

Physical Activity Habits and Lifestyle Habits of Japanese Preschool Children Living Germany from the Parental Perception

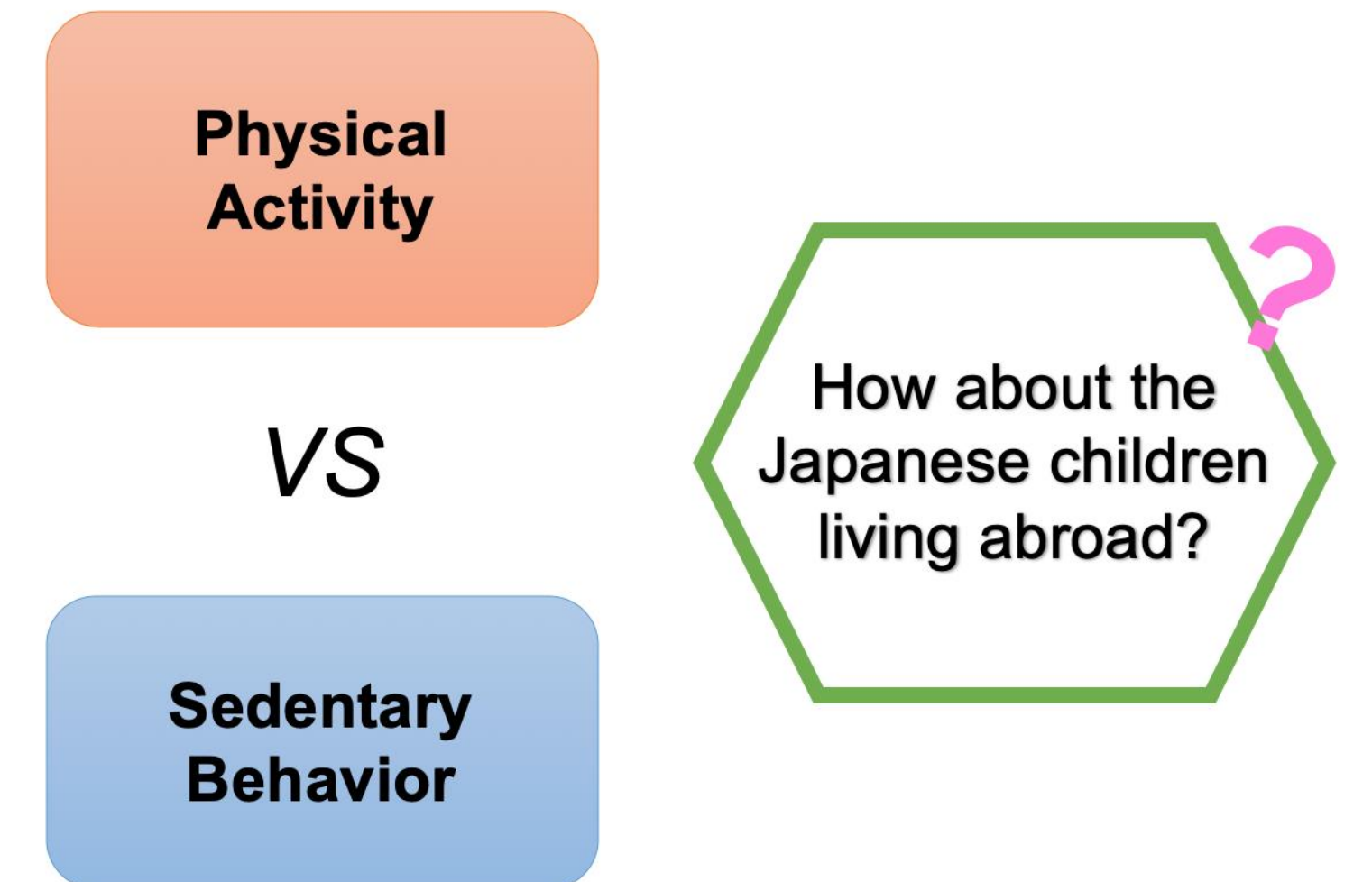
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Introduction • Aim

