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## Perspectives on physical activity among major ethnic groups in Malaysia

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### Abstract

Physical activities contributes towards healthy life style. Participating regularly in physical activities should become a culture in our life. This study applied Social Cognitive Theory to determine perspectives on physical activity and how it is correlate among the Malaysian major ethnic groups with different culture. This quantitative research using a self-develop questionnaire conducted among 269 respondents with an approximate distribution of 50-30-20 (Malay - Chinese - Indian) ratio selected randomly in Peninsular Malaysia. The results showed most of the respondents agreed that sport events promote socialization and agreed participation in physical activities reduces the risk of heart diseases. They also confident that participation in sports develops self-control and could give personal satisfaction. Majority of them less agrees that participating in physical activities is dangerous and risky for children and may cause physical handicap. Involvement in physical activity is worthy as a leisure and they also agreed (Malay 87%, Chinese 81% and Indian 84%) that people may feel freedom and avoid boredom. Malaysians are confident and believe that physical activity bring benefits in term of social, wellbeing, personal, risk and safety and leisure. Despite the existence of differences of what to wear, what to eat, what to belief and how to get along with others, the three main ethnic groups in Malaysia, did not show significant differences regarding their perspectives on participation in physical activity. Its' good sign of unity and prosperity among Malaysians through involvement in physical activity.

**Keywords:** physical activity, major ethnic groups, healthy life style

### Introduction

Malaysia, the multicultural developing country, with many indicators showing that this country to be among the most sedentary nations in the world (Azmi *et al.* 2009 & Hallal *et al.*, 2012) <sup>[1, 5]</sup>. To date physical and sport activities contributes to the increasing need for an intensive physical activity programs to enhance healthy life style to tackle the deceases caused by physical inactivity among Malaysians. Lack of time, fear of injury, lack of facilities and poor health conditions are factors that influence the perspectives of the participation in physical activity. Lack of time, for example, is a pressing problem among adolescent in today's world and result in unfinished tasks (Hardcastle *et al.* 2013) <sup>[6]</sup>. It is expected that there will be different perspectives on physical activity among different major ethnic groups in Malaysia. Perspective is a particular attitude towards something. In this context of discussion, perspective is a different point of view towards physical activity. Different people tend to have different perspective towards physical activity. For a young person, physical activity participation could be exercising in a sports club for fun or with serious competitive intent, and for an older person, it might also be sports club participation or a walk to the market place or a group-based sport such as water gymnastics for rehabilitation. Often, participation in physical activity is not only based on planned behavior and intention but is performed rather automatically and with less awareness (Hirvensalo, & Lintunen, 2011).

This study applied Social Cognitive Theory to determine perspectives on physical activity and how it is correlate among the Malaysian major ethnic group as a way of better understanding how such cultural factors relate to physical activity. Social Cognitive Theories are useful for explaining health behaviors such as physical activity. According to Bandura (2004) <sup>[2]</sup>, an individual's motivation to engage in physical activity is based on three postulates:

self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and self-evaluated satisfaction or dissatisfaction. People must learn to monitor their health behavior, motivate themselves, set goals and establish social support to sustain their effort physical activity participation. Self-efficacy, for example, a key construct of social cognitive theory, is defined as people judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances in physical activity.

### Physical activity

Physical activity is commonly known as exercise. This including aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities. Aerobic activity refers to cycling, pushing in a wheelchair, running, brisk walking, dancing, playing basketball, swimming and using cardiovascular equipment at a gym, etc. Muscle-strengthening activity refers to lifting weights, using resistance bands, and body weight movements such as push-ups and planks. Benefits of this type of physical activity include lowered risk of heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, and some cancers. Additional benefits include prevention of weight gain, weight loss, improved cardiovascular and muscular fitness, prevention of falls, and reduced depression (Ministry of Health, Malaysia, 2019) [10].

Participation in physical activities could potentially expose the participant to sport injury risks such as fracture, sprain, concussion or bone dislocation. Participation in physical activities also need proper facilities and requires participant to handle various equipment and sports gear. Besides, engaging in physical activity requires proper body functioning. It is believed that involvement in physical activity has a positive relationship with healthier and fitter bodies. Researchers generally agree that healthier and fitter bodies are essential deterrent to diseases. Unfortunately, health morbidity cases are increasing and encroaching even to the younger Malaysians (Ministry of Health, Malaysia, 2019) [10].

