

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPORT ACTIVITIES, ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERSONALITY DYNAMICS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SINDH

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the relationship between education performance of person and his grooming in the society with sports activities especially at early education levels of schooling. Some valid inferences have been drawn to indicate that sports activities in early schooling age has significant impact on big five personality traits in the later part i.e. professional life of a person.

Key Words: Extravert, Agreeableness; Neuroticism Conscientiousness; Openness to experience. Sports Participants and Non Participants

METHODOLOGY

607 male high school students were randomly selected from various high schools in the 8 districts of Sindh namely Badin, Hyderabad, Jamshoro, Khairpur, Larnkana, Qamber, Sanghar and Sukkur.

52% of total sample (i.e. 317) respondents were sports participants at least in one of the school sports activities such as athletics, cricket, hockey, table tennis, badminton, volleyball, football and *kabaddi*. The remaining 48 percent (i.e. 290) samples were non-sports participants in high schools.

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INTRODUCTION

Literature shows that appropriate sport participation for most high school students is detrimental to their educational progress and it has significant impact on personality trait (Melnick, Sabo and Vanfoson, 1992; Casey, 1989; Parker & Johnson, 1981). The research is geared towards validating the literature and to assess the extent to which sport participation among high school students has positive psycho-social and/or psycho-educational performance. The research reveals that sports participants perform badly in academic grades in comparison non sports participants, although their achievements in terms of winning sports awards were significantly high to that of non sports participants. The paper is divided into three parts: Part one provides theoretical framework derived from literature review. Part two highlights study results, interpretation of data and research findings. Finally, part three presents conclusions and relevant references.

Parker & Johnson, 1981 reported that the sport activities reflected time away from the classroom. Whereas, some studies on the relationship of sport participation of high school students to academic achievement contradict results and show that sport participation either contributes positively in a small way to student achievements especially grades or does not impact student achievements in the classroom (Marsh, 1988).

Table 1: Consolidated work helped to carryout research:

Author (s)	Year	Major Findings
1.Perry RP et al	1979	Sports participation could also create intrinsic values for students.
2. Johnson	1994	Improve students Grades keeps them in schools, rises their educational aspiration.
3. Maners PA and Smart	1995	Participation in too many activities produced diminishing returns. Participation in sports and other extra-curricular activities was consistently, but participation in some activities had mixed or predominately negative effects which needs further research.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPORTS ACTIVITIES

4. Mitcheli DL	1994	Students sports related activities are significantly related with their success rates in the professional life
5. Linder KJ	1999	Supporters of high school sports programs argue that sport participation improves students' achievements motivation.
6. Rasmussen	1999	Athletic team participation was related to identity foreclosure, particularly for males. With respect to whether student's participation on sports activities was beneficial to their academic goals.
7. Trembly et al	2000	Highly active individuals were significantly more optimistic & experienced self - efficacy than those non active or low active people
8. Tross SA et al	1999-2000	Found that sports could facilitate positive racial / ethnic relations as well as positive inter group attitudes and behavior among northern and southern school children's.

Contrary to this, supporters (Slavin, R.E., & Madden, N.A 1997) of high school sport programs argue that sport participation improves students' achievement as motivation improves students' grades, keeps them in school, raises their educational aspirations helps them appreciate health, exercise and fitness, helps them learn about themselves and learn to handle adversity, and helps them experience team work and sportsmanship. To sum up, the quantity of research literature in this field is fast growing but school-sponsored sport activities for high school students are still not fully understood. It is imperative to determine the factors which positively impact the student's ability to succeed academically in school in conjunction with excellence in sports activities during high school studies. A consolidated review is provided in a tabular format at Table 1.

