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Relationship between Girls' Participation in Sports Activities and Social Difficulties at  
College Level

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**Abstract**

Girls' participation in sports has traditionally been labeled as "problematic" in sports literature. Muslim girl's engagement is frequently seen as being constrained by the society. This study was conducted to investigate how Pakistani female students engage in sports and how they view their participation to be constrained. Data was collected from 39 teachers, 163 female students and their parents through a self made questionnaire. The data was analyzed through SPSS version 22 by using mean and correlation coefficient as statistical sources in order to determine the relationship between the girls' participation and social difficulties. The findings demonstrated that the association between girls' participation in sports activities and societal challenges is significant and because of the constraints imposed by society, female students either do not participate or participate very little.

**Keywords:** Girls' participation, Sports activities, Social difficulties, College level

**Introduction**

Sports are a joy-filled spring. The bored and apathetic can entertain themselves by playing games. Playing games helps to clear the mind and get rid of stressful situations. Comparatively speaking, females who participate in games have a more attractive physical makeup than females who don't (Francis, Archer, Moote, de Witt, & Yeomans, 2017). By engaging in sports, they can maintain and improve their appearance and physical fitness. Girls who play sports exhibit a high level of poise and respect for themselves (Nicholson, & Taylor, 2020). Playing games help them to become efficient, active, and eager. Participation in sports and games pave the way to lessen symptoms of illness and stress problems among girls. They can manage their anxiety and daily tensions by participating in sports. Girls who are busy in competitive lives often experience

despair, but when they play games, they feel better (Stevens, Loudon, Yow, Bowden, & Humphrey, 2013).

Furthermore, playing in games teaches young girls how to take risks and manage it. Girls must be strong and ready to take on challenges to deal with these situations because life is already a test, and dangerous conditions exist in these settings. This is only achievable when they participate in games (Hecht, 1998). Girls can develop goal-setting, critical thinking, the pursuit of achieving dominance and other achievement-centered attitudes through playing games. These are the fundamental abilities at a job place or to carry out the assigned routine tasks (Brandon, 2016). They are capable of coping with stress and anxiety (Heilman, 2017). Games develop logical thinking skills. Playing games makes one more mentally attentive and hence enable one to concentrate and focus that help in resolving issues and learn the skills (Kisango, 2016). Young girls can develop their command skills through games (Notter, 2010). Young girls' leadership skills are strengthened through sports. Many games demand leadership skills so that players can compete more effectively (Burton, 2015).

According to Berg, Warner and Das (2015), there are so many barriers in the way of girls' participate in sports activities such as a lack of governmental assistance, the denial of equal opportunities and risks of sexual aggression toward girls. Girls' participation in sports activities is also severely hampered by the absence of support from parents, spouses, family members and community organizations (Loeffler & Bovaird, 2020). When girls see an actual role model, they are more likely to participate in sports, but its absence creates a limitation (Koivula, 1999). Girls who participate in sports activity do not receive the same quality televised reporting as their male counterparts (Strong, 2007).

Girls encounter challenges while participating in athletics all across the world. These challenges are societal, political, financial, practical, and personal. Lack of a private location where girls can interact without men observing them is a barrier in Pakistan (Naseer, Mughal, & Javed, 2020).

Administrators, teachers, guardians and leaders must be aware of the challenges faced by female athletes in order to run a successful game program for them. They must also ask the

guardians and leaders to modify their perspectives specifically for girls participating in sport (MUSIMBIM'MBAHA, 2020).

According to Hunter *et al.*, (2020), the social norms that demand suitable fashion are a big obstacle for girls. In communities that follow customs and religion, constraint in attire is generally expected to be covered frequently the legs, arms, and hair. In addition to it, from the standpoint of religious and custom-bound communities, the emergence of different female body parts during play is considered as awkward (Williams & Kamaludeen, 2017).

### **Objective of the study**

To find out the connection between societal problems and girls participating in sports activities of District Lakki Marwat.

### **Limitations of the study**

The study's limitations are listed below.

1. Since there was no existing instrument, the data was collected from the respondents through using a self-made instrument.
2. The findings of the study cannot be applied to all the colleges in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

### **Research methodology**

#### **Survey approach**

A survey is a useful technique for students to gather first-hand information utilizing a questionnaire about the opinions of teachers, parents, and female college athletes. In the social sciences, the most frequently employed as a mode of observation is the questionnaire approach (Babbie, 1993). Every type of data can be acquired by employing a survey approach (Yin, 1994). For the current study, a survey approach was adopted while keeping in mind the aforementioned ideas.

#### **Population**

All employed teachers, parents of female athletes, and female college athletes in District Lakki Marwat, Province of KP, Pakistan made up the population of the current study. Below is a description of the population in more detail.

Table No 1. The number of total teachers, girls athletes and parents

S.No	Name of College	Total Teachers	Total Girls Athletes	Total Parents
1	GGDC Lakki Marwat	20	85	85
2	GGDC Serai Nurang	19	78	78
Total of each column		39	163	163
Population: $39+163+163= 365$				

#### Tool for data collection

The data was collected from the respondents through a self made questionnaire of five point Likert scale. Strongly Disagree (SDA), Disagree (DA), Undecided (UD), Agree (A), and Strongly Agree (SA) were the responses. The scale's weightings for the options were as follows: SDA=1, DA=2, UD=3, A=4, and SA=5.

