

Realization of the Purposes of Affective (Emotional) Domain of Physical Education among Male High School Students

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Abstract

Background: Training the emotional domain through physical activities and movement is considered a novel approach. Physical education offers numerous opportunities for students to engage with educational goals, making it one of the most effective methods or teaching tools for developing emotional awareness. This study investigates the realization of the affective (emotional) domain objectives in physical education among male high school students.

Methods: The research was conducted using a field-based, descriptive method. The measurement tool employed was an attitude scale developed by the researcher specifically for physical education, with confirmed validity and reliability. The statistical population consisted of male high school students in Yazd, with a sample of 380 participants.

Results: The study's findings indicated that the mean and standard deviation of the participants' responses to the physical education attitude scale reflect their levels of interest and attention toward the physical education course. According to the results, questions 8 (failure to observe general safety principles) and 15 (failure to comply with rules and regulations) had the lowest mean scores (3 and 3.1), highlighting challenges in these areas. In contrast, question 16 (respect for elders) received the highest mean score (4.6), demonstrating its significance and importance to students. Moreover, the results of the chi-square analysis showed that the observed number of participants in the high and low groups compared to the expected number (161) was significantly different ($\chi^2(1, 381) = 272.9, P < 0.001$), with an effect size of 0.72. These results indicate that the emotional (attitudinal) development goal of physical education has been effectively achieved among the students fostering a positive attitude toward physical education.

Conclusion: Consequently, it is recommended that educators continue to prioritize the emotional aspects of physical education and implement necessary measures to further support this objective.

Key Words: Affective Goals, Emotional Development, High School, Physical Education, Students.

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1- INTRODUCTION

One of the most important goals of education is the holistic development of children, adolescents, and young people. Many factors play a significant role in their growth and education, including the role of physical education and sports, and their impact on children, adolescents, and young people (1).

Considering that the best time for talent development is childhood, and one of the most effective tools for this development is physical education, it becomes evident that schools are the most suitable setting for these activities (2). If special attention is given to physical education in schools, and programs are properly developed by authorities based on existing conditions, society will undoubtedly achieve the fundamental objectives of physical education. Recent studies have emphasized that early involvement in structured physical education improves not only physical but also emotional and social development (3, 4).

Al-Farabi, in his book, *Ethics*, stated: "Ethics and its cultivation are considered the foundation of individual and collective perfection, and this foundation is completed through physical education" (5). Similarly, Ibn Sina discussed the school curriculum, saying that "The school program for eight years will consist of learning languages, religious education, Quranic studies, poetry that conveys noble manners and morals, sports, arts, and crafts" (6). To maintain balance, a child should not spend all their time on studies until the age of fourteen; rather, part of their time should be devoted to sports, and at times, they should be free to engage in activities of their own choice." Durkheim also believed that the aim of education should be the advancement of certain physical, intellectual, and moral states in children, preparing them for life in a political society (7, 8).

In education, the goal is to develop various dimensions of the personality of children, adolescents, and young people in all physical, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects. Physical education is considered one of the most important responsibilities of the educational system, and serious attention is given to planning for this important matter (9). Students make up a significant portion of our society, and addressing their issues and concerns is of great importance since substantial resources are spent on their education and training to prepare them for responsibilities in the future society (3). A proper and comprehensive physical education program, alongside other educational programs, can contribute to the physical and mental health of students during their school years and even into adulthood, while also preventing many deficiencies and disorders (10). Today, physical education is an essential and inseparable part of the individual and social life of many communities and nations around the world (11). Physical education plays a crucial and vital role in human life by strengthening and developing various dimensions of humans in areas such as beliefs, thoughts, physical abilities, skills, emotions, culture, and society. Its main goals include maintaining health, individual and public hygiene, physical growth and strength, defensive preparedness, achieving joy and happiness, and success in professional and occupational tasks (7, 12).

However, practical evidence shows that due to the lack of a positive outlook, educational challenges, insufficient resources, and inadequate educational environments, the essential foundation that ensures the health and well-being of future generations has not been properly implemented. If solutions are not found, we will naturally fall short of producing a healthy, energetic, and active generation (9).

