirements on Physical Activity of Young Adults:"

The article "The Effects of Physical Education Requirements on Physical Activity of Young Adults," conducted by Derrick Mears and published in the American Secondary Education 36(3) journal in the summer edition 2008, was a study with the purpose of determining if having a higher amount of high school physical education credits required had impacted those students to become more physically active later in life.

A survey questionnaire was used in conducting this study and it was given to three-hundred sixty one undergraduate students at three separate universities. The questions used asked about their physical activity levels in cardiovascular, muscular strength, and muscular endurance fitness components.

The results of this study showed that those students who came from areas which had a higher amount of credit requirements in physical education reported much higher levels of current fitness. With these results you can conclude that the higher amount of credits could have been the positive impact on the higher levels of fitness.

This article's study relates to our research project because it supports our research question of the relationship between adult's previous physical education experience in

school and their current physical activity levels. The results show the need to keep physical education in schools so that we can and maintain have a fit and healthy community.

"Curriculum Diversity and Young Adult Physical Activity: Reflections from High School Physical Education"

This article described a research study that took 1,920 undergraduate college students who participated in a diverse physical education curriculum. A diverse curriculum is defined as having three or more of the activities given they were; aquatics, individual activity, physical conditioning, outdoor adventure, rhythmic and team activities. The study wanted to prove that individuals who were a part of a diverse curriculum or a curriculum that involved more than just team sports were more likely to live physically active lives.

Two pilot studies were conducted to ensure the reliability of the studies instruments.

After a few changes were made the survey was then distributed to its participants. The first section of the survey focused on physical education participation. Respondents were asked to choose activities from each of the six categories that I mentioned early. They were also asked to rank the six on a scale of emphasis. One being the most emphasized.

Current physical activity was measured by questions about how often and what type of physical activity the participants took part in. The questions were based on the recommended amounts of physical activity for adults. The questions were very specific.

To ensure the best results participants who were not United States graduates were eliminated as well as those who were over the age of 24.

The results came to show that individuals whose physical education classes were diverse had a higher level of cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength, sport participation, and flexibility exercises. Curriculum results also showed that team sports and physical conditioning were most times rated as the number one emphasis of the curriculum.

To us there was no surprise in these findings. In the discussion area of the article, researchers made an interesting connection to the curriculum results. They were not surprised to find that team sports ranked high on curriculum emphasis. They stated this could end up being a downfall to older adults physical activity. As you grow older team sports and activities are less available therefore you must turn to alternative forms of activities. Not being knowledgeable on individual sports and recreation like yoga may be a huge factor in whether or not one chooses to be active.

We found the findings of this article to be very beneficial not only to our study but more so to our future as we proceed to become educators. If the true goal for physical education classes is to educate and promote lifelong physical fitness and well being, it is important we continue to research to ensure we are creating an appropriate curriculum.

“The Influence of Experience on Pre-service Teachers’ Perceptions of Good and Bad Aspects of a Lesson”

This article was about prior experiences in sport and physical activity prior to formal teaching preparation and if they are influential in their perceptions of becoming a teacher. The authors specifically wanted to find out if previous experience such as: coaching, teaching and athletics helped pre-service teachers in their beliefs of teaching.

Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire that remained anonymous through coding. This questionnaire asked simple and direct questions regarding background experiences with working with students including: time and duration, skill level, and age of their clients. Next, the participants had to watch a video that showed a 40 minute class on elementary soccer. Then participants were asked to analyze the lesson using four categories: student, teacher, lesson organization, and content.

Results concluded that participants with previous playing, teaching, and coaching experience had the greatest potential for pedagogical content knowledge. These participants commented on the ability of the teacher to accurately demonstrate tasks, attention to goals of the lesson, and sequence and appropriateness of the lesson. Other pre-teachers that did not have previous experience did not comment on content knowledge like above, but commented mostly on general pedagogical knowledge. The study also said that participants with more experience tended to not direct their comments towards students. Participants that are farther along through their physical education schooling have a greater understanding of what is expected in teaching lessons and how to make these lessons meaningful to students.

Method

IRB protocols were completed through the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. We surveyed people that lived around the Twin Cities area and did not utilize protected groups as part of our research. We do not anticipate any risks for taking our survey and all surveys will remain anonymous. Deception will not be used in our surveys and we hope that a benefit of our survey is for people to be more aware of the benefits of physical activity. Participants will be aware of informed consent and will take the survey only if they would like to. Approval was granted by Bill Campbell on March 9, 2010.

The research method used to obtain the information for this report was a written survey. This survey was given to the population of sixty-five male and female adults over the age of twenty-one. These were working adults, some of these participants were married with families and others were single.

