

Analysis of the opinion on physical education in high schools and the extracurricular sports practice of students and their personal environment

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Abstract:

The opinion of Secondary Education students towards the subject of Physical Education shows that is a subject of great interest in which various variables have an influence. In this study, students' opinions about the subject have been analysed based on different aspects: the subject they like the most, the importance they attach to physical education, the level of satisfaction with physical education classes, preferences of the subject, if they would choose it as an optional subject, if they are in favour of a reduction in the hours of these classes, on the benefits they think they obtain with physical education, and finally on their habits of extracurricular practice and the habits of its environment. The questionnaire for the analysis of satisfaction in Physical Education (C.A.S.E.F.) was used in a sample of 266 students of first and second course of Secondary Education in three different centres of the city of Segorbe (Spain). The results of the research show great interest in the subject by the students, being their favourite subject. In addition, they would choose it as an optional and refuse to reduce teaching hours for that subject. These same students prefer content related to games and sports and think that the subject benefits them specially to improve their physical condition. A high percentage of students practice physical activity and sports outside of school hours, this practice also exists in the majority of the student's environment, being the friends who carry it out the most. Finally, the variables that explain significantly whether or not students engage in physical activity are, in the case of men, the desire to have no fewer hours of physical education per week and, in the case of women, their desire to choose physical education as an elective subject.

Keywords: physical education, satisfaction, extracurricular practice, physical activity.

Introduction

Physical education is a subject of great importance for the curriculum in Secondary Education. For this reason, this research has been carried out in order to find out students' opinion of this subject and also to obtain information on their sports habits outside school hours. It is important that students and adolescents participate in physical education classes and it is highly recommended that they carry out extracurricular activities (Codina, Pestana, Castillo, & Balaguer, 2016), since through these they obtain a good amount of benefits, both physically and cognitively, improving the academic aspect as a consequence, as well, since an improvement related to this practice has been demonstrated (Berrios, Latorre, & Pantoja, 2017). In addition, for many adolescents and especially for children, school is the most important place outside the family, and it has been shown that students' perceptions of the school environment are significantly associated with their health and well-being (Oliveira et al., 2017) so it is interesting to hear their views. Regarding to the practice of sports, the importance of the habits of the members of the environment has been demonstrated, finding that there is a positive relationship between the practice of a subject and the practice of any physical-sports activity of relatives or friends. This is due to the fact that the child grows up and interacts in a healthy environment, in which the practice of sports is encouraged and a series of values that are inherent to sport are transmitted, values that are transversal and that extend to daily life, improving the correct development of social relations (Castro-Sánchez, Zurita-Ortega, Martínez-Martínez, Chacón-Cuberos, & Espejo-Garcés, 2016).

Theoretical Framework

Physical education

The aim of secondary education is to provide students an optimal education so that they can broaden their skills and abilities and be intelligently prepared for new contexts (Ríos-Sánchez, 2015). Physical education is understood as the educational action that involves the person and the body, forming part of the educational process and being oriented towards the development of skills and abilities, improving motor behaviour. It also

aims to get to know one's own body through physical activity, acquire healthy and hygienic habits, use one's own body's own expressive resources and, above all, foster social relations, avoiding discrimination against one's partner (López-Martínez, 2006). Following the definition of Vizúete-Carrizosa (2002), physical education is shown as the capacity to educate the quality and life expectancy of students, so that once they finish their studies, they are able to develop their knowledge by focusing on their daily habits and attitudes, in order to take charge of the care and maintenance of their own bodies.

Satisfaction

Satisfaction, related to the fact of feeling competent, makes the student have good reasons to participate more actively in physical education classes, and to do so they must know how to manage and understand the values of socialization and respect that exist when participating in physical education classes (Sicilia, Ferriz, & González-Cutre, 2014). This educational satisfaction is directly related to the general satisfaction of life (Ríos-Sánchez, 2015) and has a positive impact on student satisfaction in other subjects, but for this reason it is essential that teachers are involved in their classes and that they are motivating (Baena-Extremera & Granero-Gallegos, 2015). If we improve these aspects and the student presents high levels of satisfaction, toxic behaviors and school dropouts will be reduced and the satisfaction of daily life outside the classroom will improve (Baños, Ortiz-Camacho, Baena-Extremera, & Tristán-Rodríguez, 2017). According to Ríos-Sánchez (2015), the main factors affecting the level of student satisfaction are family quality, student characteristics (self-esteem and self-concept), environmental conditions in the classroom and social and emotional relations.

