CHAPTER – I
1.1 INTRODUCTION

Attitude, the first word of English directory is a matter of how we feel about ourselves. If we feel good, the world look nicer and the performance of the person in terms of his work life, personal life improves and result is that the efficiency gets reinforced. Attitude is the approach adopted to reach the “top”. It is a very important part of an individual who dreams to do something great in life. The attitude building does not allow an overnight change but it is a regular trust through a constant process orientation. When we see people adapting to positive thinking, they develop a positive attitude. Those people, who plan their positively, move forward in life and contribute greatly to themselves, their families, and their organization and in the process get involved in the nation building. A person who thinks negatively, always get the negative results. Attitude has a clear linkage to the heart of a person. If the heart is involved in whatever one does, the most difficult jobs/projects become easier. If one feels proud of what he is doing, it becomes a great motivator itself. One must certainly take the things in positive stride; it can give positive vibration and energy in accomplishing a task.

We are today in the era of globalization and liberalization wherein we have to compete with the world. There is no doubt that we have the best talent available in this Great Nation. It is the attitude, which is missing, the will to work and the will to excel. If one looks at India, we find an interesting paradox. India has about 16% of world population but it has less than 1% of world GDP. Recently India crossed the one billion mark in population. We are said to have the largest pools of technical talent available in the country. But at the
same time we are one of the lowest productivity in the world. This is because the attitude is missing. If we take this as a challenge and opportunity and change our attitude towards excellence, we can do it. We can certainly leverage on our resources, especially in this millennium, to use our attitude into a competitive advantage for the nation building. While better infrastructure, resources and use of information technology can help in improving the productivity and performance, key to a radical change will come through attitude building in our people. We need to go into paradigm shift in this millennium. We, therefore, need to dream to be through a right attitude in life.

It is the attitude and not the aptitude that determines the altitude of a person. While we get involved in our day to day affairs, we need to keep our attitude as high as possible. There are various dimensions to the attitude. If we see in our professional and personal lives, we find people highly successful in managing their lives if they exhibit a right attitude. People, who tend to go towards negative situations, always get negative results in life. People who think positively always implement positive actions and do get positive results in hand. It is well said "The success of an individual, an organization, a society or a nation depends on the attitude of their people." If people have right attitude they make good teams and work effectively towards achieving the desired goals to ensure success in their objectives. One can certainly make changes in the attitude if he/she desires to do that. The desire of doing things comes from within i.e. from the heart. If the heart is full of desire to excel, one can certainly get excellence in life.

Attitudes, the effective by–products of an individual's experiences, have their bases in his inner urges, acquired habits, and the environmental influences by which he is surrounded.
We are not born with our attitudes, but develop them as accompaniments of experience. Attitudes grow and develop, as do other mental and emotional behavior patterns, in terms of an individual's reactions to his environment. They also alter his developmental patterns as he continues to experience a kind of give and take between himself and his parents, his teachers and his associates, as well as other environmental stimuli.

Attitudes are contagious; Children are great imitators of attitudes, which are caught as they are taught. They learn many of their attitudes from their parents, their teachers, and other older associates. Parents may attempt to force their attitude upon their children, often with little or no success. However, as the members of a family live together and as the elders express their attitudes concerning people and current issues, children tend to develop the same or similar attitudes without realizing that they are doing so. A child tends to fall in line with accepted group attitudes. He acts with little understanding of the reason for his behavior. What he does often is divorced from his best interest.

An adolescent's attitudes are more personal, and directed by his own individual drives. Behavior on the part of elders that interferes with his freedom may stimulate adolescent antagonisms. The teen-ager may come to feel that adults are intolerant and non-understanding. He considers himself to be “broadminded.” Actually his attitudes are biased in terms of his personal wishes and felt needs. His behavior may be motivated by an attitude of self-sufficiency or a belief in his own personal power and rightness.

In attitude building, it is critical for an individual to be fully knowledgeable. People, who have the knowledge of the best methods
and processes and can implement the same in the right frame of mind produce world class products, can give world class services. In today’s environment, the knowledge needs to be updated from time to time through various training and development programs. Learning to update knowledge as regular phenomenon is the key to success. There are many factors that determine the people attitude. It is a fact that people are not born with attitude but they develop these as they mature.

There are three primary factors which can determine the attitude:

1. Environment
2. Experience
3. Education

Let us try to examine each of the above in light of building attitude.