- As a worldwide issue, the increasing trend of sedentary behavior in preschool children is increasing and the time for physical activity tends to be decreased (Jason et al., 2007).
- Physical activity (PA) is an important factor to promote the physical and mental development in preschool children, and to reduce the risk of serious diseases such as obesity and cardiovascular error (Bürge et al., 2011; John, 2010; Andersen et al., 2008).
- The number of Japanese residents' children living abroad is increasing and Germany is ranked 8th as a popular country with increasing Japanese residents (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2018).
- Kato (1995) suspected the bias of physical activity experience on Japanese children living abroad, and common physical activity in Japan are not common for preschool children living abroad.
- However, there is less research about the physical activity habits and factors related to motor learning of Japanese children in Germany.



“To investigate the physical activity habits of Japanese preschool children living in Germany in order to clarify the influence of the ‘living abroad’ environment on physical activity experience”

Methods

Subjects A questionnaire survey was carried out on 75 parents who have preschool children (from three- to five-years-old) who attended the Japanese kindergarten in Germany on 10th to 28th February in 2020.

Measures The questionnaire survey which the authors created contains in total 21 questions related to physical activity habits (n = 9), lifestyle habits (n = 4), basic information of preschool children (n = 1) and parent’s perception toward the environment in Germany (n = 2). Participants were announced that the questionnaire used for the research and submission was regarded as the consent/agreement for the research.

Data Analysis 52 participants (69%) answered the questionnaire. The result was analyzed by using IBM SPSS statistics.26 to investigate the frequency distribution of physical activity habits and lifestyle habits of preschool children, and to compare the

results among boys and girls using the t-test to clarify the significance difference. Correlation among physical activity habits and physical activity experience was calculated, and the significance level was set to 5% or less.

Table 1. The number of Participants

	3-years-old	4-years-old	5-years-old	Total
Boys	9	8	14	31
Girls	8	9	3	21
Total	18	17	17	52

