

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPORTS INVOLVEMENT AND STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to determine relationship between sports involvement and student's performance in Malaysian public university. Based on survey, this study suggested that the students who are involve actively in sports are also good in their study. It because, they have energetic body, an intelligent mind, and strong immune system. From having all of these, students tend to give full attention in class, being more dicipline, and be more creative in giving ideas. The results provide information about the pattern of how the students' performances can be increase by actively involve or participate in sports.

Keywords: Sports involvement, students' performance, university, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Sports today cuts across all barriers, be they ethnic, religious, racial or educational and has served as a symbolic dialogue in developing the citizens of the world. Sports according to Irby (2008), is an integral part of the total make-up of the society. Markovits, (2002) defined sport as highly organized games and competitions requiring physical skill, strategy and chance as well as physical prowess (Grows, 1997). Students spend a great deal of time sitting at a desk, reading books and do assignments until late into the night. The burden life of students makes them have no time to do any sports. Encouraging students to get daily physical activity increases their health and fitness, while also making them feel better overall. University students are known for having very demanding schedules. Most participate in sports, clubs, extra-curricular activities, and advanced classes. This study focuses specifically on the relationship between students' participation in sports and their level of effort and achievement in academics. This topic is of interest to us because most students find themselves struggling to manage time and effort between sports related activities and academic task and assignments. So we wanted to conduct a survey to explore where we stand compared to other students at our faculty who are in similar situations. We solicited feedback from the student population at our faculty.

Sports activities are very important for students' development. Researchers have begun to recognize the importance of involving in sports activities and there are been an increase in the number of studies related to this area (Silliman et al., 2004). Involving in sports activities have been associated with lower levels of depressive symptoms, increase happiness level and also life satisfaction and it will also improve student's health (Menec, 2003; Ruuskanen and Ruopilla, 1995). Other than that, by participating in sports, students will make more friends, expanding life experience, offering opportunities for education and career in sports. By involving in sport activities, it is necessary for them to relieve themselves from stressful academic work. Furthermore, after the students graduate from university, most of the students will enter into sophisticated society, in which social interaction is necessary. Hence, it cannot be denied that those social activities in campus can help the students a lot. For example, when the university organizes a sports event, there will be many other universities could join the event, as for that, the students can communicate and meet many people and they can exchange ideas and opinion regarding any matters (Weil,2012). Moreover, according to Astin (1993), when a student involve in sport activities that been organized by the university, this will contributed to the education of students. This is also will result that students tend to achieve better grades in their academic, have greater chances of implementing career objectives and are more satisfied with their university experience. Another taught is majority of the students still do not know the importance of sports involvement. Some of them already know the importance but they were still resists to exercise. Perhaps, the sports education exposures are low or not being emphasized by the university. To relate all the possible factors are student involvement in sports (student resistance, importance of sports, methods to overcome) in one single setting to investigate their influences on student performance, which demonstrate significant gap of knowledge.

To fill these gaps, this study is attempts to determine the relationship between sports involvement and students' performance in Malaysian university perspective. Next section is a discussion on review of literature of current issues.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Importance of Sport Involvement among Students

Team sports are useful for teaching students many important skills. The first of these skills is competition. In today's world, we are surrounded by competition. Adults face competition when they are applying for and keeping jobs, whereas youth face competition in academics and sports. Participating in competitive team sports at this young age gives an opportunity to understand the healthy aspects of competition in a friendly environment. Students of all ages who participate in sports have been found to cope better with competition in other areas of their life (Ritchie, 2010). Team sports also help a student's physical wellbeing. Students who are actively involved in a sport are more likely to describe themselves as being in good physical health than students who do not participate in sports. There is limited research on the risk of injury for students participating in team sports. Also, athletically active youth are more likely to be nutrition-conscious in their food choices than students, who are not actively involved in a sport (Doyle, 2007). One of the primary reasons of university sport are important is because it gives students the exercise they might not normally receive. Of course, this type of activity usually occurs after school. Most popularly, these types of activities include major sports such as football, basketball, baseball, tennis, track and field and soccer but also might include gymnasium games and other games. After class programs such as the sports club are ideal in a university district as this is the easiest way for students to get their exercise (Gonca, 2012).

