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I would like to thank my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, with whom nothing is impossible. His unending grace never fails and supplies my every need. He is my rock in times of trouble and my comforter in times of need.

I would also like to thank the Head of Caerleon Comprehensive School, Dr. A.G. Davies for allowing this study to go ahead, and all staff who assisted in the investigation. Special thanks to Ruth McKenna for providing a reliable contact to the school and for transport. You’re input was invaluable.

Many thanks to Dena Digweed, my personal tutor who never let me down even when I failed her! Your timely input was necessary to help me complete this work.

Final thanks go to my close family and friends whose prayers and continued support are greatly valued. Thank you also Mum and Dad for the opportunity of studying at university.
ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to determine the influence of the parent upon KS4 pupil’s level of participation in physical activity. The investigation endeavoured to establish the extent to which adolescents perceive parental influence as responsible for their physical activity behaviours. Additionally, the study intended to examine a number of concepts, including several major socialising agents, adolescent perceptions of positive and negative parental influence, and parent-child relationships according to gender.

A questionnaire was devised and administered to 30 male and 30 female adolescents currently studying at KS4 level secondary education in Caerleon Comprehensive School, Newport. The questionnaires data were entered into the SNAP 8.0 software package and consequently analysed and discussed. Relevant findings and significant relationships were clearly and coherently illustrated in the form of tables and charts using SNAP 8.0 and Microsoft Excel.

The study concluded that parent(s) play an integral role in the ongoing socialisation of adolescents into sport and activity. It was further established that the influence of the peers should not be underestimated, since adolescents cited friends as the most positive influence on their own physical activity level. Future research should target differences between single and dual-parent homes using a wider demographic. Parent-reported activity should be implemented and analysed to produce more reliable findings.
CHAPTER ONE:
INTRODUCTION
1.0 INTRODUCTION

Research investigating the reasons that people become involved in sport has been of great importance since the beginning of the sociology of sport (Coakley and Dunning, 2000). Studying the process of 'socialisation' has been invaluable in order to gain an insight into who becomes involved in sport and the reasons as to how and why. Hargreaves (1994, p. 17) states that “Socialisation is the transmission of behaviours, roles, attitudes and beliefs expected within society to the next generation”.

The process of socialisation begins early in life and involves the role of key agents; the family, the school and the mass media (Horne et al, 1999). From these three components, Boutilier and Sangiovanni (1983) identified the family as the foundation of the socialisation process, consequently providing the fundamental concepts of what is appropriate and what is undesirable behaviour. Furthermore, sport and fitness related activities form an essential part of the socialisation process of children, providing the opportunity to attain and develop a range of physiological and sociological skills which are fundamental in preparing children to manage the many demands that will be placed upon them in adult life (Sports Council for Wales, 1994).

The present study is concerned with young people studying KS4 level secondary education. The study will refer to subjects as ‘adolescents’ as this correctly defines them according to Spirduso (2004, p. 6). During this age
period, young people are still experiencing a primary socialisation process in which they first become a member of society. Haralambous and Holbourn (2000) believe that primary socialisation is the most important aspect of an ongoing process. By responding to the approval and disapproval of the parent(s), and modelling their example, the adolescent learns the basic behavioural trends of society. Horne et al (1999) also suggests that the influence of the parent(s) during primary socialisation is more significant than any other socialising agent.

1.1 Aims of the study

The primary aim of the study is to determine the influence of the parent on KS4 pupils’ level of participation in sport and physical activity. The secondary aim is to determine whether the mother/female guardian or the father/male guardian is perceived as the more influential figure and whether this depends on the gender of the adolescent. The study’s objectives are to find out how the extent of parental influence towards adolescents’ sport and physical activity level compares with other socialising agents, such as peers, PE teachers, and sporting role models. The researcher intends to establish the extent to which adolescents’ identify the parent(s) as influencing their attitudes towards sport and physical activity, and their resultant participation level. Furthermore, the study aims to analyse and compare the adolescents’ perception towards the positive and negative influence of the parent(s) on resultant participation levels. The difference in the response of male and female adolescents shall also be considered.
1.2 Rationale for the study

There are a number of reasons why this topic area is worth investigating. Firstly, previous research assessing children’s activity levels has shown that, in general, children are relatively inactive (Baranowski et al., 1987). If it could be concluded that parental influence is positively linked to increased child participation in sport, intervention programmes to help parents encourage extra curricular physical activity could be implemented and sedentary behaviours discouraged. Regular physical activity is a well documented contributor to the health and quality of life for people of all ages (Gustafson and Rhodes, 2006) and is a moderate predictor of the short and long term health of children. There is also evidence for the notion that physical activity behaviours established in youth may persist into adulthood (Sallis et al., 1992). Thus, encouraging extra curricular participation in sport could have implications for the management of current problems surrounding obesity and other health issues.

