

THE SPORT PARTICIPATIONS AND SOCIAL CLASS RELATIONSHIP AMONG FEMALE ATHLETE OF PAKISTAN

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Abstract

The drive of the existing research was to determine the relationship between social class (gender inequality and dress code) and sports participation among successful female athletes of secondary schools of rural areas of Pakistan. The nature of the study was purely quantitative. The adopted and modified survey questionnaire was employed for the purpose of collecting the data. Simple random sampling was used as a sampling technique. In the sense of statistical techniques, descriptive statistics and correlation (Pearson) analysis was utilized to analyze the survey data. The results revealed that gender inequality and dress code had strong and significant relationships with sports participation (health, personal drive and interest), therefore, the direction of all relationships was found negative. It was concluded that both gender inequality and dress code found big hurdles in the way to female sports participation.

Keywords: Gender Inequality, Dress Code, Female Athletes, Sports Participation, Pakistan.

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1. Introduction

Pakistan is one of those countries, where the Muslim community is dominant almost 97 percent and they are very firm in their religion (Wynbrandt, 2009). Modern age is a period of globalization and the whole world became a sports village. Females approach on the way to sports is optimistic, they love sports and also alike to take part in sports for their complete growth i.e. health, intellectual, social, demonstrative, and spiritual growth (Khan et al.,2012).

Pakistan is a Muslim country where gender differences interfere the girls' participation in sports events in public, due to mix gender sports and dress code (Qureshi, & Ghouri, 2011). Due to this, females have limited sports facilities supporting them in practical field. In Pakistan, there have not such sports environment for females in which they may participate and practice with males jointly as well. Therefore, in spite of limited practice resources approach, female athletes have excellent laurels in sports. Moreover, they have inadequate separate play grounds. The foremost anxiety for participation in competitive sports of female athletes range from a horror of judgment aspect may adverse approaches from the society concerning to their opinion and cultural requirements dominant in the society (Qureshi, & Ghouri, 2011). No doubt, the strength is increasing in participation among females not only at schools' level but at national level also in various sports in this modern era.

Pakistani female athletes have disclosed impressive performance in the international sport competitions such as Olympics, World Championships, Commonwealth Games, and Asian Games and proved their sports participation with

Gold Medals in athletics, karate, swimming, and cricket for the country in recent decades (Abbas, 2011, Bakkar, 2011).

Successful female athletes who rose up Pakistani national flag among the world nations at numerous intercontinental sport competitions can be seen in Table 1.

Similar to participation in sports at national level, successful female athletes of secondary schools from 25 Educational Boards out of 30 contributed for the highest integrities in All Pakistan 3rd Inter-Board Female Sports Competitions 2014-2015 (PSB, 2015) as shown in Table 2. Moreover, 700 successful female athletes of secondary schools participated in 13 sport events as badminton, hockey, volleyball, and table tennis including 9 events of athletics (track and field) across the country in this mega event.

All Pakistan 3rd Inter-Board Female Sports Competitions were confronted in badminton, hockey, volleyball, table tennis, and athletics (track events as 100 m, 200 m, 400 m, 800 m, 1500 m, 4x100 m and field events as discuss throw, javelin throw, shot put, high jump, long jump, and hop, step and jump). Sahib-e-Asra of Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) Faisalabad was declared best athlete of this mega event with three gold medals (PSB, 2015)[6]. The results of successful female athletes in 3rd Inter-Board Female Sports Competition 2014-2015 can be seen in Table 3. Table 1. athletes is successful females at international competition.

Table 1. Athletes as Successful Females at International Competitions

Sr.#	Name of Successful Female Athlete	Sport Event	Achievement(s)	Participated in
1.	Naseem Hameed Siddiqi	Athletics (100 M)	Gold Medal	SAF Games 2010
5.	Anum Bandey	Swimming	--	Olympics 2012
7.	Kiran Khan	Swimming	Gold Medal	1 st South Asian Swimming championship
			06 Silver & 03 Brown Medals	SAF Games 2004
			02 Silver & 03 Brown Medals	SAF Games 2006
			02 Brown Medals	SAF Games 2010
			No Medal	Beijing Olympics 2008
11.	Maria Toorpakay Wazir	Squash	Salam Pakistan Award 2007	
12.	Hajra Khan	Soccer	Team Member	Sun Club, Maldives
8.	Sana Mir	Cricket	Gold Medal	SAF Games 2010
			Gold Medal	SAF Games 2014

The total 50 female athletes are considered foremost successful out of 700 participating athletes in the All Pakistan 3rd Inter-Board Female Sports Competition 2014-2015 as shown in Table 2. However, eight successful female athletes belonging to distinguish Educational Boards got gold medals in eight individual events of athletics (track and field). Whereas, four successful female athletes of 100x4m relay of athletics, five successful female athletes belonging to badminton, 16 successful female athletes of hockey, 12 successful female athletes belonging to volleyball, and five successful female athletes of table tennis approached to victory stand for gold medals representing their respective Educational Boards in all Pakistan female sport event and can be seen in Table 3.

