

Impact of Exercising Sports during Childhood and Adolescence on Educational Attainment

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Abstract – Sport is an attractive and vital activity for youngsters. It helps in the holistic development of young people, fostering their physical, social and emotional health. The benefits of sport reach beyond the impact on physical well-being and the value of the educational benefit of sport should not be underestimated. Physical Education and sport have their own impact on education. There are some direct positive effects of sport on educational productivity. They are: The better health status of athletes could increase productivity and lead to more investments in human capital. Sport teaches soft skills like taking orders, leadership, teamwork, performing in a regulated system, and socialization. Sport can help to form the character of young people because it teaches behavioural habits like motivation, discipline, tenacity, competitive spirit, responsibility, perseverance, confidence, and self-esteem, which cannot always be acquired in classroom. These behavioural aspects should lead to reduced truancy, increase the willingness to succeed in school, and encourage social interaction with other students, which are associated with higher efficiency. Through sport we learn about importance of key values such as honesty, teamwork, fair play, respect for themselves and others and adherence to rules. We will develop sportive attitude and learn how to cope with winning and losing. The rate of return to sports might be larger for women than for men because sport activities may enhance the capability of being successful in a male-dominated society. The higher competitiveness and self-esteem of female athletes can be essential to assert themselves and to compete with men in the classroom. This shows the positive relationship between being involved in physical activities and psychological development. Here in this paper we analyze the impact of exercising sports during childhood and adolescence on educational attainment. We can find strong evidence that the effect of sport on educational attainment is statistically significant and positive. Thus we can say that sports helps in overall development of the personality and in building strong characters and strong nation.

Key words: Exercise, Sport, Childhood, Adolescence, Educational Attainment.

INTRODUCTION

Student-athletes in the past have often been regarded as “arrogant and cocky” students. Throughout the researcher’s years as a student-athlete, science teacher, and coach, these remarks from the public have been heard many times. Defending the advantages of participating in sports has occurred often and had the researcher wondering whether if what was said was accurate. Are these students confident or arrogant? There are two questions to be answered. First, what have others found pertaining to the relationship between high school athletics and academic achievement? Second, does participation in athletics have an impact on the student’s self-esteem?

Today, obesity is one of the most pressing health concerns for our children. More than one-third of children and teens, approximately 25 million kids, are

overweight or obese—and physical inactivity is a leading contributor to the epidemic. The Surgeon General recommends children should engage in 60 minutes of moderate activity most days of the week, yet estimates show that only 3.8 percent of elementary schools provide daily physical education. Schools serve as an excellent venue to provide students with the opportunity for daily physical activity, to teach the importance of regular physical activity for health, and to build skills that support active lifestyles. Unfortunately, most children get little to no regular physical activity while in school. Physical activity programs argue that allocating time for daily PE does not adversely impact academic performance and that regular exercise may improve students’ concentration and cognitive functioning.

OBJECTIVES

- Studies reveal that involvement in sports activities during childhood and adolescence significantly raises the probability of attaining a higher school degree holding other characteristics constant.
- Athletes also had fewer behaviour problems. Athletes often have a code of conduct to follow. Athletic codes include refraining from smoking, drinking and using illegal drugs as well as maintaining proper behaviour in class.
- Athletic involvement raises the students' sense of belonging both in the school and in society.
- Athletics can also develop and contribute to the personal and moral character of the student while promoting leadership and cooperation
- Athletic participation helps develop basic values such as self-confidence, self-respect, self-esteem and competitive spirit. These human elements, unarguably, will aid children in the post-education world.
- Athletics address the issues of relevance and engagement in learning.
- Sports help the athletes to make decisions that they feel is right and to believe in these decisions.
- One of the objectives of secondary school athletic programs is to instil social values such as sportsmanship in our students.
- When students feel physically fit, they feel better about themselves, thus possibly reducing their levels of depression.
- Athletes tend to be more popular than the rest of the students.
- Student-athletes often enjoy being rewarded for their work and dedication.
- Experiences gained through athletic participation often influence athletes in many areas of life, including job satisfaction and life satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

This paper examines if differences exist in the self-concepts of students who participated in athletics and those who do not. It shows the positive impact of sport

and physical education on students' educational performance. The basic result of this work was to establish a strong and positive baseline correlation between high school sports participation and academic achievement.

INTERPRETATION

In the debate about athletic participation and academic performance, it is often assumed that sport activities of adolescents are harmful to their educational outcomes. The underlying line of reasoning is oversimplified: Since the time spent on sport activities crowds out time devoted to schooling, the impact of sport is negative. However, empirical investigations find a rather positive correlation between sport and educational attainment. In this new framework, time spent on sport does not necessarily reduce the time allocated to schooling but can also reduce bad leisure activities, which might harm educational productivity. Examples for bad leisure activities are watching television, playing computer games, smoking, drinking, and going to parties. If participation in athletic activities reduces these bad activities, sport can have an indirect positive effect on educational productivity. Anderson (1998) reports that male as well as female athletes spend significantly more hours per week on homework and less on watching television than non-athletes. According to several coaches, "a sport imitates life". Sports often have been thought of as the method of teaching youth skills necessary for success later in life.