Level of Health Condition

The physical intensity and variety of the sport or game determines the health benefits and impact on student's well-being. Obesity is one of the most critical health issues being addressed today. People in the young age such as students also have the potential to get this type of disease. It's a serious problem that increases the risk of heart attack, Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease, which is the leading cause of death for men and women in the United States. Sports can help combat obesity in adults and children, which, according to the Surgeon General, affects nearly 60 million Americans. The Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports of California believes that being involved in physical activities, such as sports, exercise or recreational games, can help reduce these risks (Nthangeni, 2006). At present, the promotion of physical exercise has become one of the Government's main objectives with respect to public health. This is due to the fact that, among the goals to be achieved by the Government, is the prevention of the illnesses (Patrick et al., 2001), as well as the boost of a healthy lifestyle and quality of life of the person. This concept has gained increasing importance in the last decade. It was clearly pointed out the existing relations between physical activity, everyday life sport and health not only on an individual level but also on a public one. Physical activity practiced on a regular basis is associated with a great amount of physical, psychological and physiological benefits (Biddle, 1993), and plays an exceptional role in preventing a variety of illnesses. Leading a sedentary lifestyle, on the contrary, is closely connected with the pathologies mentioned above and can become a serious health problem both in childhood, adolescence and particularly among University students (Irwin, 2007).

Effect of co curricular achievements

Being able to spend time with their friends outside of school is more important to students than knowing they are physically active. Life skill gains through social interaction can be tremendous Social interaction in team sports teaches youth to: 1) Associate with their peers; 2) Solve conflict; and 3) communicate effectively with their peers. According to Men's health Magazine (2006), the mental component of team sports and games helps develop strategies, such as deductive reasoning and critical thinking, as well as fostering social skills essential to successfully functioning in society. While involved in youth sports, students can learn about teamwork, responsibility, accountability, discipline, respect, communication and self-esteem. Sports play a pivotal role in positively shaping the physical as well as the developmental skills of university students. Sometimes, the emotional development of youth is hindered because of the physical and/or

emotional absence of friends. Sports provide youth with opportunities to interact with a caring and supportive friends or lecturers. Friends support outside the family is a major protective factor for high-risk students. The interaction a student's has with his or her coach helps to improve self-esteem as well as lower the chance of depression. Sports team membership can also help increase a student's self-worth, especially when the emphasis is on group or team success, rather than individual achievement. Youth of all ages, including those in university, are likely to receive an end-of-the-season trophy for participating in the team sport. Receiving a trophy with their teammates is intended to help youth feel a sense of accomplishment, teamwork, and recognition (Tirodimos, 2009). Activities during and after class also make a good impression on colleges if students are planning to work at established company. Nowadays, employers look for students who do not just go to the class and go home after class is over. Instead, they look for students who have good grades while at the same time participated in extracurricular activities. These activities range from participating in clubs and sports to volunteering after university at a recreation centre. If employers see you maintained good grades while participating in these activities, it will be impressed (Polgar et al, 2012).

Factors of the surrounding environment

Sports also allow students to be creative when they otherwise would not have had the chance. Activities such as gifted-and-talented programs that allow gifted students to participate in activities they otherwise would never have experienced in the classroom are a great way to allow students to be creative. Additionally, participating in sports club such as football teams and netball's team that appeal to students' interest also allows them to expand their knowledge and be creative. Students also can have their interests expanded by participating in sports. These activities could consist of anything, such as participating in national competition and for the higher achievement; students can bring the university's name to the international. By participating in sports, a student might realize he is interested in something he never knew he was interested in before. For example, if a student has never do archery before and joins an archer club, he may find out he enjoys doing that and will develop an interest in it (Payne, 2008).

