

Perceived Barriers to Physical Education in Tokoroa High School's Year 10 Students

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Background

- Obesity (BMI>30) is an increasing social issue, with predictions that most adults will be obese or overweight (BMI>25) by 2030 globally. [1]
- Proper nutrition and consistent participation in physical activity are the most effective methods for curing and preventing obesity. [2]
- High school Physical Education (PE) classes represent an opportunity to teach these methods.
- The perceived barriers students face when it comes to the enjoyment of PE may present an obstacle to teaching these methods.
- Most existing research on student barriers to PE use interview techniques and focusses on females. This indicates that females face extensive barriers with little evidence that males face any. [3, 4]
- The current study used a questionnaire to determine the barriers of male and female students for the first time in New Zealand.

Research Questions

1. What barriers do year 10 students at Tokoroa High School face when it comes to participation in physical education class?
2. What is the difference between males and females and their barriers to physical education at Tokoroa High School?

Methods

- Participants were the year 10 student group (N=91) at Tokoroa High School.
- A questionnaire was created using Qualtrics software.
- Questions focussed on the student's feelings towards PE, specifically relating to perceptions of self, classmates, teachers, content and importance to health, with appropriate questions selected from previously published studies (question 1 related to gender).
- The online questionnaire took 10-15 minutes to complete and was completed during class time on 4th August, 2017.

Results

Question	Answer	Percentage giving answer		
		Overall	Female	Male
2 Would you rather there was a set uniform or are you happy choosing what to wear during PE?	A1 Set Uniform	39.6	43.9	36.0
	A2 Choice	60.4	56.1	64.0
3 Do you feel embarrassed if you can't perform a hard or complicated skill as well as your classmates?	A1 Yes	35.2	41.5	30.0
	A2 No	64.8	58.5	70.0
4 Would you rather PE was separated into boys and girls classes?	A1 Yes	29.7	19.5	38.0
	A2 No	70.3	80.5	62.0
5 Does having PE class in the morning make you feel uncomfortable throughout the rest of the day (because of being sweaty or feeling tired?)	A1 Yes	40.7	41.5	40.0
	A2 No	59.3	58.5	60.0
6 Do your classmates make PE too competitive?	A1 Yes	41.8	46.3	38.0
	A2 No	58.2	53.7	62.0
7 Do your classmates not take PE seriously enough?	A1 Yes	55.0	56.1	54.0
	A2 No	45.0	43.9	46.0
8 Do your teachers generally try to make everyone feel included in PE?	A1 Yes	82.4	92.7	74.0
	A2 No	17.6	7.3	26.0
9 This year so far, have you enjoyed the content taught to you in PE?	A1 Yes	82.4	85.4	80.0
	A2 No	17.6	14.6	20.0
10 Do you prefer to participate in activities that create competition (e.g. sports games) or activities that are not competitive (e.g. dance, yoga)?	A1 Competitive	61.5	53.7	68.0
	A2 Non-Competitive	38.5	46.3	32.0
11 Do you think PE is important to help you live a healthy lifestyle?	A1 Yes	95.6	90.2	100.0
	A2 No	4.4	9.8	0.0
12 Do you think that PE should be a compulsory class in NCEA level 1, 2 and 3?	A1 Yes	63.7	56.1	70.0
	A2 No	36.3	43.9	30.0

Barriers Students Face

As a class, more than 50% (a majority) answered questions 2 (60.4%) and 7 (55.0%) in a way that highlighted these factors as barriers.

