

ATTITUDE TOWARDS PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES AMONG FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENTS AND THEIR FATHERS

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Abstract

Background: Physical activity (PA) is a critical determinant of physical and psychological well-being, yet cultural and gender-specific factors often shape attitudes toward participation. Limited evidence exists regarding intergenerational perspectives on physical activities in Pakistan, particularly among young women and their fathers.

Objective: This study aimed to examine and compare attitudes toward physical activities among female college students and their fathers in Peshawar.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted with 200 participants, including 100 female college students (aged 16–22 years) and 100 of their fathers. Participants were recruited from various colleges and universities in Peshawar through simple random sampling. Attitudes toward physical activities were assessed using the validated Attitude towards Physical Activity Scale (APAS), comprising 32 items on a five-point Likert scale. Descriptive statistics, independent samples t-tests, and correlation analyses were performed to compare group differences and intergenerational associations.

Results: Fathers demonstrated significantly more positive attitudes toward PA ($M = 76.86$, $SD = 16.42$) compared to daughters ($M = 67.47$, $SD = 10.41$), $t(198) = 46.81$, $p < .001$, with a moderate effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.68$). Reliability analysis indicated strong internal consistency for fathers (Cronbach's $\alpha = .890$) and acceptable reliability for daughters ($\alpha = .721$). Correlation analysis revealed a very weak, negative, and non-significant relationship between fathers' and daughters' attitudes ($r = -.033$, $p = .746$).

Conclusion: The study indicated a notable age disparity, with dads

exhibiting more favorable views towards physical exercise than their daughters. These findings indicate the necessity for culturally attuned treatments to tackle gender-specific obstacles and promote increased engagement of young women in physical exercise. Targeted interventions that address gender stereotypes, institutional possibilities, and safe pathways for involvement are necessary to encourage active lifestyles among female students in Peshawar.

INTRODUCTION

Physical activities (PA) in educational institutes play a vital role in the promotion of health life and educational learning. Regular involvement in physical activities has the power to develop healthy lifestyle in the coming years of students' life (1).

The indulgent of the students in physical activities (PA) in the early stage not only develop students' physique but also instill positive attitude towards these activities. One of the primary objectives of physical education is to enhance positive attitudes among the students that encourages life time (2).

It has been observed that those students who show positive attitude towards physical activities in educational institutes also take part in it outside the institutes (3). A positive attitude towards exercise may be the primary determinant of a physically active lifestyle (4).

It is also essential to know the students' attitude towards physical activities as if the students show positive attitude towards physical activities thus it is presumed that they would like to participate in such activities in their future lives. Involvement in physical activities not only develop physique but it also helps in shaping the body and maintain good health that is essential for the future life. Participation in physical activities helps students to achieve cognitive and kinesthetic skills in physical education programs (5, 6).

It is not a new phenomenon it the research of physical education to assess attitudes of students of different ages towards physical activities including sports and exercise (7).

The females physically weak and less active (8). To promote female college students' participation in physical activities, particular attention should be paid to the critical role of self-efficacy. At the same time, it is also important not to overlook the competitive sports preferred by male students, which require

stronger self-efficacy to cope with competitive pressures and social expectations (9).

For men, fatherhood is associated with decreased physical activity levels. Targeting physical activity levels in fathers has been identified as a way of improving their well-being and the well-being of their children; however, fathers are far less likely to be involved in family-based physical activity interventions than mothers. Fathers are also less likely to participate in co-physical activity with their daughters than their sons (10).

Physical educators, teachers, doctors and many others always try to inform general public about the benefits of regular exercises. It is also believed that through participating in physical activities and sports, individuals can develop social skills and desirable attitude towards physical activities can further develop worthy values in individuals (11).

The attitude of young students towards sports and physical activities, over all consequence of study demonstrated that undergraduate in Pakistan indicates great disposition towards physical exercises to improve their wellbeing (12).

Similarly, another study conducted in male students most of the students believes and thought about physical exercises were good for rush, fervor, wellbeing and wellness (13).

We observe that many researches were conducted to know the attitude of students towards physical activities, but no research was conducted in Peshawar to know the attitude of parents towards physical activities.

Methodology

The objective of the research is to have an understanding of attitude of female college students and their fathers whether they have a positive or negative attitude towards physical activities for this reason we took a sample consisted of 100

undergraduate female students and 100 educated fathers were selected through probability sampling technique. Sample was selected from different institutions of Peshawar through random sampling technique. The outcome measures used in this study were the primary dependent measure was level of attitude towards physical activity among female college students and their fathers. In the present study Likert-type scale was used to be responded on a five (5)-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. A reliable scale with 32 items for attitude towards physical activities scale (APAS) was used for data collection. The numbers of reverse items in the scale are 11. The scale has been found to

be reliable and valid for measuring the attitude toward physical activity. The Cronbach alpha for the scale was obtained.

The participants were also provided with information about the purpose of present research and instructions regarding the questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered in the form of a paper pencil survey and required only limited time. The participants were also instructed to fill the other questionnaire by their father. The filled questionnaires were then collected for scoring and statistical procedure.

RESULT

Descriptive analysis for fathers:

Age Group (Years)	Percentage (%)	Mean $\pm$ SD	Cumulative Percentage (%)
39-44	22.0	49.06 $\pm$ 5.617	22.0
45-49	32.0		54.0
50-54	29.0		83.0
55-59	14.0		97.0
60-65	3.0		100.0

The age of participants ranged from 39 to 65 years, with a mean of 49.06 years (SD = 5.62). Distribution by age intervals showed that the largest proportion belonged to the 45-49 year group (32%), followed by the 50-54 year group (29%). The 39-44 year group comprised 22% of participants, while 14% were in the 55-59 year group. Only a small proportion (3%) were aged 60 years and above.