ENVIRONMENT:

The environment consists of positive and negative influences at home. It could also consist of peer pressure at the school and college level.

In today’s environment of media revolution, television plays a great role in building the environment. There are many other factors such as religious, cultural, social and political backgrounds, which can be very vital in building the environment which ultimately results in framing the attitude of the people.
EXPERIENCE:

The behaviour of a person changes according to the past experience with the person. If a person has a positive experience in the past with the other person, his attitude towards him becomes positive and in case there are some negative experiences, the attitude immediately turns into negative. Experience in the past could be bad, mad, and sad but it can turn out to be better with a positive reinforcement of the event/interaction provided one has a positive attitude.

EDUCATION:

There are two types of education, which can be primarily responsible for building the right attitude. There are informal and formal education processes involved. A teacher can play a vital and key role in building the attitude. If the teacher himself is in the form of a negative influence, it can deteriorate the student and student can follow the wrong steps by the path shown by the teacher. The teachers have to act as role model and whatever they preach must be first practiced by them before they ask the students to follow. A teacher, therefore, is one of the key essential factors for building the attitude of the future generations. The education system and education can teach the student how to make a living but can also teach how to live.

These three elements or factors can determine and shape the future of a person and hence it becomes the responsibility of both the parents and teachers to come out openly to build up the positive strength in the individual personality.

Creating powerful positive attitude: One must articulate one’s own attitude. One must make it so powerful enough to ignite the feeling. Let
it become a rallying point to create a positive attitude. One must communicate the feeling in a situation that it generates enthusiasm.

**Creating the right attitude with great ideas:** All great ideas are meaningless if they are not implemented rapidly, effectively with a positive thinking and direction. For this people must develop a right muscle tone. Big commitments are a series of small commitments and if one gets the habit of creating and meeting small commitments, there is always a great chance that the large vision and goals are achieved. It is only a driving force to create an attitude to convert ideas into action.

**Building passion:** We need to create a powerful passion in us and our people that will build the resilience to overcome all obstacles. Passion kindles a spark that inspire in and others around us to achieve greater heights. It brings a far higher ownership in us and which is so vital for our loving and enjoying what we are doing.

**Having courage:** If we want to win, we must be in the game. Seizing opportunity is not a reactive act. It is very active, creative act. Too often, we own all the right assets, but flinch at using them when it is time to put ourselves on the line. Ambition dangles success before our eyes, but we lack courage to pursue it. Courage comes from conviction and conviction comes from within i.e. from attitude.

**Admitting quickly and emphatically the wrong:** When we are right, let us try to win people gently and tactfully to our way of thinking and when we are wrong, that will surprisingly often, if we are honest to ourselves – let us admit our mistakes quickly and with enthusiasm.
Building a positive self esteem: Building self-esteem is nothing but feeling good about things. If we feel good about the situation, people and processes, the results would automatically be good. If we feel good within ourselves, the performance goes up; the relationship improves at home and at work. The world looks nicer and there is only one reason that there is co-relation between the feeling and behavior.

Giving positive interpretation on other people behaviour: It is always seen that without going to facts, people talk negative about other persons. One must try to give benefit of doubt to other person before reaching any conclusions. One must, therefore, try to be positive interpreter for others. This will build up positive relationships and would act as a catalyst in building positive attitude.

Building enthusiastic interaction: Enthusiasm and attitude go hand in hand. Enthusiasm can inspire confidence, raise morale and build loyalty and is always priceless. Enthusiasm can act as a proactive step in building the right attitude for the right interaction.

Developing a sense of humor: A sense of humor makes a person likable and attractive. One must learn to laugh at himself because it is safest humor. Laughter is the natural tranquillizer for people around the globe. It is therefore important to create the sense of humor in any interaction, which can lead to a development of a positive attitude personality. In order to build up positive attitude, one must take a decision to be positive and start working towards positive actions, behaviours, habits etc.

Many techniques may be considered to evaluate attitude viz. self reported method, Public opinion poll etc.
Self reported methods: Researcher ask people to respond to questions by expressing their personal views. The search for such measures involves psychological measures of one sort or another.

Opinion Polling: Opinion polling is essentially a method of finding out the attitudes and values of a specified population. It has become a specialized field of study and practice. Opinion Polling has been concerned also with a great variety or subjects dealing with social, economic, international and also with questions of consumer preferences usually called “Market Research” and now called, by some, “Motivational Research.”