The goals of physical education include the desired outcomes obtained from participating in a comprehensive and logical program. The four traditional goals of physical education—physical development, neuromuscular development, cognitive development, and emotional (affective) development—were once the foundation of school programs for students (13). These four goals of physical education and sports are instrumental in shaping a well-rounded and balanced individual who becomes a valuable asset to society (3). Although discussions regarding the goals of physical education may differ, these goals can generally be classified into four categories: physical, neuromuscular, cognitive, and emotional (affective). The emotional development goal is a broad concept that encompasses emotional, affective, and social growth (7).

The necessity of physical education in schools is not limited to physical aspects; it also has cognitive and social benefits (3). Moreover, comprehensive growth in the physical, mental, intellectual, moral, and emotional dimensions of individuals, which are the essential goals of physical education, has not been given the attention it deserves (10).

Additionally, the programs organized by the Ministry of Education's Department of Physical Education, which aim to achieve desirable educational goals, are not properly implemented in some schools (7). Currently, the objectives of physical education programs at the elementary level are not being satisfactorily achieved, which leads to weaknesses in program execution at the secondary level and a failure to meet the overall goals of physical education in schools (14). Physical education has strayed from its primary goal of helping individuals reach their full potential. Extensive research is needed to address these issues in the context of physical education in schools (9).

The state of sports in secondary schools, in terms of facilities, equipment, and resources, shows that while human resources are deemed sufficient, the evaluation of the facilities and equipment is unfavorable, and the execution of physical education programs is inadequate. The interest and abilities of students are somewhat satisfactory (12).

Studies examining the implementation of physical education programs in schools reveal numerous weaknesses. The reality is that physical education suffers from many shortcomings and does not receive the necessary attention and value it deserves. As a result, its impact is insufficient and short-lived. Most physical education activities are focused on competitive training, involving only a limited number of students, while the fundamental objectives of physical education are being neglected (3).

The educational goals of physical education in elementary schools have been achieved at a skill level (above average), and no significant difference was observed between students' skills and attitudes (15). Increasing the interaction between teachers and students and enhancing the educational and training levels of physical education skills leads to greater physical activity in physical education classes. Increased physical activity in these classes results in positive outcomes in all aspects of students' future lives (5).

Providing activities in the form of various movements and games promotes independence, self-confidence, and personal and social self-esteem in students (3).

Therefore, in this article, we aim to examine the "realization of the affective goals of physical education in male high school students in Yazd, Iran" and determine whether these affective goals have been achieved?

2- MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research, in terms of location, is field-based, and in terms of objective, it is an applied research study. The method used is descriptive.

2-1. Sampling and population

The statistical population of the research includes all male high school students in Yazd, totaling 39,387 individuals.

The sample size, according to the Morgan-Krejcic Table (1970), is 380 individuals. Based on the distribution of individuals in the statistical population, eight schools were randomly selected using a cluster sampling method. Then, students from both the first and second levels of high school and different grade levels were randomly sampled. After visiting the schools, the attitude scale for the physical education class was administered (16).

2-2. Procedure

In line with the research objective, the data collection tool is a researcher-made attitude scale for the physical education class, focusing on emotional and affective aspects of the affective domain. It consists of 24 attitudinal statements measured on a five-point Likert scale (from very low to very high), covering topics such as emotional control, sacrifice, honesty, respect for rules, and more.

2-3. Validity and Reliability

The validity of the research tool was discussed in several meetings with experts in the fields of physical education and educational research, assessing to what extent the tool measures the critical aspects of the research objectives. With input from the experts, the content validity of the tool was deemed satisfactory and confirmed. The reliability of the test was determined using internal consistency through the split-half method (even-odd) and Cronbach's alpha coefficient. It was randomly tested on 40 individuals, and the

reliability coefficients from the split-half method and Cronbach's alpha were 0.90 and 0.83, respectively, indicating a high and acceptable reliability coefficient.

2-4. Data analysis

Descriptive indicators (mean and standard deviation) for each of the items on the attitude scale were calculated. To answer the research questions, the data were analyzed using non-parametric inferential statistics, specifically the chi-square test (χ^2).

3- RESULTS

The descriptive indicators (mean and standard deviation) of the participants' responses to each of the statements in the physical education attitude scale are presented in Table 1.

