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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# STUDY ON SPORTS PARTICIPATION OF COLLEGE STUDENTS BASED ON EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

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### ABSTRACT

The physical health of college students is the foundation of various national undertakings, a favorable driving force for promoting continuous social development, and an important external manifestation of the comprehensive national strength and national vitality of the country. Based on a questionnaire survey of 1560 students, we found that older students, female students, non-only child families, and rural students are more actively involved in sports. To improve the physical health level of college students, efforts can be made to ensure exercise intensity, increase the coverage of physical education courses, vigorously promote the construction of sports clubs, and strengthen the academic linkage between physical health test scores and student awards. To increase the participation rate of college students in sports, we can start by continuing to maintain the development of "lifelong sports" education, increasing the recognition of parents and family members for physical exercise, emphasizing the updating of teaching methods, emphasizing financial support and functional development of sports facilities, and cultivating a strong cultural atmosphere of sports.

## INTRODUCTION

Modern civilization not only brings people full material enjoyment, but also poses new threats to their health. Due to factors such as mental stress, excessive nutrition, lack of exercise, and environmental pollution, non-communicable diseases are spreading globally, and the population in a "sub-healthy state" is constantly expanding. The physical and mental health, physical strength, strong willpower, and vitality of young people are a reflection of the vigorous vitality of a nation, a symbol of social civilization progress, and an important aspect of a country's comprehensive strength. In recent years, students in the age group of 19 to 22 (undergraduate stage) across the country have all experienced a decline in physical fitness indicators such as speed, explosiveness, strength, endurance, and flexibility. In addition, the detection rate of visual impairment among college students is 86.5, which means that the number of "glasses enthusiasts" is constantly expanding, indicating that the decline in physical fitness of college students is still ongoing. The physical health of college students is the foundation of various national undertakings, a favorable driving force for promoting continuous social development, and an important external manifestation of the comprehensive national strength and national vitality of the country.

This study conducted a questionnaire survey on sports participation among 1560 students at Beijing Second Foreign Languages College, in order to provide reference materials for improving the physical health level of students and promoting their sports participation.

**Overall situation:** Sports participation is the behavior of college students participating in sports activities that use physical exercise as the basic means to promote comprehensive physical and mental development. It is the sum of a series of aspects such as sports cognition, emotion, interest, activity participation, participation results, evaluation, etc.

The subjects of this questionnaire survey are freshmen and sophomores, accounting for about 98%. The proportion of male students is 4.49%, while the proportion of female students is 95.51%, which is highly correlated with the proportion of male and female students at Beijing Second Foreign Language Institute. Rural students account for 26.92%, while urban students account for 73.08%. The proportion of only children is 69.87%, while the proportion of non-only children is 30.13%. Beijing International Studies University has implemented a sports club system since 2017, relying on sports teams to form peer guidance, attracting ordinary college students to participate in physical exercise,

carrying out daily activities and training, and selecting outstanding students from the club to join the school team, representing the school in Beijing and even national and international competitions. According to the survey, only 17.31% of students have confidence in their physical condition, indicating that the majority of students have realized that their physical condition is poor. However, the number of people who enjoy sports only accounts for 23.72% of the total number, indicating that the awareness of physical exercise is not deeply rooted in people's hearts, and the role of physical education in education has not been fully utilized. Based on the fact that 92.95% of students have insufficient awareness of their physical fitness, we notice that the majority of students have recognized the fundamental reasons for their poor physical condition, and it is imperative to promote nationwide physical exercise. Through analysis, we found that the number of times students participate in sports activities (excluding physical education classes) is mainly 1-2 times a week and 1-3 times a month, accounting for 62.82%. However, it is worth noting that the proportion of students who choose "not even once" actually reaches 10.9%, indicating that apart from physical education classes, this group of students never participate in sports activities. The duration of each physical activity is concentrated between 0-30 minutes (50%) and 30-60 minutes (36.54%), and this distribution of duration is unsatisfactory.

We designed 11 questions using the Likert Level 5 scale and conducted a survey on students' attitudes (Table 1). After analysis, it was found that the number of students with strong sports participation behavior and awareness accounts for only half of the total number. Some college students believe that their physical fitness is poor and are unwilling to participate in physical education classes and extracurricular sports activities. Some college students believe that the school's sports venue, facilities, and equipment are insufficient to meet their exercise needs; Some college students believe that parents believe that physical exercise is not a "serious matter" and do not support them in engaging in physical exercise. Instead, they demand that they devote more time to studying.