Moreover, there is a significant gap in the literature specifically analysing adolescents’ participation rates in sport and exercise whilst studying at KS4 level. Research to determine adolescents’ perceived parental influence according to gender is also limited and inconclusive, thus rendering this study both effective and relevant.
1.3 Structure of the study

A comprehensive reference to extant literature pertaining to the study’s subject matter shall be used to construct a relevant and effective questionnaire. The questionnaire will be utilised to gather the necessary information required to generate clear and concise results, which will be discussed at length with reference to existing research within the subject area. The investigation will close by concluding whether or not the aims and objectives were reached, and will direct the reader as to possible future research in this area.
CHAPTER THREE:
METHODOLOGY
3.0 METHODOLOGY

The methodology section aims to establish a number of objectives, which will assist in conducting the study. These objectives comprise conducting the study; identifying subjects; measuring and analysing the data, and designing the study (Thomas and Nelson, 1996). A multitude of methods are available to the researcher, each with their benefits and drawbacks. The methodology utilised by the researcher will vary depending on the overall aims and objectives of the study. As Veal (1994) points out, a clear understanding of what one wishes to find out is essential in deciding upon the studies most suitable methodology, so as to collect and analyse the required information. The aim of the present study is to examine the influence of the parent in determining KS4 pupils’ level of participation in sport and physical activity.

Due to the diverse nature of different methodological approaches, one method may be appropriate for one study, yet proves unbeneﬁcial for another. Identifying the research issue should be the primary task of any research when selecting the most suitable method (Veal, 1994). The current study will adopt a ‘naturalistic’ approach as it “assumes that there can be multiple answers to the studied topic, thus people are seen to have different opinions according to their circumstances” (Greendorfer and Hasbrook, 1991). It is unlikely to have a defined set of answers that may be apparent in the more scientiﬁc ‘positivistic’ approach; rather the study area is expected to gauge a range of different opinions in relation to parental inﬂuence and sporting participation.
3.1 The research design

The method adopted in this study will be quantitative in nature, enabling the collection of replicable data that could also be generalised to a wider population. The collection of the quantitative data will occur through the use of a questionnaire. This form of data collection was chosen due to its ability to provide relatively complex information in a succinct, easily understandable form (Veal, 1997, p. 146). Additionally, the questionnaire’s ability to obtain a large sample in a short time and with minimal cost also influenced its selection as the research tool (Haralambolous and Holbourn, 1995).

3.2 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire is an important instrument of research and a vital tool for data collection (Oppenheim, 1992, p. 100). Therefore, it must be well designed to provide the information needed that will be acceptable to the participants, and which will not cause problems for the researcher at the analysis and interpretation stage (Bell, 1993). Moreover, an effective questionnaire should be quick and easy to answer, require little or no writing, and allow straightforward quantification (Veal, 1997).

The nature of this study required the use of KS4 pupils aged fifteen and sixteen. Consequently, when the questionnaire was designed, the ability of respondents to interpret questions and articulate their answers was carefully considered when deciding upon the language used in the questionnaire.
It was decided that the questionnaire would incorporate ‘closed’ questions as they can be attitudinal as well as factual. A closed question offers respondents a choice of alternative replies, which can be indicated simply by ticking the appropriate box (Oppenheim, 1992). Closed questions offer many advantages to the researcher but also have some drawbacks. Veal (1994) states that closed questions have the advantage of being quicker and easier to answer; are easily administered and allow straightforward quantification. For these reasons it was decided that open ended questions would not be incorporated, since difficulty may occur during results analysis. Furthermore, the response rates of open questions are not as reliable as that of closed questions, especially given the age of the participants. However, Oppenheim (1992) points out that closed questions can be somewhat restrictive, limiting the respondents from answering spontaneously in a true and expressive manner. In light of these imperfections, and to prevent any bias in the answers, the response categories were designed to take into account all the expected responses. According to Oppenheim (1992), respondents may become irritated if they feel they cannot reflect their ideas and feelings clearly from the available answers. To counter this problem, an ‘other’ category was integrated into the question to identify unanticipated responses.