Results

Figure 1. Physical Activity Time and Screen Time

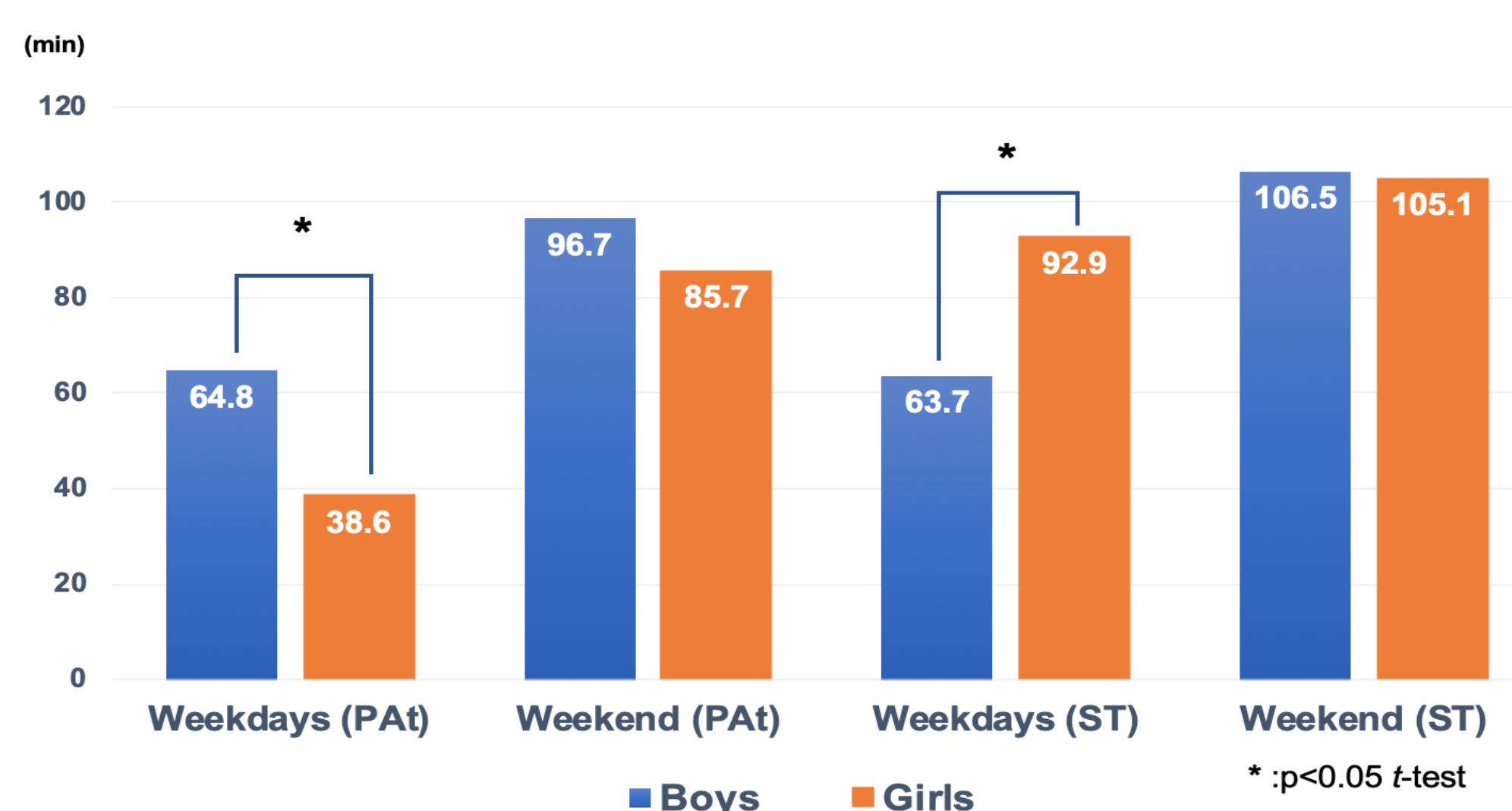


Figure 2. Correlation between Physical Activity Time and Sport Club Participation Rate

