

Perceptual Experiences of Stakeholders Concerning Effects of Sports on Education

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Abstract: This study examined conceived stance of stakeholders regarding effects of participation in sports on educational development of youngsters. The stakeholders most obviously comprised of the Parents and Teachers. Effects of sports on intellectual development, academic enhancements, school dropout and developing interest towards education were the specific focal points of the study. It was found that both teachers and the parents consider sports as quite useful activities having positive effects on educational development of its participants. The study ascertained that a supportive role of sports in the intellectual growth of the participants is perceived and a positive association between sports participation and aversion of school dropout is also conceived by the respondents. Effectuality of sports in improvement of classroom attendance, level of arousal, commitment to school-related activities and increase in the interest towards education was also perceived by the respondents.

Key words: Stakeholders • Perception • Educational development • Sports

INTRODUCTION

Appropriate development and proper improvement of youth in the field of education is prime concern in Pakistan as it is in other parts of the world. Efforts in this respect continue to improve and promote quality education through different means. Role of sports in the educational development is clamorously advocated by the experts of physical education and sports as the proponents of sports claim a very significant role of sports in the educational development of a child. It is said that sports participation not only contributes to the physical development but its role in social, economic and intellectual development is also worldly agreed. A far-famed saying ‘*Sound mind in a sound body*’ referring to the potential quality of sports in the intellectual development of participants [1] seems to be generally endorsed and proved through the process of scientific research. Research studies substantiate a positive relation between sports participation and mental health [2, 3]. It has been found that sports and physical activities raise

the level of mental alertness and improve intellectual functioning of the participants [4]. Many studies conducted in California Department of Education USA affirm a positive relationship of sports with educational performance [5]. Similar are the findings of a study conducted by Barron *et al.* [6] which maintains that participation in sports and academic success is positively correlated ([6]. In a study undertaken on Australian School children aging 7-15 years, Dwyer *et al.* [7] found a significant correlation of sports and physical activities with academic performance. Several research studies maintain that absorption and better academic outcomes are usually proportional to time spent in sports activities [8, 9, 10, 2]. Sports activities ameliorate working capacity of crucial body systems and improve the degree of alertness among participants. Sports activities not only enhance mood, but also increase mental alertness [4]. Physically and mentally alert students always perform better, achieve more [11] and like to remain present in their classes. It has been noticed that sportsmen/women show better results in Math, English [12] and science subjects [13]. Cocke [14] states that participation in sports and

physical activities improve the brain functions, levels of concentration and self esteem etc which may all support academic betterment of a child.

Studies show a propensity of learning both “cognitive and non-cognitive” skills among adolescence [15, 16]. Non-cognitive skills or sporting activities play significant role in preventing school dropout and increasing chances of the continuation of education [15]. It has been observed that participation in sporting activities develop a positive attitude towards school, lowers dropout rates [17] and foster further education [3]. It has also been noticed that sportsmen/women usually have more firm relations with their institution [18] and the school sports activities not only enhance the identity of students with the school but also increase their commitment to the school related programmes of activities [19], whereas Marsh and Kleitman [19] found that commitment to school related activities help improve the academic grades, educational aspiration and highest educational attainments. Analyzing the data on students from NELS-1988 i.e. National Educational Longitudinal study, Broh [12] found that students’ participation in sports was related to improvement in the academic performance and grades. She however maintained that in comparison to interscholastic, the intramural sports participation had lesser relation with the academic improvement. While analyzing earlier research work done in the area under discussion, Guest and Schneider [20] state that the researchers have found positive connections among sports participation and academic improvement. Studies on the similar topics conducted in the United States also reveal a positive impact of amateur sports on academics with a high attendance attitude among players [21,22] and reduced trends of remaining absent from classes [12,20].