To provide a means of familiarising respondents with the topic of the study, the researcher decided to include a brief description of important points and key terms to precede each group of questions. Additionally, simple questions concerned with pupils’ feelings towards sport and physical activity were placed at the beginning of the questionnaire with the aim of
putting respondents at ease. A small section of the questionnaire utilised Likert’s (1954) Summated Ratings Scale. This scale was deemed suitable due to its simplicity and ability to record a participant’s response in a continuum, rather than a limited yes/no response. The Likert Scale allowed subjects to rank their personal feelings towards major influencing agents, for example, 1=most positive, 5=least positive.

The questionnaires were completed using a self administered style. This involved an explanation as to the purpose of the study, followed by the respondents’ completion of the questionnaire. However, the researcher remained in the room in order to answer any questions that the respondents may have had. According to Bell (1993) this method permits any explanations to be made, and allows a degree of personal contact, enabling better cooperation. The major advantages of this method according to Oppenheim (1992) include a high response rate, accurate sampling and a minimum of researcher bias.

3.3 Subjects

The selection of subjects must be appropriately considered and implemented, and are vitally important strategic elements of any research (Mason, 2000). In line with the aim of the study, which is to investigate parental influences upon KS4 pupils’ level of sport and physical activity, the subjects will consist of pupils between the ages of fifteen and sixteen, studying at KS4 level. When implementing the use of a survey in any study,
there are ethical issues such as anonymity and confidentiality which require careful consideration. The basic ethical principle governing data collection, says Oppenheim (1992, p. 83), “is that no harm should come to respondents as a result of their participation”.

In accordance with the ethical guidelines of this study, a letter confirming the authenticity of the research, and requesting the consent of the school was sent to the headmaster (Appendix A). The head was then promptly shown a copy of the questionnaire and asked to give signed consent for the study to go ahead (Appendix B). All members of staff involved in administering the questionnaires in their classes were fully informed as to the purpose of the study, and also shown a copy of the questionnaire. Pupils were briefed before completing the questionnaire and informed of their right to withdraw at any time. Subjects were assured of their strict anonymity and confidentiality with regard to the responses and information given. On completion of the study, subjects were debriefed and thanked for their time and cooperation.

3.4 Sampling procedure

The questionnaires were distributed to pupils studying at KS4 level at Caerleon Comprehensive School in Newport, Wales. The school holds around 1600 pupils from surrounding towns and villages, providing the study with a wide cross section of participants and a potentially diverse range of
responses. Therefore, the findings can be represented to a wider population outside of the designated sample group. Another main factor in selecting the school was its relatively close proximity to my current location of study in Cardiff. Furthermore, this school proved to be convenient, as the researcher has existing links with a current member of staff.

A total of 60 (30:30) questionnaires were administered equally to male and female pupils from two randomly selected form groups in Year 11 of the school. All questionnaires were completed and returned to the researcher. The survey took place during the form groups’ Friday morning tutorial period at the beginning of the school day, as this was deemed the most convenient time for both staff and pupils.

3.5 Questionnaire Data Analysis

Following collection of the questionnaires, the data was compiled in preparation for its analysis, using the SNAP 8.0 edition software package. All answers were entered into SNAP using ‘data entry’ mode, which allows the researcher to transfer answers from paper to computer simply by clicking the relevant boxes. Some questions such as 14, 18 and 19, had to be inputted in to Microsoft Excel in order to be analysed. This was due to the nature of the question (Likert Scale) and the type of analysis required by the researcher. In addition to tabulating and illustrating the findings, cross tabulations were performed to determine relationships between certain responses, and to examine any comparisons between male and female subjects.
3.6 Reliability and Validity

When conducting any kind of research, it is imperative to ensure the data obtained is both valid and reliable. According to Veal (1997, p. 35), “Validity is the extent to which the information collected by the researcher truly reflects the phenomenon being studied”. One approach to determine the validity of a study is to include two or more questions placed in different parts of the questionnaire, which essentially ask the same thing, but are worded differently. This gives the researcher the ability to determine whether the responses offered were reliable. To test the reliability of the questionnaire, questions 17 and 20 were used, since both questions essentially asked respondents if they thought that their parents had an influence on their level of participation in sport and exercise (Appendix D). It is well argued that questionnaires offer greater reliability as they produce standardised data in a statistical form. This gives the researcher the option of replicating the research and checking the results against the previous data.

3.7 Pilot study

The priority of a pilot study is to test the questions to ensure that they are written in a clear, coherent manner that is easily understood. Furthermore, Oppenheim (1992, p. 47) asserts that “piloting can help us not only with the wording of questions, but also with procedural matters such as the design of a letter of introduction, the ordering of question sequences and the reduction
of non-response rates”. The identification of any difficulties in the pilot study allows the researcher to iron them before the main study commences (Giddens, 1997).