The analysis of the participants' responses on various aspects of their attitudes toward physical education in schools reveals the following trends:

a) Punctuality and Participation: The participants indicated a high level of punctual attendance and full participation in class exercises, with mean scores of 4.4 and 4.2, respectively. The consistency in their effort to improve and correctly perform physical fitness exercises is also reflected with mean scores of 4.2 across these statements.

b) Safety and Hygiene: Students demonstrated significant compliance with individual safety rules (mean = 4.2) and attention to personal hygiene by wearing clean sports clothes (mean = 4.3). However, non-compliance with general safety rules in the classroom had a relatively lower score (mean = 3.0), suggesting potential areas for improvement in observing safety protocols.

c) Teacher Interaction and Instruction: Following teacher instructions and maintaining a warm-up routine were well-practiced, with high mean scores (4.2 and

4.0). Cooperation in sports activities also received high participation, indicated by a mean score of 4.0.

d) Emotional and Social Development: Participants showed strong emotional control (mean = 3.7), respect for elders (mean = 4.6), and adherence to values like honesty and truthfulness (mean = 4.3). Social behaviors such as sacrifice and selflessness were also well-rated (mean = 4.0).

e) Leisure and Self-Esteem: The use of sports activities during leisure time had a

mean score of 3.9, and there was generally strong support for Islamic and human values (mean = 4.0). However, there was moderate attention given to physical fitness (mean = 3.3), indicating that students might not prioritize fitness as much as other aspects.

f) Negative Behaviors: Interestingly, negative behaviors like non-compliance with rules and regulations received a low mean score of 3.1, which indicates that most students generally adhered to expected classroom standards.

Table-1: Mean and SD of participants' responses to the statements in the physical education attitude scale

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation
Punctual attendance in physical education class	4.4	0.9
Full participation in class exercises	4.2	0.8
Effort to correctly perform physical fitness exercises	4.2	0.8
Effort to improve physical fitness	4.2	0.9
Effort to correctly perform skills in class exercises	4.2	0.8
Effort to improve personal sports skills	4.2	0.9
Effort to follow individual safety rules in physical education class (personal sports equipment)	4.2	0.9
Non-compliance with general safety rules in physical education class (environment and equipment)	3.0	1.4
Wearing sports clothes	4.1	1.1
Observing cleanliness and hygiene of sports clothes	4.3	0.8
Following the teacher's instructions in physical education class	4.2	1.0
Warming up the body completely before starting exercises	4.0	1.0
Cooperation and participation in sports activities	4.0	1.0
Performing responsibilities in sports activities	3.7	1.1
Non-compliance with rules and regulations	3.1	1.5
Respect for elders	4.6	0.7
Controlling one's emotions	3.7	1.0
Sacrifice and selflessness	4.0	1.0
Honesty and truthfulness	4.3	0.9
Lack of attention to physical fitness	3.3	1.4
Support for Islamic and human values	4.0	1.1
Having humility and modesty	4.0	1.0
Using sports activities during leisure time	3.9	1.2
Attention to the teacher's instructions in physical education class	4.2	0.9

Now, has the goal of emotional (affective) development in physical education been achieved among students? According to

Table 2, the difference between the observed numbers in the high and low groups and the expected number is 161.

Table-2: Results of the chi-square analysis of the physical education attitude scale

Groups	Observed Number	Expected Number	Difference	Chi-Square Test	Degrees of Freedom
Low	29	190	-161	272.9	1
High	351	190	161	-	-

These results indicate that the difference in sample proportions from the hypothesized values (i.e., 0.50 each group) is significant, with $P < 0.001$ and $\chi^2(1, 381) = 272.9$. The effect size of 0.72 shows the deviation of the observed frequencies from the expected frequencies, confirming that the goal of emotional (affective) development in physical education has been achieved among the students.

4- DISCUSSION

This research aimed to determine whether the emotional (affective) development goals of physical education have been achieved among male high school students in Yazd. The findings revealed that the observed proportions of students with positive attitudes towards physical education were significantly higher than the hypothesized proportions ($P < 0.001$, $\chi^2(1, 380) = 273.9$). The large effect size (0.72) indicates a substantial deviation of the observed frequencies from the expected frequencies, confirming that the emotional development objectives in physical education have been successfully met. This outcome supports the notion that physical education contributes not only to the physical but also to the emotional and social development of students.