The challenge to education is not only to pass on knowledge of culture, but also teach for transfer by helping students to generalize their behaviour through commitment and responsibility according to their perception of that knowledge. This challenge today is becoming more difficult as complex lifestyles become increasingly less effective in promoting this transmission in the human race. Unlike past generations when crisis occurred only occasionally, modern human beings live with crises daily economic, political, social, ecological, both at home and worldwide.

Physical Education has vital role for total development of a child. Physical education has become a subject study at “Madhyamik Pariksha” in West Bengal Board of Secondary Education. It has become also a subject of study at degree level under different Universities of the state. This education is indicated by the increasing opportunity for advanced study in this field. It is a growing field and to be more scientific this can be comparable to other advanced fields. It is
an integral part of total education process. Physical education is a
cross section study of man, not a longitudinal one and it is one of the
most important part of school level programme. In West Bengal,
Physical Education has become curricular requirement from the year
1974.

Attitude is an attractive concept in physical education because it
reflects an individual’s previous experiences with particular attitude
objects associated with physical education. Thus physical educators
have been measuring attitudes formally and informally for sometimes.
We often ask students, athletes, teachers or parents and their opinion
is simply the verbal expression of an attitude, but an attitude can be
expressed non-verbally as well.

On the basis of previous experiences, the research scholars has
an idea that attitude is one of the most important factors which
influence the development of productive Physical education
programme in the schools and colleges. So it is a very vital job for the
physical educators to judge or clarify the ideas and opinions of the
society as a whole towards physical education programme.

Physical education and psychological development

Physical education is concerned with human behaviour, and
physical activity can affect behaviour in many ways. Scott (1960) lists
seven ways in which physical activity contributes to psychological
development.

1. *Attitudes are changed.* Physical education can contribute to the
development of wholesome attitudes toward factors such as exercise,
learning of motor skills, fitness, and use of leisure hours. The desire for
and interest in physical activity will play an important role in determining the support the profession of physical education obtains in trying to achieve its goals of a fit population.

2. *Social efficiency is improved.* Physical education has the potential; it is believed, to contribute to proper group adjustments, to the development of desirable social traits such as honesty, sportsmanship, and reliability, and to the development of a socially desirable personality.

3. *Improved sensory perception and response accrue.* Although the research is inconclusive, there is some evidence that physical education can help to make a person more sensitive and responsive to the environment by the development of characteristics such as speed, visual perception, reaction time, depth perception, and kinesthetic awareness.

4. *Improved sense of well-being exists.* Physical education, it is believed, contributes to good mental health. By means of play and various forms of physical activity, an opportunity is afforded for emotional release and having fun, and it provides a supplement for daily work. Being physically active contributes to the development of a healthy personality. As William Menninger, a famous psychiatrist, stated in a speech: “Good mental health is directly related to the capacity and willingness of an individual to play. Regardless of his objections”, resistances, or past practice, any individual will make a wise investment for himself if he does plan time for his play and takes it seriously.
5. **Better relaxation is promoted.** Physical education has some support to show it can help to release muscular tension, together with affording an efficient motor response. Through selected forms of physical activity, there is some evidence that some forms of stress can be alleviated and thereby relaxation promoted in the individual.

6. **Relief is provided on psychosomatic problems.** More research should be conducted to determine the contributions of physical education to certain physical states such as chronic fatigue, dysmenorrhea, and phobias. Scott points out that there is more objective evidence on the effects of exercise on dysmenorrhea than on the other aspects.

7. **Skills are acquired.** One of physical education’s greatest contributions is through the development of physical skills in its programs.

**SPORTS**

The term “Sports has been coined from the word “Disport” which means diverting one self merely for fun or merry making”.

Sports in recent times are mainly of a competitive nature though their recreative values cannot be underestimated or denied. Despite the fighting attitude between the competitors, sports bring the different nations classes to a common platform and establish brotherhood and friendship between the people of different countries. Thus sports nowadays have changed a lot with the following characteristics:

1. More scientific and mass oriented.
2. Well organized and mostly health directed.

3. Elevate mental and physical stamina of the participants.

4. Help to acquire sound health of players and athletes.

5. Increase mental concentration.

6. Help to acquire the coverage to fight against odds and difficult situations.

7. Bring honour and social dignity to the successful participants.

8. Forge national integration and the international peace and brotherhood amongst the people of the whole world. (Sunil Thakur (1987).