### The impact of different variables on sports participation

**Gender:** In terms of the degree of liking sports, the proportion of boys choosing "like" (71.43%) is significantly higher than that of girls (21.48%). In terms of the frequency of participating in sports activities, boys participating in sports activities more than 3 times a week and 1-3 times a month, respectively, accounting for 42.86% and 28.57%, while girls concentrated in sports activities 1-2 times a week (45.64%) and 1-3 times a month (18.79%). In terms of the duration of each sports activity, boys mainly participated in sports activities for 60-120 minutes (42.86%), while girls spent shorter time, concentrated in sports activities for 0-30 minutes (51.01%). In terms of attitude towards physical exercise, the attitude of different genders are even completely different, but a very interesting situation emerged in this questionnaire survey, which is that girls have a more positive attitude towards physical exercise and sports activities than boys. In terms of attitudes towards sports participation, the proportion of positive responses from girls is generally over 70%, while the proportion of positive responses from boys is generally below 50%, which is very different from traditional inherent thinking.

**Family members:** This study divided the respondents into two types: only children and non-only children. After comparative analysis, the proportion of non-only-children choosing to enjoy sports (31.91%) is much higher than that of only children (20.18%). In terms of the frequency of participating in sports activities, both have the highest proportion of 1-2 times a week, but the proportion of non-only-children (46.81%) is higher than that of only children (42.2%). In terms of the duration of each physical activity, the distribution pattern of the two is consistent and there is no significant difference. It is worth noting that 48.94% of non-only child children believe that physical exercise is "very important", while only 34.86% of only-child children consider this data.

In terms of attitude towards sports participation, the difference between non-only children and only children is even more pronounced. 85.81% of non-only children strongly agree and agree that "participating in physical exercise can provide leisure and a lot of fun", while only 58.72% of only children agree with that. 63.83% of non-only children strongly agree and agree that "sports have enriched my leisure life and are an indispensable part of my life", while only 54.13% of only-child children. This fully shows that the awareness of sports participation of students born in a multi-child family is significantly higher than that of students born in an only-child family, and also confirms the benefits of brothers and sisters in the family for individual sports participation awareness from the side.

**Grade:** A total of 520 freshmen, 1010 sophomores, and 30 seniors participated in this questionnaire survey. The influence of different grades on sports participation is also very significant. For the degree of "liking sports", the highest proportion of fourth-year students is 100%, followed by first-year students at 28.85%; In terms of participating in sports activities, 66.67% of senior students, 15.38% of freshmen, and 6.93% of sophomores participate at least three times a week. The extreme option of "not doing it once" accounts for the highest proportion among freshmen, reaching 13.46%, indicating that their sports are relatively irregular and still require strengthened management and unified requirements to develop towards a more balanced direction. In terms of the duration of each physical activity, most senior students are in the optimal range of 60-120 minutes; sophomore students are concentrated in 30-60 minutes, and freshman students are concentrated in 0-30 minutes. This indicates that as grades increase, the duration of physical exercise shows an increasing trend.

In terms of attitude towards sports participation, the proportion of senior students who show positive evaluations is significantly higher than that of other grades, which confirms that after four years of the college experience, students have gradually formed their own understanding of the importance of sports exercise and participation, and have laid a good foundation for the practice of the concept of "lifelong sports".

**Geography:** This study distinguished student groups from different regions, divided into "urban" and "rural" groups. After analysis, it was found that different regions also have a significant impact on the understanding and practice of sports participation.

Table 1. Student Attitude Statistics (%)

	Strongly agree	agree	general	disagree	strongly disagree
Participating in physical exercise can be a way to relax and find a lot of fun	32.05	34.62	28.85	3.21	1.28
I enjoy sports competitions, games, and other activities in class, which can bring me excitement and stimulation	19.87	33.33	32.69	10.26	3.85
At present, I am in good physical condition, disease-free, and do not need to engage in physical exercise	3.85	3.85	24.36	50.64	17.31
Sport has enriched my leisure life and it is an indispensable part of my life	17.95	39.1	34.62	5.77	2.56
Through sports activities, I have experienced the joy that sports bring to me and enjoy it tirelessly	16.03	31.41	38.46	10.9	3.21
I can persist in completing the tasks assigned by the teacher in physical education class, no matter how hard or tiring it may be	12.82	43.59	34.62	7.05	1.92
The sports facilities in the school are particularly limited and very rudimentary, making it difficult to participate in physical exercise	7.69	21.15	35.9	31.41	3.85
I have a low level of physical activity and am worried about making a fool of myself in front of my classmates, so I try not to show myself in physical education classes	5.77	19.23	41.03	26.92	7.05
There's no need to invest too much energy in physical education classes, as long as you pass the exam	2.56	7.05	28.21	49.36	12.82
I really enjoy sports, but I lack the environment and atmosphere for sports, so I have no choice but to do something else	7.69	30.77	29.49	26.28	5.77
My parents always remind me to have as little time as possible for sports activities and to make more use of my time for studying	3.21	7.69	10.9	41.67	36.54