The survey consisted of ten questions related to the person's previous physical education experiences in school and their current physical activity levels. We had specific directions on how to answer the questions and the research questions used on the survey

were made to see what people thought of their experience, what they thought their activity level was and if those past physical education experiences caused them to stay physically active through life. They were able to rate their experience in school physical education on a scale of one to ten.

The surveys were given out at random and the participants had a choice on whether to complete and return the information or not. Once the data was collected, we looked at the specific questions on the survey to see how it correlated. The results were then entered into a excel spreadsheet, calculated and graphed.

Results

Drawing conclusions from the articles relating to past physical education experience in schools and current levels of physical fitness, our group believed that there would be a correlation between our main research questions. We were expecting to find a correlation between current levels of physical fitness and how individuals rated their physical education experience. However, after running the Pearson correlation on our data we found there to be no correlation.

What we did find, is that most people had a positive experience with physical education with the average being 7.5 out of a possible score of 10 (with 10 being the best) when they rated their experience on our survey. They seemed to enjoy their experiences in physical education class and did not have too many negative feeling about it, despite what they may have answered on any of the other questions.

Another finding was that the 76% of the majority of the population we sampled, considered themselves to be somewhat physically active. Another interesting fact we found was that 100% of our surveys were required to take physical education classes in High School but only 66% thought that physical education classes had an impact on their interest of being physically active now.