4-1. Comparing with Previous Research

In Salehi Omran's research, it was found that the educational objectives of physical education in elementary schools were largely achieved, particularly in terms of emotional and psychological growth. This aligns with our findings, which show that

emotional development has been successfully integrated into the physical education curriculum among high school students as well. However, our study extends the findings by demonstrating that emotional development remains a key objective even at the high school level, reinforcing the value of continued physical education throughout a student's academic journey. Both studies highlight that emotional skills such as self-esteem, social cooperation, and empathy are key outcomes of a well-structured physical education program (17).

Behzadpour and Mousapour's study focused on physical fitness and motor skills in secondary school students, concluding that while physical development was emphasized, emotional and social aspects were somewhat overlooked. Our study, however, shows that emotional development is not only achievable but has become a primary focus in modern physical education programs. This divergence may reflect changes in curriculum priorities and educational approaches over the last two decades. In particular, our findings demonstrate that emotional intelligence, self-control, and social awareness are now more systematically incorporated into physical education (18).

Dudley (2012) focused on the physical activity levels and movement skills taught in secondary school physical education, finding a positive correlation between physical activity and emotional well-being. Similar to our results, Dudley emphasized

that increased physical activity led to improvements in students' emotional health, particularly in areas such as self-esteem, social interaction, and stress reduction. Both studies show that physical education provides a platform not only for improving physical fitness but also for fostering emotional stability and social cooperation among students (19).

Hemmati Nejad's research, conducted in the early 1990s, highlighted several challenges in the implementation of physical education programs in secondary schools, particularly the lack of attention to emotional and social development. In contrast, our study shows significant progress in these areas, suggesting that modern physical education programs are now more holistic. This difference can be attributed to the evolution of education systems, where the emotional domain of learning has gained more prominence in recent years. Our study emphasizes the role of emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills, areas that were less emphasized in earlier curricula (20).

Eskandari's study examined the curriculum and implementation of physical education programs in secondary schools, concluding that while the physical aspects of education were prioritized, emotional and social development were often neglected. Our findings, however, demonstrate that these aspects have now been integrated successfully into the curriculum. This suggests that there has been a shift towards a more balanced approach in physical education, focusing not only on physical fitness but also on developing emotional and social competencies. This shift is likely due to the growing recognition of the importance of emotional intelligence in educational outcomes and long-term well-being (21).

4-2. Analysis of Emotional Development

The high proportion of positive attitudes toward the emotional aspects of physical

education, such as self-control, cooperation, and respect for rules, confirms the success of the programs in achieving emotional development goals. Emotional development in education is critical for students' holistic growth. It prepares them for real-world challenges by teaching them how to manage their emotions, cooperate with peers, and act responsibly in social settings. Our study shows that physical education plays a key role in this process by providing structured opportunities for students to engage in physical activity, while simultaneously cultivating essential emotional skills such as empathy, emotional regulation, and social awareness.

4-3. Implications for Future Curriculum Development

Given the importance of emotional development in student success, the findings of this study suggest that schools should continue to emphasize the emotional aspects of physical education. Teachers should receive training to further integrate emotional intelligence into their lesson plans, focusing on developing students' self-esteem, teamwork, and emotional regulation. Additionally, the results indicate that physical education programs need to remain adaptable, ensuring that they continue to meet the evolving needs of students in both physical and emotional domains (22, 23).

4-4. Strengths and limitations of the study

While the results of this study are promising, there are limitations that should be addressed in future research. The study focused on male high school students in one city, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future studies should consider including a more diverse sample, both in terms of geography and gender, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of emotional development in physical education.

5- CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the emotional (affective) development objectives in physical education have been achieved among male high school students in Yazd. The findings align with several previous studies while also providing new insights into the growing importance of emotional intelligence in modern physical education programs. The success of these programs in promoting emotional well-being, cooperation, and self-regulation highlights the critical role that physical education plays in the holistic development of students. As the educational landscape continues to evolve, it is essential for educators and policymakers to ensure that emotional development remains a central goal of physical education, preparing students for both academic and life success.

6- AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

All authors have participated in the conception of the study as well as in the analysis and interpretation of data, elaboration, or critical reviews of the report; and they have read and approved the final version of the manuscript. The authors confirm that there are no concerns of financial involvement with organizations, entities, or individuals with an interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in the manuscript, and no conflict of interest.

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