

Leisure Activity Profile among Tribal Paramedical Male College Students of Tripura, A North-Eastern State of India

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Abstract: *The present research study aimed to investigate the detail profile of leisure activities chosen by the male paramedical tribal students of Tripura. The study found that, BMI value is within normal range which indicates good health status of the participants and also good impact of leisure activities on health. Most popular leisure activity was found to be internet surfing, followed by physical activities and listening music. No health issues had been reported by the participants.*

Keywords: Leisure activity, male tribal, college students, paramedical

1. Introduction

It is impossible to overestimate the importance of extracurricular activities for college students in the hectic and demanding world of higher education. It becomes more and more obvious that young brains need to strike a good balance between work and play as they negotiate the demands of academic life and strive for excellence. Recreational activities are essential for fostering overall well-being because they give kids a chance to relax, refuel, and develop personally. Outside of classrooms and study spaces, leisure activities offer an essential means of decompressing, being creative, and fostering social connections. This study examines the range of recreational pursuits among tribal male college students in Tripura, highlighting their significance in improving mental health, encouraging academic achievement, and fostering the general growth of well-rounded people.

Numerous studies have been conducted thus far on the impact of recreational activities on college students' academic performance across different nations (Erinjeri & Lobo, 2023; Turkson et. al., 2021; Leung & Lee, 2012). These researchers assert that recreational activities of any kind improve pupils' academic achievement across all educational levels. Rather than focusing on different types of leisure activities, more attention has been paid to the context and impact of leisure activities. Diversifying the student's free time activities not only reveals their areas of interest but also their hidden skills. The variety frequently aids in determining the cultural influence on the student's life and activities.

Numerous studies on recreational activities have been conducted on Ghanaian junior high school students (Turkson et al., 2021), Spanish secondary school students (Álvarez Muñoz & Hernández Prados, 2023), French teenagers (Lieuury et al., 2014), and many other groups of students. According to the data from the literature review, no research

has been done on the differences in the recreational pursuits of the male tribal paramedical college students in Tripura. The current research team made an effort to thoroughly examine the many leisure pursuits that male tribal college students have taken an interest in and are currently engaged in. The impact of culture on the subjects under investigation will also be highlighted in this study.

2. Material and methods

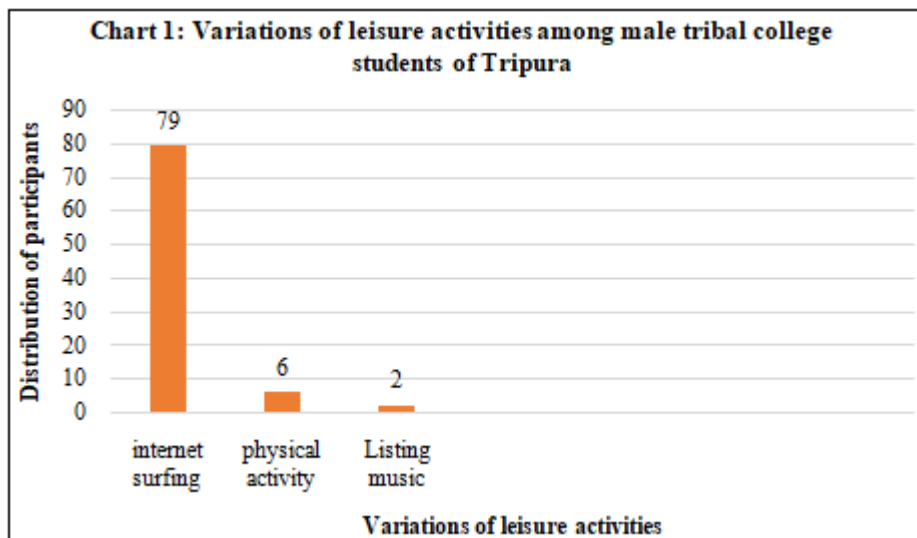
This cross-sectional study, which took place at paramedical institutions across West Tripura between October 2023 and December 2023, involved male college students, aged 19 to 21, who were chosen from tribal communities. The exclusion criteria included smoking and drinking frequently, having a family history of diabetes mellitus, having at least one obese parent, taking medication for a condition for longer than three months, and/or having genetic health issues. All of the subjects gave their informed consent. An anthropometric measurement tool and weighing machine are used to assess height (cm) and weight (kg) and computed their Body Mass Index (BMI). The use of in-person interviews allowed for the observation of patterns in leisure activities. In all, 87 male tribal students took part in the research.