There are five (5) different perspectives on physical activity which include social, wellbeing, personal, risk and safety, and leisure will be discussed throughout this article. A brief explanation of the terms provided as follows:

### Social

Social is someone that enjoys being with others. We gained social benefits through physical activities. The social aspects considered in this article include interaction, celebrations, respect, relationship, positive attitude and public identity.

### Well-being

Wellbeing is the state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy. Aspects of wellbeing considered in this article include moral behavior, educational abilities, health conditions, source of fitness, posture, risk of heart diseases, distress, artistic movement, creative movement and skills and, overall attitude.

### Personal

Personal refers to oneself, not to other people, which involves a personal opinion, quality, or thing belongs to one particular person. Personal matters relate to our feelings, relationships, and health. The personal elements that taken into account in this article are personal growth and development, mental satisfaction, body control, self-control, personal satisfaction, body shape, sense of appreciation, good personality and controls the emotions.

### Risk and safety

Risk is the possibility of something bad happening, while safety is the condition of being protected from harm. Risk and

safety are important to be addressed in physical activity program. The element of risk and safety used in this article including dangerous and risky children, physical handicap, life threatening experiences and harsh behavior.

### Leisure

Leisure is freedom. It can be time free from work, a state of mind or the behavior connected with physical activity that people engage in their freely disposable time. The element of leisure used in this article including sources of excitement, pleasure, used of free time and freedom.

Malaysia is a Southeastern Asian multiracial country with many different ethnic groups living in the country. These include Malays, Chinese, Indians, and other indigenous Bumiputra groups. The demographic composition in the country are as follows: 50.1% of the population are Malay, 22.6% are Chinese, 11.8% are indigenous Bumiputra groups other than the Malays, 6.7% are Indian. Non-citizens account for 8.8% of Malaysia's resident population (Benjamin Elisha Sawe, 2019) [4]. This multicultural context makes Malaysia a highly rich society, with diverse religions, foods, culture, and customs. This research is focusing on the perspective of physical activity among major ethnic groups (Malay, Chinese and Indian) in Malaysia. The main objectives of the research are to identify the difference types of perspectives towards physical activity among major ethnic groups in Malaysia (Table 1).

**Table 1:** Ethnic groups of Malaysia

Ethnic group	Population of Malaysia
Malay	50.1%
Chinese	22.6%
Indian	6.7%
Non-Malay Bumiputera and other Indigenous groups	11.8%
Non-citizens	8.8%

### Malays

Accounting for 50.1% of the Malaysian population, the Malays are the largest ethnic group in the country. Indigenous to the country, the Malays are generally Muslim and practice Malay culture. This means that Muslims of any race are counted as Malays provided, they practice Malay culture. The largest community in the country, with their language, Malay, being the national language, Malays are dominant in the political landscape of Malaysia.

### Chinese

Accounting for 22.6% of the Malaysian population, Chinese are the second largest ethnic group in the country. Malaysians Chinese have been in Malaysia for centuries, with the peak of immigration in the Nineteenth Century. At their arrival, the Chinese worked in railway construction and tin mining, and later they began to own businesses and trading in the country. Their religion is mainly Taoism or Buddhism. The Chinese have over the years absorbed elements of Malaysian culture, intermarrying with the indigenous groups, which have led to the development of a syncretism of practices and beliefs, a new culture consisting both Malay and Chinese tradition.

### Indian

Indian account for 6.7% of the Malaysian population. Indian subgroups include Tamils, Telugus, and Punjabis. Tamils, who account for 86% of Malaysian Indians, began arriving in the 18th and 19th Centuries during the colonial era. Indian

laborers were brought to the country to construct railways, to work in plantations, and in rubber and oil palm estates. Their religions are Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and Sikhism. Some of the Muslims of South Asian (Indian) ancestry have intermarried with the Malay Muslims and become integrated in Malaysia.