Study Results and Findings

This study results and findings were based upon randomly selecting 607 male high school students from various high schools in eight (8) districts¹ of Sindh. The sampling frame was split in two

¹ Badin; Hyderabad; Jamshoro; Khairpur; Larkana; Qamber; Sanghar; and Sukkur

i.e., sports participants and non-sports participants. 52% of total sample (i.e. 317) respondents were sports participants who participated at least in one of the school sports activities such as athletics, cricket, hockey, table tennis, badminton volley ball, foot ball, and *Kabaddi*. The remaining 48 percent (i.e. 290) sample was non-sports participants in high schools of sample districts.

Table 2 provides details about sample respondents' age and ethnic groups. Table shows symmetrical distribution in terms of age of sample participants, especially age group of 15 years. Data further shows that 66 percent of total respondents represented Sindhi as their mother tongue. Besides, a fair representation of participants from various ethnic groups could also be observed. A large sample from Sindhi speaking respondents is mainly based upon purposive selection of respondents of Sindhi speaking localities. The purpose was to ensure quality data as language could be a barrier in expression and communication.

Table 2: Sample Respondents by Age and Ethnic group (n=607)

Demographic characteristics	Percent
Ethnic group	
Sindhi	66
Urdu	9
Balouch	4
Punjabi	7
Pashto	5
Other	9
Age group	
14 Years	21
15 Years	39
16 Years	20
17 Years	20

Survey Data, 2009-10

It is essential to note that non participants in sports do not mean zero involvement. The difference between participants and non participants is that the sports participants significantly spend more time in sports activities than the non-participants. Non-participants tend to play indoor games, whereas sports participants play games such as cricket, foot ball and other out- side houses. One may consider non-participants as non serious with sports activities yet it is impossible to find a student of 14-17 years spending no time in sports (Table 3).

Table 3: Percentage of Hours Spend on Sports per Week (n=607)

	Sports Participants N=317	Non-Sports Participants n=290
Time spend		
≥ 15 hours	20*	5
10-14 hours	33*	11
6-9 hours	28*	13
1-5 hours	19*	26
No time spend	-	45

Survey Data, 2009-10

Table 4: Percent of Academic Grades of Sports and Non-Sports Participants (n=607) %

Grades	8 th Class		7 th Class		6 th Class	
	Non-Sports Participant	Sports Participant	Non-Sports Participant	Sports Participants	Non-Sports Participant	Sports Participants
	n=290	n=317	n=290	n=317	n=290	n=317
A-I	16	13	10	3	10	13
A grade	29	26	23	24	26	30
B grade	26	28	45	33	39	27
C grade	23	30	20	37	22	23
D grade	6	3	2	3	3	7

Survey Data, 2009-10

Table 4 shows comparison of academic achievements between sports participants and non participants. Table clearly indicates that non-sports participants have good grades as compared to sports participants. This may be that the non-participants spend more time on their studies to that of sports participants. The data provides good base to suggest that even at this early age of education about 86 percent sports participants reported that spending time in education was tough as it required mental concentration, teachers' skills in making things to understand and their parents effective supervisory role towards keeping checks on them. Survey data confirms that non-sports participants tend to be regular in the class as they fall above 75 percent strata of the total classroom attendance. Non-sports participants also did fairly well in terms of attendance in the class but the mean differences are significantly different at 95% Co-efficient Interval (CI). Similarly, according to teachers' perception non-sports participants tend to do well in classroom assignments, homework, mid-term tests and in the final examinations and earn good academic grads to that of sports participants. These findings could be linked with sports participants' time apportioned in sports activities. According to teachers it was very difficult for sports participants to make sensible compromise between time allotted for sports and studies.

Table 5: Reasons for Participating in Sports n= 607

Major Reasons	Sports						Total	All %
	Cricket	Athletics	Football	Volleyball	Kabaddi	Other		
	Figures in Numbers							
Favorite	196	20	1	29	5	7	258	81
Keep Fit	3	2		1		1	7	2
Competitive	18	9		2			29	9
For Fun	4						4	1
Family Background	14	4		1			19	6

Survey Data, 2009-10

81 percent of total reported that they liked the sports therefore they were participating. These respondents were involved in all types of sports including cricket and *Kabaddi*. Those who wanted to keep fit chose cricket, athletics and volleyball (Table 5).