#### Mode for data collection

The questionnaire items were arranged and grouped in the light of the pertinent literature. In order to ensure the face validity and content validity, the questionnaire was sent to different experts in the concerned field for pre-testing to evaluate its validity before it is used for the collection of data. Cronbach's Alpha was used for determining its reliability. After the verification/confirmation of questionnaire's validity as well as of its reliability, it was distributed among the teachers and students of Government Girls Degree College Lakki Marwat and Government Girls Degree College Sarai Nurang by the researcher herself. It was collected from them after filling the questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent to and collected from the parents through the assistance of athletes. The collection of data took a few days. The data was subsequently submitted to SPSS for additional processing.

#### Tools for data analysis

Utilizing quantitative methods, statistical analysis of the gathered data was performed. The relationship between the independent and dependent variables was examined using percentage and correlation coefficients. Software from the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 was used for analyses.

HA: There is a considerable connection between societal difficulties and college-level girls' participation in sports.

Table No. 2: *Pearson's correlation illustrating the link between societal difficulties and girls collegiate athletes.*

Correlations		Societal Challenges	Girls Participation in Sports Activities
Societal Challenges	Correlation P.	1	.700**
	2-tailed Sig.		.000
	Number	163	163
Female Participation in Sports Activities	Correlation P.	.700**	1
	2-tailed Sig.	.000	
	Number	163	163

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

The association between females' participation in sports activities and societal challenges is shown in the table is .700 (70%) and is significant at the 0.01 alpha level. In the table above, the p-value is displayed as .000. It is determined that there is a significant association between social problems and girls participating in sports activities because this P-value is smaller than the alpha level 0.01 (0.000 < 0.01) and the p-value of the table indicates that the alternate hypothesis is accepted here.

### Discussion

The objective of the current study was to identify the difficulties that female college athletes in District Lakki Marwat experienced when competing in sports. The findings indicate a strong connection between social challenges and girl engagement in sports. Because of excessive

social scrutiny of girls, they are prevented from participating in sports at the colleges level. According to the respondents, girls are teased by relatives and friends when participating in sports activities. Wearing a veil also restricts girls to participate in sports activities. Similarly, wearing a sports uniform goes against social norms and prevents girls from participating in sports. Dominantly male Social thinking lowers girls' self-confidence. The girls are also not allowed to participate in sports due to domestic issues. Fear of sexual assault, robbery and kidnapping are other barriers that prevent girls from entering the playground. Peer bullying also makes it less likely for girls to participate in sports-related activities.

The study results are consistent with Olafson's (2002) assertion that girls rarely worry about looking better than their peers while participating in sports activities. Young girls are particularly concerned with their peers' social and academic standing (Eder, 1985). When one is less skilled or matched, it would appear that girl's game environments are very difficult. When playing sports, the opinions of your teammates can be subtle, yet they're still highly important (Everhart & Pemberton, 2001). Peer could swiftly and simply turn away the sensitive and socially conscious participant by "just rolling their eyes."

The researcher discovered that female youngsters faced social obstacles during this crucial period of their growth at college, which is supported by Gould's (2004) findings. The notion that activity is not enjoyable or "doable" may further relate to the constrained social and cultural constructions of physical activity as "sport," which is more competitive and skill-focused.

The findings are in line with those of studies by Evans (2006), Gibbons and Humbert (2008), Gilbert (2001), Humbert (1995), and Flintoff and Scraton (2001), which came to the same conclusion that girls' lives appear to be characterized by a limited number of opportunities for and experiences with sport and physical activity. This result is in line with those of Weiss *et al.*, (1996), who found that in the setting of sports, peers have an irrevocable impact on one's motivational results and self-perceptions.

The findings of the study were not supported by the study of Brett *et al.*,(2002) because of sample size and study location (the above-mentioned study was conducted in the vicinity of the United States of America, where sociocultural limitations and culture are different from the researcher vicinity). The study's sample size was insufficient.

## Conclusions

After the findings, the researcher came to the conclusion that girls' engagement in sports is significantly hampered by societal obstacles. According to the respondents, girls are teased by relatives and friends when participating in sports activities. Similarly, how to wear a veil restricts girls and also wearing sports uniform goes against social norms. Both the mentioned factors prevent girls from participating in sports. The excessive social scrutiny and watchfulness of girls is a barrier to their involvement in sports at the colleges level.

## Recommendations

The following suggestions are made in light of the study's findings and conclusions.

1. Awareness should be created among the masses about the benefits of girls' participation in sports.
2. When participating in sporting activities, girls should dress appropriately with a veil and a sports uniform so that norms may be not at risk.
3. Government should ensure the safety of female with reference to sports participation
4. Girls should maintain a balance between their involvement in sports and their obligations to their families.
5. When girls desire to participate in sports activities both within and outside the family, they should be prepared to deal with societal barriers.

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