### Methods

The research using a method of quantitative research through questionnaire. The research was conducted throughout Peninsular Malaysia, as representing Malaysia, which comprise various states, urban and rural, and people from diverse demographics and backgrounds. A total of 269 respondents from the three major ethnic groups, (i.e., Malay, Chinese, Indians) age 18 to 60 years are involved. The respondents have been selected through stratified random sampling technique from various states. They come from diverse backgrounds in terms of their gender, ethnicity, education levels, location, and occupation. Data Collection was done on-site by assistance from a team of enumerators. Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 21.0 windows.

In order to conduct comparisons between ethnic groups, we set an initial goal of 269 respondents with an approximate distribution of a 50-30-20 (Malay - Chinese - Indian) ratio for ethnic groups. This quota sampling approach was deemed to be in line with theoretical generalizability rules proposed by Calder (1982). Data was collected from five (5) Peninsular

Malaysia zones: Kedah, Kelantan, Johor, Perak and Melaka. Surveys were distributed on site at the recreational park areas that are frequented by people from most levels of Malaysian society. Questionnaires were distributed to groups of 8 participants at a time to ensure proper supervision of the data collection process. A central investigator was present at all times during data collection.

### Data analysis

This section will analyze five (5) different perspectives on physical activity which include social, wellbeing, personal, risk and safety, and leisure. The data presented in numbers and percentage to identify the perspective and differences towards physical activities among the three major ethnic groups in Malaysia.

### Social factor

Table 2 shows that regardless of ethnicity, majority of respondents (Malays 87%, Chinese 75% and Indians 72%) are agreed that physical activities are the source of interaction. Majority of Malays (89%), Chinese (87%) and Indians (89%) also agreed that sport events promote socialization. All the three major ethnic group do not deny that involvement in physical activity promoting the value of respect and majority of them (Malay 93%, Chinese 89% and Indian 82%) agreed that the parents must allow their children to do physical activities because it enhances their relationship with other segments of the society.

**Table 2:** Social as a perspective towards physical activity among major ethnic group in Peninsular Malaysia

Social	Malay					Chinese					Indian				
	SD	DNA	LA	AG	SA	SD	DNA	LA	AG	SA	SD	DNA	LA	AG	SA
Physical activities are the source of interaction among people.	1 (1%)	3 (2%)	13 (10%)	70 (54%)	43 (33%)	1 (1%)	3 (3%)	19 (20%)	44 (46%)	28 (29%)	1 (2%)	2 (5%)	9 (20%)	20 (45%)	12 (27%)
National and annual sports day of the schools/university and other celebrations promote socialization.	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	12 (9%)	64 (49%)	52 (40%)	-	3 (3%)	10 (11%)	51 (54%)	31 (33%)	1 (2%)	2 (5%)	2 (5%)	17 (39%)	22 (50%)
Physical educationalist should avoid close intimacy with the other people because it lowered his great respect.	-	1 (1%)	7 (5%)	59 (45%)	63 (48%)	1 (1%)	4 (4%)	6 (6%)	48 (51%)	36 (38%)	-	1 (2%)	7 (16%)	19 (43%)	17 (39%)
Parents must allow their children to do physical activities because it enhances his relationship with other segments of the society	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	10 (8%)	64 (49%)	54 (42%)	1 (1%)	6 (6%)	16 (17%)	47 (49%)	25 (26%)	-	2 (5%)	9 (20%)	16 (36%)	17 (39%)
Physical activities do not promote the positive attitude towards people	-	-	28 (22%)	75 (58%)	27 (21%)	-	9 (9%)	27 (28%)	46 (48%)	13 (14%)	2 (5%)	1 (2%)	15 (34%)	19 (43%)	7 (16%)
Participating in physical activities gives public identity to participants	1 (1%)	3 (2%)	17 (13%)	70 (54%)	39 (30%)	-	2 (2%)	19 (20%)	58 (61%)	16 (17%)	-	1 (2%)	9 (20%)	23 (52%)	11 (25%)
Total	130 (100%)					95 (100%)					44 (100%)				

Notes: SD: Strongly Disagree; DNA: Do Not Agree; LA: Less Agree; AG: Agree and SA: Strongly Agree

### Well-being

Table 3 shows that regardless of ethnicity, majority of Malays (61%), Chinese (63%) and Indians (55%) are disagreed that physical activities have negative impact on moral behavior. The Malay (53%), Chinese (36%) and Indian (41%) also disagreed that educational abilities of the students are affected while participating in physical activities. Instead, most of respondents (Malay 89%, Chinese 87% and Indian 89%) agreed that to promote better health conditions, people may take part in the sports activities. Majority of Malays (93%) and Indians (82%) agreed that physical activities are one of the sources for fitness while for Chinese, only 62% are agreed

and 35% are less agreed. The Chinese perhaps belief that there are several sources for fitness apart from physical activities.

