

# Risk taking Behavior and Mental Health among Physical Education Students

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The study sought to determine the risk taking behaviour and mental health among physical education students. The sample consisted of 100 early adults (physical education students), 50 boys and 50 girls. Different statistical techniques were used to obtain the data. The method of selection was purposive sampling method from different institutions in Kerala. Risk taking behaviour and mental health were calculated by using the questionnaires of risk taking behaviour and mental health profile. Statistical techniques such as t test, ANOVA, Scheffe's post hoc tests and coefficient of correlation were used for the analysis of data. The findings illustrate that there is a relation between risk taking behaviour and mental health and different variables affect the risk taking behaviour and mental health in physical education students.*

**Key words;** Risk taking behaviour, mental health

## **Introduction**

Bucher (1972) proposed that physical education is an integral part of the total education process, is a field of endeavor that aim the development of physically, mentally, emotionally and socially fit citizens through the medium of physical activities that have been selected with view to realizing these outcomes. It is the education for the holistic development of the personality of an individual through physical activity, which is practiced in an organized manner and controlled by a specialist, is a useful way to reduce sedentary lifestyles and stress levels. To obtain an optimum physical well being, one requires focusing not only the body but also the mind and emotions. Daily physical activities results in the proper growth and

maintenance of health. The vast majority of studies show evidence of positive associations of physical activity in physical and mental health measures.

The objectives of physical education are to develop human personality in its totality. It includes physical fitness, social efficiency, and cultural development, recreational and intellectual. Practicing physical activity in adolescence reduces the probability of presenting episodes of depression, difficulty sleeping, anxiety, loneliness, antisocial behavior, emotional problems and hyperactivity. The mental objectives of physical education are knowledge and understanding of rules, strategy and etiquette of various activities.

Risk taking is any consciously or non-consciously controlled behaviour with a perceived uncertainty about its outcome, and/or about its possible benefits or costs for the physical, economic or psycho-social well-being of oneself or others (Trimpop, 1994). The concept of risk has been a concern of human beings from the earliest days of recorded history and most likely even before that. A major motivating force for risk taking has been identified as positive emotional experiences. Many risk taking situations, such as driving in a car, walking on uneven surfaces, or talking about important issues incorporate appraisals, schemata, and behaviours are the threshold of consciousness. The fear of failing to achieve personal goals would offer the motivation to be more cautious and control the personal environment. Risk taking behaviour is inevitable, essential to evolution and, therefore, at least in part genetically determined, while different ways of expressing risk taking behaviour are environmentally determined. Considering the lack of research on risk-taking behavior during young adulthood, the current study focused on this age group specifically.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as “a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.” The WHO stresses that mental health “is not just the absence of mental disorder.” Mental health is crucial for the well being and functioning of individuals. Mental health involves self esteem, autonomy, emotional stability and social competence. Without one being mentally healthy, one cannot function effectively. Good mental health is an important resource for individuals, families, communities, and nations. Mental health, as a inseparable part of general health, contributes to the functions of society, and has an effect large on productivity.

## **Need and significance of the present study**

The present study focuses upon risk taking behavior and mental health of physical education students. Risk taking behavior is referred as any consciously or non-consciously controlled behavior with a perceived uncertainty about its outcome, and/or about its possible benefits or costs for the physical, economic or psycho-social well-being of oneself or others. Risk taking behavior is harmful to society. Early adults are more susceptible category to make risk taking behaviors (Poldrack, 2011). so the studies related to risk taking behavior is very essential in our society.

Mental health refers to our cognitive, behavioral, and emotional wellbeing it is all about how we think, feel, and behave. Mental health is crucial for the well-being and functioning of individuals. Without one being mentally healthy, one cannot function effectively. Good mental health is an important resource for individuals, families, communities, and nations. The lack of attention to the mental health of adolescent may lead to mental disorders with lifelong consequences, complications with health matters, and reduces the capacity of the individual and society to the safe productive. For a better tomorrow, the study of mental health will be a very good initiative.

The population, physical education is selected because, today physical education is not considered by most of the academicians in the right perspective and the most of the educational community ignores its values. There is so much psychosocial problems are reported that are faced by physical education students. The majority of physical education students are coming from below average families and there is no any special concern for them. Physical education not being delivered or delivered without quality, insufficient time allocation, lack of competent qualified and inadequately trained teachers, inadequate provision of facilities and equipment and teaching materials, large class sizes. These challenges affect the mental health of students.

## **Definition of Key terms**

### **Physical Education**

Physical education, an integral part of the total education process, is a field of endeavor that aim the development of physically, mentally, emotionally and socially

fit citizens through the medium of physical activities that have been selected with view to realizing these outcomes Bucher (1972).

### **Early adulthood**

Early adulthood is also called young adulthood is a stage of life between 18 and 34 years, when grownups become more independent and explore different life possibilities. It also refers to young adulthood stage in Erik Erikson's model between early and middle adulthood.