The pilot for this study consisted of a peer review by two members of staff at the sample school, one of which was a PE teacher. Both members of staff agreed that the questionnaire was age appropriate, and key terminology was explained logically and coherently. Thus, the questionnaire maintained its original form for the main study (Appendix C).
CHAPTER FOUR:
RESULTS
4.0 Results

4.1 The extent of Parental Influence

Figure 1 and Table 1 demonstrate the different views as to whether parents’ attitude and level of participation in sport and exercise have influenced the adolescents’ attitude and level of participation. Results revealed that 70% or 41 of the respondents either ‘agreed’ (55%) or ‘strongly agreed’ (15%) that their own attitudes and level of participation are influenced by their parents. Only 8.3% or 5 subjects reported that they ‘disagreed’ or ‘strongly disagreed’ with this view. The remaining 21.7% of respondents indicated ‘no influence’.

Figure 1 and Table 1 (‘influence’, q.17)
- The view that parents have influenced participation and attitude development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolute Analysis</th>
<th>% Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Base</td>
<td>60 100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reply</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you say that your parent(s)/guardian(s) attitude an...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, strongly agree</td>
<td>9 15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>33 55.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence</td>
<td>13 21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2 3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>3 5.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 Self Description

Figure 2 and Table 2 show the adolescents’ self perception towards sport and exercise participation. Results demonstrated that only 15% or 9 subjects spent most of their free time in activities unrelated to sport or health related exercise. The highest percentage (41.7%) of subjects reported that they ‘sometimes’ partake in sport and health related exercise. A further 25% or 15 subjects ‘quite often’ partake in sport and health related exercise, and just 18.3% or 11 adolescents’ reported ‘very often’ doing things involving sport and health related exercise in free time.

![Figure 2: ‘self perception’, q. 11) - Adolescents self perception toward sport and exercise participation.](image-url)
Table 2: (‘self perception’, q. 11) - Adolescents self perception toward sport and exercise participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolute Break %</th>
<th>Base</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which of the following describes you best? (please read c...

- A: I spend most of my free time doing things that do not involve sport or health related exercise
  - 9 respondents (15.0%)

- B: I sometimes do things in my free time that involve some form of sport or health related exercise
  - 25 respondents (41.7%)

- C: I quite often do things in my free time that involve some form of sport or health related exercise
  - 15 respondents (25.0%)

- D: I very often do things in my free time that involve sport or health related exercise
  - 11 respondents (18.3%)
4.3 Self description and Parental Participation

A cross tabulation was administered to explore the relationship between adolescents’ self perceptions towards sport and exercise participation (question 11), against the level of participation of the parent(s) (question 14). Table 3 shows that of the 11 subjects that ‘very often’ do things in their free time that involve sport, 72.7% or 8 of them stated that the father/male guardian regularly took part in sport and/or exercise. However, just 36.4% or 4 subjects said that the mother/male guardian regularly took part in sport and exercise. In total, 81.8% or 9 of the participants who ‘very often’ played sport or exercised in their free time had at least one active parent. These findings can be accepted with a 95% confidence level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolute Analysis</th>
<th>Base</th>
<th>% Satisfied 95% Confidence Interval</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Cross tabulation of self description and parental participation
Figure 3 displays specific responses to parental participation to distinguish between adolescents with one parent regularly participating in sport, and those of whom both parents regularly participate. Results demonstrate that 31.6% or 19 subjects had parents who both participated in regular sport and/or exercise (YY). 35% or 21 respondents noted that neither parent took part in regular sport or exercise (NN). Very few subjects (6.7% or 4) indicated that their mother/female guardian was the only parent that took part in regular sport and exercise (YN). Conversely, a reasonable number (26.7% or 16) of respondents signified that only the father/male guardian regularly played sport or exercised (NY). More specifically, 45.5% of participants who ‘very often’ participated in sport noted that only the father took part in regular sport and exercise. Of the subjects that ‘spend most of their free time doing things that did not involve sport and exercise’, 44.4% or 4 of them noted that neither parent regularly took part in sport and exercise.

Figure 3: Adolescents’ perceived level of sport participation (q.11) and specific responses to parental participation (q.14)
4.4 Parental Participation and Parental Influence

Tables 4 and 5, and Figures 4, 5 and 6 illustrate relationships between parental participation and the adolescents’ perception of parental influence. Results from figure 4 reveal that 51.4% or 19 of those participants that reported the mother/female guardian as not regularly taking part in exercise and sport ‘agreed’ that they had been parentally influenced. Conversely, 60.9% or 14 participants whose mother/female guardian regularly participated in sport and exercise ‘agreed’, implying a more significant value. Responses suggesting ‘no influence’ were 27% or 10, and 13% or 3 respectively.