Athletes usually have higher self esteem scale than non-athletes. The main difference we can find in area of behaviour, happiness, satisfaction, as well as intellectual and school status. The biggest difference between athletes and non-athletes was the total self-concept score. The Education policy makers should view athletics as an essential part of the child's education. In the past sports students are regarded as "arrogant and cocky" but in reality it is confidence of the students but not the arrogance. Participation in high school extracurricular activities is often viewed as a nonessential part of child's education. However student participation in extracurricular activities is associated with a host of positive outcomes including increased school performance and participation, increased in community pride and involvement and increased self-esteem and perception of self-worth. Studies have indicated that there is a positive correlation between participation in athletics and academic achievements. According to Stegman, students frequently participating in athletics outperformed students who seldom participated in athletics. Athletics enhances education, socialization, sportsmanship, citizenship skills, leadership skills and teamwork are increased in a positive manner. Athletic involvement raises the students' sense of belonging both in the school and in society. Athletics can also

develop and contribute to the personal and moral character of the student while promoting leadership and co-operation. Although athletes are more risk takers, they tend to have considerably fewer discipline problems and run-ins with the law. Athletes tend to use drugs, alcohol and tobacco less than non-athletes. The rate of return to sports might be larger for women than for men because sport activities may enhance the capability of being successful in a male-dominated society. The higher competitiveness and self-esteem of female athletes can be essential to assert themselves and to compete with men in the classroom. To illustrate this, we use an example of classroom participation: Students within one course compete in signalling their effort through classroom participation in order to obtain good grades. Since women are less competitive in their behaviour, female students might shy away from competition with male students. A female athlete, however, is more likely to withstand this competitive pressure and to participate against male students. Gneezy et al. (2003) and Niederle and Vesterlund (2005) present experimental evidence that women have an aversion against competition in tournaments, even though they are not less productive than men. Gneezy and Rustichini (2004) find that the negative effect of competition on female performance exists already at young age, which suggests that this effect is largely biological. Sport and especially competitive sport at younger age might help to overcome this biological difference at least partly. There have also been reports of a negative correlation between athletics and academic achievement. Athletics in urban schools may in fact reduce the academic performance of the school. As reported by Zaugg, athletes in revenue sports like basketball and football do not, on the average, perform as well in the classroom as their non-athlete peers. There are those in the public that believe that athletics and academics cannot go together. Based on research, there is a need to balance academics and athletics in schools. In order to balance academics and athletics, we first must understand the impact of athletics have on the student's self-perception and community involvement as well as performance in school. As schools try to deal with the limited budgets, extracurricular activities tend to be the first ones cut. But studies show that sport and education go hand in hand. Sport definitely has its positive impact on educational fulfilment.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- A review of literature shows that students participating in athletics tend to be more successful in the school, in the community, and in their own personal lives.
- Athletes often are more outspoken than non-athletes. Research has indicated leadership skills of students were statistically higher in athletes than non-athletes.

- Physical activity has potential benefit both psychologically and physically. In athletes we can find increase in level of fitness. So they will have higher self esteem compared to non-athletes.
- The result of application and engagement of the learning process can help athletes to attain a higher GPA in school than non-athletes.
- Statistical evidence demonstrates that participants in sports and other extracurricular activities earn better grades than non-participants and record better attendance in school.
- Findings have revealed that the mean graduation percentages of athletes are almost 5 percent higher than non-athletes. Interscholastic athletics may lead to experiences, attitudes, self-perceptions and treatment that enhance the academic role. Sports activity provides a context for personal assessment and growth.
- Research has indicated leadership skills of students were statistically higher in athletes than non-athletes.
- Athletes tend to have a high self-esteem and commitment to excellence.
- Sacrificing physical education does not improve academic performance.

CONCLUSION

Overall, we conclude that participation of adolescents in sport activities has significant positive effects on educational attainment. We also find evidence that the effect is generally larger for women than for men, especially if they participate in competitions. However, the results also point to the fact that taking part in competitions might offset (but not reverse) the beneficial effects of sports on the highest degrees, probably because both competitions and studying for the highest degrees are very time-consuming activities. The positive effects of sport activities should encourage politics to strengthen sport activities in school and out of school. Moreover, parents should be aware of these positive effects, i.e., they should encourage their children to get involved in sports. It seems especially beneficial for girls to participate in sports because it strengthens their position in competing with boys in classroom and probably also their position in male dominated societies and work surroundings. Thus denying a student the opportunity to participate in athletics is basically denying the student an invaluable educational opportunity. "Sports builds character" is

an acceptable slogan for many sports advocates. Many believe that high school athletic and non-athletic activities are not only supportive of the academic mission of schools but are inherently educational and vital to the total development of students.

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