



AN ANALYSIS ON WOMEN'S PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES PARTICIPATION

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Abstract:

The notion that “*women are the weaker sex*” is not true in the world of sport. For women like men can be competitive and aggressive without destroying ones natural beauty and charm. Sports participation is after all a worthwhile goal for women. The purpose of this study is to determine the perception on women's sports participation while correlating to the type and degree of sports participation. It also determined the contributing factors of the moderating variables such as; father and mother's educational attainment, family income, and institutional location. The study was conducted among the 973 randomly selected female Physical Education students of the three institutions; Mindanao State University, Marawi City; Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology, Iligan City; and Capitol University, Cagayan de Oro City. Descriptive-correlation method of research was used employing the Perception on Women's Sports Participation Inventory (PWSPI) as the foremost tool in gathering the data. Results indicated that the variables of father and mother's educational attainment and family income showed a significant correlation with the perception on women's sports participation, while, institutional location was not significantly correlated. Significant correlation was also found between father, mother's educational attainment, and institutional location towards the variable of the type of sports participation. However, family income showed no significant correlation to the type of sports participation. It was also found out that there was no significant correlation between mother's educational attainment, family income, and institutional location towards the variable of the degree of sports participation. Significant correlation however, was found between father's educational attainment and degree of sports participation. Perception on women's sports participation was found to be significantly correlated towards the type and degree of sports participation. It was concluded further, that the

relationships of the variables significantly contributed to the positive perception on women's participation in sports.

Keywords: women participation, type and degree of sports participation, gender analysis

Introduction

In most societies, participation in sports has been primarily a male domain. However, over the past decades women in sports advocates have proven that women are also competent and have a place in the sports world. When the first female ball player circled the bases at Vassar College in 1866, sportswomen have taken their sports experiences to heart (Sandoz & Winans, 1999). Even without strong history of achievements women had to prove that they were competent in sports. In present days, we see vast number of women participating in not only considered minor sports but also in type of sports that require great prowess and skills. The growth of women's sports can best be judge by the gradual but persistent expansion of women's events in the modern Olympic Games (Bennette, Howell, and Simri, 1983). However, when women first began banging at the door of sports world, they encountered plenty of opposition. As the acceptance of women in sport has not followed a steady, uphill course throughout history, instead, it has gone through many peaks and valleys – times when female sports figures more popular heroines and times when women were condemned as unfit mothers (Lutter & Jaffee, 1996).

Over the years most objectives to women's sports participation have been subjective in nature, often predicated upon the sentimental thesis that women is fragile in nature and dainty in appearance (Klafs & Lyon, 1978). It is also related to the Victorian ideal of femininity that rejected vigorous sports participation because it was believed that such activity could compromise a woman's modesty, jeopardized her emotional control and result in injury that could hinder or prevent childbearing and the contradiction of a mate (Eitzer & Sage, 1978).

Women constitute a special case in the realm of sport activities. Unfortunately, sport has traditionally been defined as male domain, and access to sport for women has been defined as out of the ordinary to the point of being discourage and in some cases, legally outlawed (Coakley, 2001). The fear of losing one's femininity was the real issue behind so much attention to women's active involvement in sports. In addition, Miller & Levy (1996), concluded that "sports participation by women routinely carries a

negative stigma,” because traditional images of sports are seen as incompatible with traditional roles for women (Goldberg & Chandler, 1991). According to Nixon, Maresca, and Silverman (1979), women athletes have been hypothesized to experience gender role conflict especially if they engage in sports traditionally regarded as more masculine, because society is still more comfortable with women who participate in sports that emphasize traditional feminine characteristics such as grace and beauty (Kiovula, 1995). Thus, gender role conflict is purported to be generated by the dissonance of the women athlete's need to identify with two roles: the valued feminine role and the unvalued, even stigmatizing, athletic role for girls and women (Adler, Kless, 1992). Hall (1996) added that the real issue behind so much attention to an athlete's femininity was the fear that she might be a lesbian. She further added that sports researchers leapt upon this concept, and their studies typically found that women athletes were more androgynous, more masculine, less sex type, or less feminine.

On the other hand, although negative stereotypes of the femininity of women athletes exist, the study of Metheny (1965) provide a positive perception toward women athletes that they are respected and are seen as feminine by men and women, athletes and non-athletes alike. Furthermore, Fasting (1996) stated that the global women's movement over the past thirty years has emphasized that females are enhanced as human beings when they develop their intellectual and physical abilities. This idea has encouraged women of all ages to pursue their interests in sports, and it has led to the creation of new interests among those who, in the past never would have thought of playing sports. Coakley (2001) added that the women's movement also helped redefine occupational and family roles for women, and this has provided more women the time and resources they need to play sports. As the ideals of the women's movement have become more widely accepted and as male control over the lives and bodies of women has weakened, more women have chosen to play sports. These and other issues have brought importance of determining other impressions and perceptions on women's sports participation. Thus, the perception of the students on women's sports participation may depend on their experiences and participation in past and present sports and physical activities.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine the perception on women's sports participation among the 973 randomly selected female Physical Education students of the three institutions; Mindanao State University, Marawi City; Mindanao State

University-Iligan Institute of Technology, Iligan City; and Capitol University, Cagayan de Oro City. It also aimed to determine the relationships of the dependent variables of the type and degree of sports participation, as well as the moderating variables of father and mother's educational attainment, family income, and institutional location.

Purposely, this study helps to encourage more participation and involvement of women not only in playing sports but as well as in sports management, administration and leadership. The study is also significant among women in developing and promoting more sports programs that will enhance perception that is more positive and influence those who fairly perceived women's participation in sports. Findings further provide awareness among women not only the health benefits, healthy lifestyle and social contribution of sports but to encourage them to participate as well.

