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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MENTAL HEALTH BETWEEN PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND NON PHYSICAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The importance of diverse kinds of physical bodily function, physical exertion and sports for the promotion of health in general and mental wellness in particular has been punctuated by the diverse researchers. Therefore, with the intent to compare the mental health status of physical education (PE) and non-physical education (NPE) students' present study was structured. Forty (40) students (twenty (20) PE and twenty (20) NPE) of Lucknow University, Lucknow were taken as the subjects of the work. The age of the sample ranged from 17 to 26. PE students were those who are undergoing B.P.Ed and M.P.ED course and NPE students were those who are studying in undergraduate and postgraduate at Lucknow University, Lucknow. Mental health checklist (MHC) constructed by Kumar (1992) was used to measure the mental health status of the subjects. MHC is a self administering inventory and it was administered individually to the students in their respective classrooms. Grading was performed according to the direction given in the examination manual. The t-test was applied to compare the base grade of PE students and NPE students on mental health. The results of the study indicated that there was significant difference exists between PE students and NPE students at the 0.05 level of significance. NPE students scored higher than the PE students on mental health, which demonstrate PE students having a sound state of mental health in comparison with NPE students. The result of the study suggested that PE students possess a good mental health status.



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KEYWORDS: Physical education students, non-physical education students, mental health.

INTRODUCTION

Mental health is an index which shows the extent to which the person has been able to meet his/her environmental demands it may be social, emotional or physical. However, when an individual finds himself/herself trapped in a situation he/she does not have effective coping strategies to deal with it effectively, consequently he/she gets himself/herself mentally strained. This mental strain is generally reflected in symptoms like anxiety, tension, restlessness or hopelessness among others.. Mental health, therefore, should not be confused with mental illness; it is a study of pre-illness mental condition of the person (Kumar, 1992).

Rani, Malik & Thapa, (2012). The concept of mental health is equally old as human beings. In recent years clinical psychologists as well as educationists have started paying proper attention to the field of mental wellness. Yet, in India, relatively very little study has been conducted.

Kumar, (1992). Mental health, thus, should not be confused with mental illness; it is a subject area of pre-illness, mental condition of the person. Mental health, as such, stands for a psychic condition which is characterized by mental peace, harmony and content. It dishes out with adaptation problems at every level of lifespan.

The importance of various forms of physical activity, exercise and sports for the promotion of health in general and mental health in particular has been emphasized by the recent researchers (Edwards, Ngcobo, Edwards & Palavar, 2005; Fox, 2000; Edwards, 2003).

Honari, Heidary, Moradi & Emami, (2011). Fitness is effective in providing health as well as wellbeing, and it is considered the most important factor to such an extent that even also affects people on the mental aspect. Physical activity and exercise are considered to have an important role in health and fitness improvement and disease prevention.

Research results indicated that participation in physical bodily function can reduce psychological problems such as anxiety and depression, while those who perform less



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physical activity suffer from psychological problems such as depression and anxiety (Eshraghi, Kashef & Mehri, 2012; Pourranjbar, Poursoltani, Khodadadi & Ghorbanzadeh, 2012; Honari et al. 2011).

In today's era, the value of physical activity and utilization program for all strata of the society, especially for students who are perpetually required in mental actions and own significant roles in the future of the company is absolved. It has been reported in various studies that participation in physical activity not only has an important role in more efficient use of leisure time, but also it decreases anxiety, depression and boring feelings and causes cheerfulness in students (Honari et al., 2011; Arabameri, Ahsani, Dekhoda & Saiah, 2010).

Physical activity and sports are one of the strategies to cope up excess stress caused by mental load and inactivity. So far, in the studies about mental health, just few psychic issues have been investigated (Eshraghi et al., 2012; Pourranjbar et al., 2012; Rani et al., 2012; Honari et al., 2011; Edwards et al., 2005), while it is well known that inactivity, in addition to affecting psychological aspects, has significant effects. Therefore, investigating mental health in student population of our country is one of the issues requiring special attention.

Mental health status of students is one of the significant topics in any university and its purposeful and regular evaluation should be seen by all custodians and researchers. By considering this topic, descriptive presentation of PE and NPE students' mental health condition is possible.

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this work is to compare the mental health status of PE students and NPE students.

SUBJECTS

A total of forty students (twenty (20) PE and twenty (20) NPE) of Lucknow University, Lucknow



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METHODS AND MATERIALS

The subjects of the study. The age of the selected subjects was ranged from 17 to 25 years of age. For the purpose of this study PE students were those who are undergoing B.P.Ed and M.P.Ed course in Lucknow University, Lucknow and NPE students were those who were studying in graduates (B.A, B.sc and B.com) and postgraduates (M.A, M.sc and M.com) course at Lucknow University, Lucknow and don't have any participation in any form of physical activity or sports events.

