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Correlation between Sport Participation and Personal Development of Basketball Players

Raisalam Delos Trico Angoy[1], H. Amung Ma'mun[1*], Agus Mahendra[1], Bambang Abduljabar[1], Balme Makiring Diva[2], Michelle Mordeno Layao[3]

[1]Department of Sports Education, School of Postgraduate Studies, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia
[2]College of Teacher Education, Surigao del Norte State University, Philippines
[3]College of Sports Physical Education and Recreation, Mindanao State University, Philippines

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Abstract

Despite its popularity to enhance physical, emotional, and social skills, the existing studies mostly focus on athletes coming from well-resourced environments, leaving a gap in understanding how these benefits manifest in resource-limited settings. This study examined the relationship between sport participation and personal development of collegiate basketball players in the Mindanao State University (MSU). Using a descriptive-correlational approach, this research assessed sport participation using related variables, such as active years, training volumes, and competition levels. To measure personal development, life skill indicators, such as leadership, teamwork, and communication, were used. Data were collected from 48 basketball players across several MSU campuses using standardized questionnaires. Results of the study revealed a significant positive correlation between prolonged sport participation and improved personal development, particularly in teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving. The strongest correlation was found in the number of years of participation and training experience, with weaker associations for training frequencies and competition levels. These findings indicate that even in resource-limited environments, a consistent sport engagement could foster a meaningful personal growth. The study concludes that a structured sport program could contribute to a holistic development of athletes although additional resources and exposures to higher-level competitions could further enhance these benefits. Future research should investigate the impact of coaching quality and socio-cultural factors on personal development, particularly in under-resourced settings.

✉ Correspondence Address : Jln Dr. Setiabudi 200, Bandung, Indoneisa
E-mail : raisalamdangoy@upi.edu

INTRODUCTION

Participation in sports has long been recognized as a powerful tool for fostering physical, emotional, and social development. Participation in sports and physical activity is frequently regarded as a potential contributor to psychological resilience due to the associated physical, cognitive, and social advantages (Husain et al., 2024). Competitive team sports like basketball, in particular, play a crucial role in developing personal life skills, such as leadership, teamwork, communication, and emotional regulation (Sela, 2021). These skills, sharpened through a structured and sustained sport engagement, are often transferable to other areas of life (Pierce et al., 2018), including in academic and professional settings. Previous research has shown that sport participation could improve physical fitness (Tahira, 2021), while the implementation of structured sport programs emphasizing discipline, teamwork, and time management can enhance the student self-determination and achievement of goal orientations (Hassan, 2024). This holistic development underscores the importance of sports in nurturing well-rounded individuals capable of thriving both on and off the court.

However, a number of existing literature on sports and personal development focused on athletes from developed countries (Gould et al., 2023), where sport infrastructure (Eime et al., 2017; Wicker et al., 2013), training resources (Wen, 2015), and competitive opportunities are robust (Chemerilovai et al., 2019). In these settings, athletes often benefit from structured programs that offer consistent trainings and frequent competitions as the key to foster their personal growth (Gadiet & Deutsch, 2020). While these studies provide valuable insights, they fail to address whether similar patterns of personal development emerge in a more limited resource contexts. For instance, in developing regions like Philippines, where the access to sport facilities and competition opportunities may be uneven as most of the developments are concentrated in urban areas like Metro Manila which leads to regional disparities (Caballero, 2018), the basketball participation contribution on personal development remains underexplored. In addition, a research on self-efficacy of the basketball players found that the higher the general self-efficacy, the higher the perceived shot success (Santua, 2020). However, it did not address their personal development. This gap in the literature highlights the need to examine how sport participation functions and affects personal development in less privileged environments.

The framework proposed by Côté & Hancock (2016) which emphasizes the interconnectedness of three key domains, namely performance, participation, and personal development (3Ps), offers useful lens to explore this inquiry. According to this framework, an optimal development in sports is achieved when there is a balance in improved performance, increased participation, and fostered personal growth (Wibawa, 2023). While studies in high-income countries have shown that this balance can be successfully struck in well-supported environments (Côté & Hancock, 2016), little is known about how the 3Ps interact in developing regions. Specifically, where participation may be constrained by a lack of resources and competitive opportunities, the potential trade-offs between participation and personal development warrant further investigation. Thus, the present study aimed to understand whether basketball participation in the Mindanao State University (MSU) System in Mindanao supported the holistic development of athletes across all three domains.

The MSU System found in Mindanao offers a unique context to test the 3Ps framework in a developing country setting. Across its campuses, the availability of sport infrastructure and competitive opportunities varies, making it an ideal setting to study the impact of sport participation on personal development. Previous studies suggest that the duration of sport engagement and exposure to competitive environments positively correlate with the development of life skills (Bae et al., 2023). However, in resource-constrained settings like the MSU campuses located in Mindanao, where players may not have access to the same level of support as their counterparts in more developed regions, the dynamics of personal development in sports may differ significantly, particularly in balancing the performance and participation.

