

An Analysis of the Dimensions of Physical and Bodily Education from the Perspective of the Teachings of Imam Reza(A.S)

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Article info

Abstract

Article type:
Research Article

Received:
16 June 2025

In Revised form:
29 July 2025

Accepted:
25 August 2025

Published:
30 August 2025



In today's world ,where the complexities of modern life pose unprecedented challenges to human physical health ,the re-examination and re-construction of models for physical education based on authentic religious teachings has become an undeniable necessity .This research aims to explain the dimensions of physical education from the perspective of the narrations of Imam Reza (A.S.) focusing on the central question: What are the main dimensions of physical education in the intellectual framework of Imam Reza (A.S.) ,and how are they related to comprehensive human education ?The present study ,employing a descriptive-analytical method and a systematic review of narrative texts ,has conducted a precise analysis of the statements of Imam Reza (A.S.) .The findings indicate that from his perspective ,physical education is organized within a" holistic system "comprising six fundamental dimensions":Management of Sleep and Wakefulness" ,Cleanliness and Personal Hygiene" , "Nutrition" , "Exercise and Physical Activity" , "Fasting " ,and" Management of Desires " .What distinctly sets this model apart is its profoundly wisdom-oriented and teleological approach ;in such a way that each of these dimensions is analyzed not merely as a health recommendation ,but as" a manifestation of practical worship "and" a means for self-cultivation and drawing nearer to God Almighty " .By presenting this systematic and evidence-based model ,this research provides a theoretical and practical framework for redefining the true position of physical education within the Islamic education system ,taking a fundamental step towards integrating physical health and spiritual transcendence in Islamic societies.

Keywords: Physical Education ,Imam Reza(A.S).Peace be upon him-Health, Islamic Education ,Al-Sira al-Radawiyya The Conduct of Imam Reza(A.S).

Reference: Alizadeh, Mozhdeh. (2025). An Analysis of the Dimensions of Physical and Bodily Training from the Perspective of the Teachings of Imam Reza (A.S.).*Imam Reza (A.S.) and Contemporary Sciences*. 3(7). 62-91.

Publisher: Imam Reza (A.S.) International University

DOI:<https://doi.org/10.22034/ijs.2025.345799.1018>



1. Introduction

In the contemporary era, the complexities of modern life and the adverse effects of industrialization have posed unprecedented challenges to human physical health. Under these circumstances, the re-examination and reconstruction of models for physical education based on authentic religious teachings have become an undeniable necessity. This research, focusing on the intellectual framework of Imam Reza (A.S.) as one of the rich sources of Islamic teachings in the domain of health and education, investigates the dimensions of physical education. The primary issue is that, despite the emphasis placed by the Quran and Sunnah on the importance of physical education, a significant theoretical gap is felt in systematically explaining the dimensions of this concept from the perspective of the narrations of the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.), particularly Imam Reza (A.S.). This research is based on the premise that the Sira of Imam Reza (A.S.) can provide a comprehensive and integrated framework for physical education in the present age.

2. Research Objectives

The primary objective of this research is to explain the dimensions of physical education from the perspective of the narrations of Imam Reza(A.S) and to delineate the interconnections of these dimensions with each other and with comprehensive human education .The central research question is“ :What are the main dimensions of physical education in the intellectual framework of Imam Reza(A.S) ,and how are they related to comprehensive human education?

Subsidiary objectives include:

1. Presenting an indigenous model based on the Sira of Imam Reza(A.S) for educational planning.
2. Explaining the religion’s integrated perspective on the human being ,in which physical education is an inseparable part of the Islamic educational process.
3. Addressing the educational needs arising from the industrial lifestyle and changing consumption patterns.

3. Methodology

This research was conducted using a descriptive-analytical method and a systematic study of narrative texts related to Imam Reza(A.S) .The theoretical framework

of the research is the” Unified Theistic Anthropological System “,in which the human being is considered a multi-dimensional entity physical ,rational ,emotional, and spiritual whose existential dimensions interact dynamically with one another. Within this framework ,the body ,as the vehicle of the soul ,a divine trust ,and an instrument for spiritual development ,holds a special status .The required data were extracted by examining reliable narrative sources and books ,such as‘ Uyun Akhbar al-Rida and Bihar al-Anwar ,as well as contemporary analytical works ,and were analyzed using a systemic and interdisciplinary approach.

