

ROLE OF SPORTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HARD WORK AS A LIFE SKILL - FORMER ATHLETES' PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

The current study was an attempt to assess the perception of government servants in the community of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan, as to assess the role of sports in the development of hard work ethics. The population of this study comprised of doctors (33), engineers (25), and teachers (67) who had participated in sporting activities in their student lives. The researchers used a purposive sampling (snowball sampling) technique to identify appropriate participants to complete a researcher's developed, self-administered structured questionnaire. The collected data was tabulated and analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The formulated hypotheses were tested at a significant level of .05. The findings revealed that participants believed that participation in sports developed the quality of hard work (.000<.05). No gender or category wise differences were found pertaining to the role of sports in the development of quality of hard work (679>.05 & .082>.05). The ability to "work hard" was identified by the stakeholders as being a significant life skill for success in Pakistan, along with a clear perception that participating in sport would help develop this ability. The findings of this study will enhance and encourage the interest of medical, engineering, and general students towards sports participation in order to be successful as well as to advance their profession (doctors, engineers, and teachers).

Keywords: Sports Development; Hard Work Ethics; Former Athletes Perspectives.

INTRODUCTION

Internationally, sports have been identified as an institution that has a role to play in helping individuals to become social and efficient members of society. For many people, the development of positive life skills is, in fact, a major

justification for participation in sport. Life skills not only help youth to succeed in sporting activities but if transferred can also contribute to the individual's success in non-sports setting. These life skills include techniques and skills that are important and useful for professional lives. The role of sporting activities in teaching life skills is important both for the individual and for society.

Jacobs and Wright (2018) revealed that appropriate quality sports programs can develop life skills (self-control, leadership) which play a key role in an academic and social environment. The sports environment is considered by some to be more important than classrooms in developing life skills as it is a context where youth can face challenges and learn the skills (Turnnidge, Côté & Hancock, 2014). It has been recognized since antiquity that sports have a strong potential to act as a vehicle for personal development (Gould & Carson, 2008; Fraser-Thomas, Côté & Deakin, 2005) and that personal development such as patriotism, commitment, actions and beliefs can be fostered through sports participation (Hawkman & Van Hon, 2019). It is clear that sports can develop life skills in individuals and particularly adolescents (Camiré, Trudel, & Forneris, 2009) and youth, particularly when the youth sports organization works upon the social-emotional and psychosocial development of the participants as one of their prime goals (Carreres-Ponsoda, Escarti, Cortell-Tormo, Fuster-Lloret, & Andreu-Cabrera, 2012).

Walker (2019) highlighted that involvement in sporting activities is associated with potential benefits like developing a sense of belongingness, competence, autonomy, and positive relationships for the participants. Sports context can facilitate a positive climate to develop life skills and help participants to become thriving, functioning, and productive citizens (Bean, Kramers, Forneris & Camiré, 2018). Sport has an important role in the modern and contemporary technological age because to some extent youth remain vulnerable (Super, Verkoojein, & Koelen, 2018) to factors such as increased consumption of alcohol and illicit drugs (Kwan, Bobko, Faulkner, Donnelly, & Cairney, 2014; Lisha & Sussman, 2010) racism and negative interaction with peers (Holt, Sehn, Spence, Newton, & Ball, 2012).

A number of life skills, such as punctuality, commitment, hard work and discipline, that can be developed through suitable programs, are necessary in order to help professionals, such as doctors, engineers and teachers to survive and thrive in their professions and life in general (Jacobs, Lawson, Ivy, & Richards, 2017; Dionigi & Son, 2017; Weiss, Stuntz, Bhalla, Bolter & Price, 2013; Camiré & Trudel, 2013). Doctors, engineers, and teachers contribute in an important way to the betterment of society and are highly respected professional members of the Pakistani community. From their perspective, life skills are particularly important

(Hord, 1997). The life skill of hard work is one that is considered to be especially important for success. This study considers the relationship between participating in sport and the development of an ethic of hard work. It was undertaken to ascertain the perceptions of former athletes, who had participated in various sports and are now professionals working in Pakistan, regarding the role they believe that sports play in the development of quality of hard work.