### **Risk Taking Behavior**

Risky behaviour or risk-taking behaviour is defined as any consciously or non consciously controlled behaviour with a perceived uncertainty about its outcome, and/or about its possible benefits, or costs for the physical, economic or psycho-social well-being of oneself or others (Trimpop 1994).

### **Mental Health**

A state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community (WHO, 2015). The WHO stresses that mental health "is not just the absence of mental disorder."

### **Objective**

To find out the significant relationship between self-esteem, autonomy, emotional stability, social competence and risk taking behaviour in physical education students

### **Hypothesis**

There will be significant relationship between self-esteem, autonomy, emotional stability, social competence and risk taking behaviour in physical education students.

### **Method**

#### **Sample**

The study was conducted on 100 participants (physical education students). The sample method used was non probability sampling. The participants were selected from SreeSankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, Ernakulum and Christ College Irinjalakkuda, Thrissur.

#### **Tools used**

Personal Data Sheet

#### **Risk taking behaviour**

The risk taking behaviour (RT – 18) was developed by de Haan et al, (2011). The RT-18 comprises 18 dichotomous yes/no statements with two subscale of nine items each

- risk-taking & risk assessment. A high score on the risk-taking subscale reflects a high level of actual risk-taking behaviour of an individual and a high score on the risk assessment subscale indicates a low level or less consideration of possible consequences.

### **Mental Health Profile**

Mental Health Profile was developed by Vanajakumari and H. Sam Sananda Raj (1995). It was used to measure the variable of mental health. The test contains 40 items and it is divided into four subsets, each having 10 items. The first subsets measure self-esteem, second subset measures autonomy, third measures emotional stability, and the fourth subset measures social competence.

### **Procedure**

Permission to conduct the study was taken from the concerned authority of the colleges. Rapport was established with the participants, and informed them that their responses are confidential. At the same time they are also informed that their responses will be only taken for the research purposes. Then the investigator distributed the questionnaire. They were asked to fill the personal details in the data sheet provided. Then they were asked to read the instructions clearly and asked them to clarify their doubts if any. After completion, they were asked to hand over the questionnaire and personal data sheet. The final selection was done and uncompleted data were discarded. The scores of different variables and the personal information schedule were organized in a systematic order. Then the data were feed into a spread sheet for verification and further statistical analysis

### **Analysis of data**

The analysis was done using SPSS. Correlation was used for analysis. Pearson's 'r' was employed in the present study to estimate the interrelationships among the different variables. The significance of the obtained 'r' was compared with the limits established using the standard error of 'r' which is calculated for 0.1 percent, 1 percent and 5 percent level.

Table 1

**Correlation coefficient between mental health and risk taking behavior of students in physical education.**

Variables	Risk taking behaviour	Self esteem	Autonomy	Emotional Stability	Social Competence
Risk taking behaviour	( )				
Self esteem	.203*				
Autonomy	.073	.265**			
Emotional Stability	.288**	.537**	.033		
Social Competence	.338**	.406**	-.006	.567**	

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The above table shows that the coefficient of correlation obtained between the risk taking behaviour and mental health among physical education students. From the table, risk taking behaviour is positively correlated with self-esteem (.203), autonomy (.073), emotional stability (.288), and social competence (.338). Risk taking behaviour has a significant correlation with self-esteem at 0.05significance level. Risk taking behaviour has highly significant correlation with emotional stability and social competence at 0.01significance level.

This means that the persons who have high self-esteem, emotional stability and social competence have more chance to make risk taking behaviour. Self-esteem is simply referred as the confidence of one's own worth or abilities. Risk taking is one of personality traits that may be affected by confidence. High self-esteem individuals rely on their positive self views and tend to be less defensive in responses to a risk taking behaviour. Emotional stability referred as a person's ability to remain stable

and balanced, and social competence consists of social, emotional, cognitive and behavioural skills needed for successful social adaptation. Both emotional stability and social competence have high correlation with risk taking behaviour. The sub variable self-esteem has highly positive correlation with the other variables at 0.01 significance level. From the table it shows that self-esteem is positively correlated with autonomy (.265), emotional stability (.537) and social competence (.406). The sub variable autonomy has positive correlation with emotional stability (.033) and negative correlation with social competence. The sub variable social competences have highly significant correlation with emotional stability at 0.01 sig

## CONCLUSION

The study revealed that there is significant correlation between the sub variables of mental health variables like self esteem, emotional stability and social competence. Risk taking behaviour is positively correlated with self esteem, autonomy, emotional stability, and social competence. Risk taking behaviour has highly significant correlation with emotional stability and social competence. Risk taking behaviour has positive correlation with mental health variable autonomy. The physical education and sports towards health and wellness is strongly approved and the participation in well regulated physical fitness program is strongly recommended by this study..

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