Table 3 also shows that Malays (37%), Chinese (32%) and Indians (30%) are less agreed on the statement saying posture deformities cannot be improved by taking part in physical activities. On the other hand, they (Malay 92%, Chinese 86% and Indian 93%) are agreed that participation in physical activities reduces the risk of heart diseases. They (Malay 90%, Chinese 86% and Indian 87%) also agreed that by taking part in physical activities people can get rid of all the worries, tension and illness.

**Table 3:** Well-being as a perspective towards physical activity among major ethnic group in Peninsular Malaysia

Well-being	Malay					Chinese					Indian				
	SD	DNA	LA	AG	SA	SD	DNA	LA	AG	SA	SD	DNA	LA	AG	SA
Physical activities have negative impact on moral behaviour	49 (38%)	30 (23%)	24 (18%)	22 (17%)	5 (4%)	36 (38%)	24 (25%)	19 (20%)	12 (13%)	4 (4%)	13 (30%)	11 (25%)	10 (23%)	7 (16%)	3 (7%)
Educational abilities of the students are affected while participating in physical activities	33 (25%)	36 (28%)	41 (32%)	18 (14%)	2 (2%)	21 (22%)	16 (17%)	34 (36%)	20 (21%)	4 (4%)	10 (23%)	8 (18%)	13 (30%)	11 (25%)	2 (5%)
To promote better health conditions, people may take part in the sports activities	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	12 (9%)	64 (49%)	52 (40%)	-	3 (3%)	10 (11%)	51 (54%)	31 (33%)	1 (2%)	2 (5%)	2 (5%)	17 (39%)	22 (50%)
Physical activities are one of the sources for fitness	-	1 (1%)	7 (5%)	59 (45%)	63 (48%)	-	3 (3%)	33 (35%)	39 (41%)	20 (21%)	-	1 (2%)	7 (16%)	19 (43%)	17 (39%)
Posture deformities cannot be improved by taking part in physical activities.	19 (15%)	28 (22%)	48 (37%)	26 (20%)	9 (7%)	18 (19%)	22 (23%)	30 (32%)	19 (20%)	6 (6%)	6 (14%)	10 (23%)	13 (30%)	11 (25%)	4 (9%)
Participation in physical activities reduces the risk of heart diseases.	-	1 (1%)	10 (8%)	75 (58%)	44 (34%)	-	2 (2%)	12 (13%)	49 (52%)	32 (34%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	23 (52%)	18 (41%)
To get rid of all the worries, tension, and illness one should take part in physical activities.	-	2 (2%)	11 (8%)	76 (58%)	41 (32%)	-	4 (4%)	9 (9%)	54 (57%)	28 (29%)	2 (5%)	1 (2%)	3 (7%)	21 (48%)	17 (39%)
Physical activities are adding artistic movement in an individual.	-	6 (5%)	23 (18%)	71 (55%)	30 (23%)	-	3 (3%)	33 (35%)	39 (41%)	20 (21%)	1 (2%)	4 (9%)	11 (25%)	22 (50%)	6 (14%)
Creative movements and skills are developed while participating in physical activities.	1 (1%)	1 (2%)	18 (14%)	57 (44%)	51 (39%)	-	6 (6%)	28 (29%)	42 (44%)	19 (20%)	-	-	10 (23%)	18 (41%)	16 (36%)
The overall attitude people towards physical activities	1 (1%)	4 (3%)	34 (26%)	66 (51%)	25 (19%)	1 (1%)	4 (4%)	26 (27%)	45 (47%)	19 (20%)	-	2 (5%)	10 (23%)	17 (39%)	15 (34%)
Total	130 (100%)					95 (100%)					44 (100%)				