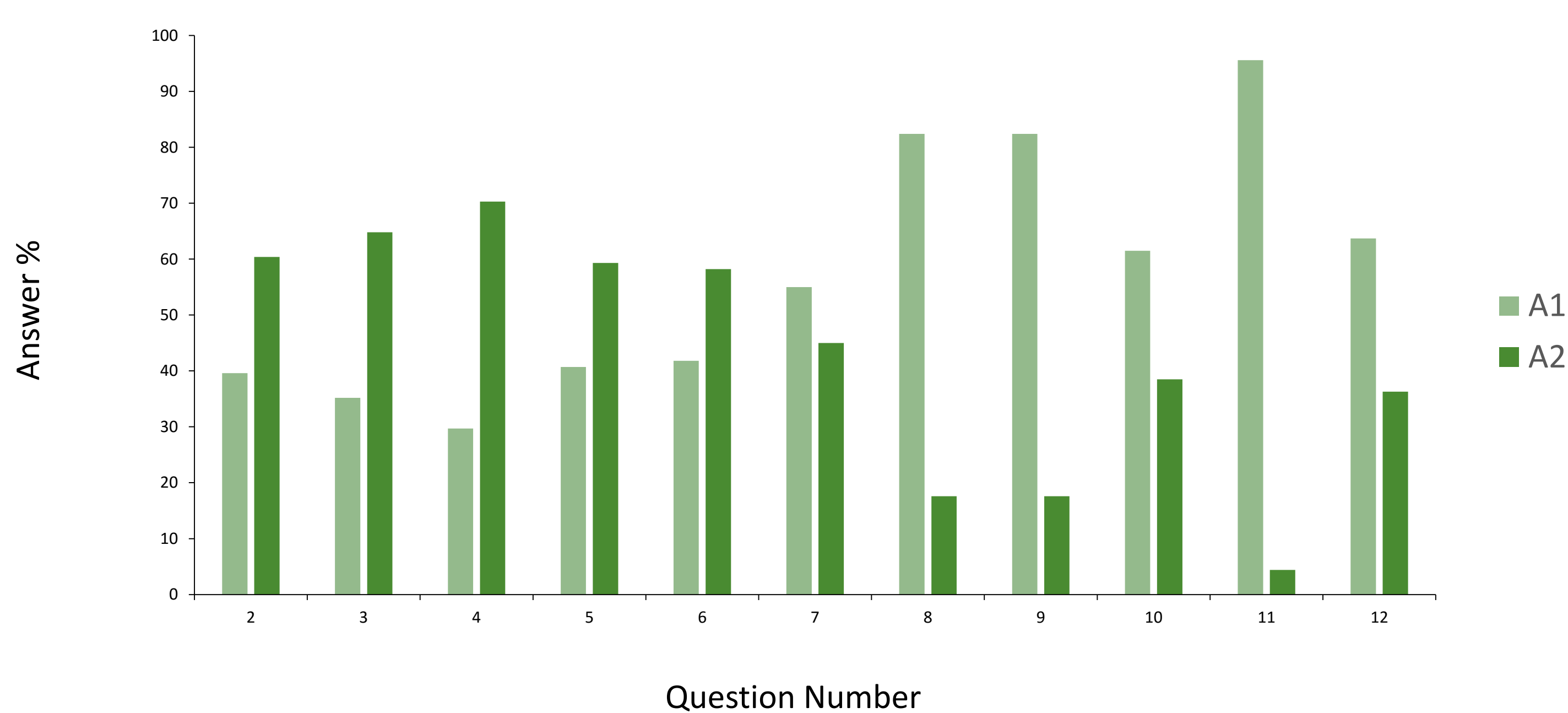


Figure 1. Percentage of answer given by all participants

Key Findings & Applications

- Wearing PE uniform (Q.2) was the most prominent barrier participants faced with 60.4% answering that they would rather choose what to wear.
- 55.0% of participants answered "yes" to question 7 making it the only other barrier a majority of the age group identified.
- Males showed the greatest desire to have separate sex classes, whilst females felt most strongly that teachers managed to include everyone in PE class, contrasting previous research findings. [4]
- Implications for PE teachers include collaborating with students to create uniforms and classes that foster the most positive learning environments.

Difference Between Males and Females

Five questions showed a greater than 10% difference between the answers given by males versus females: 3, 4, 8, 10 and 12, indicating a substantial difference in the views of males and females regarding these factors.