Table 6: Respondents' Relationship with the Member of Family who play sports % (n=607)

Relationship	Non-Sports Participant %	Sports Participants %
Parents/Brothers	2	56
Uncles	8	26
Cousins	13	18
None	77	-
All	100	100

Survey Data, 2009-10

It is interesting to know that involvement of sports participants in sports has substantial relationship with the fact that some of their family members did play or else were involved in sports. For example, out of total approximately 56 percent reported that their elder family members were involved in competitive sports. This seems acceptable given that the junior family members in the family tend to imitate / follow their elder ones.

Table 7: Illnesses during Childhood % (n=607)

Did you have any illnesses during your childhood	Non-Sports Participant %	Sports Participant %
Yes	36	11
No	64	89
All	100	100

Survey Data, 2009-10

Table 7 illustrates relationship between childhood illnesses with involvement in sports activities. Non-sports participants reported that they did have history of illness during their childhood. The illness included acute cases of diarrhea, malaria and hepatitis etc. They also mentioned that such illness did play a negative role in distracting them from sports.

Table 8: Health Profile of sports participants and non-participants:

Health Profile	Sports Participants n=317	Non-Sports Participants n=290	
	Mean	Mean	t
Mental Health	24.9	23.2	0.14
Emotional Health	19.96	20.56	0.394
Social Health	24.13	23.7	0.262

Survey Data, 2009-10

Table-8 shows the comparative health profile of the sports and non-sports participants. There is significant difference on the 'Physical' component of the health among sports and non-sports participants. No differences were found on other dimensions of the health. However, non-sport participants were more emotional and less social as compared to the sports participants.

Table 9: Mean, SD and t-test for Big Five Personality Traits of Sports and Non-sports Participants

Traits	Sport Participants N=317		Non Participants N=290		t	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Extraversion *	3.5	1.585	6.58	2.2	2.59	0.01
Agreeableness	4.16	1.661	5.77	1.83	0.395	0.532
Conscientiousness	3.64	1.554	4.41	1.68	0.059	0.028
Neuroticism	3.54	1.591	4.22	1.74	1.501	0.05
Openness *	3.39	1.565	1.45	2.14	2.268	0

*= Significant at 95 Percent Co-efficient Interval (CI).

Survey data reveals that significantly higher proportion of sport participant's fall in the category of extraverts this is understandable given that nature of sports demands assertiveness and sports create an environment of excitement. Further, more than 50% respondent fall the category of agreeableness. It is mentioned that for sports person agreeable dimension of personality has positive relationship in terms of success influenced by team work. For example Cricket is a team game personality with agreeableness is must for the success of team. One of the properties that fall under conscientiousness is self discipline and character. This is linked with experience and age specially levels of maturity of a person. The sample respondents hardly fall in the age of maturity which is evident from the response indicating distribution sparse distribution. It does not show in proportions the level of conscientiousness among sports participants of age group in class ix and x.

CONCLUSIONS

The sports especially at early age of education have significant influence on academic performance. Study shows that non participants in sports significantly acquired higher grades as compared to participants in sports. Further 87 percent sample teachers informed that full time participation required time which has to be compromised on time required for home work studies. The serious sports participants invest time in sports rather than for studies. Sports activities are essential for healthy grooming of child to become better citizen in future.

It is revealed that the condition of sports facilities in schools in very poor. All-out efforts at public levels be made to improve these facilities. There is no serious effort at policy levels to encourage participation of pupil in sports. Given that pupil who does not perform well in studies may opt for sports and become future sportsmen on professional grounds. The encouragement at school levels in sports by the government is must. This could be achieved through introducing sports as subject in early study stages of school education.

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