Moreover, the result of this study provide empirically-based information for sports organizers, administrators, trainers, and coaches to provide sports program and open more opportunities that will encourage among women to participate in sports. Finally, it will provide baseline information for further research on women in sport.

Methodology

a) Research Design

In this particular study, a descriptive–correlation type of research design was used to determine the respondents' perception on women's sports participation. It aimed to determine the relationship of the independent variable of perception on sports participation and the dependent variables of type and degree of sports participation. It also aimed to determine if the selected moderating variables of parents' educational attainment, family income and institutional location affect the independent and dependent variables. The data was collected and evaluated through a researcher-made questionnaire on perception on women's sports participation.

b) Samples and Sampling Procedures

The study involved the female students of Physical Education 1 to 4 classes of the three Universities namely: Mindanao State University–Main Campus (MSU-Main) in Marawi City, Mindanao State University–Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT) in Iligan City, and Capitol University (CU) in Cagayan de Oro City. The numbers of respondents taken from each University were determined through stratified random sampling procedure with the following distribution: MSU–Marawi, 484; MSU–IIT, 307; and CU, 182 a total of 973 samples.

c) Instrumentation

The study used a researcher-made questionnaire developed based on observations, interviews, literature review and with the help of experts. The questionnaire has two main parts; the demographic profile of the respondents which consists of the following; institutional location, parent's educational attainment, family income, type of sports participation, and degree of sports participation.

The second part is the Perception on Women's Sports Participation Inventory (PWSPI) the primary tool in determining the respondents' perception on women's sports participation. It is composed of fifteen (15) questions with positive and negative questions; both have five choices to choose depending on how the respondents perceive women's active involvement and participation in sports. The researcher-made questionnaire was validated by the research adviser and some experts. It was pilot tested at the Princess Lawan Bae Hall Dormitory of 50 selected occupants with a reliability of .703.

Results and Discussion

The data showed the five categories of the parents' educational attainment of the respondents which showed that both father and mother's educational attainment indicate to have a high percentages of 46.8% and 49.7% respectively who had able to graduate in college. The intellectual capacity of the parents significantly contributed to the respondents' awareness of the essential contribution of sports and other related physical activities.

In terms of the respondents' monthly family income, it ranged from "Below P10,000.00" to as high as "Above P15,000.00". Among the 973 respondents, 375 of them had a monthly family income of below P10,000.00 and 360 respondents have a monthly family income of P10,000-P15,000. Only 238 respondents were having a monthly family income of above P15,000.00.

A high percentage of the respondents came from MSU-Marawi with a frequency distribution of 486. Majority of the respondents participate in individual and dual sports with a percentage of 54.4% (529), and 43.4% (422) participate in team sports. There were 22 respondents who signified to have not played at all. There were 620 of the respondents or majority of them occasionally participate in sports while 20.6% (200) participate regularly and 15.7% (153) do not participate at all. The results disclosed, that 919 out of 973 respondents perceive "positive" and strongly positive" on female sports participation.

Results in relation to father and mother's educational attainment and family income showed a significant relationship with perception on sports participation, while, institutional location was not significantly correlated with perception on sports participation. Significant relationships were found out between father and mother's educational attainment and institutional location and the type of sports participation.

However, family income showed no significant relationship with the type of sports participation. There were no significant relationships between mother's educational attainment, family income and institutional location with the degree of sports participation. Significant relationship however was found out between father's educational attainment and degree of sports participation. Perception on sports participation was found out to be significantly correlated with the type of sports participation and degree of sports participation. It was concluded further, that the relationships of the variables greatly contributed to the positive perception on women's participation in sports.

Conclusion

In most societies, participation in sports has been primarily a men's domain. However, over the past decades women in sport advocates have proven that women are also competent and have a place in the sports world.

It is interesting to note that as positively perceived that women who participate in sports are confident and have a higher level of self-esteem, perform better leadership qualities and possess a healthy lifestyle. Active involvement in sports among women therefore does not harm psychologically and physically nor detract their femininity but enhanced them as individual. In order to foster more positive perception on women's sports participation, advocates therefore on women in sports should continue and expand the advocacy on empowering women's equity in sports.

Recommendations

In order to foster more positive perception on female sports participation, it is recommended that coaches, trainers, and sports administrators should encourage and provide more sports program opportunities for women. Sports promotion for women should include workshops and trainings on social graces and good grooming that will help keep the natural charm and maintain the lady-like characteristics of women even those who literally involve in more physical sports. Parents should encourage exposure and participation on both competitive and recreational activities to their children

during earlier stage to establish wider perspective related to sports participation and involvement. School administrators, particularly those in elementary grades, should provide more participation opportunities and develop programs that will positively encourage the young girls to get involve into sports and recommend in training camps those with possible potentials for better trainings and skill development. Private and public agencies with women organizations should include active involvement among members on both recreational and competitive sports activities. Local Government Units should provide sports facilities and equipment and develop programs for free or with minimal charges for better access of the community, especially those with potentials but less fortunate to sustain their sporting habits. Among women, sport is not only an avenue for competition where one should be competitive and aggressive. It does not only develop social adjustments but a worthwhile involvement for wellness and healthy lifestyle.

Participation therefore, is worth - sweating. Further study is also recommended considering women in a specific sport and to include other significant variables like ethnicity, religion or other culture oriented factors. Finally, since women's participation in sports has always been an issue not only among culturally conscious communities but even in communities of free thinking and liberated individuals, therefore advocates on women in sports should continue and expand the advocacy on empowering women's equity in sports.

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