Cumulative analysis indicated that 54% of participants were below 50 years, while 83% were younger than 55 years, reflecting that the majority of the sample was in the middle-aged category, with relatively fewer participants at older ages.

Frequency Distribution of Participants (Daughters) by Age

Age (Years)	Frequency (F)	Mean (M) $\pm$ SD	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
16	17	18.14 $\pm$ 1.450	17.0	17.0
17	20		20.0	37.0
18	19		19.0	56.0
19	22		22.0	78.0
20	21		21.0	99.0
22	1		1.0	100.0

Participants' ages ranged from 16 to 22 years, with a mean age of 18.14 years (SD = 1.45). The highest proportion of participants was observed at 19 years (22%), followed closely by those aged 20 years (21%)

and 17 years (20%). Participants aged 18 years accounted for 19% of the sample, while those aged 16 years made up 17%. A very small proportion (1%) was aged 22 years.

Cumulatively, 56% of the participants were aged 18 years or below, while 99% were aged 20 years or

below, indicating that the sample was largely concentrated in the late adolescent age range. Statistical Reliability of Fathers and Daughters

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Father	.890	32
Daughter	.721	3

The reliability analysis showed that the father scale demonstrated high internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .890$, 32 items), while the daughter scale

indicated acceptable reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .721$, 3 items).

Independent Samples t-test Results

Variable	M $\pm$ SD	t	95% (LL-UL)	Cohen's d
Father	76.86 $\pm$ 16.42	46.807	73.60 – 80.12	–
Daughter	67.47 $\pm$ 10.41	64.799	65.40 – 69.54	0.683

Independent samples t-test results revealed that fathers had a higher mean score (M = 76.86, SD = 16.42) compared to daughters (M = 67.47, SD = 10.41). The difference was statistically significant,

with a moderate effect size (Cohen's d = 0.68). The 95% confidence interval for fathers' scores ranged between 73.60 and 80.12, while for daughters it ranged between 65.40 and 69.54.

Correlation Between Fathers and Daughters

	Father Total	Daughter Total
Father Total	1	-0.033
Daughter Total	-0.033	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	–	0.746
N	100	100

The correlation analysis indicated a very weak, negative, and non-significant relationship between fathers' and daughters' total scores ($r = -.033$, $p = .746$, $N = 100$).

DISCUSSION

The current research was conducted to investigate the perception of female students in colleges and their fathers about physical activities. In contrast to the initial hypothesis that daughters could be showing a more positive attitude towards physical

activity, the results have shown that dads had much more positive attitudes than daughters. This finding indicates that fathers are aware and support the positive effects of physical activity, but younger female students might have less coherent or less positive opinions (14).

The generational and cultural influence on the attitude to physical activity is one of the possible reasons behind these findings. As adults, who are more concerned about the health outcomes, fathers might accept the place of exercise in facilitating

physical and psychological health. The fact that the mean scores are higher and the reliability of the fathers is stronger shows that their answers were more positive and more consistent. On the contrary, the mean scores of daughters are lower, indicating a lesser tendency towards physical activity, which might be explained by social, cultural, or environmental obstacles that young women in Peshawar experience. Previous studies in Pakistan and other countries have postulated that female students can be inhibited from engaging in sports and exercise due to poor opportunities, social norms, and institutional issues (15, 16).

The second significant result was composed of weak and insignificant responses between father and daughter scores. This means that the fatherly physical activity attitudes may not be necessarily translated to the behavior and attitude of their daughters. This disparity can demonstrate the complexity of the problem of intergenerational influence: parents are able to provoke more interest, but still, daughters may be trapped by the conventions of their peers, the laws of the institutions, or even their personal choice. This was also demonstrated by the previous studies where, despite the parents motivating their children to engage in body activities and exercises, female students were less involved due to the constraints of the society and culture (17, 18).

The t-test findings also highlight the large difference between the two groups, and the effect size (Cohen d) is moderate (Cohen d = 0.68), allowing one to conclude that the attitudes of fathers are significantly more positive than those of daughters. This finding is of great significance, especially when it comes to the advocacy of active lifestyles in young women, where modelling and encouragement by parents prove essential yet not necessarily adequate in order to achieve active engagement (19).

These results show that interventions are needed to address both parental support and the barriers to female students' participation in physical activity. Schools, colleges and communities in Peshawar should come up with practices that would promote female involvement in sports, diminish cultural stigmas, and offer safe and controlled opportunities. Overall, the findings of the given study are relevant to the existing body of literature, as they indicate a

gap in the attitudes of fathers to their daughters towards physical exercise. Although fathers are supportive and have a positive view, the situation is still worse among young women, which means a strong requirement to conduct the active campaign to raise awareness, adjust the policies, and change the institutions to create a healthier and more active lifestyle for female students (20).

CONCLUSION

This research underscores a significant divergence in attitudes towards physical exercise between female college students and their fathers in Peshawar, with fathers exhibiting more favorable perspectives. The findings highlight that despite the presence of parental support, young women encounter cultural, societal, and institutional obstacles that restrict their active engagement. Targeted methods including schools, communities, and legislators are critical for creating supportive settings, challenging restrictive gender stereotypes, and promoting safe opportunities for female physical exercise. To improve generalizability, future research should involve various groups outside of Peshawar as well as wider family dynamics.

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