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The effects of sports participation on high school student's self-concept

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Abstract

The Purpose of this study was to find out the if any differences existed in the self-concept of Students participating in Sports at the high schools of Sirsa District. The Self-Concept was measured by the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale. The result of the study showed that the children who participated in Sports scored significantly higher on the Self-Concept scale than the non-participating students. Both Girls and Boy's outscored their counterparts on the Self-concept scale. The biggest difference in mean scores for boys was in the area of behavior, the biggest difference in the mean scores in girls was in happiness and satisfaction and intellectual status. The biggest difference between the Sports participating students and non-participating students was the total self-concept score. The results suggested that Sports should be included as essential part of the education by the Education Policy Makers. It is also recommended that the study should be expanded throughout more grade levels and other district schools before generalizations are made.

Keywords: Sports participation, student's self-concept, education policy makers

Introduction

Participation in Sports and Athletic Performance is considered as a non-essential part of the child's education in Schools and students are not encouraged to take part in extracurricular activities. These activities are often among the first items to be targeted for budget cuts in times of financial constraints. However, student's participation in extracurricular activities is associated with a lot of positive outcomes including increased school performance and participation, increase in community pride and involvement and increased self-esteem and perception of self-worth (McNeal, 1998).

Many studies have been done pertaining to the relationship between high school sports participation and its impacts on the students. Studies have indicated that there is a positive correlation between sports participation and academic performance. According to Stegman (2000), students frequently participating in sports outperformed students who seldom participated in sports.

Academic achievement is not the only factor that may be affected by Sports participation. Through past experiences, sports participation students tend to have a high self-esteem and commitment to excellence.

Other studies have also supported Sports for a wide range of ways that enhances education. Socialization, sportsmanship, citizenship skills, leadership skills and teamwork are increased in a positive manner. Sports involvement raises the students sense of belongingness both in the school and in society.

Methodology

This research examined if any differences exist in the self-concepts of students who participated in sports and those who do not. This part contains description of the subjects, the instrument, the procedures and the data analysis used. This study was conducted on 250 students of various schools of Sirsa district.

Self-Concept Scales

The Self-Concept scales include the Total score and the six domains scales measure specific aspects of Self-concept. They are also used to assess strengths and weaknesses in self image.

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On all scales, higher scores indicate favorable self-concept (i.e high degree of self-esteem or self-regard) whereas lower scores are associated with more negative self-concept.

The self-concept items include Behavioral Adjustment, Intellectual and School Status, Physical Appearances and Attributes, Freedom from Anxiety, Popularity and Happiness and Satisfaction.

Selection of Sample

Students of Eleventh and Twelfth standards were asked to voluntarily complete the survey regarding self-esteem. Out of the 250 Students who participated in this study, 60 percent were boys and 40 percent were girls. The feedback of the students was analyzed using Piers-Harris Children Scales.

Data Collection and Analysis procedures

Data was obtained through a two-step process. First, coaches' rosters were used to identify Sports persons and non-sportspersons. Second, the Piers-Harris Children Scales was administered. The resulting data were grouped into four major categories, a) female Sportspersons, b) Male Sportspersons, C) Female Non-sportspersons and d) Male Non-sportspersons. Data was compiled and Self-concepts were evaluated.

Results and Conclusion

The results of this study are based on a survey of 130 out of 250 members of the of classes 11th and 12th in 2015 school year. Students were divided into four separate groups: male sportspersons, female sportspersons, male non sportspersons and female non sportspersons. The first 30 in each group were administered by the Piers- Harris Children's Self Concept scale. Items are scored in either a positive or negative direction to reflect the student's self-evaluation (Piers, 1996).

Upon examination of the six clusters and the total score, it was determined that the only significant result at the 0.05 level was that sportspersons in general had a higher self-concept than non-sportspersons. When comparing the results of male sportspersons to male non-sportspersons or female sportspersons to female non sportspersons, it was not significant at the 0.05 level. On the result observed that that students participating in games and sports, whether boys or girls outscored their counterparts on the self-concept scale. All of the mean scores of the sportspersons were higher when compared to their non-sportsperson counterparts. The biggest difference in the mean scores for males was in the area of behavior. Male sportspersons averaged almost seven points higher in the area of behavior. The biggest differences in the mean scores for females were in the areas of happiness & satisfaction and intellectual and school status. Female sportspersons averaged six points higher in these areas. Female sportspersons scored the highest on the self-concept scale while male non-sportspersons scored the lowest. In fact female athletes scored higher in every category including total score. Male non-sportspersons scored the lowest in behavior and intellectual and school status and the scores were below average.

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