Figure 5 followed a similar trend for subjects reporting that the father/male guardian regularly participated in sport and exercise. 65.7% or 23 respondents ‘agreed’ that the father/male guardian had influenced their activity behaviour. However, subjects whose father/male guardian did not partake in regular sport and exercise indicated lower ‘agree’ responses (40% or 10) and higher ‘no influence’ replies (36% or 9).
Table 4: Parental participation (q.14) and Adolescent Perceived Parental Influence (q.17) (mother/female guardian)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolute Analysis % Respondents</th>
<th>Would you say that your parent(s)/guardian(s) attitude an...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base</strong></td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mother/female guardian</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No</strong></td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4: Parental participation (q.14) and Adolescent Perceived Parental Influence (q.17) (mother/female guardian)
Table 5: Parental participation (q.14) and Adolescent Perceived Parental Influence (q.17) (father/male guardian)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolute Analysis % Respondents</th>
<th>Base</th>
<th>Would you say that your parent(s)/guardian(s) attitude an...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father/male guardian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5: Parental participation (q.14) and Adolescent Perceived Parental Influence (q.17) (father/male guardian)
Figure 6 indicates that the highest number of participants who ‘agreed’ that their attitude and level of participation was influenced by their parents, also indicated that either both parents (57.9% or 11) or the father/male guardian (75% or 12) took part in regular sport and/or exercise. Furthermore, only 1 (4.3%) subject ‘disagreed’ regarding parental influence. Participants of whom neither parent regularly participated in sport and/or exercise predominantly responded with ‘no influence’ (38.1% or 8) and ‘agree’ (33.3% or 7). 19.05% or 4 respondents either disagreed or ‘strongly disagreed’. Of the small number of participants whose mother/female guardian regularly took part in sport and exercise, 75% or 3 respondents ‘agreed’, and 25% or 1 subject reported ‘no influence’.

Figure 6: Specific Responses to Parental participation (q.14) and Adolescent Perceived Parental Influence (q.17)
4.5 Positive and Negative Influence

Participants in the present study were asked in question 18 to ‘place in rank order which of the following have exerted the most positive influence on your participation in sport and exercise’. The questionnaire’s response options represented five possible influences, with 1 being the ‘most positive’ and 5 representing the ‘least positive’.
Results revealed that 36.7% or 22 respondents identified their ‘friends’ as the most positive influence. Parents were identified as the 2\textsuperscript{nd} most positive influence with 28.3% or 17 responses. A total of 65% or 39 subjects identified the parent as either the first or second most positive influence. In contrast, only 8.3% or 5 participants indicated the parent as the ‘least positive influence’ on their participation.

![Bar chart showing the breakdown of positive influence from most to least](image)

**Figure 8: Breakdown of Positive Influence from most to least**
Figure 9 and Table 7 illustrate clearly that the parent is rarely viewed as the most negative influence. In fact 63.3% or 38 respondents identified the parent as either the 4\textsuperscript{th} or least negative influence from the five options provided. In comparison to the analysis from the positive influence question (q.18), the results illustrate a strong, negative correlation between the two variables, with high levels of perceived positive parental influence associated with lower levels of perceived negative parental influence.
Figure 9 illustrates that parents are perceived as the least negative with just 8.3% or 5 respondents identifying them as the ‘most negative influence’. In contrast, sporting role models, siblings and PE teachers had the highest number of respondents indicating that they are the ‘most negative influence’. Friends, who were identified as the ‘most positive influence’ showed 61.7% or 37 responses as the 4th or least negative influence. However, a surprisingly high (16.7% or 10) number of respondents noted friends as the ‘most negative influence’.

Figure 10: Breakdown of Negative Influence from most to least
4.6 Gender

![Graph showing gender responses to parental influence (q.17)](image)

**Figure 11: Gender responses to parental influence (q.17)**

**Table 8: Cross tabulation of gender responses to parental influence (q.17)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolute Analysis %</th>
<th>Break % Respondents</th>
<th>Would you say that your parent(s)/guardian(s) attitude an...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Yes, strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please select your gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>55.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>44.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of results examining the different responses to parental influence according to gender did not indicate any significant differences. Figure 11 demonstrates that there are insignificant differences between males and females. Perhaps the only noticeable difference is the number of ‘agree’ responses which is (16.7% or 5) responses higher for females.
4.7 Gender of the parent and adolescent perceived parental influence

Participants who replied ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ to question 20 were asked to indicate the parent/guardian they perceived as having the most influence. Table 9 and Figure 12 show a significant proportion (72.2% or 26) of respondents indicating that the father was perceived as having the most influence. Furthermore, not one subject who ‘strongly agreed’ that their present level of participation in sport and exercise was influenced by their parents chose the mother/female guardian as having the most influence. Conversely, 16.7% or 6 respondents who ‘strongly agreed’ that they were parentally influenced, selected the father/male guardian as the major influence.