3. Results

A total of 87 tribal male students responded. The baseline characteristics of the students are given in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Baseline health parameters of the subjects under study

Parameters	Value
Age (years)	19.6 ± 1.33
Height (cm.)	155.2 ± 6.62
Weight (Kg.)	52.3 ± 9.24
BMI (Kg./m ²)	22.1 ± 3.25



The variations of leisure time activities are shown in **Chart 1**.

It is clear from chart 1 that most involving leisure activity among the tribal male college students is internet surfing. Out of total 87 participants, 79 students are involved in internet during their leisure period which is almost 91% of

the total population studied. Physical activity comes next to internet surfing and 6 participants are found to be engaged in that. This constitutes almost 7% of the total population under study. Only 2 students spend their leisure time listening music and they are 2% of the total population surveyed. No other leisure activity has been reported by the participant apart from the mentioned.

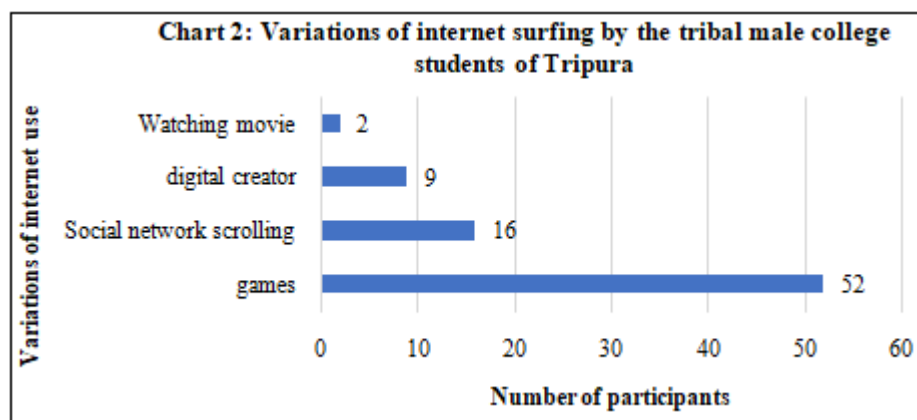


Chart 2 clearly shows the varieties of internet using by the participants under survey. Out of 79 internet surfers, during leisure time, 52 students opted games as their favorite leisure activity. This constitutes 66% of the total internet surfers. A total of 16 students out of 79, love to scroll different social networks. This is almost 20% of the total students involved in internet surfing during leisure period. A total of 9 students, i. e., 11% was found to be digital creators and earn money by various category of creations. Only 2 students (3%) was found to watch movie during leisure period using internet.

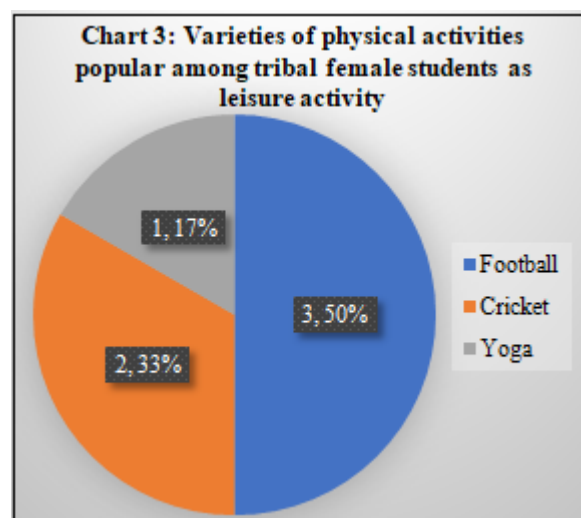


Chart 3 indicates the popular physical activities of the tribal male paramedical students as leisure activity. As it is clear from the chart that the students are not so much interested in physical activities. Among total of 6 participants, only 3

students are interested in football playing, 2 in cricket playing and only 1 student is interested in yoga. This result is alarming from the standpoint of health in near future. Though no students reported any type of serious health issues but if this negligence in the participation in physical activity continued, then in the long run these tribal student community may suffer from obesity, which in turn may cause more diseases like hypertension, hyperglycemia, diabetes mellitus etc.