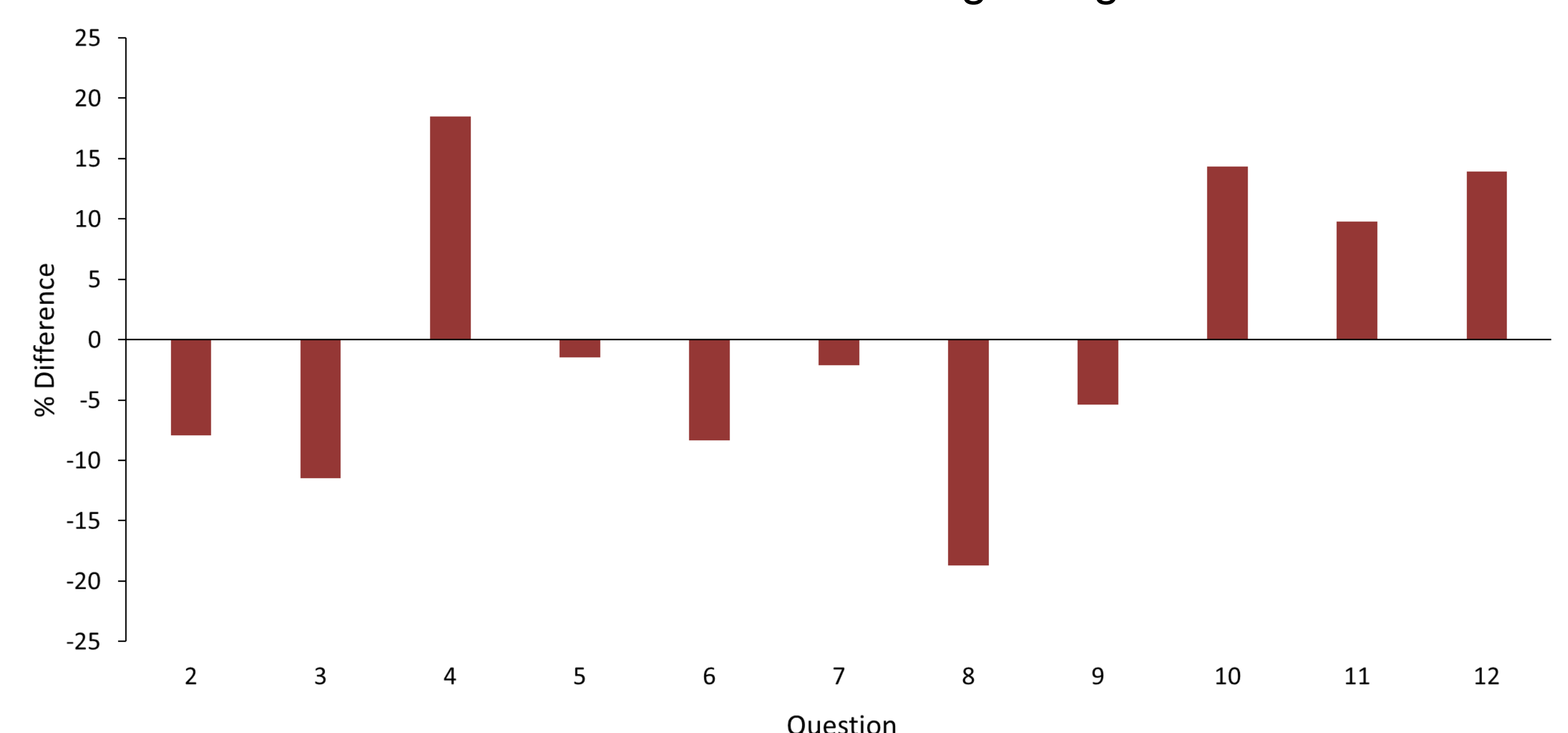


Figure 2. The % difference between the number of A1 answers given by males and females for questions 2 – 12

References

1. Kelly, T., Yang, W., Chen, C.-S., Reynolds, K., & He, J. (2008). Global burden of obesity in 2005 and projections to 2030. *International Journal of Obesity*, 32(9), 1431-1437.
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3. Coakley, J., & White, A. (1992). Making decisions: Gender and sport participation among British adolescents. *Sociology of sport journal*, 9(1), 20-35.
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