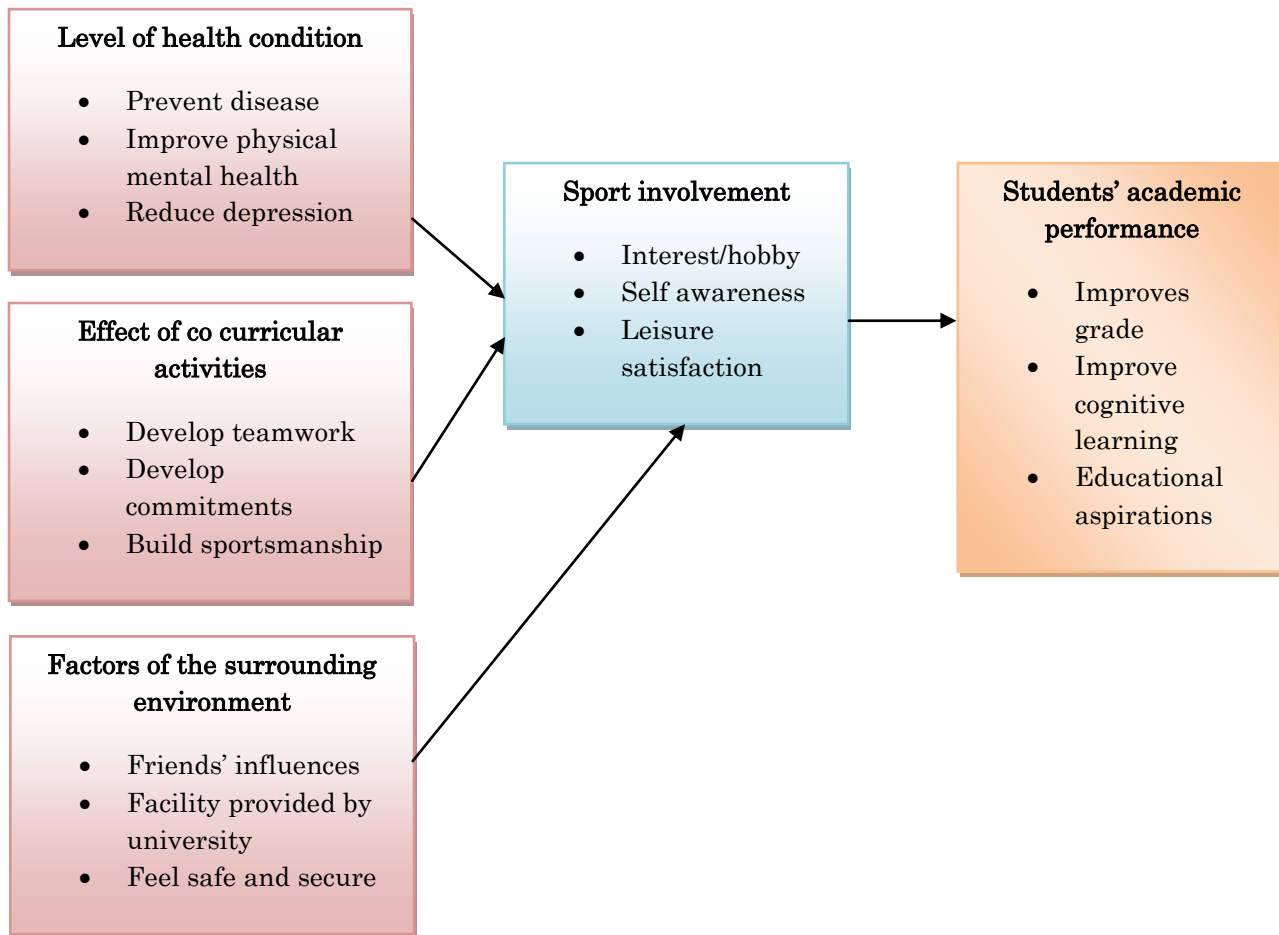
Sports can impact the student's performance