Participation of youngsters in sports much depends on the consent of parents and approval of the teachers, hence this study was thus undertaken in the above perspective to know the perceptual position of both the stakeholders regarding role of sports in the educational development of youth.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted in randomly selected five cities of the North-West Frontier Province (recently renamed as Khyber Pakhtoon Khwa KPK) of Pakistan, including Dera Ismail Khan, Kohat, Peshawar, Mardan and Abbottabad. Primal point of the study was quantification of the perceptions of stakeholders regarding possible influence and effects of sports on education. Population of the study comprised of parents and teachers being the key stakeholders. Stratified sampling technique was applied for the collection of quantitative data. Sample of the study consisted of 439, a detailed account of which has been given in table-below. A Structured questionnaire developed on the principle of five point Likert scale (Likert, 1931), consisting of 15 items was used for data collection. Suggested responses ranged from ‘strongly-agree’ to ‘strongly-disagree’ with an allotted score of 5 to 1 respectively. Accumulated data were accordingly coded and treated on SPSS version ‘12’ for the analysis. Pearson Correlation coefficient, Independent sample t-test and Chi Square test were applied according to the requirement of the analysis. The reliability of the scale on the Cronbach’s Alpha, based on standardized items remained. 722.

Hypotheses: Following hypotheses were tested:

- Respondents perceive no positive effects of sports on education of its participants.
- There is no significant difference of perceptions among parents and the teachers concerning effects of sports on education.
- Perceptions of male and female respondents regarding effects of sports on educational development are significantly alike.
- Perceptual standing of respondents regarding effects of sports on education is regulated by their Educational qualification.

Table 1: Detailed account of the sampled Population

N	Stakeholders			Gender				Education Level					
	Group	Total	%age	Male	%age	Female	%age	SSC	%age	BA/BSc	%age	MA/MSc	%age
439	Parents	147	33.5	104	70.7	43	29.3	37	25.2	54	36.7	56	38.1
	Teachers	292	66.5	172	58.9	120	41.1	0	0.00	45	15.4	247	84.6
	Overall	439	100	276	62.9	163	37.1	37	8.4	99	22.6	303	69.0

- Respondents perceive no significant influence of sports participation on prevention of school dropout, improved classroom attendance, level of arousal, commitment to school-related activities and increase in the interest towards education; among its participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It was hypothesized that the sampled population does not perceive any effective role of sports activities on educational development of its participants but contrary to the hypothesis, the analyzed data revealed approbative stance of the respondents regarding effects of sports on education. Results of the ANOVA application given in the Table 1 (appendix 'A'), depict supportive perception of the stakeholders regarding the subject question. Accumulated mean score 3.77 reveals an overall affirmative stance of the stakeholders concerning effectual role of sports in the promotion of education among its participants. Similar were the findings of Lau *et al.* [1], who endorsed the capacity of sports activities in the intellectual development of its participants, whereas Darling *et al.* [3] also asserted that participation in sports activities help in the improvement of mental capacities while Barron *et al.* [6] found a positive correlation among sports activities and academic success.

It was anticipated that no significant difference of perception prevails within categories of the stakeholders i.e. parents and teachers and according to their gender. T-test was applied to analyze the data and examine the perceptual standing and probable perceptual differences among the respondents according to their category and gender. Generally, no significant difference of opinion was observed in the perceptions of parents and the teachers regarding role of sports in educational betterment of its participants and although the null hypothesis was approved in view of the comparative scores statement of mean, SD, CV and calculated t-values of the test results given in the Table 2 (appendix 'A') it was noted that some difference of opinion even though exists among the perceptions of male and female respondents and male in comparison to female respondents are a bit more affirmative about the effectuality of sports in educational development of its participants. Findings of the study reveal that perception of the respondents is influenced by their academic qualification as the respondents with comparatively higher qualification showed a better perception of the effects of sports. Results of the linear regression, applied to examine the influence of educational qualification of

respondents on their perceptual standing regarding role of sports given in table 3 (appendix 'A') show a substantial influence of educational qualification of the respondents, on their perceptions regarding the subject matter. F-value i.e. .310 has been found significant at 0.000.