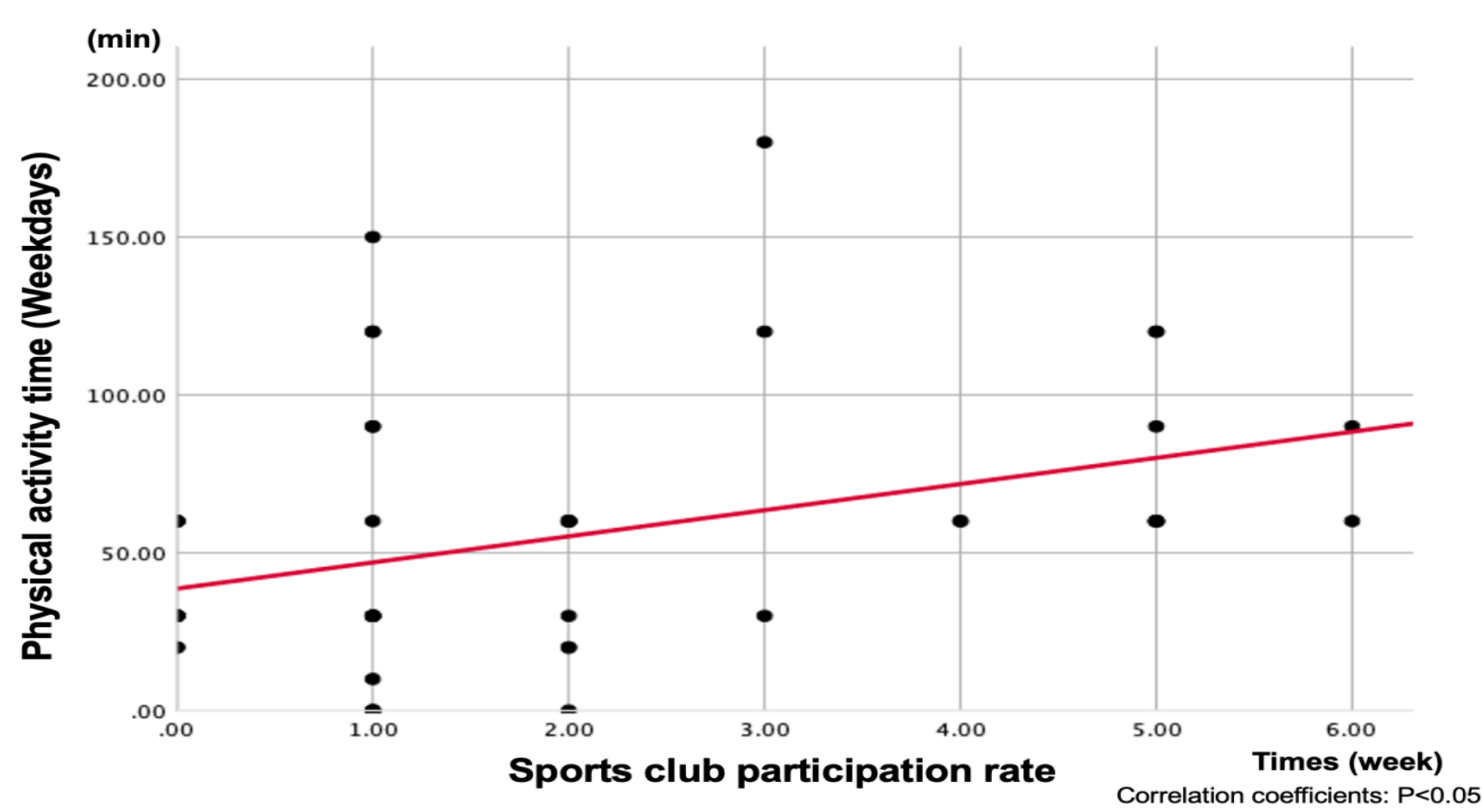


Figure 3. Popular Physical Activity