Howell Wechsler, (2012) director of the Division of Adolescent and School Health for the Centers for Disease Control, reviewed 50 studies examining the effect of school-based physical activity on academic performance and discovered that half of the studies showed positive associations and virtually none of the research demonstrated any negative impact. Multiple studies demonstrated that even relatively short spans of physical activity helped to increase the duration and intensity of concentration following such activities, including those in which the students never left the classroom. For some students, sports can provide motivation for improved academic performance. Tom Welter, an executive director of the Oregon School Activities Association, concedes that not all athletes are natural students; however, the grade requirements to stay eligible and play the sport they love drives them to overcome obstacles in the classroom and improve performance, establishing a work ethic that can serve them well for as long as they remain in an academic setting. The study, which included 317 students, showed that the fittest kids scored nearly 30 percent higher on standardized tests than the least-fit group (Payne, 2008). Moreover, the less-fit students received grades in their core subjects that were 13 percent to 20 percent lower than their fitter classmates.

Thus the hypotheses for this study are as follows:

- H1. Sport involvement gives impact to students' academic performances*
- H2. Sport involvement can increase the level of health condition*
- H3. Sport involvement can bring effect to co curricular achievement*
- H4. Sport involvement because of the factor surrounding environment*

Figure 1: Research Model



METHODOLOGY

Sampling

Data for the research were collected through questionnaires. The sample of this study comprised are Universiti Teknologi MARA students in Shah Alam.

Instrument

A set of questionnaires containing 20 questions divided into 3 sections was developed based on the report objectives. Different question types such as ranking, yes-no, open-ended question and likert-scale question were explained. The questionnaires were distributed to 150 students.

Sampling data

Majority of respondents were female, aged between 22-24 years old, studied retail management in semester 5.

FINDINGS

Assessing reliability

In determining the reliability of the instrument, a general rule is that the indicators should have a Cronbach's alpha of 0.60 or more (Uma Sekaran, 2010). With the range of Alpha scores between 0.691 and

0.815 obtained in this study (shown in Table 1), we can conclude that the questionnaire is reliable and the data can be applied for the analysis (Tzu and Yin, 2005). Table III also shows the mean and standard deviation scores of the variables. Despite a high standard deviation, the results show that the respondents agree that the ease of use could make them pleasant to use. The results also indicate that there is a relationship between usage of online tutorial and student performance. The respondents have made learning fun with mean 5.28. The results also provide indications that the respondents more concentrate on study. Table III further indicates that the students believed that the online tutorial make their become working independently and improved their academic performance.

Table 1: Internal consistency of the constructs

Construct/scale	Mean	SD	Cronbach's a
<i>Level of health condition</i>			0.792
Tool to promote health	5.0733	0.97689	
Tool to prevent disease	4.7333	0.96702	
Relieved from stressful life	4.8867	1.31862	
Improve physical health	4.8067	1.07252	
Improve mental health	4.9800	0.88591	
Reduce depression	5.0015	0.78739	
Being alert in class	5.8946	1.28762	
Feel fit	4.7893	0.73562	
Feel energetic	4.8964	0.15432	
Better sleep	5.0233	0.38757	
<i>Effect of co curricular achievement</i>			0.737
Work in teamwork	5.1733	1.00165	
Instill sportsmanship	5.3067	0.73225	
Improved leadership skills	5.2800	1.15346	
Follow commitment	4.9733	1.39003	
Balance time	5.3857	1.67345	
Positive experience	4.6729	0.02287	
Specific career path	5.8635	1.98653	
Teach to associate with peers	5.9876	1.89625	
Solve the conflicts	4.8756	0.97363	
Enhance communication	5.1937	1.27678	
Develops confidence in personality	4.6867	1.73574	
Character development	4.0987	0.87654	
Unique learning labs	5.9876	1.98765	
<i>Sports Involvement</i>			0.691
Interest during free time	4.9067	0.95078	
Leisure satisfaction	5.0133	1.05542	
Self awareness	4.7000	1.09759	
Sports' attraction	4.7133	0.97854	
Fun and enjoyable	4.9333	1.29877	
Get awards	4.9874	0.87653	
Sport's recognition	5.9721	1.98241	
Self actualization	5.9112	0.72415	
<i>Factors of the surrounding environment</i>			0.815
Satisfy facility and equipment	4.8533	1.13153	
Friend's influences	5.1867	0.87766	