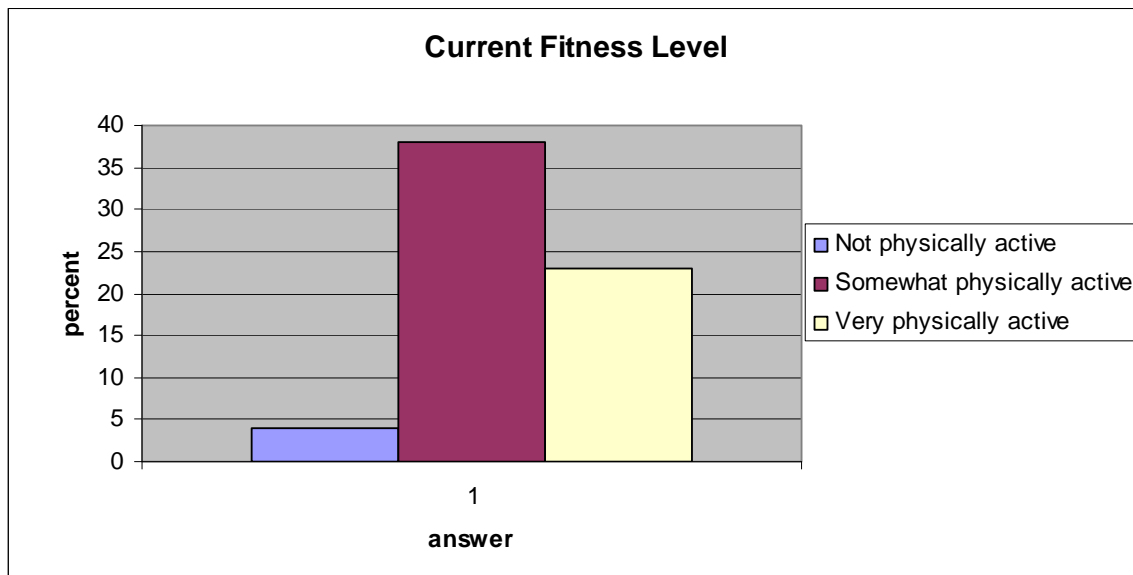
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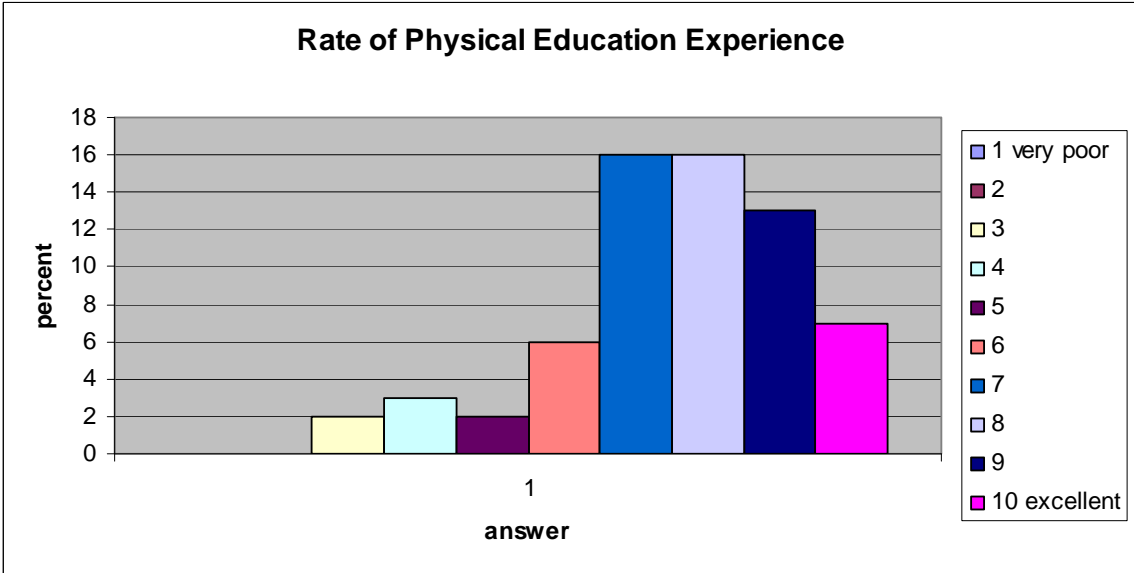
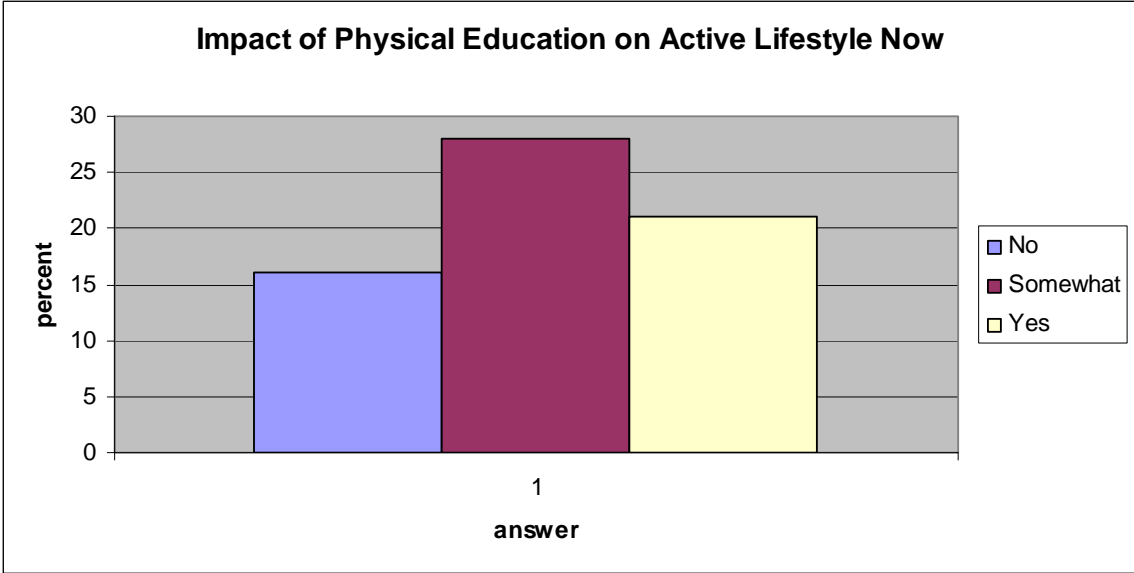
The articles we reviewed before this studies suggested that our research q would show that physical education classes in school did effect future physical activity behavior. However, we found that from reviewing our data, we can conclude from our survey that although one may have felt they had a positive physical education experience, it might not mean it has made an effect on their attitudes and motivations towards being physically active. We suggest that this conclusion is not correct, as we ran our results we realized our questions were not specific enough to really grasp what our question was asking. In the future if we were to run this research again we would suggest doing a qualitative survey, which would include sitting down and interviewing our subjects. We really needed to get a lot more information to draw some better results.

Questions that should have been included on our survey needed to be more specific about physical activity. We should have included some types of activities and used a time variable for example how often do you reach your Vo2 max each week. We could also have listed activities that one might participate in and ask if they learned the skills of these sports or activities in a physical education class. It would also be important to get a good understanding of what the individuals participated in during physical education classes and also what they learned or took away from the class. We feel it would be beneficial to run this research between different age groups. Our prediction would be that you would be able to see how the practices of physical education have changed over time as well and possibly see where things have gone wrong.

Much more attention and detail must be added to get a more clear and concrete result when researching this particular question. When looking at other research questions and methods there is many topics and focuses that a researcher could chose to use.

Graphs and Data





References

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