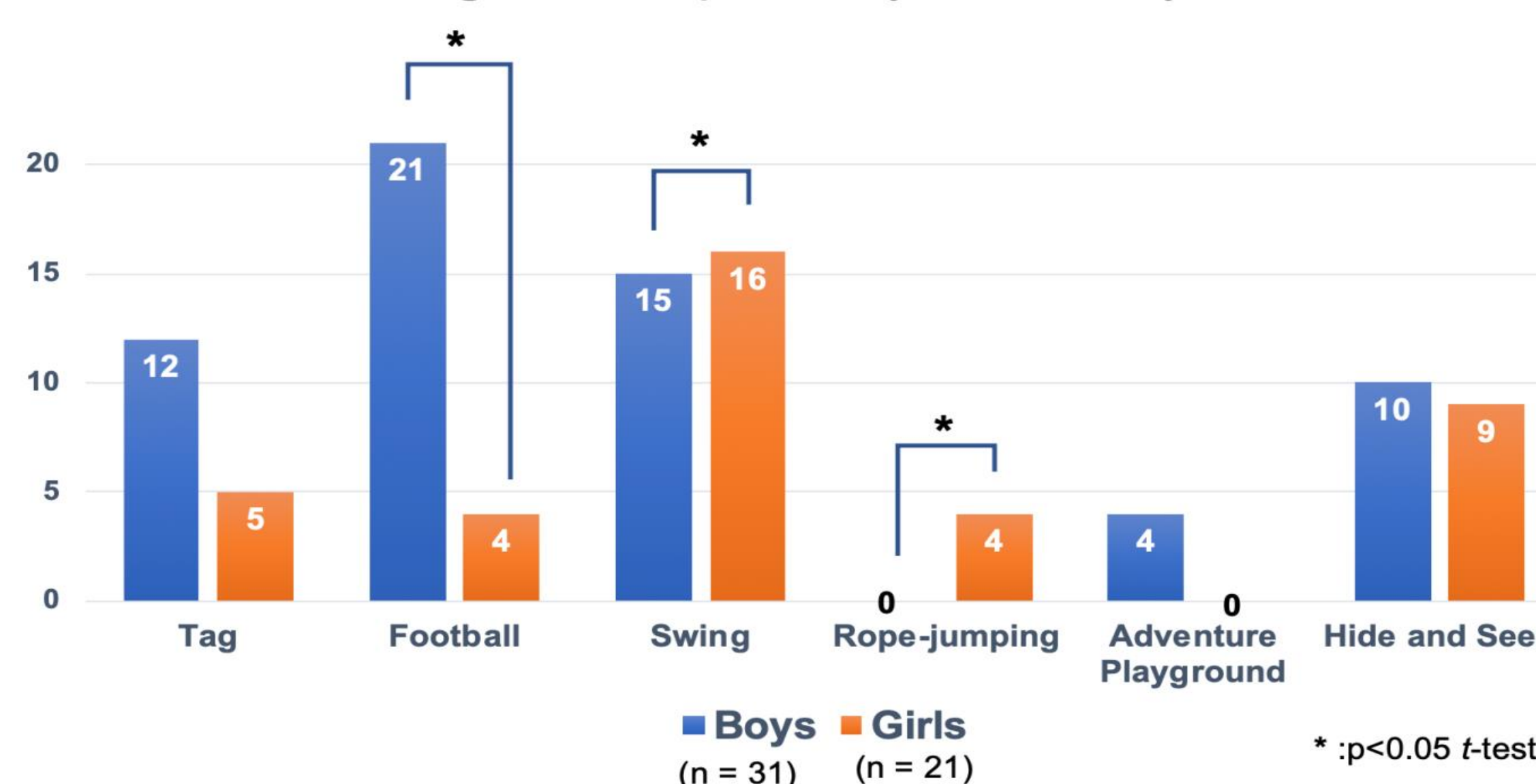


Figure 4. Popular