Table 9: Cross Tabulation of adolescent perceived parental influence (q.20) and gender of the parent (q.21)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolutes Analysis % Respondents</th>
<th>Base</th>
<th>In your opinion, do you think your present attitude and participation is influenced by your parent/guardian?</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>No Influence</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Satisfied</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you answered ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ in the previous...</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father/male guardian</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>76.9%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother/female guardian</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 12: Adolescent perceived parental influence (q.20) and gender of the parent (q.21)
Analysis of participant gender against most influential parent was necessary to determine any parent-adolescent relationships between genders. Figure 13 shows that both male and female participants viewed the father/male guardian as having the most influence on attitude and participation levels in sport. Both genders had 36.1% or 13 respondents indicating the father as the main influential parent. Only 5.6% or 2 male participants viewed the mother as the main parental influence. This is in stark contrast to 22.2% or 8 female participants who indicated the mother/female guardian as the predominant influence. Despite this difference, it is clear that for both genders, the father/male guardian is perceived as the main influence in determining attitudes and participation levels in sport and exercise.

![Figure 13: Gender of participant and most influential parent](image-url)
CHAPTER SIX:
CONCLUSION
CONCLUSION

This study has arrived at a number of clearly identified conclusions concerning the influence of the parent(s) and its effect upon the resultant participation rates of adolescents studying at KS4 level. The researcher has identified a considerable influence from the parent(s) on adolescent participation, lending support to the functionalist approach to sport socialisation.

Parental modelling was considered to be an essential feature of the overall influence of the parent(s). Lacking a parental demonstration of physical activity behaviour denies the adolescent a significant and powerful figure upon which participation can be moulded and encouraged.

The degree in which parent(s) involve themselves in sport and exercise was shown to have a clear impact on the adolescents’ participation level. The current study lends substantial support to Moore et al’s (1991) claims that there is a relationship between parent’s and children’s physical activity, with parental participation and enjoyment of physical activity resulting in higher levels of activity amongst adolescents.

Analysis has seen that the vast majority of adolescents view parent(s) as encouraging and supportive towards sport and exercise, rather than proving to be difficult and serving as a barrier to participation. An additional relationship was found to exist between inactive adolescents and their
negative perception of parental influence, giving further credence to the belief that parents are in a considerable position to shape the activity behaviour of the adolescent.

One major surprise to the researcher was the adolescents' placing of peers above parents in relation to positive influence upon physical activity levels. Inconclusive research has caused conflicting statements over evidence to suggest that the degree of influence shifts from parent(s) to peers between childhood and adolescence (Lewko and Greendorfer, 1988). Based on the evidence, the current study refused to overlook the prominent influence of the peers, and accepted that friends serve as a major, if not the chief socialising agent towards adolescents’ physical activity level.

In general, there was very little difference between gender responses to parental influence that have been evidenced by previous studies (Weiss, 2000, Hendry et al, 1993). An insignificant difference between males and females was found but was considered unsubstantiated in content.

This study has effectively commented on the continued importance of parental influence upon adolescent participation in sport and physical activity. In conclusion, the researcher believes to have successfully identified that behaviours exhibited by significant adults, can develop young people’s competency beliefs, involvement, and enjoyment of physical activity. As a result, parents should be encouraged to provide positive role models for their children’s behaviour in order to motivate them into physical activity.
Limitations of the study

In order to ease the process of data analysis, only closed questions were used. Whilst this method proved to be beneficial and relatively simple to interpret data from, retrospection suggests to the researcher that the inclusion of open questions may have allowed a greater scope in which to explore the key points under scrutiny.

The comparison between parental influences and other socialising agents was not as extensive as originally desired. The unanticipated degree of influence from peers caused less discussion in other important area such as siblings and PE teachers. On reflection, the questionnaire may have been more suitably designed to accommodate such extensive discussion, with a broader range of questions. Another limitation of the study was its failure to take into account adolescents’ currently residing in a single-parent home, and the inevitable effect on responses to certain questions.