LITERATURE REVIEW

By nature, the sport requires and demands the utilization of the abilities and potential of its participants. Numerous writers have identified the potential for sport to develop important life skills such as the ability to work hard and to show leadership (Allen, 2013) and positive attributes such as developing self-confidence (Jones, Lavalley, & Tod, 2011). When we look at the nature of sports competitiveness, then automatically we look for the development of the skill of working hard. Sports have the potential to develop the quality of hard work among the participants and it is generally believed that those teams and athletes who remain champions, successful and dominant, do so on the basis of hard work. Such a life skill is not merely essential for the sporting life, but it also plays a significant role in the non-sports setting.

In regards to the development of the ability to work hard Jamil (2009) and others (Muller, Phelps, Bowers, Agans, Urban & Lerner, 2011; Gardner, Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2008; Galassi, 2017) consider that sport has the potential to teach participants to work hard along with related skills such as discipline, a sense of responsibility, self-confidence and punctuality.

Yang et al. (2010) highlighted that the ability to work hard could be developed through sport and that this skill had a positive impact on stress, while Camiré et al. (2009) examined that sports participation positively develop the quality of hard work and sense of others. Other studies have identified the development of hard work and life skills such as teamwork, a sense of responsibility, self-confidence and integrity, which are essential for professional success (Holt, Tink, Mandigo & Fox, 2008; Forneris, Danish & Scott, 2007; Côté & Fraser-Thomas, 2007; Brunelle, Danish & Forneris (2007). Sporting participation has also been identified as helping develop the attribute of hard work, teamwork, eradicate racism, understanding of ethnic differences, constructive and effective management and utilization of time, self-esteem and sympathy, which also play an important role in non-sports setting (Lasch, 2018; Wilson, 2018; Baird, 2018; Adachi & Willoughby, 2016).

Many of the studies highlight that sports participants develop hard work, not in isolation but supplementary with developing various personal aspects and features such as sense of control and leadership, which are necessary for professional success (Ewing & Seefeldt, 2002; Smoll & Smith, 2002; Davis, 2002; Fredricks & Eccles, 2010; Rosinki, 2010; Head & Alford, 2015; Mahoney, 2000).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This research paper is mainly concerned with the role played by sports in the development of hard work as a life skill in light of the views of the former athletes. Therefore, the researcher has focused to achieve the following sub-objectives.

1. To investigate the perception of former athletes on the role of sports in the development of hard work.
2. To analyze the differences between the perception of male and female respondents on the role of sports in the development of quality of hard work.
3. To find out the differences among the perception of doctors, teachers, and engineers regarding the role of sports in the development of quality of hard work.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The following hypotheses have been formulated from the literature review and the researcher's observations:

H_{A1}: The respondents perceive that sports played a significant positive role in the development of hard work.

H_{o2}: There are no significant statistical differences between the perception of male and female respondents on the role of sports in the development of quality of hard work.

H_{o3}: There are no statistically significant differences among doctors, teachers, and engineers regarding the role of sports in the development of quality of hard work.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample Size and Sampling Strategy

In this study, the researchers applied a purposive sampling (snowball sampling) technique because other sampling techniques were not workable due to the nature of the study. Snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling method used when the number of a population is difficult to locate. The researchers contacted and collected data from those 125 respondents, 97 males and 28 females, who had taken part in sports activities in their student lives.

Table 1. Description of the Sample

Gender	Category			Total
	Doctors	Teachers	Engineers	
Male	29	49	19	97
Female	4	18	6	28
Total	33	67	25	125

Research Instrument Used for Data Collection

A variety of research instruments, such as questionnaires, observation, tests, interview, and checklists, have commonly been used for collecting data depending upon the nature of the study. In the current study, the researchers developed a close-ended questionnaire with five responses (Table 2) on a Likert scale.

A questionnaire was selected as it is the most economical and inexpensive research instrument available, particularly when data is to be collected from a scattered population.

Scoring Process

The researchers counted the responses of each respondent separately. The collected responses were converted into quantitative research paradigm. The following values were fixed for each option.