Healthy habits

Physical education classes are an essential tool for promoting healthy habits in students. Following the idea proposed by Ruiz, Seva, & Bastías (2016), the students undergo emotional exchanges due to their experiences in physical education classes, and benefit from changes such as the decrease in anxiety levels that make them positively increase their moods, responsibility and empathy with their peers. Moreno & Hellín (2002) explain that the development of the positive aspects towards the subject of physical education and physical exercise must be one of the most outstanding objectives of the educational programme of the subject, since improving this aspect will facilitate and encourage children and adolescents to maintain a healthy lifestyle and habits. On the other hand, according to a study carried out by León-Elizondo, Sanz-Arazuri, & Valdemoros-San Emeterio (2012), thanks to the satisfaction previously mentioned, which is created from the classes carried out in the physical education subject, it is possible to provoke an increase in the intentions of students to practice physical-sports activity outside school hours, due to the fact that they perceive a great utility and improve the predisposition towards the classes taught.

Motivation and interest in Physical Education classes

Moreno & Hellín (2002) explain that attitudes towards physical education are more positive the more frequent the practice of physical activity. Obviously, motivation and commitment to sport will be important, as this will be an important factor in increasing frequency and persistence in sport (Hagiwara, 2017). Regarding to this aspect, it is true that there are variables that influence whether the interest is greater or less, such as those shown in Moreno, Hellín, & Hellín (2006), where it is observed that age is an influential factor in interest, with students between 12 and 13 years old usually having more interest and motivation in classes than students between 14 and 15 years old. This is because they describe the physical education subject as a competitive and fun subject, in which they create greater emotional bonds and intelligence, in addition to considering the subject important and useful. Gender is another influential variable, since it has been shown that there is a greater number of interest in the subject of Physical Education in male gender, in addition to showing an increase in physical motivation and positive vision of the subject when the student successfully surpasses the motor skills (Moreno & Hellín, 2007).

Regarding to their motivation, ego-oriented students are more vulnerable to appreciating strategies based on feelings of guilt, which decreases their level of self-determined motivation, while homework-oriented students focus more on responsibility for their own behaviour, increasing their self-determined motivation (Moreno, Hellín, Hellín, & Cervelló, 2006). In recent research carried out by Charchaoui-Gonçalves, Cachón-Zagalaz, Chacón-Borrego, & Castro-López (2017), the motivation for learning about the mechanisms of intrinsic, extrinsic or demotivation-motivation of secondary school students in the subject of physical education is analysed. Following the results of this study, it has been demonstrated that the main motivation of students corresponds to intrinsic motivation (44.9%), because they enjoy in class, have fun and find the subject very interesting and useful. However, the level of extrinsic motivation remains high (42.9%) while the demotivation of students is very low (1.99%). Therefore, it is confirmed that the main motivation for students to participate in physical education classes is intrinsic motivation, but bearing in mind extrinsic motivation, which is not very far away.

Extracurricular physical activity and physical education

As regards the practice of extracurricular physical and sports activity, this practice has a positive influence on the changes of adolescence and on the academic performance and orientation of students. Extracurricular activities related to physical activity have been shown to significantly improve a person's psychological, physical and social development, as well as generating healthy habits and increasing self-esteem. In addition, in relation to emotional intelligence, it has been demonstrated that there are notable contrasts between students who practice physical activity outside school and students who do not, due to the formation of a greater number of socio-affective interactions (Ruiz et al., 2016). The practice of extracurricular physical activity also generates improvements related to the transmission of values. This causes an increase in the levels of respect and commitment shown by the participants, for instance, with the necessary material to develop the sessions or decreasing the mockery of their peers even when the competition increases. Therefore, there is a considerable improvement in the interpersonal relations of the students-companions, favouring a more positive climate in the classes (Madrid-López, Prieto-Ayuso, Samalot-Rivera, & Gil-Madrona, 2016)

Physical activity and family environment

Several studies highlight the importance of healthy habits of a person's environment to be influenced by them, for instance, the research of Amenabar-Perurena, Sistiaga-Lopetegui, & García-Bengoechea (2008) or Revuelta, Acebo-García, & Rey-Baltar (2017), which establish that parents are the most fundamental and influential tool in the environment for children and adolescents to engage in physical activity and sport, and that is why parents who support and facilitate this type of practice make their children practice more and more lastingly. Another recent study that follows this line is Castro-Sánchez et al. (2016) which state that more than half of the parents of the pupils regularly engage in physical activity or sport. In addition, the vital importance of the family in general as an element for students to achieve stable healthy habits in their daily lives, practicing physical activity more frequently, thanks to the direct and positive relationship between the practice carried out by family members and that carried out by their children (Berrios et al., 2017).