The study purposed to execute its aims in order to apply them to a wider population. With more time and resources, a larger sample from neighbouring schools in the area could have been used to increase the reliability of the findings. One approach that was not considered prior to the investigation was to measure the parent’s perceptions alongside those of the adolescents. This approach potentially offers a more realistic indication of adolescent perceptions, rather than actual received influence.
Recommendations for Future Research

Future research in this area should initially prioritise a more widespread sample of participants both numerically and geographically. This would allow wider generalisations to be made about any significant findings. The direction of the research should target any differences between single-parent and dual-parent families upon adolescents’ perceived influence of parent(s). Moreover, to fully determine the extent of parental influence, the effect of socio-economic status should be incorporated into the investigation. The use of parent-reported activity should also be implemented and analysed. The use of qualitative research could be adopted in order to uncover greater issues regarding parental influence. This may reveal further effects upon adolescent participation rates that the current studies methods either restricted or denied.
REFERENCES
REFERENCES


APPENDICES
Dear Dr Davies,

My name is David Toms and I am currently a third year student studying Sport and Physical Education at the University of Wales Institute Cardiff (UWIC). I spoke on the phone with a friend of mine (Ruth McKenna) who is one of your members of staff, regarding an investigation I am undertaking as part of my level 3 dissertation, and was advised to contact you with the relevant information.

The study is aimed at investigating whether parental influence is the dominant factor in determining KS4 pupils’ physical activity levels. The method of investigation is a questionnaire that will take around 5-10 minutes to complete. The required participants are 30 male and 30 female pupils currently studying at KS4 level, i.e. year 10 and 11. The participants will be briefed and debriefed and fully instructed for the study and informed of their right to withdraw at any time.

It is intended that the pupils will complete the questionnaires in the registration/tutorial period at the start of the day, in order to avoid any inconvenience to you or your other members of staff. If you could contact me ASAP to confirm a suitable date and to discuss any other queries it would be greatly appreciated.

In accordance with the ethics guidelines of my dissertation, the identity of all the participants will be protected both during and after the study. At no time will the participants be asked to place or give their name, thus rendering their replies completely confidential.

I have chosen your school because of the recommendation from Mrs McKenna whom I understand thoroughly enjoys working at the school and speaks highly of her experience there. Thank you for considering my investigation. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely

David Toms
I am aware that the current investigation seeks to discover the influence of the parent in determining the level of physical activity undertaken by KS4 pupils.

I am aware that the forthcoming study adopts the use of a questionnaire in order to achieve its aims.

I am aware that 30 male and 30 female KS4 pupils are required for the study.

I understand that in accordance with the ethics guidelines of the dissertation, the identity of all the participants will be protected both during and after the study. At no time will the participants be asked to place or give their name, thus rendering their replies completely confidential. Each participant will be given the right to withdraw at any time.

I therefore consent to allow pupils of Caerleon School to participate in this study.

Signed

[Signature]

Hi. Caerleon Camp School.
APPENDIX C
Health Related Exercise and Sport: Determinants of Participation Questionnaire.

The following questionnaire contains questions that examine the possible influences of your parents upon your participation levels in physical activity. Please read the questions carefully and answer as accurately and honestly as possible. Your answers will remain anonymous.

**Q1** How important do you think it is to maintain a physically active lifestyle? (Please tick 1 box only).
- Very important
- Quite important
- Slightly important
- Not at all important

**Q2** Why? (Please tick 1 box only).
- Look good/Feel image
- Keep fit/Stay healthy
- Prevent illness
- Other

**Q3** If you ticked 'other' please specify.

**Q4** Generally how would you describe your feelings towards sport and health related exercise? (Please tick 1 box only)
- Strongly like
- Like
- Neither like/dislike
- Dislike
- Strongly dislike

**Q5** How much do you enjoy taking part in sport and health related exercise? (please tick 1 box only)
- I really enjoy it
- I enjoy it
- I dislike it
- I really dislike it

**Q6** Are you a member of a sports or fitness club? (please tick 1 box for both)
- Sports Club
- Fitness Club
- Inside
- Outside
- Both
- Neither

**Q7** How many times a week do you usually take part in some form of sport or fitness related exercise? (please tick 1 box only)
- None
- 1-2 times
- 3-4 times
- 4+ times

**IMPORTANT:** Before answering the next group of questions, please read and understand the following definitions. Effective exercise involves you having to breathe heavily for at least twenty minutes, in which you may also begin to sweat. Activities not meeting this criteria should be deemed non-beneficial to your overall level of fitness.

The term sport refers to team or individual, formal or recreational COMPETITIVE activities. Fitness and health related activity refers to activity that is participated in for the sole purpose of improving overall health and fitness, and DOES NOT involve competition.
Q8 How many times a week do you participate in extra curricular activities? (Including lunchtimes and after school) (tick 1 box)

None .................................................................
1 Day .................................................................
2 Days .................................................................
3 Days .................................................................
4 Days .................................................................
5 Days .................................................................