It is important to examine student attitudes toward their curriculum as they can have a large impact on the success of a class. Attitudes develop at an early age and can be changed based on situational contexts such as a particular teacher or the class environment (Aicinena, 1991). In other words, a student’s attitude toward a particular subject in school can be shaped by his/her perception of the teacher or instructional setting. Attitudes toward physical activity and perceptions about physical education classes are important to understand as they can influence an individual’s decision to begin or to continue participation in an activity (Lee, Kang, and Hume, 1999; Silverman and Subramaniam, 1999).

Despite research on high school students’ attitudes toward physical education, no studies were found which have a focus on student attitudes toward physical education in relation to a curriculum driven by state content standards. While content standards are intended to assure that all students meet minimum curricular
requirements, if students do not find a need for physical education in their lives or do not find it valuable, the content standards possibly may have no meaning in their lives either. These attitudes may lead to avoidance behaviour or disruptive behaviour in the classroom. What may be one key to the relationships between student attitudes toward physical education and state content standard are the activities offered, the way in which these activities meet the standards, and the presentation of the activities to the students.

Therefore, the specific research questions are:

1. What are high school students’ attitudes toward physical education?
2. How other variables do influence student attitudes toward physical education.
3. What is the perceived importance of physical education?
4. What activities are perceived to be most important to the physical education curriculum?

As physical educators, we have to believe that we can have a major impact on this disturbing trend if we develop appropriate physical education programs. However, in order to maximize the success that physical education can have, it is important that students perceive physical education in a positive manner and learn to enjoy being physically active. Enjoyment of physical activity has been identified as one of the crucial factors for our youth and adolescents to remain active (Motl, Dishman, Saunders and Dowda, 2001; Sallis, Prochaska, Taylor, Hill and Geracci, 1999; Wankel, 1993). This is seen as a critical concern as many of these students will become influential members of
the community who will need to be supportive of our physical education programs for our efforts to continue.

To this end, it is important to consider that the students appeared to prefer a more traditional approach to physical education with a majority of students identifying team sports and games as the most enjoyable aspects of the curriculum. This was consistent with findings from previous studies (Tannehill and Zakrajsek, 1993; Tannehill et al., 1994). It is thought that this may also be due to the fact that many students have not experienced anything other than traditional physical education programs as well as the large number of students who participate in sports either interscholastically, intramurally, or on club teams outside of school.

Another important variable in physical education is the use of coeducational classes. Now, almost all physical education classes are coeducational. The students in this study preferred coeducational classes, a finding which is also supported in the literature (Rice, 1988; Tannehill et al., 1994). When asked why they enjoyed coeducational classes the most typical response was “to look at the girls/boys”. These findings would appear to be influenced by the students’ development stage and their heightened awareness of the opposite gender. Unfortunately, it can also be detrimental to the educational process. Therefore, it is recommended that although coeducational classes may increase the enjoyment they may not be as educationally productive as having more homogeneous grouping of physical education opportunities for the students. This concept is supported by the findings that the majority of students (64%) preferred to participate with students of similar abilities while only 10% indicated they preferred to participate with students of lesser ability. This clearly indicates the grouping of students may be helpful in increasing enjoyment and
possibly participation levels in our schools. This is likely to be of greatest importance at the secondary level as students are more likely to have more concern about peer response to their performance (Goodwin, 1997). Additionally, Kneer (1982) also states this type of grouping creates a much more effective teaching environment for the students. Those who have more skill can be provided additional challenge, while those who are not as skilled should have their needs addressed by adapting for their specific abilities and goals.

In order to address the issues of participating in team or individual sports and participating with classmates of similar ability, it is recommended that teachers incorporate team and individual sports into a fitness based curriculum. In other words, while the teachers should continue with the trend to teach students how to improve or maintain their health through being active, they may be well advised to structure their classes such that those who enjoy team or individual sports will have the opportunity to play small-sided games with classmates of similar ability. While the higher skilled students are working on a fitness or skill development task the less-skilled students may be playing the small sided game. Regardless, it is important to focus on teaching the students why they are doing what they are doing, the benefits they are gaining by participating in these activities.

