

An executive summary of the final report of work done on the Minor Research Project of *Ms Smitha Pereira*, Department of Social Work entitled “Impact of Physical Activity on Academic Performance of School Children -A Study in Mangalore Taluk, Karnataka.” Sanctioned by UGC, Vide Sanction Letter No. MRP(H)-0839/13-14/KAMA002/UGC-SWRO, dated 28.3.2014

Introduction: Physical activity is important to all the individuals as it helps to be active everyday promotes healthy growth and development. children who establish healthy lifestyle patterns at a young age will carry them - and their benefits - forward for the rest of their lives. With many benefits of physical activities, it helps them to have better focus and concentration during school. Hence parents and teachers should help the children to take up the physical activities as it can be beneficial to them for the overall development of the children.

Methodology: The aim of the current study is to explore the impact of physical activity on academic performance of school children. The universe of the study comprises of South Canara district, Karnataka. The primary school teachers and parents of the children were the respondents of the study. A sample of 200 was covered in the study in which 100 respondents were the controlled group where they were assigned physical activities to the group. The respondents were chosen by systematic random sampling method.

Finding: The study revealed that out of 200 respondents, 116 are boys and 84 are girls, where it represents boy's population more than the girls among the primary school children. Majority of the children are of the age group of 11-12 years who are in VI or VII standard class. The study reveals the students are enrolled to school in the proper age, hence their age and class in which are studying is in proper balance as according to the Karnataka Board of studies.

In the semi structured interview schedule researcher presented the questions to the parents and teachers on physical activities of their children. All the children of this age like to involve themselves in play, sports, games. Although television and other electronic gadgets are available still children of this age group still have liking towards the play. If parents motivate them to involve themselves in playing they can develop the interest towards sports and games. But lack of space for playing most of the children remain at home watching TV, playing video games and so on. It is seen from the research that 15% of the children come to school using public transport like bus, 20% of the children reach to school by using the school vehicle facility, whereas a large number of children that is 50% use private vehicles like car, two-wheeler, autorickshaw, vans or so on to come to school, 15% of children come to school by walking. Most of the children have their schools in walkable distance but parents send their children by vehicles as they find it is not safe to walk and they find it easy and comfortable to send their children by vehicles. It is found that most of the children spend extra time in physical activity that is playing some sports like swimming, playing throwball, cricket, playing some games in the neighbourhood. However, the controlled groups were given certain activities like running, skipping, sports and so on. From the experimental group only 8% of the children were involved in physical activities after school time. 42% of the parents said their children spend the free time by watching TV, as mass media is catching the attention of children and most of the children spend time in watching cartoons, movies and so on. Only 20% of children spend free time is playing, the interest of children in playing games is losing among the present generation, though playing has lot of benefits in children. 10% of children are interested in spending their free time drawing and 5% indulge themselves in creative activities. Whereas 13% of children even at this very small age spend their free time in studying. It is very sad to know that about 60% of their children do not want their to be encouraged to sports and games and only 40% say that they would encourage their children for sports and games. It understood that most of the children do some physical activities like jumping, dancing so on a daily basis without devoting extra time for it but as a routine in a day. 70% of the parents are of the opinion that schools do not show interest for physical education. 65% of the children are send to tuition classes after their school daily where they spend about two hours on studies and hence children find no time for games and so on after the school. 72% of the schools do not consider physical education as important and ready to cut down this

hour for any of other purposes especially during exam time, annual day practices, any celebrations in the school and so on. The study shows that 66% of the children had good impact of the physical activities on their academic performance. 55% of the parents agree that their children show more interest on studies after having a physical activity. 66% of the children become keen and enthusiastic in their studies after the physical activities.

Teachers opine that 90% of the children in the class are active after the physical education class, the energy level of the students is very high after they come from grounds. 64% of the children interestingly and actively take part in sports, games and other physical activities in school. 62% of the students are found to be very active in the class and most of them are the students from the controlled group. Teachers opine that 74% of the students concentrate well in the class and again all the children in the controlled group are included in this category. It is found that 86% of the students have improved performance among the controlled after getting into the physical activities after the school hours at school. 60% of the students are able keep the balance between their studies and activities whereas 40% were able keep the balance between the two. 87% of the students have shown very impact in their academic performance after taking up the physical activities.