Table 2. Statistics of All Pakistan 3rd Inter-Board Female Sports Competition 2014-2015

3 rd Inter-Board Female Sports Event Competition	Frequencies
Number of Educational Boards participated.	25 out of 30 Boards
Sports Events in which Successful Female Athletes Participated.	Athletics, 210, 90, Badminton, 176, 144, Hockey, Volleyball & 80 & Table Tennis
Number of Successful Female Athletes Participated.	700

Source: [PSB, 2015].

Table 3. Results of All Pakistan 3rd Inter-Board Female Sports Competition 2014-2015

No.	Name of Successful Female Athlete	Event(s)	Medal	Represented BISE
1.	Sahib-e-Asra	100 M	Gold	BISE Faisalabad
2.	Sahib-e-Asra	200 M	Gold	BISE Faisalabad
3.	Sahib-e-Asra	400 M	Gold	BISE Faisalabad
4.	Asra, Minhal, Farhat, & Rubab	4x100 M	Gold	BISE Faisalabad
5.	Umme Habiba	Shot Put	Gold	BISE Gujranwala
6.	Habiba	Discuss Throw	Gold	BISE Gujranwala
7.	Amina	Javelin Throw	Gold	BISE Gujranwala
8.	Javeria	Long Jump	Gold	BISE Sargodha
9.	Habiba	High Jump	Gold	BISE Gujranwala
10.	Rubab, Asma, Shakila, Naima & Razia	Badminton	Gold	BISE Faisalabad
11.	Saira and fellow players	Hockey	Gold	BISE Faisalabad
12.	Hadia and fellow players	Volleyball	Gold	BISE Faisalabad
13.	Kiran, Rahat, Kalsum, Zara, & Naila	Table Tennis	Gold	BISE Faisalabad

Source: [PSB, 2015]; *BISE:* Board of Intermediate & Secondary Education

The objective of the current study is to determine the relationship of social class factors with sports participation of successful female athletes at secondary schools' level in rural areas of Pakistan. This may be for the reasons that there is social hindrance of dress code and gender inequality in Pakistani community and may be all these cover the appropriate discouragement for female athletes that can be problematic for successful female athletes to obtain sports participation goals. and may be all these cover the inappropriate encouragement for female athletes.

2. Research Methodology

The research design for the existing study is a correlational research design and purely based on quantitative research method.

2.1 Population and Sampling Procedure

The researchers obtained lists or record of names of 9th and 10th grade/class successful girls' athletes of secondary schools of rural areas from Ministry of Education (Provincial) of Punjab, Sindh, and Khyber Pakhtoon Khawah Provinces of Pakistan. These lists or records of girls' secondary schools highlighted the population of the study (Creswell, 2014) that was 13,677 in numbers. Moreover, targeted number (590) of successful female athletes of Government girls' secondary schools at rural areas in Pakistan provided the way to approach as a sample size. A wide-ranging rules of thumb encouraging to if more than 300 samples for the survey analysis (Tabachnick, & Fidell, 2013).

2.2 Research Tool

The tool was comprised of a survey questionnaire. In a survey questionnaire, the participants followed the guidelines

and composed or marked their responses to the queries (Graziano, & Raulin, 2013). The data was composed through adapted survey questionnaires structured by different researchers as a primary research instrument. Items for social interference factors adopted from (Qureshi, & Ghouri, 2011, Glick, & Fiske, 1996) whereas, sports participation items are adopted from (Al-Qattan, 2005). The researchers modified the adopted survey questionnaires with the permissions of genuine authors.

2.3 Collection of Data

The researcher contacted with the headmistresses of relevant secondary schools from where the survey data was to be collect and briefed them about the research purpose. During the survey phase of collecting the data, respondents were told not to mention their names in the questionnaires and the information provided by them will be kept confidential. However, the survey questionnaires were distributed to the selected respondents of Government girls' secondary schools and communicated them to go their homes and bring the filled questionnaires on very next day to be submitted in their headmistress office. Therefore, the respondents of targeted schools responded 364 cases out of 590 distributed questionnaires. The useable cases were 313 (53%) overall.