Notes: SD: Strongly Disagree; DNA: Do Not Agree; LA: Less Agree; AG: Agree and SA: Strongly Agree

### Personal

Table 4 shows that regardless of ethnicity, the respondents as a whole (Malay 81%, Chinese 74% or Indian 75%) agreed that growth and development factors affected by movement can be enhanced through participation in physical activities. The respondents (Malay 89%, Chinese 79% and Indian 85%) also agree that mental satisfaction can be achieved while participating in physical activities. Most of respondents (Malay 93%, Chinese 83% and Indian 81%) believe that a person who participated in physical activities is well control of his body. The result also shows that all ethnic groups (Malay 94%, Chinese 83% and Indian 82%) are confident that participation in sports develops self-control in trying situations. In fact, there are also confident that taking part in

sport events could give personal satisfaction.

On the other hand, the respondents disagree (Malay 59%, Chinese 56% and Indian 50%) on the statement said good body shape cannot be developed through participation in physical activities. As expected, most of the respondents agree that participation in physical activities enhanced the sense of appreciation of others in which Malay 86%, Chinese 81% and Indian 75%. Instead, they disagree (Malay 50%, Chinese 52% and Indian 50%) that physical activities are not one of the sources of developing a good personality. However, all ethnic groups (Malay 84%, Chinese 78% and Indian 77%) unanimously agree that participation in physical activities controls the emotions of individual.

**Table 4:** Personal as a perspective towards physical activity among major ethnic group in Peninsular Malaysia

Personal	Malay					Chinese					Indian				
	SD	DNA	LA	AG	SA	SD	DNA	LA	AG	SA	SD	DNA	LA	AG	SA
Growth and development factors affected by movement can be enhanced through participation in physical activities.	1 (1%)	8 (6%)	15 (12%)	68 (52%)	38 (29%)	1 (1%)	3 (3%)	21 (22%)	40 (42%)	30 (32%)	2 (5%)	4 (9%)	5 (11%)	26 (59%)	7 (16%)
Mental satisfaction can be achieved while participating in physical activities.	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	12 (9%)	74 (57%)	42 (32%)	-	5 (5%)	15 (16%)	50 (53%)	25 (26%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	4 (9%)	24 (55%)	14 (32%)
A person who participated in physical activities is well control of his body.	1 (1%)	2 (2%)	7 (5%)	67 (52%)	53 (41%)	-	6 (6%)	10 (11%)	54 (57%)	25 (26%)	1 (2%)	2 (5%)	5 (11%)	19 (43%)	17 (39%)
Participation in sports develops self-control in trying situations.	-	1 (1%)	7 (5%)	77 (59%)	45 (35%)	-	2 (2%)	12 (13%)	51 (54%)	30 (32%)	-	1 (2%)	5 (11%)	26 (59%)	12 (27%)
Taking part in sports events give your personal satisfaction.	-	2 (2%)	16 (12%)	57 (44%)	55 (42%)	-	-	18 (19%)	42 (44%)	35 (37%)	-	2 (5%)	9 (20%)	17 (39%)	16 (36%)
Good body shape cannot be developed through participation in physical activities.	39 (30%)	38 (29%)	3 (23%)	14 (11%)	9 (7%)	31 (33%)	22 (23%)	20 (21%)	18 (19%)	4 (4%)	11 (25%)	11 (25%)	9 (20%)	9 (20%)	4 (9%)
Participation in physical activities	-	-	28	75	27	-	9	27	46	13	2	1	15	19	7



enhanced the sense of appreciation of others			(22%)	(58%)	(21%)		(9%)	(28%)	(48%)	(14%)	(5%)	(2%)	(34%)	(43%)	(16%)
Physical activities are not one of the sources of developing a good personality	30 (23%)	35 (27%)	30 (23%)	30 (23%)	5 (4%)	25 (26%)	25 (26%)	16 (17%)	20 (21%)	9 (9%)	11 (25%)	11 (25%)	8 (18%)	10 (23%)	4 (9%)
Participation in physical activities controls the emotions of individual.	1 (1%)	3 (2%)	17 (13%)	70 (54%)	39 (30%)	-	2 (2%)	19 (20%)	58 (61%)	16 (17%)	-	1 (2%)	9 (20%)	23 (52%)	11 (25%)
Total	130 (100%)					95 (100%)					44 (100%)				