Sports Club

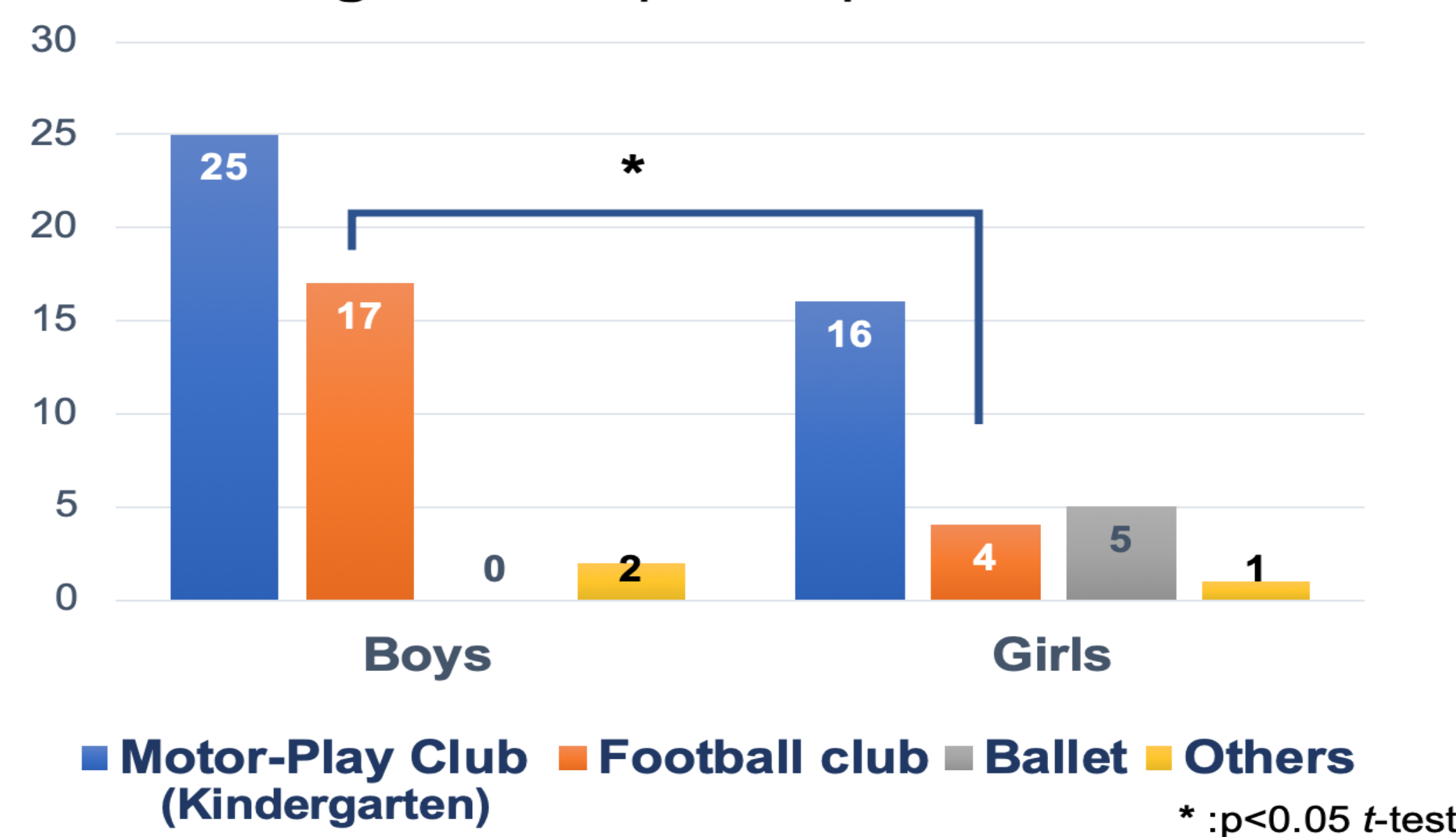