The degree of interest in sports among urban students (21.93%) is lower than that in rural areas (28.57%), and the distribution pattern of "participating in sports activities" is basically consistent. However, it is worth noting that the proportion of "not doing it once" in urban and rural areas has reached 8.77% and 16.67% respectively, indicating a long way to go in promoting sports activities. In terms of the duration of each physical activity, the duration of rural students are significantly shorter than that of urban students. The proportion of rural students concentrated in "0-30 minutes" (59.52%) is significantly higher than urban students (46.49%). In the statistical period of "60-120 minutes", the proportion (7.14%) is much lower than that of urban students (13.16%). This indicates that rural students may be affected by a series of factors such as hardware facilities and social environment, causing the inability to develop a habit of continuous long-term exercise. However, it is interesting that rural students and urban students exhibit different characteristics in their attitude towards sports participation. Taking the statement that "participating in physical exercise can provide leisure and a lot of fun" as an example, the proportion of rural students who "strongly agree" reaches 42.86%, while urban students only have 28.07%. This indicates that rural students are very willing to participate in physical exercise, but may not be able to participate in physical exercise normally due to various objective factors. As for the statement that "enriching one's leisure life is an indispensable part of my life", 26.19% of rural students strongly agree, while only 14.91% of urban students, which further confirms the previous statement.

**Whether participated in sports clubs or not:** In terms of the degree of liking sports, the proportion of students who participate in sports clubs (100%) is significantly higher than that of students who do not participate (80.95%), and the frequency of participating in sports activities outside of class is also significantly higher than that of students who do not participate in sports clubs. In addition, there is an absolute advantage in the duration of sports activities: students who participate in sports clubs for only 30-60 minutes can better experience the joy of sports exercise and enjoy the sense of achievement and excitement brought by the exercise process. Students who do not participate in sports clubs tend to spend less than 30 minutes and feel poor in their sports experience,

unwilling to challenge higher difficulty physical exercise tasks.

## CONCLUSION

The survey results show that the tendency of college students to participate in sports has the following characteristics:

- The level of awareness and love of sports among college students increases with grade, while the proportion of students who never participate in sports activities decreases with grade;
- Female students have a significantly more positive attitude towards physical exercise than male students, which subverts the traditional impression that "men love sports more than women";
- Family members have a profound impact on the participation of college students in sports, and the proportion of students born from non-only-child families who enjoy sports is much higher than that of only-child families;
- Geography has a significant impact on the participation of college students in sports. Urban students have a lower level of interest in sports than rural students, but they have a significant advantage in exercise duration.

## Suggestion

In response to the declining physical health level of college students year by year, it is recommended to focus on physical education classes and extracurricular activities to improve their physical health level. The main measures include:

- Physical education compulsory courses for lower grade students (freshmen and sophomores) ensure a certain level of exercise intensity, with a focus on improving the exercise content of students' cardiovascular function. At the same time, quality exercise items that reflect students' cardiovascular function will be included in the exam content, and the weight of exam scores will be adjusted appropriately. Strengthen the integration of in class and out

of class, and gradually increase the proportion of process assessment and evaluation;

- Increase the coverage of physical education courses, scientifically plan undergraduate physical education courses, implement a sports credit operation mechanism with full coverage of physical education courses for four years, and meet the needs of students' sports interests;
- Carry out a variety of student mass sports activities, vigorously promote the construction of sports clubs, fully utilize the influence of peers, and mobilize students to participate in sports and exercise actively.
- Strengthen the promotion of physical health testing work, implement the regulations of the Ministry of Education, and link the test results with student evaluations, awards, and other academic achievements.

In response to a series of related phenomena and problems in the participation of college students in sports, it is recommended to develop relevant countermeasures tailored to the school and individual. The main measures include:

- Continue to promote lifelong physical education, innovate physical education teaching and extracurricular physical exercise programs, integrate education with entertainment, and drive students to discover the joy of sports.
- Increase the recognition of parents and family members towards physical exercise. Parents and family members are significantly correlated with the participation rate of college students in sports activities. Therefore, we should fully integrate family strength into the physical education of college students, draw attention from families, and further improve the participation rate of college students in sports.
- Physical education teachers should attach importance to updating teaching methods, designing different teaching objectives and plans based on the different foundations and levels of different students; truly achieve "teaching according to aptitude" and "teaching according to interests"; strengthen the cultivation of students' awareness of sports participation, let every student truly experience the fun and value of sports, and activate the enthusiasm of college students to participate in sports.
- Pay attention to the funding support and functional development of sports venues, facilities, and equipment to meet the growing needs of students for physical exercise. At the same time, make full use of campus cultural promotion as a means to lay a solid foundation for cultivating a strong sports culture and further improve students' participation in sports.

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