Notes: SD: Strongly Disagree; DNA: Do Not Agree; LA: Less Agree; AG: Agree and SA: Strongly Agree

### Risk and safety

Table 5, shows that the majority of respondents, Malay (33%), Chinese (27%) and Indian (30%) are less agree on the statement that participation in physical activities is dangerous and risky for children. The majority of them (Malay 28%, Chinese 32% and Indian 36%) also less agree on the statement that participation in physical activities may cause physical handicap. Responding on whether physical activities are life threatening experiences, most Malays (50%) and

Chinese (46%) are disagree while majority Indian (32%) are less agreed. Regardless of ethnicity, very small number of them (Malay 4%, Chinese 4% and Indian 7%) are agreed on the statement said physical activities are life threatening experiences. Most respondents, however, believe that the harsh behavior can be modified while taking part in physical activities with 71% Malay, 65% Chinese and 61% Indian, agreed with this statement.

**Table 5:** Risk and safety as a perspective towards physical activity among major ethnic group in Peninsular Malaysia

Risk & Safety	Malay					Chinese					Indian				
	SD	DNA	LA	AG	SA	SD	DNA	LA	AG	SA	SD	DNA	LA	AG	SA
Participation in physical activities is dangerous and risky for children.	28 (22%)	31 (24%)	43 (33%)	21 (16%)	7 (5%)	24 (25%)	26 (27%)	26 (27%)	10 (11%)	9 (9%)	10 (23%)	9 (20%)	13 (30%)	7 (16%)	5 (11%)
Participation in physical activities may cause physical handicap.	29 (22%)	30 (23%)	37 (28%)	25 (19%)	9 (7%)	17 (18%)	23 (24%)	30 (32%)	18 (19%)	7 (7%)	6 (14%)	6 (14%)	16 (36%)	14 (32%)	2 (5%)
Physical activities are life threatening experiences.	34 (26%)	31 (24%)	39 (30%)	21 (16%)	5 (4%)	20 (21%)	24 (25%)	28 (29%)	19 (20%)	4 (4%)	8 (18%)	9 (20%)	14 (32%)	10 (23%)	3 (7%)
Harsh behaviour can be modified while taking part in physical activities.	-	4 (3%)	34 (26%)	65 (50%)	27 (21%)	1 (1%)	2 (2%)	30 (32%)	46 (48%)	16 (17%)	-	2 (5%)	15 (34%)	20 (45%)	7 (16%)
Total	130 (100%)					95 (100%)					44 (100%)				

Notes: SD: Strongly Disagree; DNA: Do Not Agree; LA: Less Agree; AG: Agree and SA: Strongly Agree

### Leisure

Table 6 below, shows that Regardless of ethnicity, the respondents as a whole (Malay 91%, Chinese 75% or Indian 75%) agreed that physical activity is a source of excitement. Instead, they disagree (Malay 77%, Chinese 63% and Indian 45%) that pleasure cannot be achieved through physical

activity. Respondents regardless of ethnicity also agreed (Malay 90%, Chinese 84% and Indian 91%) that involvement in physical activity is worthy use of leisure and they also agreed (Malay 87%, Chinese 81% and Indian 84%) that people may be afforded freedom in their physical activities in order to remove boredom.