Table 2. Descriptions of Values

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
05	04	03	02	01

Statistical Tests Used

Data analysis refers to measure, evaluate, and analyzed the data in a well-organized manner by applying the requisite statistical tools (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014). The coding, tabulating, and feeding of the data in a valid and exclusive form produced precise and concise results. The researchers used Descriptive Statistics (Total Number, Percentage, Cumulative Percentage, Tables and Graphs) of the sample and descriptive analysis (Mean, Median, Standard Deviations, Tables and Graphs) of the sample. The researchers also used inferential statistics (linear regression, t-test, and ANOVA) to generalize the results.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Descriptive Analysis

Table No. 3 represents the demographic information of respondents included in the survey. For this purpose, percentages are given for the gender and category of the respondents.

Table 3. Statistics on gender and category of respondents

		%
Gender		
Men		77.60%
Women		22.40%
Category		
Doctors		26.40%
Teachers		53.60%
Engineers		20.00%

Table 3 shows a detailed description of respondents based on their gender and category. According to the table, 77.60% of men and 22.4% of women were included in the study. As the Doctors, Teachers and Engineers constituted stakeholder, therefore; 26.40 % Doctors, 53.60 % Teachers and 20.00% Engineers were included in the survey.

Table 4. Showing the mean and standard deviation of the respondents in perspectives of the role of the sports played in the development of hard work.

Mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) for the responses analyzed in the study

S.No	Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	M	SD
1.	I believe that one can develop the quality of hard work through organized sports participation	125	1.00	5.00	4.4560	.78806
2.	I consider that hard work is the prime step for any achievement	125	1.00	5.00	4.3760	.78969
3.	I feel that my hard work is an engine to push my efforts for achievements	125	2.00	5.00	4.5040	.57675
4.	I think that I will always remain a hard worker at my workplace	125	1.00	5.00	4.5200	.78904
5.	I think that I can survive through hard work at my workplace	125	1.00	5.00	4.5360	.75716
6.	I think that hard-working produces a sense of justice at my workplace	125	1.00	5.00	4.4320	.75494
7.	I consider that my hard work at my workplace brings productivity	125	2.00	5.00	4.6400	.61434
8.	I feel that my hard work builds my self-image and ego at my workplace	125	2.00	5.00	4.6800	.57642

Mean is Significant at=3.00

The perceptions and beliefs of former athletes were surveyed with the help of eight different questions. According to the analyzed data, the means of the eight items were recorded significant (4.45, 4, 37, 4.50, 4.52, 4.53, 4.43, 4.64 & 4.68 > 3.00). The high mean scores of the respondents

confirmed that they acknowledge the role of sports in the development of hard work quality.

Testing of Hypothesis

H₁: The respondents perceive that sports played a significant positive role in the development of hard work.

Table 5. Regression shows the role of sports in the development of the quality of hard work.

Predictor	Dependent	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	t	B	Sig.
Sports	Quality of Hardworking	.522	.273	.267	46.085	1.072	.874	.000

$\alpha = .05$

The above table portrays the respondents’ perception of the positive role of sports in the development of the quality of hard work. R² in the above table shows that there is a 27% role in the development of quality of hard work due to participation in sports activities. According to the analyzed data, if one unit increases in the predictor (sports participation) then it will cause .874% units’ variation in criterion (development of the quality of hard work). The data showed that statistically, sports participation was significantly expected on the development of the quality of hard work because, B=.874, t (1.072) = p<0.05. Sports participation has clarified the significant proportion of variance in the development of quality of hard work as R2 = .273, F (2, 123) = 46.085, p < 0.05, which asserted that the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

H₂: There are no significant statistical differences between the perception of male and female respondents on the role of sports in the development of quality of hard work.

Table 6. t-test showing the difference between the perception of male and female respondents regarding the role of sports in the development of quality of hard work.