Friend's support	5.0200	1.05213
Feel safe and secured	4.4400	1.14388
Sports events	4.3933	0.92611
Healthy competition	5.9873	0.7653
Practice healthy lifestyle	5.9342	0.82453
<i>Students' performance</i>		0.805
Improve cognitive learning	4.8400	0.86761
Impact academic CGPA and grades	5.0400	0.93321
Being more open minded	5.0467	0.93648
Gain general knowledge	5.1067	1.09389
More discipline	5.4867	1.25177
Organized in person	4.9863	0.12656
Educational aspirations	4.9243	0.72563
Motivation to attend class	5.8354	0.25143
Being more responsible	5.9254	0.25643

RESULTS

Table 2 shows the results with respect to the four hypotheses constructed. The analysis indicates, H1 is accepted (p value <, 0.001). It is ease of use on usage of online tutorial , H2 (p value <, 0.001) which is interactive of online tutorial accepted by students in UITM Shah .Similarly, H3 is accepted privacy on usage of online tutorial (p value <0.001). Lastly, H4 is also accepted with (p value < , 0.001) means usage of online tutorial are accepted in students performance.

Table 2: Hypotheses Results

Hypotheses	Causal Relationships	β	Sig.	Result
H1 : Sports involvement	→ academic performance	0.5450	*	Supported
H2 : Health condition	→ sports involvement	-0.5499	*	Supported
H3 : Co Curricular achievement	→ sports involvement	0.3270	*	Supported
H4 : Surrounding environment	→ sports involvement	- 0.1180	*	Supported

Notes: β Standard error, $\alpha = 0.05$, * <0.001, Sig. = Statistical significance of the test

DISCUSSION AND PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATIONS

The mean scores also reflect this where the students scored above average mean for attributes measuring the student's performance, sports involvement, surrounding environment, level of health effect, and effect to the co curricular achievements. These findings suggest that in order to attain improvements in the students' performance, the university has to consider the suitable between the efficient of sports facility and the university environment. When there is efficient, this would create a good for student to involve in sports. This study found significant relationship between the surrounding environment and the pattern of the university sports' involvement. In other words, when the university has create the sports environment such as campaign and competition it does make students more attract to involve in sports. The findings, however, show that the level of health effect are more important compared to the effect on the co curricular achievement (p value of the interaction < 0.00) This indicates that level of health is a primary factor that leads students to involve in sports.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The modern lifestyle is far from an active one. Many students spend hours sitting down, practically motionless, either studying, watching TV, or surfing the web. This inactive lifestyle may have some undesirable outcomes such as weight gain, increased tiredness, and various health issues. These are the factors why students nowadays are getting stress in the young age. Actually, active people are not only healthier but also happier (Asuncion, 2012). These barriers have been the focus of study in a great variety of

populations and have been increasing in developed countries due to two main reasons. Besides that, due to the advances in technology, that is to say, the reliance on technology, the urbanization of the population and the mechanization within the workplace; on the other hand, due to the fact that physical and sport practice has been relegated to leisure time, thus competing with a wide range of offers and volunteering options during the spare time that sometimes are more appealing to people (Skarnulis, 2012). Results from different studies indicate that people who encounter more barriers have less possibilities of becoming active (Pate et al., 2002; Sallis et al., 2000) and that these may vary depending on age and gender establish that, in order to eliminate some of the barriers that hinder the possibility of engaging in an active and healthy lifestyle, the participants should receive feedback on their reasons towards physical exercise together with advising on the improvement of fitness. Therefore, we aim at studying in detail the features of inactive university students. At the same time, we will approach the goal of our research: to identify the determining barriers of the university students who have never practiced physical and sport activities in their spare time.