4. Findings

Based on the analysis of the narrations of Imam Reza(A.S) an integrated six-dimensional model for physical education was extracted .Each dimension ,transcending mere health advice ,is analyzed as a manifestation of practical worship and a means for self-cultivation and drawing nearer to God .These dimensions are:

Management of Sleep and Wakefulness :Sleep is introduced as the“ sultan of the brain ”and essential for the body’s foundation .Recommendations regarding sleep etiquette such as sleeping initially on the right side indicate a perspective that transforms sleep into an opportunity for optimizing physical and spiritual function and a practice for reliance on God and gratitude.

Cleanliness and Personal Hygiene: Personal hygiene is elevated to the level of a timeless behavioral pattern and an act of worship. Emphasis on brushing teeth with the Miswak/Arak stick is a clear example which, besides its local and systemic health benefits, is explained as purifying the “means of communication with the Lord.

Wise Nutrition: Nutrition transcends the purely biological realm and is regulated based on real benefits (Masalih) and harms (Mafasid) – what is lawful due to its benefit and unlawful due to its harm. Recommendations such as avoiding over-eating, observing dining etiquette, and consuming beneficial substances (like figs, olives, and pure honey), aligning with modern scientific findings, demonstrate a holistic and wisdom-oriented perspective. Consuming food with a divine intention is itself considered a practical act of worship for seeking proximity to God.

Exercise and Physical Activity: Exercise is introduced as a platform for enhancing religious efficacy and preventing coarseness or harshness in religion. Emphasis on sports like swimming, archery, and horseback riding within the framework of

constructive play indicates attention to the harmonious development of physical, moral, and spiritual dimensions.

Fasting (Sawm): Fasting is analyzed as a holistic health strategy that simultaneously impacts physical dimensions (metabolic detoxification and regeneration)psychological dimensions (strengthening willpower)and spiritual dimensions (increasing humility and empathy with the poor).This perspective fully aligns with medical findings on the benefits of fasting.

Management of Desires: Controlling and restraining desires (such as unlawful gazing and sexual deviations like homosexuality) is introduced as a key factor for maintaining psychosomatic health and empowering cognitive tools (the eye and the ear) for perceiving higher truths.

The findings clearly show that these dimensions exist within an interconnected system ;such that a disruption in one dimension (like sleep deprivation or unhealthy nutrition)directly negatively impacts other dimensions (like worship ,rational thought ,and control of desires) ,and vice versa.

5. Conclusion

This research sought to extract and explain a systematic and integrated model for physical education from the intellectual framework of Imam Reza(A.S.) The fundamental distinguishing feature of this model is its“ profoundly wisdom-oriented and teleological approach ”,wherein physical education is not considered an independent or marginal matter ,but rather a vital and inseparable part of the Islamic educational process and a means for the” cultivation of the soul “and“ seeking proximity to God ”.The alignment of the teachings of Imam al-Rida with findings of modern science attests to the timeless and universal nature of these teachings.

Suggestions:

Utilizing this model as a” theoretical framework and practical guide “in the formal and informal education system of the country for nurturing a healthy ,capable ,and committed generation.

Families and educators using this model for curriculum planning and lifestyle.

Conducting comparative studies on the Sira of other Infallibles (A.S.) in the field of physical education.

Implementing” field studies “to assess the effectiveness of applying this model in different educational environments.

Conducting” deeper philosophical and anthropological research “to explain the foundations of each of the six dimensions.

In summary ,reviving this Sira is a wise response to the physical and spiritual health crises of the present era and takes a fundamental step towards integrating physical health and spiritual transcendence in Islamic societies.

Keywords: Physical Education, Imam Reza (A.S.), Health, Islamic Education, Conduct of Imam Reza (A.S.) (Al-Sira al-Radawiyya).