Testing Variables	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t	Sig.
Hard work	Male	97	4.5186	.24930	123	.415	.679
	Female	28	4.4964	.24718			

$\alpha = .05$

The results in the table given above support the hypothesis set by the researcher. The analyzed data portrays that the mean score and standard deviation of male and female in response to the role of sports in the development of hard work were calculated 4.51, 0.25, 4.49 and 0.24, respectively. The result of hard work is greater than the common alpha level

.05 ($679 > .05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis has been accepted. The acceptance of the null hypothesis confirms that there are no significant statistical differences between the perception of male and female respondents on the role of sports in the development of hard work as a life skill.

H₃: There are no statistically significant differences among doctors, teachers, and engineer's perception regarding the role of sports in the development of quality of hard work.

Table 7. ANOVA is showing the mean difference among the perceptions of doctors, teachers, and engineers regarding the role of sports in the development of quality of hard work.

Testing Variable Category		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	F	Sig.
Hard-working	Doctors	33	4.5515	.23065	2, 122	2.556	.082
	Teachers	67	4.4687	.24876			
	Engineers	25	4.5840	.25278			

It was supposed that there are no statistically significant differences among doctors, teachers, and engineers regarding the role of sports in the development of quality of hard work. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the assumed statement. The results of ANOVA are presented above in Table-6. According to the analyzed data, mean score and standard deviation of doctors, teachers, and engineers in respect to hard work developed through sports were calculated 4.55, 0.23, 4.50, 0.24 and 4.60, 0.25, respectively. The p-value of the testing variables is greater than the alpha level ($.082 > .05$); therefore the null hypotheses that there are no statistically significant differences among doctors, teachers and engineers regarding the role of sports in the development of quality of hard work has been accepted.

DISCUSSION

The main hypothesis was that the stakeholders would consider that participation in sports has a positive role in the development of the quality of hard work is confirmed by the data. The ability to work hard in a sustained manner is considered to be a crucial attribute for professionals in Pakistan, and the ability to demonstrate this ability is important for those professionals who are looking to be successful and for professional advancement.

When we consider the three questions relating to the relationship between sport participation and developing a positive outlook towards hard work, all three show the stakeholders were incredibly positive that this relationship existed. Ninety-four percent of the responses, for example,

either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I believe that one can develop the quality of hard work through organized sports participation”.

The stakeholders were also clear that they considered that the ability to work hard in their professional practice was crucial for professional success, for personal growth and that they personally demonstrated this ability.

As identified in the literature review a number of studies have considered the development of life skills either directly related to hard work (Camiré et al., 2009, Fraser-Thomas & Cote, 2009; Johnston, Harwood & Minniti, 2013; Eime, Young, Harvey, Charity & Payne, 2013; Yang et al., 2010; Gucciardi & Jones, 2012) or in associated areas such as time-management Camiré & Trudel, 2013, or in some cases outcomes generated by an increased ability to persevere and work consistently. These include Dworkin, Larson, and Hansen (2003) who highlighted that sports participation explores, initiate new ideas, and identify new things to bring innovation and overcome difficulties. Sports participants worked more diligently to develop social networks and to develop a greater sense of community, and to develop greater resilience and mental toughness (Fraser-Thomas & Cote, 2009; Johnston *et al.*, 2013; Eime, Young, Harvey, Charity, & Payne, 2013; Yang *et al.*, 2010; Gucciardi & Jones, 2012).

CONCLUSION

The ability to “work hard” was identified by the stakeholders as being a significant life skill for success in Pakistan, along with a clear perception that participating in sport would help develop this ability. This leads to several questions about who gets access to sporting participation, who is excluded and why. Even if this link was not, in reality, true, does the perception that having played the sport will mean you have learned to work hard, advantage sportsman and sportswomen in the selection and promotion processes in Pakistan. Especially if the people in making the decisions believe this relationship to be true.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The current study confirmed the role of sports in the development of hard work as a life skill, so it is recommended that sports activities may be conducted in educational institutions at large and community in particular. Likewise, the concerned administrations of important quarters like hospitals, and construction and work (CNW) departments may assign duties to motivate workers to take part in sports to empower their health standards, particularly to those professionals who have remained athletes. Furthermore, it is recommended that Coaches, Trainers, and physical educationists may teach hard work as a life skill in the sports context.

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