**Table 6:** Leisure as a perspective towards physical activity among major ethnic group in Peninsular Malaysia

Leisure	Malay					Chinese					Indian				
	SD	DNA	LA	AG	SA	SD	DNA	LA	AG	SA	SD	DNA	LA	AG	SA
Physical activities are the source of excitement.	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	10 (8%)	64 (49%)	54 (42%)	1 (1%)	6 (6%)	16 (17%)	47 (49%)	25 (26%)	-	2 (5%)	9 (20%)	16 (36%)	17 (39%)
Pleasure cannot be achieved through physical activities.	35 (27%)	42 (32%)	24 (18%)	21 (16%)	8 (6%)	29 (31%)	34 (36%)	12 (13%)	17 (18%)	3 (3%)	8 (18%)	12 (27%)	14 (32%)	9 (20%)	1 (2%)
Engagement in physical activities is worthy use of leisure.	-	1 (1%)	12 (9%)	53 (41%)	64 (49%)	-	3 (3%)	8 (8%)	54 (57%)	30 (32%)	-	2 (5%)	2 (5%)	18 (41%)	22 (50%)
People may be afforded freedom in their physical activities in order to remove any sign of boredom.	-	3 (2%)	13 (10%)	68 (52%)	46 (35%)	-	2 (2%)	16 (17%)	45 (47%)	32 (34%)	-	2 (5%)	5 (11%)	20 (45%)	17 (39%)
Total	130 (100%)					95 (100%)					44 (100%)				

Notes: SD: Strongly Disagree; DNA: Do Not Agree; LA: Less Agree; AG: Agree and SA: Strongly Agree

### Discussion

We gained social benefits through physical activities. According to Nicole (2018) [12], physical activities improve self-image, increases self-esteem, reduce stress and anxiety and allow us making friends. As part of social, wellbeing is a positive physical and mental state which stems from a host of collective relationship with people and places. Apparently, perspective on physical activity in the context of wellbeing among the Malays, Chinese and Indians do not differ significantly. This finding supported by Scully *et al.* (1998)

[13], whom stated, “a range of exercise regimens may be able play a therapeutic role in relation to a number of psychological disorders”. Thus, it is important to recognize the difficulties associated with adherence to physical activities.

Participation in physical activity creates moment-to-moment personal experience. Body image issues and self-efficacy are other examples of personal things that related to an active lifestyle. Data analysis of table 3 illustrates that involvement in physical activity is capable to improve a

person's personal status such as social, emotional, mental and physical aspects. This finding confirms that there is a strong relationship between physical activity and personality. This finding also supported by Sun, Norman, and While, (2012) [15] whom identified that personality was associated with positive attitudes towards physical activity.

Physical activities are always exposed to various safety issues before, during and after activities. Positive practices could avoid the occurrence of accidents that caused injuries to the participants. Risk management practices are an important element in the management of physical activities. This element is significant in increasing the wellbeing of a society where a safe and healthy population can be developed. Risk and safety can be an unresolved issue if it is not addressed properly. According to Kohl and Murray, (2021) [9], there are two primary unintended consequences (risks) of physical activity that have been extensively studied, which are musculoskeletal injury and exertion-related sudden cardiac death. Most of injury risk, however, can be prevented with proper use of safety gear and changes to the playing environment. Thus, the emphasize of education and awareness about safety precautions and potential injury is a priority in physical activity program.

As a country that is moving towards becoming a developed country, Malaysia recognizes the importance of physical leisure and leisure time management. The people are becoming wiser in arranging leisure time-used. Leisure participation has been proven to be beneficial and has a positive link to physical activity. Leisure should be viewed and approached from the larger holistic perspective of physical activity which emphasizes wellness, physical fitness, healthy life styles and stress management (Schallock, & Kiernan, 2020) [14]. Leisure, is definitely one of the most important motives of why people engage in physical activity. At the same time, however, the lack of formal lessons on leisure in schools and the lack of organized programs of how to use leisure time wisely, increased the likelihood of young people's involvement in sedentary and unhealthy activities. Social Cognitive Theory focus on environmental factors such as social norms, culture, community support, sports facilities and peers support to enhance the involvement in physical activities. The environmental factors will contribute towards behavioral changes for a healthy life.

### Conclusion

Regardless of ethnicity, most Malaysians are confident and believe that physical activity bring benefits in term of social, wellbeing, personal, risk and safety and leisure. Despite the existence of differences of what to wear, what to eat, what to belief and how to get along with others, the three main ethnic groups in Malaysia, Malay-Chinese-Indian, did not show significant differences regarding their perspectives on participation in physical activity. Anyone, regardless of skin color, has the right to engage, to learn and to understand physical activity. The Social Cognitive Theory can be a guidance to change our sedentary life style to an active and healthy behavior. The overview of this research enables us to take the next steps to develop a work-based project on physical activity.

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