Material and method

Objective

The objective of this research is to evaluate the opinion of the students in secondary education on the subject of physical education and then make comparisons to analyse whether there are differences in practice based on the comparison of the levels of sports practice of the respondents and those of the members of their environment.

Sample

The sample of the study corresponds to the students of secondary education of the city of Segorbe. The sample is composed of a total of 266 students of which 127 are boys (47.75%) and 139 girls (52.25%). Given that the sample is made up of secondary school students, the ages are between 12 and 19 years old.

Instrument

In order to evaluate the students' opinions on the subject of physical education and the analysis of their sports practice and the practice of their environment, the questionnaire for the analysis of satisfaction with physical education known as CASEF was used (Moreno et al., 2006). This questionnaire consists of 22 questions. First, sociodemographic data such as age, gender and course are collected and then asked about students' opinions and preferences regarding the subject of physical education. Finally, there are questions aimed at gathering information on their extracurricular sports practice and the sports practice of the members of their environment.

Procedure

Once the centre had been contacted and given its approval for the study, it went to the classes to explain and report on the study and the correct way of completing the questionnaire, guaranteeing the anonymity of the data collected in the research. During the completion of the questionnaire, several questions suggested by the students were answered, related to the way of answering the questionnaire, without influencing their answers.

Statistical analysis

The statistical analysis performed have been carried out using SPSS 23. First, frequencies and descriptive statistics of the groups of interest were obtained based on different aspects. On the other hand, following a deeper statistical analysis and considering that the answers to the questionnaire related to the students' sports practice and their environment are dichotomous, analysis have been carried out using contingency tables in which the value of the Chi-Square test has been taken as a reference. This value makes it possible to conclude that the variables proposed for analysis show a significant relationship or not. In addition, once again considering the dichotomous nature of the answers, a binary logistic regression has been carried out to learn about aspects of their opinions and habits that are significant predictors of the students' physical and sports practice.

Results

Preferred subject area

In terms of the subject they like most, as can be seen in Table 1, the first option chosen by students was physical education (40.6%), with a large difference over the second and third options, which are tutoring (10.5%) and mathematics (8.6%), respectively. On the other hand, the less frequent choices are religion, scientific culture and Latin, with 0.4% all of them.

Table 1. Frequencies and percentages of subjects chosen as first choice

Subject	N	%	Subject	N	%
Biology	12	4.5	Technology	6	2.3
Geography/History	19	7.1	Plastic arts	11	4.1
Spanish	7	2.6	Economy	12	4.5
Mathematics	23	8.6	Latin	1	0.4
English	11	4.1	Performing Arts/Dance	2	0.8
Physics and Chemistry	9	3.4	Scientific culture	1	0.4
EF	108	40.6	Philosophy	4	1.5
Religion	1	0.4	Valencian	2	0.8
Ethics	4	1.5	Tutoring	28	10.5
Music	5	1.9	Total	266	100

In addition, the second and third choices were analysed, and physical education was again chosen in both cases, with 12.8% in the case of the second choice, followed by mathematics (9%) and 11.3% as the third choice, followed by geography and history (10.9%). Regarding the importance of physical education, students who consider the subject to be important are the largest group, representing 36.8% of the total, followed very closely by 36.5% of those who consider it to be very important. 24.8% consider it normal and there is a minority who consider it unimportant (1.9%). In terms of satisfaction with the classes, 72.9% think that they like the subject of physical education very much, while 24.8% of the students like it regular and 2.3% think that they don't like it at all. In terms of the aspect of physical education that they like most, as can be seen in table 2, games and sports are what students in physical education like most (69.9%), followed by physical fitness and health (48.1%), activities in natural environment (37.2%) and, finally, body expression, which is the aspect that they like least in physical education classes (18.8%).

Table 2. What I like most about Physical Education

Contents	Answer	N	%	Contents	Answer	N	%
Physical condition and health	No	138	51.9	Corporal expression	No	216	81.2
	Yes	128	48.1		Yes	50	18.8
	Total	266	100		Total	266	100
Games and sports	No	80	30.1	Natural environment activities	No	167	62.8
	Yes	186	69.9		Yes	99	37.2
	Total	266	100		Total	266	100

Physical education as an elective, reduction of subject hours, benefits of physical education

Regarding the choice of physical education subject as an elective subject, 56% of the students surveyed said they would choose it, while the remaining 44% said they would not. When students are asked about fewer hours of physical education during school hours, there is a clear denial that the number of hours is reduced (90.6%), while the rest (9.4%) would do well to subtract hours from the subject. If we look at the aspects in which students understand that they can be helped by physical education (see table 3), the option that shows the highest positive percentage is that it helps them to improve their physical condition (92.9%), followed by the relationship with others (56.4%), being more coordinated (47.7%) and respecting others, the material and the environment (56.8%). Finally, the aspect in which physical education helps less in the opinion of the students is the improvement of intelligence (10.5%).