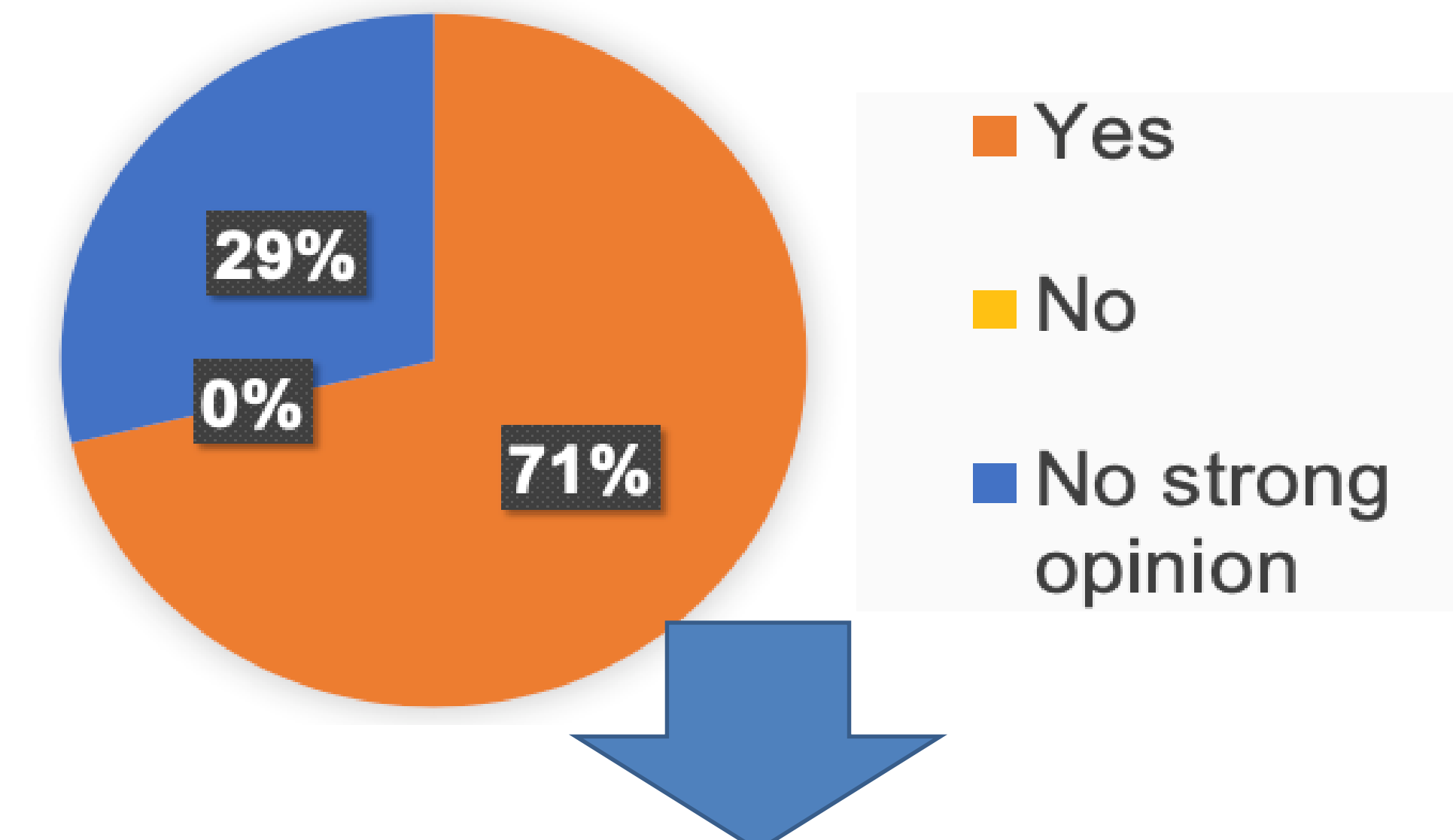
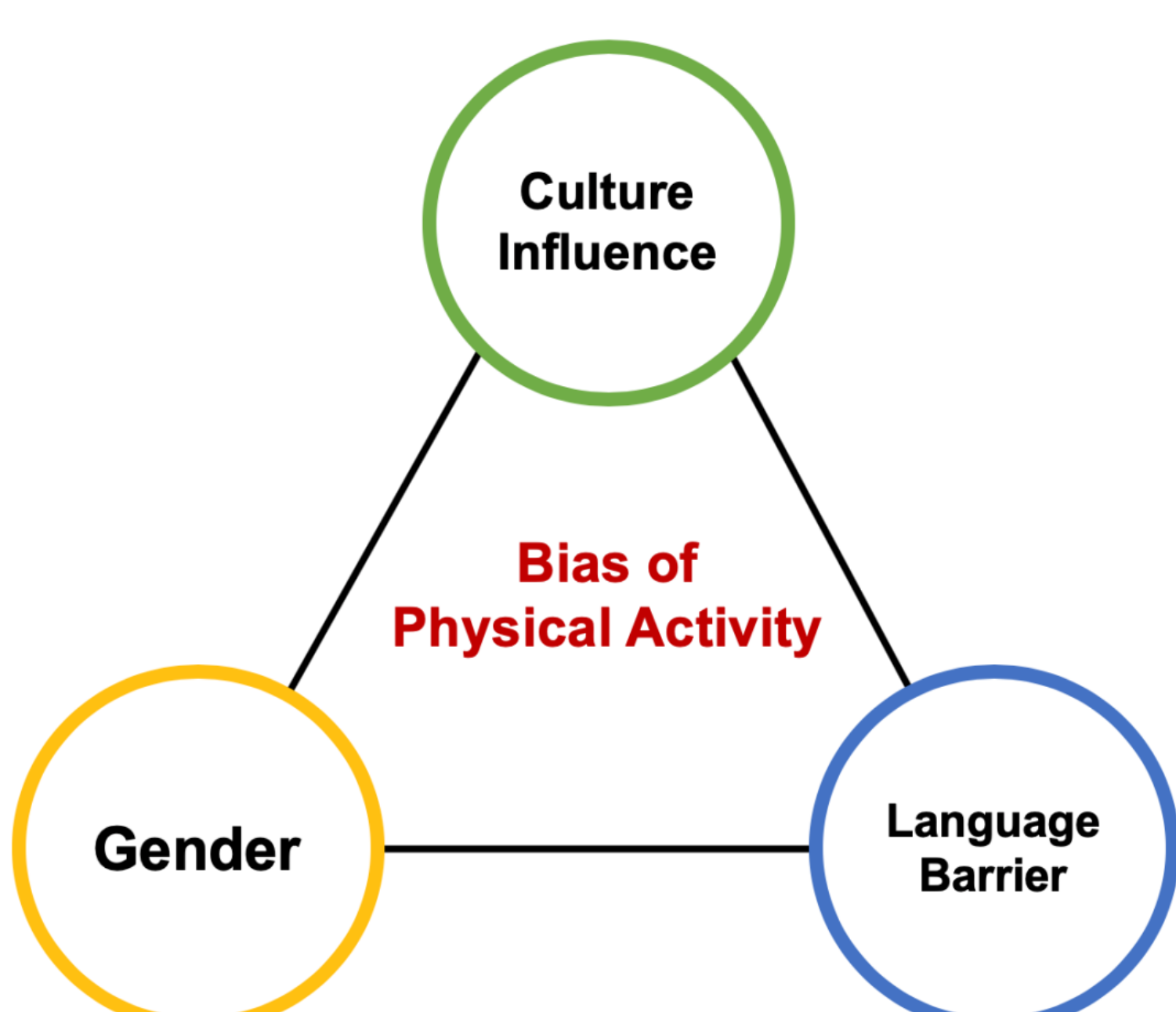