3. Results

The findings were analyzed on concrete bases using statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics and Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient to answer the question "what is the relationship between social class factor (dress code and gender inequality) and the sports participation of successful female athletes (health, personal drive, and interest). The descriptive statistics described the mean age (15.42 years) and std. deviation (.981) of the participants.

Results (Table 4) highlighted that dress code had significant correlations with health ($r = -.78, p < .01$), personal drive ($r = -.77, p < .01$), and interest ($r = -.75, p < .01$). Results from the correlations analyses exposed that dress code had negative relationships with all sub-variables health, personal drive, and interest of sport participation of successful female athletes. The relationships between dress code and health, personal drive, and interest in sport participation of successful female athletes were also high and significant.

Table 4: Correlation results among sub-variables of social class factor and sports participation of successful female athletes (n=313)

Sub-Variables		Dress Code	Gender Inequality
Health	Pearson Correlation	-.781**	-.718**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
Personal Drive	Pearson Correlation	-.774**	-.773**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
Interest	Pearson Correlation	-.754**	-.716**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000

Note. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result showed in Table 4 revealed that gender inequality

was significantly correlated with health ($r = -.72, p < .01$), personal drive ($r = -.77, p < .01$), and interest ($r = -.72, p < .01$). Result from the correlation analysis indicated that gender inequality had strong relationships with health, personal drive, and interest in sport participation of successful female athletes. As well as, the analysis of the gender inequality presented also negative but significant correlations with all sub-variables (health, personal drive, and interest) of sport participation of successful female athletes.

4. Discussion

The findings of the existing paper revealed significant, strong, and negative relationships among the scores of sports participation variables such as health, personal drive, interest and social class variables (dress code and gender inequality). If males would rather see a female athlete wearing less clothing and acting alike a model instead of a sport figure that the media will yield them (Shaller, 2006). It is apparent that females' sports are insignificant paralleled to the sports world of males. The reason for negative relationship may be behind this that the sports dress of female athletes is not considered well and appreciated in the community. Another reason may be existed that the female sports dress is much criticized because of male dominancy in the society. The findings reported that the gender inequality establishes strong and significant but negative relationships with all variables of sports participation of successful female athletes. In spite of increased figures of females' participation in sports, males still dominate the sports world (Shaller, 2006). This may be the reason behind the negative association that the gender inequality is exists in Pakistani community as well and male athletes are in approach accessibly on priority basis. Female athletes may further

motivate in the development of sports participation, once they get advantage of equal opportunities and appropriate training environments. Furthermore, the finding revealed that both the variables (dress code and gender inequality) impose on the female athletes of Pakistan. The reason for less females' participation in sports may not have any stimulation for the athletes because of male dominance in sports. The existing findings also verify the findings of former studies (Aubrey, 2006, Harbour et al., 2008, Berberick, 2010, Szymanski, Moffitt & Carr, 2011, Helfert & Warschburger, 2013, McKay, 2013, Burch et al., 2014, Gurock, 2014, Javed, 2014) about social class construct and female participation in sports.

5. Conclusion

The results of the existing research revealed that both gender inequality and dress code are big hurdles in the way to female sports participation especially in rural areas. According to the findings, it was concluded that sports dress is not considering reputable during the sports participation of rural areas female athletes and training sessions as well as in the fields of play. On the other hand, the sports authorities may look into, to provide female athletes not only equal opportunities but also make available incentives, prizes, and job promotions at the victory for their appreciation, which are provided to male athletes. Therefore, the mixture of these constructs cannot be overlooked. However, the sports authorities should also have to provide initiative equally for the stimulation of successful female athletes to increase sports their participation in sports. Consequently, educational institutions should also work for due consideration of female athletes and reflect in a broad sense through emerging approaches for the females' sports. Actually, successful female athletes' feedback may be contemplative for the developments as well as in emerging approaches. The review of the community regarding the sports dress of female athletes may be changed and looked into the broad sense of their athletes' health, drive, and interest for their overall prosperity. Sport authorities should remember that both male and female sports have equal worth and importance. Female athletes' contribution is needed to enhance the participation in sports in rural areas to achieve the entire successes in Pakistani sports context.

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