Another avenue we believe should be strongly considered is increasing the number of elective physical education offerings for juniors and seniors. Obviously, this becomes a resource issue for many schools. However, in those schools where there are sufficient facilities to handle the additional students, elective courses can be extremely beneficial. While many of these students may choose sports or games, others may choose fitness options. Regardless of the
choice for activities, teachers will have more opportunities to help students remain active.

In order to continue to improve our physical education programs we must remember to listen to the students. We must then mesh their feedback with the state standards so that we can help students become healthy, active adults. Failure to accomplish these goals is likely to result in the continuation for the alarming increase in obesity rates. Our students must learn why physical activity is important to helping them become healthy and productive adults. We must also continue to monitor how the most and least active of our students are responding to the curricular changes that have been brought about by the development of state physical education standards. It is hoped that as the students become more familiar with fitness–based curriculum that they will learn more about why physical activity is so important, as well has how to exercise safely. As these changes are made, developing programs that are more effective for all of our students may lead to students gaining an appreciation for the importance of healthy active lifestyles that may carry on into adulthood.

Humans are designed and constructed for one thing–movement. Yet our society does everything it can to prevent movement. Our children have access to every “labor–saving” device that exists. They are not being saved at all, however, but rather being exposed to potential overweight, illness, and physiological deterioration (Thompson, 1998, p. 69 – 70).

In 1987, Siedentop cautioned that high school physical education was an endangered species; a subject matter that might gradually become extinct in secondary curricular. He argued that an increasing lack of expectations for significant outcomes in high
school physical education and even more alarming, concern that students have stopped caring about physical education would bring about its demise. Physical educators have a duty to alter the expectations of high school students, but the best curricular and most heroic expectations will be ineffective if negative attitudes toward the course lead students to ignore its value, then, is the agent that can change perceptions and the catalyst that can make physical education a positive educational experience. Although some of the researchers questioned the correlation between attitudes and actual behavior (Lapiere, 1934; Wicker, 1971) most researchers suggested that attitude and the individual's underlying belief system are considered the best indicators of the decisions people will make throughout their lives (Bandura, 1986; Dewey, 1933; and Pajares, 1992).

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of the study is to find out the attitude of general public of rural and urban areas towards physical education and sports at school level.

1.3. DELIMITATIONS

1. The study was delimited to general public of seventeen (17) districts of West Bengal.
2. The study was also confined to the general public consisting of teachers, guardians, day labourers, business people and office goers from rural and urban.

1.4. LIMITATION

1. The general public was oriented with the test before they were asked to answer the questions, but the researcher had no control over the sincerity of the subjects while making response to the questionnaire.

2. During addressing the general public regarding administration of the test there was no special motivational technique applied on them while responding to the questionnaire.

3. The research scholar had no control over the knowledge, information and thinking of the general public of rural and urban areas regarding the concept of physical education and sports.

1.5. HYPOTHESIS

After exchanging views with the cross-section of the general public it was expected that general public will have indifferent attitude towards the programme of physical education and sports at school level.
I.6. DEFINITION AND EXPLANATION OF TERMS

ATTITUDE

According to Allport (1991.) an attitude is “A mental and neural State of readiness, organised through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual’s response to all objects and situations with which it is related.

According to Scott (1960). “An attitude is a feeling or mood relative to active”.

According to Woodworth (1940) “An attitude is a set or disposition (readiness, inclination tendency) to act toward an object according to its characteristics so far we are acquainted with them.

I.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

1. The study will help to elevate mental and physical stamina of the participants.

2. There is imperative need for people’s involvement in physical activities and sports and games and their popularization for general health and fitness and this study is expected to make general public aware of this.
3. This study will contribute to raise awareness about the importance of physical education, sports, games among the school goers and their guardians.

4. This survey research might help to explore the levels of attitudes of general public towards physical education as a curricular subject in Secondary state of education in West Bengal.

5. This study is an attempt to reveal the attitudinal differences of the general public living in rural and urban areas towards physical education and sports activities at schools of West Bengal.

6. This study might help the physical education teachers working in Schools in evaluation of the existing physical education curriculum with greater magnitude.

7. The present study may add the new knowledge in the field of physical education in general and health habits of general public in particular.

8. The findings of the study may search the possibilities for reconsideration of the objectives of physical education. The study will help to evaluate as well as to prepare a new dimension of training programme for health, fitness and competitions.

9. The study also might help to explore the levels of interests and motivation towards physical education which may have a positive impact on the existing policies of the examination board and the policy makers.