Besides that, it is highly recommended that each student start engaging himself/herself in exercising activities such as brisk walking, aerobics or cycling to strengthen the immune system and avoid getting illness like cardiac failures and diabetes. Weil (2012) advises that to make exercise a habit, one should take things slowly. For instance, instead of rushing to run for an hour per day, a student should start his routine by walking for 10 minutes and running for 15 minutes as a starter. Intensity should be increased once the body can adapt to the existing momentum which means as time goes by, the student can run for 40 minutes and slowly increase his time and speed as time goes by. Klein (2009) suggests that to motivate oneself to exercise, one should do a variety of exercises that he enjoys. Thus, a student should widen his exercise routine to many activities rather than sticking to only one type of exercise habit. A student can swim on Sunday, have a brisk walk on Tuesday, cycle on Thursday and join an aerobic class on Saturday (Payne, 2008). Next, Stevens (2011) recommends that to make exercise more interesting and colorful, one should have a 'buddy system'. Having friends while exercising or playing games is a positive way of maintaining a consistent exercise habits. So, it was suggested that the university motivates the students to exercise by gathering them into a meeting every weekend and conducting healthy events such as marathons or walkathons so that students will have the opportunity to experience having buddy systems while exercising. Not only that a partner will accompany students while exercising and having her can also make you exchange ideas regarding exercise routines. A student can always gather other students and make plans to exercise on any weekends at somewhere convenient for each of them to join. It is proposed that the university need to conduct awareness campaigns such as indoor activities carnival or sports carnival for the student, to encourage them participate in exercising activities thus leading the student to a better lifestyle.

In addition, university also plays an important role to provide good facilities, equipment and games court to encourage students to engaging in sports (Atanda, 2013). The sports department also can build gymnasiums for the students. It is because some students look for the privacy to do their physical exercise. Sometimes, students also look for light activity especially the girls. It is because, they do not want to make their body too tired with vigorous activities. They prefer sports like playing catch, throwing a Frisbee, cycling, badminton and ping pong. On the other hand, boys like to engage in team sports like footballs, Sepak Takraw, Futsal, Rugby and basketball. Thus, university should do a survey first before providing right sport's equipment to the students. Krisanda, (2013) noted that university must provide sport's consultant in order to observe the students' activities and give sport's advice to them. Even, they are university students; it was surprisingly that many of them are lack of sport's education. So, it is consultant's job to educate the students the proper way to play sports. Sport's education is important to avoid any bad incident happen during playing sports. Also, time is one of the biggest reasons why students don't involve in sports. Their time is already full with the assignments, university project, seminar, trip, research and so on. When they have free time, they use it for rest, sleep; hang out with friends and shopping. They thought that, if they exercise there a lot of time required and they are not enjoying by doing that. When they want to exercise, they found that they do not have friends/ buddy system that are willing to exercise with them. For girls especially, when they have no friends exercise with them, they feel shy and also feel unsafe with the environment since there are a lot of cases such as raped, kidnap, burglar and murder occur nowadays. For boys, they lost their interested when they not having clique around them. Moreover, most of the sports that the boys usually involve need a team. In addition to these, the students assess the sufficiency of their universities' sport facilities and declare what kind of facilities should be created on their campuses.

According to the results of the survey, it is apparent that university students cannot fully participate in recreational and sports activities for various reasons, the most important being the fact that universities fail to offer adequate amount of social, cultural, athletic and other similar activities. Universities should take on the responsibility and duty of offering such activities that students need

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