Q9 Please specify any extra curricular SPORTING activities you participate in (You may tick more than 1 box)

None .................................................................
Football ..............................................................
Rugby .................................................................
Netball ..............................................................
Hockey ............................................................... Crick.
Basketball ...........................................................
Tennis .................................................................
Badminton ...........................................................
Swimming ...........................................................
Gymnastics ...........................................................
Athletics ..............................................................
Other (please specify) .............................................

Q10 Please specify any extra curricular FITNESS RELATED EXERCISES you participate in (not including sports or walking)

None ................................................................. Aerobics ...........................................................
Circuit Training ..................................................... Jogging .............................................................
Gym ................................................................. Cycling ............................................................
Swimming ...........................................................
Other (please specify) .............................................

Q11 Which of the following describes you best? (Please read carefully and tick 1 box only)

A: I spend most of my free time doing things that do not involve sport or health related exercise .................................................................
B: I sometimes do things in my free time that involve some form of sport or health related exercise .................................................................
C: I quite often do things in my free time that involve some form of sport or health related exercise .................................................................
D: I very often do things in my free time that involve some form of sport or health related exercise .................................................................

Q12 If you ticked box (A) please specify what kind of activities you participate in, instead of sport or health related exercise (you may tick more than 1 box)

Watching TV ........................................................
Using the internet ..............................................
Seeing friends ....................................................
Playing computer games ....................................
Reading .............................................................
Working (part time) .............................................
Other (please specify) ...........................................

Q13 How much of your free time do you spend taking part in the following activities? (Please tick 1 of the boxes for each activity)

A lot of my time ..................................................
Some of my time ................................................
None .................................................................

Watching TV ......................................................
Using the internet ..............................................
Seeing friends ....................................................
Playing computer games ....................................
Reading .............................................................
Working (part time) .............................................
Participating in sport ...........................................
Participating in health related exercise ................

The next section of the questionnaire involves examining what role your parent(s)/guardian(s) may or may not have had in determining your participation level in sport and health related exercise. Please answer all questions honestly.
Q14 Does either of your parent(s)/guardian exercise or take part in sport on a regular basis?
- Yes
- No

Mother/female guardian
Father/male guardian

Q15 If you answered 'YES' to EITHER of the above boxes, how would you describe the influence of your parent(s)/guardian upon your own attitude towards sport and health related exercise? (Please tick 1 box for each activity).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive influence</th>
<th>Negative influence</th>
<th>No influence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health related exercise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PLEASE READ: The term 'positive influence' refers to someone who may have encouraged or motivated you to participate in sport and health related exercise. 'Negative influence' refers to someone who may have discouraged or 'put you off' participating in sport and health related exercise.

Q18 Please place in rank order those which have exerted the most POSITIVE influence on your participation in sport and health related exercise (1=Most positive influence, 5=Least)

- Friends
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s)
- Sporting role models
- Brothers/sisters
- P.E. Teachers
- Other (please specify)

Q19 Please place in rank order those which have exerted the most NEGATIVE influence on your participation in sport and health related exercise (1=Most negative influence, 5=Least)

- Friends
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s)
- Sporting role models
- Brothers/sisters
- P.E. Teachers
- Other (please specify)

Q16 Does either of your parent(s)/guardian belong to a sports or fitness club?

Mother/Female Guardian
Father/Male Guardian

Q17 Would you say that your parent(s)/guardian(s) attitude and level of participation in sport and health related exercise has influenced your own attitude towards, and level of participation in sport and health related exercise? (please tick 1 box)

- Yes, strongly agree
- Agree
- No influence
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q20 In your opinion, do you think your present attitude and participation level in sport and exercise is a result of your parent(s)/guardian(s) attitudes towards and participation level in sport and exercise?

Yes, strongly agree
Agree
No influence
Disagree
Strongly disagree

Q21 If you answered 'strongly agree' or 'agree' in the previous question, which parent/guardian do you think has had the most influence?

Mother/female guardian
Father/male guardian

Q22 Please select your gender

- Male
- Female

THANKYOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION
Validity and Reliability

In order to measure the consistency of individual responses, questions 17 and 20 were used as they essentially asked the same question. The pie charts below show the similarity between the responses to the questions, thus rendering the questionnaire both valid and reliable.

Pie Chart of Adolescent Perceived Parental Influence (q.17)

Pie Chart of Present Attitude and Participation Level (q.20)