Table 3. Aspects in which Physical Education helps me

Aspect	Answer	N	%	Aspect	Answer	N	%
Be more sociable	No	150	56.4	Be more coordinated	No	127	47.7
	Yes	116	43.6		Yes	139	52.3
	Total	266	100		Total	266	100
Improve physical condition	No	19	7.1	Respect others, materials and environment	No	151	56.8
	Yes	247	92.9		Yes	115	43.2
	Total	266	100		Total	266	100
Be smarter	No	238	89.5				
	Yes	28	10.5				
	Total	266	100				

Extracurricular physical activity

Considering the level of practice of extracurricular physical activity, 71.4% of those surveyed said they did it, while 28.6% did not practice any activity outside school hours. Analysing the same variable, referring to their environment, the students affirm that 37.6% of the parents and 48.1% of the siblings carry out physical and sports activity, while the highest value is found in the group of friends, representing 85%.

Physical activity, relationship between students and parents.

Regarding the analysis of the relationship between the practice of physical activity between students and parents (see table 4), 81 parents practice physical activity like their children, while 19 parents do so, even though their children do not practice it. On the other hand, 109 students do engage in physical activity, even if their parents do not, while the rest of the students (57) do not engage in physical activity like their parents.

Table 4. Contingency table for physical activity between students and parents

		My Parents			
		No	Yes	Total	
Practice activity	physical	No	57	19	76
		Yes	109	81	190
	Total	166	100	266	

Once the Chi-Square test has been carried out, it has been observed that it is significant ($p=.007$), so we can say that there is a significant relationship between the sports practice of the students and their parents.

Relationship between physical activity between students and siblings

Regarding the ratio of physical activity of students to siblings (see Table 5), we found that of the total number of students surveyed, 97 students practiced physical activity in the same way as their siblings, while 31 students did not practice any activity at all and their siblings did. On the other hand, there are 93 students who practice physical activity, although their siblings do not do it and 45 students who do not practice any type of activity.

Table 5. Contingency table for physical activity between students and siblings

		My Siblings			
		No	Yes	Total	
Practice activity	physical	No	45	31	76
		Yes	93	97	190
	Total	138	128	266	

In this section, the Chi-Square test is not significant ($p=.130$) and therefore in this case it cannot be said that there is a significant relationship between the sports practice of the students and their siblings.

Physical activity, relationship between students and friends

In terms of the relationship between students and friends (see table 6), there are 164 students who practice physical activity just like their friends, while 62 do not, although their friends do. On the other hand, 26 students engage in physical activity, although their friends do not, and only 14 students engage in no activity and their friends do not engage in any activity either.

Table 6. Contingency table of physical activity among students and friends

		My Friends			
		No	Yes	Total	
Practice activity	physical	No	14	62	76
		Yes	26	164	190
	Total	40	226	266	

Analysing the value of the Chi-Square test we observe that it is not significant ($p=.329$) and therefore we cannot affirm that the existing relationship between the sports practice of the students and that of their friends is significant.

Predictive model using binary logistic regression

Regarding to predictive models using binary logistic regression analysis, they have been carried out to analyse whether the set of variables proposed as independent (I would choose Physical education as an elective, have fewer hours of EF, you like the EF class, the class is easy, the class is motivating, the class is useful, my parents practice and my siblings practice) are able to explain the dependent variable, which in this case will be

whether or not they practice physical activity. The same analysis has been carried out for men and women. In the case of men, the value of significance in the omnibus test has been significant ($p < .01$) so the model proposed has predictive capacity. Secondly, we see that this explanatory capacity ranges from 17% to 30% of the variance of the dependent variable, since these are the values obtained in the R^2 of Cox and Snell and the R^2 of Nagelkerke and that it is capable of correctly classifying 88.2% of the cases. As can be seen in table 7, we see that of the variables proposed, only one is significant, the one corresponding to having fewer hours of physical education per week, and as can be seen with a negative value in Beta of -3.90.