Perceived effects of sports on educational development of its participants were measured using regression model, the results of which assert that null has not been affirmed and contrary to the hypothetical stance of the researchers, it was found that the respondents consider an effective role of sports activities in educational betterment of the participants. F-values concerning perceived influence of sports i.e. .234, .437, .284, .102 and 1.456 respectively on school dropout, improvement in classroom attendance, improvement in the level of arousal, commitment towards school-related activities and increase in the interest towards educational activities were found as significant at .000, significance, a detailed account of the results of regression analysis have been given in table 4 (appendix 'A'). It is important to mention here that findings of the Heckman *et al.* [15] reveal that participation in different types of sports activities play quite a significant role in preventing school dropout and helping in continuation of education. It was found that participation in sports activities improves students' commitment to school related activities, whereas Marsh and Kleitman [19] ascertained that commitment to school related activities help improve the academic grades, educational aspiration and highest educational attainments. Enhancement in classroom attendance and improvement in the level of arousal has also been found among the positive effects of sports participation. Hills [4] asserted that sports activities help in the betterment of mental alertness and arousal. Study conducted by Stevenson [20] affirmed that participation in sports helps improve high attendance attitude among players while Guest and Schneider [22] said that sports activities help reduce the trends of remaining absent from classes.

CONCLUSION

It was concluded that the respondents perceive a formative role of sports and consider a positive effect of sports activities on education of its participants. It was noticed that among the respondents, parents give a little more weight to sports in academic enhancement. The contribution of sports activities in the intellectual growth of the participants was viewed as very useful.

The data analysis did not reveal any significant difference of opinion among males and females regarding impact of sports participation on academic enhancement, however the stance of female in comparison to male respondents was more supportive for the youth sports participation. It was noticed that academic qualification of the respondents influences their perception regarding the effect of sports on education as the respondents with MA/MSc or higher qualification were more supportive to sports activities and their positive effects on education as compared to respondents having a Secondary School Certificate (SSC) on their academic credit.

Sports activities were considered as quite helpful in preventing school dropout and their role in improvement of class attendance was also considered as quite positive by most of the respondents. It was concluded that the role of sports in increasing the mental capabilities and

level of arousal, commitment to school related activities and overall educational betterment was perceived by the respondents as quite helpful and effective.

Endnote: According to findings of this study the level of perception among the subject stakeholders i.e. teachers and the parents regarding positive upshots and effect of sports participation is quite encouraging. The extent of facilities in the educational institutions and intensity of sports in practice, on the other hand, is very meager and quite concerning. Not being the subject of this study, we are not going into details and the reasons of shortcomings; however it is strongly recommended that adequate funds, staff, space and equipment should be made available to the educational institutions for launching appropriate sports activities to benefits of the students, the society and the nation.

Appendix

Table 1: Perception of respondents regarding effects of sports on education, on ANOVA

Categorical Variables	Groups	N	Mean	SD	df	F-value	Table value	P-value	Results
Stakeholders	Parents	147	3.78	1.078	1	.006	3.84	.940	Null rejected
	Teachers	292	3.77	1.113	438				
	Total	439	3.77	1.100					
Gender	Male	276	3.84	1.031	1	3.409	3.84	.006	
	Female	163	3.64	1.200	438				
	Total	439	3.77	1.100					
Academic Qualification	SSC	37	3.57	1.168	2	.818	3.00	.442	
	BA/BSc	99	3.77	1.100	438				
	MA/MSc	303	3.84	1.076					
	Total	439	3.77	1.100					

Table 2: T-test showing means scores difference of respondents regarding their perceptual standing

Group	n	Mean	S.D	C.V	Level of Significance	t-tabulated	t-calculated	Result
Parent	147	3.78	1.078	28.51	0.05	1.960	.075	Null accepted
Teaches	292	3.77	1.113	29.52				
Male	276	3.84	1.031	26.84	0.05	1.960	1.846	
Female	163	3.64	1.200	32.96				

Table 3: Linear Regression model showing influence of variables

Independent variable	Dependent Variable	R	R Square	df	F-value	P-value	Beta Score	Sig.
Educational qualification of respondents	Perceived effects of sports on education	.027(a)	.001	1	.310	.578 _(a)	.027	.000

Table 4: Linear Regression model showing relation of variables

Independent variable	Dependent Variable	R	R Square	df	F-value	P-value	Beta Score	Sig.
Sports participation	School dropout	.023(a)	.001	1	.234	.629 _(a)	.023	.000
	Improved classroom attendance	.032(a)	.001	1	.437	.509 _(a)	-.032	.000
	Level of arousal	.025(a)	.001	1	.284	.594 _(a)	.025	.000
	Commitment to school-related activities	.015(a)	.000	1	.102	.750 _(a)	.015	.000

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