TOOLS

A 'Mental health checklist' (MHC) constructed by Kumar (1992) was used to measure the mental health status of the subjects. The MHC consisted 11 items with a 4 point Likhert scale. A numerical value of 1, 2, 3, and 4 was assigned to the 4 response categories. The total scores vary from 11 to 44 showing the highest to lowest (poorest) mental health status of persons. A high score on MHC is indicative of poor mental health level.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

To compare the mental health status between PE students and NPE students, the independent t-trial was given between the average scores of both study groups. Further the level of significance was set at level of 0.05. The statistical analysis was performed with the help of SPSS (V-16) software.

RESULTS

The scores of the mental health status were analyzed to determine any significant difference that might exist between PE students and NPE students and the result is presented in the following table 1.

Table 1: Mean comparison between physical education students and non-physical education students on mental health

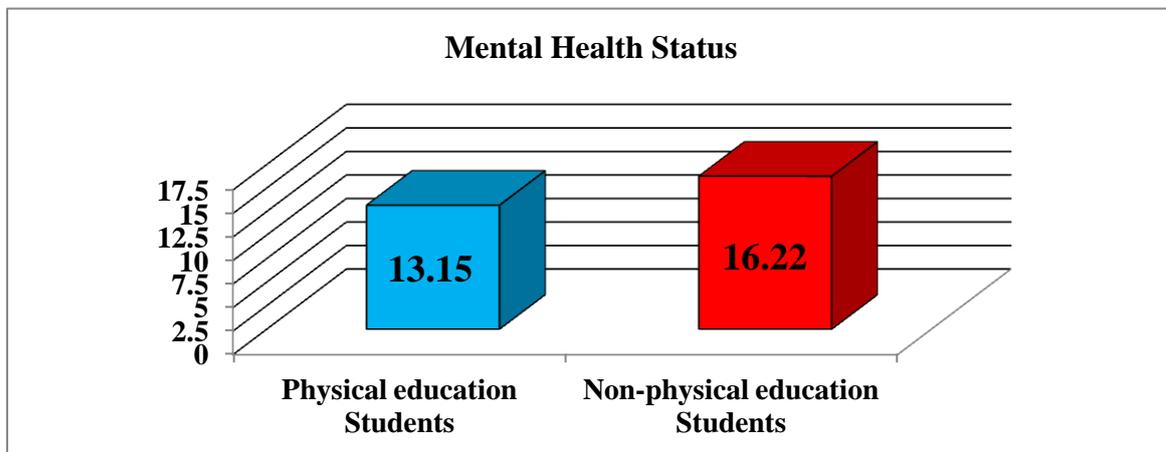


Students	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> value
Physical Education	20	13.15	2.18	3.38*
Non-physical Education	20	16.22	2.59	

*Significant at $p < 0.05$

Tabulated $t_{0.05} (38) = 2.01$

Figure 1: Mean comparison of physical education students and non-physical education students on their mental health status



The result of this study revealed that there is substantial conflict exists between PE students and NPE students in their mental health condition. The mean score (16.22) of NPE students was higher than the mean score (13.15) of PE students which indicates that the mental status of PE students is better than NPE students.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to compare the mental health status of the PE students and NPE students. From the results it is attributed that there was a significant difference found between both study groups on mental health status. As we know participation in physical



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activity and sports programs helps us to cope up with the psychological stresses (Honari et al., 2011), which ultimately results in better mental health status.

In this study, we have investigated PE and NPE students. The course of PE is designed in such a manner, in which the students who undergoing this course, having a basic knowledge of sports, as well as participation in sports is required to get admission in this course. Means those who are undergoing this course are definitely involved in physical activity and exercise programs. The other study group (NPE students) was those students who don't have any involvement or exposure of sports or physical activity programs. Consequently, the degree of their mental health cannot equate with the PE students. The findings of this study also prove this fact.

Several researchers like Erickson (1936), Hurlock (1972) have expressed their view in a similar tone. The value of various forms of physical activity, exercise and sport for the promotion of health in general and mental health in particular has been emphasized by the recent researchers too (Edwards et al., 2005; Fox, 2000; Edwards, 2003).

Physical activity and exercise are considered to have an important role in health and fitness improvement and disease prevention (Honari et al., 2011).

The findings of our study are in line with the findings of several contemporary researchers such as Rani et al., (2012) who studied the mental health of sports and non-sports senior secondary school students and reported on their findings that sports persons possesses good state of mental health.

Pourranjbar et al., (2012) also reported the same type of results as they compared athlete and non-athlete students in Kerman University of medical sciences on their general health status.

CONCLUSION

Within the limits and limitations of the study following conclusions may be drawn:-

- There was significant difference exists between the PE and NPE students in their mental health status.



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- The mental health status of PE students is better than NPE students.

At least on the basis of obtained results it is suggested that we have take part in any form of physical activity on a regular basis to have a good state of mental health. It will keep us free from any form of anxiety, stress and tension in our daily

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