Table 7. Binary logistic regression on the practice of physical activity in men

	B	E.T.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Physical Education as an elective subject	.37	.58	.41	.522	1.45
Have fewer hours of physical education	-3.90	1.47	7.04	.008	.02
I like physical education classes.	.15	.76	.04	.841	1.17
Classes are easy for me	.25	.59	.18	.668	1.29
Classes are motivating	-.77	.59	1.71	.191	.47
Classes are useful	1.27	.67	3.63	.057	3.56
My parents are physically active	.54	.65	.69	.408	1.71
My siblings are physically active	1.06	.64	2.72	.099	2.90
Constant	.73	1.30	.31	.577	2.07

In the case of women, this model also significantly explains whether or not they will practice sport, as the omnibus test has been significant ($p < .05$). In this case, the explanatory capacity ranges from 13% offered by Cox's R^2 and Snell's R^2 to 18% by Nagelkerke's R^2 , with 65.5% of the cases properly placed. As can be seen in table 8, only the choice of the physical education subject as an elective explains significantly whether the students practice sport or not ($p < .05$), likewise this is the most explanatory variable, since its exponential value is the one that is furthest from 1.

Table 8. Binary logistic regression on the practice of physical activity in women

	B	E.T.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Physical Education as an elective subject	.96	.39	5.94	.015	2.61
Have fewer hours of physical education	.17	.63	.07	.791	1.18
I like physical education classes.	-.68	.42	2.67	.102	.51
Classes are easy for me	.11	.41	.07	.797	1.11
Classes are motivating	-.17	.40	.18	.672	.85
Classes are useful	.33	.39	.70	.402	1.38
My parents are physically active	.67	.42	2.57	.109	1.95
My siblings are physically active	-.20	.40	.24	.625	.82
Constant	.58	.80	.53	.468	1.79

Discussion

The results extracted above allow us to affirm that the students of the city of Segorbe value the subject of physical education in a positive way and consider it very useful, which coincides with other studies such as those carried out by Moreno & Hellín (2002) and Moreno et al. (2006). In addition, it has been proven that there is a high level of satisfaction with the subject by the students, which coincides with the study carried out by Baena-Extremera & Granero-Gallegos (2015).

In terms of preferences for the content, it has been observed that students have a greater affinity for the physical condition and health contets, games and sports and activities in natural environment, respectively. These data coincide with those obtained in the study conducted by Moreno et al. (2006). Likewise, this study partly disagrees with the above-mentioned study, since in our case the students have not shown a high interest in body expression. When examining the results obtained regarding the option of physical education as an optional subject, it has been observed that the majority of students would choose it, as was the case in the study by Moreno & Hellín (2007).

With regard to the aspects in which physical education helps, it has been obtained that it helps to improve the student's physical condition and health, social relations and coordination. However, we have obtained a result that is not in line with the results obtained by other authors such as Moreno & Hellín (2007), since in our case the option of improving intelligence has been the least chosen.

Finally, when talking about physical and sports activity outside school hours, the study coincides with other studies that state that there is a very high number of students who practice extracurricular physical and sports activities (Chacón-Cuberos et al., 2017; Moreno et al., 2006). In addition, it has been observed that there

is a practice of physical and sports activity by the parents of the students represented by 37.6%, something far from the 50% represented in the study carried out by Castro-Sánchez et al. (2016).

Conclusions

Once the results have been analysed, we can draw several conclusions from this study: the first conclusion is that the subject of physical education is the one that has the greatest preference among students in the total number of subjects proposed. In addition, students attach great importance to the subject and most have shown high levels of satisfaction on it. We can also conclude that the contents the students like most is the one that corresponds to games and sports, far above the corporal expression that has not had protagonism. The majority of students would choose physical education as an elective subject, a high percentage of them reject the possibility of reducing the number of teaching hours in the subject and most of them think that physical fitness is the aspect to which physical education contributes most. With respect to physical activity, we can conclude that a high percentage of students engage in extracurricular physical activity. In addition, a significant relationship has been found between the sports practice carried out by the students and that carried out by their parents, not resulting in a comparison with siblings and friends.

Limitations of the study and future lines of research

With regard to limitations and future lines, first of all, we find the limitation of the sample size, since, although an adequate number of respondents has been obtained, a greater collection of data would have facilitated the generalization of the results. As for the future lines of research, it would also be interesting to delve into the possible differences of opinion regarding the different variables analysed according to the gender of the students or the course to which they belong. In addition, the figure of the teacher could be included in the analysis, comparing the attitudes of the teachers in their classes, which is what their students like most, in order to draw more extensive conclusions that may have to do with the motivation and willingness of the students towards physical education classes.

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