Figure 5. Environmental Quality

Do you think the environment in Germany is better than your previous living in Japan to increase physical activity of your child?



Discussion



- Gender bias on the physical activity and participation rate in sports club was found; girls have less physical activity than boys since the main sports club outside of kindergarten is football, and there are fewer sports club operated in Japanese.
- German culture reflects on the physical activity of boys and they prefer to play football and join in a football club (in Japanese); however, bias of sports club participation can be a bias for physical activity experience (Rohan et al., 2016).
- Language barrier is the element that prevents children joining in the local sports club and community, and it leads to less physical activity opportunity especially for girls since there are fewer sports club and services that are operated in Japanese (Medina et al., 2020).
- Girls tend to have non-vigorous-intensity physical activity such as swing and rope-jump in a short time in weekdays; however, parents have physical activity with their child in the weekend since parents have spare time.
- Preschool children should experience various physical activities to promote motor competence and active behavior (Hermundur et al., 2016), hence, parents are required to bring child to the preferred activity environment and activities.
- Motor-play club at the kindergarten is a valuable time for children to experience various physical activities; however, it is conducted only once a week for each age. Hence, it is important to build or create a ‘platform’ or ‘structure’ of comprehensive physical activity in the Japanese community to accelerate motor learning.

“This research shows the necessity to provide comprehensive physical activity opportunity for Japanese preschool children living abroad to prevent the bias of motor learning experience”