4. Discussion

India's Tripura state located in the northeast and is well-known for its thriving indigenous populations and wide range of cultures. Numerous indigenous tribes reside in the state, and they all add to the distinctive fabric of Tripura's society. The Tripuris, Reangs, Jamatias, and Halam are a few of the important tribes in Tripura. Over the millennia, these indigenous groups have managed to maintain their unique traditions, languages, and rituals, contributing to the cultural diversity of the state. Tribal settlements dot the beautiful landscapes of Tripura, where customs, folk dances, and handicrafts are an essential part of everyday life. Tribal boys' attendance in colleges throughout Tripura has increased noticeably in recent years, signaling a change in favor of educating and empowering tribal men. Many demonstrate their perseverance and determination by overcoming socioeconomic obstacles and geographic impediments to higher education. Tribal male students take an active part in cultural events, exhibiting native dances, music, and art forms that add to the lively campus environment. This tribal male college students' presence not only promotes diversity but also helps dispel gender stereotypes, giving rise to a new generation of strong, independent men who want to improve their communities.

Internet browsing is the top leisure activity option among the male tribal college students under investigation. Lots of work has been done addressing the keen interest of students at all levels, for internet (Li et. al., 2021; Salarvand et. al., 2022; Yang et. al., 2022; Zenebe et. al., 2021). Some researchers labeled this desire as "addiction," which is detrimental to students' academic interests and health. The widespread usage of the internet has put the entire world at our fingertips, which can be advantageous or disadvantageous for social interactions and human behavior. According to Sengupta et al. (2023), the BMI (kg/m²) values of these students are normal, indicating that they are in good health. Therefore, the current study suggests that using the internet in leisure time does not negatively impact the general health of male tribal college students in Tripura who are enrolled in paramedical courses. The majority of students stated that they use the internet to play games during their free time to unwind after a stressful day. It has been stated that they play video games for money in their free time. Students are known to enjoy playing online games as a kind of leisure since they help them decompress. Worldwide research on the internet usage of paramedical students has been conducted. According to Johani et al. (2020), who examined the internet usage of paramedical students in Urmia, the rate of online dependency is moderate, and students do not have enough knowledge about internet addiction. Internet use can have both beneficial and

negative impacts if it is uncontrolled and excessive. According to research by Bazrafshan et al. (2019), if internet use is done without moderation, it can lead to depression in students studying to become paramedical students in Iran. A cross-sectional survey among medical and paramedical students in numerous Iraqi institutions found a moderate incidence of addiction among students without substantial gender discrepancies (Kamil & Yousif, 2022). In 2016, Shirazi et al. carried out a study with nursing students at a paramedical college. The findings showed a strong correlation between depression and Internet addiction in nursing students from the southern Fars province's Gerash Paramedical School and Hazrat Zainab School of Nursing. According to the literature evaluation, there hasn't been any research on how male tribal college students studying paramedicine in Tripura vary in their leisure activities.

Regarding physical activity as the second choice in leisure activities among participants truly unfolds the strange sight of the students towards their concern towards their own health. They prefer to sit or lie down during leisure periods to enjoy the shows and movies in internet, but not interested to mingle with friends and play or gossip after a tiring day. A study was conducted by Das & Barman (2019) regarding the way of spending leisure period of the college students. The study's overall findings investigated how the college students were choosing to spend their free time differently. In comparison to students who engaged in unpleasant leisure activities, those who enjoyed their free time were often in better mental health. Research indicates that students who engaged in various physical and social activities during their free time had significantly better mental health outcomes than those who did not engage in any physical or social activities. Additionally, it is investigated how much time students spent during their free time impacted their mental health. Baturay & Toker (2019) investigated on internet addiction of college students. The findings show that poor connections with professors, gaming addiction, and disregarding everyday tasks are all strongly linked to internet addiction. An internet addiction leads to feelings of loneliness and lowers social, intellectual, self-, and self-efficacy. It may be possible to educate parents, educators, and educational institutions on how to prevent or detect internet addiction. It is clear from these studies that healthy habits are always associated with good gesture and high social acceptance. So habit of good and fruitful leisure activities always beneficial for the students.

5. Conclusion

The present study found that tribal male paramedical college students are involved in different types of leisure activities. The most popular among all is internet surfing, within which playing games is given the first preference. Next to internet surfing is physical activity which reflects not a good habit of the community. Third most popular leisure activity is found to be listening music. All leisure activities mainly aim to reduce the whole day academic stress.

6. Limitations

There are restrictions on the study samples with regard to age, educational level, and social status. The outcomes can

be indicative of the samples' homogeneity. Samples from diverse age groups should be included in future studies to give a fair comparison with non - tribal counterparts. The western part of Tripura was the exclusive focus of the study. There might be more regions mentioned.

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