

Sports Involvement and Parental Influence among Selected Colleges of Education Female Athletes

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Abstract

The paper investigated the influence of parents on competitive sports involvement of the colleges of education female athletes selected from the six south west states of Nigeria. The study was limited to 90 respondents. The research instrument used was a pro tested questionnaire. The study revealed that most of the female elite athletes from colleges of education were being encouraged by their parents but parents' active involvement in sports had a negative relationship with the female elite athletes' participation in sports..

Keywords: *Competitive Involvement, Athletes and Education*

Background to the Study

The family is said to have a lot of influence over the involvement of the child during childhood and that this influence decreases over a time (Onyewadume, 1993). He further argued that family is the most important predictor of sports participation. Ituh (1997) also asserted that parents act as an important socializing agent upon the life of the child in many ways. The instill norms of behaviour and the relative value of various kinds of activities engaged in by the children. They assign roles for the child to play as he or she grows up.

The basic theoretical perspective also views the family as the major agent of socialization. The parents view the maturity level of the children and assume that the intimate interaction between parent and child is the content within which parents' view of the future are transmitted on the child (Isa, 1998). He further said that parents were more likely to influence their children if they have an active emotionally satisfying relationship with them. Such a relationship not only encourages the child to emulate the parents and to adopt their goals. It also provides the interpersonal mechanism through which the child

can become accurately informed about his parents' goal for him. Therefore, understanding of the developing personality of the child demands greater knowledge of the meaningful psychological stimuli to which the child is reacting and from which he is learning modes of behaviour.

Purpose of the Study

The objective of the investigator was to study the parental influence of selected colleges of education female athletes. To reach this objective, the following null hypotheses were advanced for testing.

1. There will be no significant relationship between the influence of mothers with regard to college of education female athletes participation in sports.
2. There will be no significant relationship between the influence of fathers with regard to college of education female athletes participation in sports.

Method

In all, 90 female athletes of colleges of education belonging to 13 sports from six South West state of Nigeria were considered for data collection. All the athletes used as a subject for this study had actively participated at Nigeria Colleges of Education Games (NICEGA) and therefore they were regarded as a senior athlete. The methods of selection of the respondents were stratified probability proportion to minimum of population in each sport. At least 25% of the number of population in each sport was selected.

The research instrument used was a structured questionnaire having relevant information seeking closed ended questions was administered. The face validity of the questionnaire was ratified through its proper scrutiny by some colleagues in physical and health education. A pilot testing was conducted among selected subjects who were part of the target population but were not included in the sample selected. The reliability coefficient was 0.89 over a period of three weeks. The data were analyzed using chi-square and percentages. The hypotheses were either accepted or rejected at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

Hypothesis I

The hypothesis states that there will be no significant relationship between the influences of mothers with regard to college of education's female athletes' participation in sports. The mother's influence in this context includes mother's past or present encouragement and past active participation in sports. The data obtained were subjected to chi-square analysis. The result is displayed in table I below.

Table I: College of Education Female Athletes by their Mother's Influence on the Participation in Sports

| Sex Respondents | Mother's Influence | Responses | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|-------------|--------------|------------|----------------|-------------|
| | | Yes | No | Total | X ² | Remarks |
| Female athletes | Past encouragement | 70 77.8% | 20 22.2% | 90 100% | 27.78 P<05 | Significant |
| | Present encouragement | 76 84.4% | 14 15.62% | 90 100% | 42.72 P<05 | Significant |
| | Past active sport participation | 50 55.6 | 40 44.4% | 90 100% | 1.12 P<05 | Significant |

Df = 1, level of significance = 0.05

The table showed a significant difference between the past encouragement given by father of the college female athletes participation in sport ($x^2 = 27.78$, $df = 1$, $P < 0.05$). A higher proportion of the college female athletes (77.8%) were encouraged by their fathers in the past. Similarly, the difference between the fathers present encouragement and female athletes participation in sport was found to be significant ($x^2 = 42.72$ $df = 1$, $P < 0.05$) 84.4% of the 90 female subjects were presently encouraged by their fathers at the time of the research. However, no significant difference was observed between the fathers active sports participation in the past and female subjects involvement of the colleges female respondents' fathers were actively involved in the past and 44% were not.

Strong support for the influence of father in terms of past and present encouragement with regard to college female athletes participation in sports is provided by Adedeji (1992) who upholds that fathers of athletes had stronger influences and Isa (1998) who regarded the home as the socialization agency which is the most important for the development of women's sport involvement.

However, minority of the fathers of the female athletes were not active sport participants whereas the researcher would have expected most of the fathers to have been actively involved in sports. These finding could be interpreted to mean that father's encouragement, approval and affection are influencing variables affecting sports participation of their daughters. On the other hand father's active involvement in sport may not be regarded as an influencing variable. Thus, the hypothesis which stipulates that there would be no significant relationship between the influence of fathers with regard to female athletes participation in sports is rejected.

Conclusion

The finding of the study elucidate that the fact that the parent had an important role to play as far as the children are concerned. The parents significantly influenced the sports involvement of their daughters. But parents' active involvement in sports had negative relationship with the sports women participation in sports, in the sense that most of the parents were not active sports participants. This study would be very useful for coaches and physical educators in drawing attention to the sufficient theoretical justification for the acceptance of the variable of parents as an integral part of any future model attempting to explain women socialization into sports.

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