Given the potential disparities in resources and training opportunities, it is essential to explore how these factors influence the relationship between sport participation and personal development. Specifically, this study aimed to assess whether the prolonged participation and frequent competition in basketball are associated with greater personal development in leadership, teamwork, and communication. Understanding these dynamics will provide crucial insights into how sport

programs can be tailored to optimize personal growth and participation, especially when athletes face more significant challenging settings in terms of access to resources and competitions.

This study aimed to fill the existing research gap by focusing on the relationship between sport participation and personal development among collegiate basketball players in the MSU System. By examining factors, such as the duration of active sport participation, training volume, and competitive experience within the 3Ps framework, this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of how sport participation fosters personal growth in less privileged environments. The findings will have important implications for the design and implementation of sport programs that can better support personal development and balance participation of athletes from resource-constrained settings.

METHODS

This research utilized a decriptive-correlational approach. Descriptive because it described the sport participation of the players in terms of number of active years in sport participation, number of years of training experience, number of training sessions per week, and the level of competition played. It also described the level of personal development of the players in terms of teamwork, goal settings, social skills, problem solving, emotional skills, leadership, time management, and communication. Additionally, the study was correlational because it sought the relationship between the sport participation and personal development of the players.

Participants

The study was conducted at Mindanao State University System where all campuses are located in various places in Mindanao, Philippines. Only the campuses that had an established varsity team and had responded the request for the conduct of the study were included, including MSU-Main, MSU-IIT, MSU-Maigo, and MSU-Sulu. The participants of the study were all college students and member of the men's basketball varsity team in their respective campuses. Also, the participants were officially enrolled during the first semester of school year 2023-2024.

Sampling Procedures

The samples of this study were forty-eight basketball players who were members of the men's basketball varsity team in their campuses included in MSU System. Specificaly,15 players were from MSU-Marawi City; 11 players were from MSU-IIT; 11 players were from MSU-Maigo, and 11 players were from Sulu. Due to the small number of population, this study utilized the total sampling technique to gather the sample of this study.

Materials

The study utilized the adapted questionnaire of (Gadzic, 2009) to measure the sport participation. The questionnaire was used to examine the following:

a. kind of sport played (individual, dual, team)
b. membership in a sport club/association (yes or no)
c. years of active sport participation
d. training experiences (in years)
e. training volume (number of training session per week) and
f. participation in sport competitions (district, provincial, regional, national, international)

Based on the data acquired from the questionnaire, several criteria for sport participation were defined. The sport participants were all members of the basketball varsity team, members of sport clubs or associations, had been involved in sports at least for a year, and participated in sport competitions at one of the aforementioned levels. Therefore, the sport participation variables involved active sport participations, training experiences, training volumes, and competition levels.

Additionally, the researchers used a standardized questionnaire by (Mossman et al., 2021) to measure the personal development of the players by exploring their life skills. The questionnaire covered the life skill questions containing eight indicators, namely teamwork, goal settings, social skills, problem solving, emotional skills, leadership, time management, and communication. In total, there were 44 item questions asked to the participants. The participants had to rate how their sports taught them to perform the life skills, including 1 (not at all), 2 (a little), 3 (some), 4 (a lot), and 5 (very much).

Procedures

Prior to the conduct of the study, the researchers asked for permission to the men's basketball varsity team from the respective MSU System campuses. After having the approval, the final list of the participants of each team was finalized. Then, the researchers gave letter of consent to each of the participant. After the approval, the study began. The participants were informed about the study and instructed to read the questionnaires first, both for sport participation and personal development. They were also reminded to give honest answers in answering the questionnaires. The questionnaires were gathered securely and confidentially after the participants had completed the answers. The data were then tallied and analyzed.

Data Analysis

The data obtained in the study were evaluated using the frequency and percentage distributions to determine the sport participation of the players, while mean and standard deviation were used to determine the level of personal development. In addition, Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to identify the significance of relationship between sport participation and personal development.

RESULT

Based on the collected data, the study revealed important insights into the relationship between sport participation and personal development of basketball players. The key findings of this research are presented in Table1.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distributions of The Player Sport Participation

Sport Participation	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Number of Active Years in Sports	≤ 1 Year - 3 Years	15	31.30
	4 Years - 6 Years	15	31.30
	7 Years - ≥ 10 Years	18	37.50
Number of Years of Training Experiences	≤ 1 Year - 3 Years	17	35.40
	4 Years - 6 Years	13	27.10
	7 Years - ≥ 10 Years	18	37.50
Number of Training Session per Week	1 – 2 Times	12	25.00
	3 – 5 Times	21	43.80
	6 – 7 Times	15	31.30
Level of Sport Competition	District	4	8.30
	Provincial	12	25.00
	Regional	24	50.00
	National	8	16.70

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage distributions of the sport participation of the players. In terms of active years in sports, the majority (37.50%) had been active for 7 years or more. Also, there was an equal percentage of the players (31.30%) who had been active for 1-3 years and 4-6 years. The findings suggested that most players had a significant training experience of 7 years or more.

Table 2. Personal Development Levels of The Players

Indicators	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Descriptive Equivalent
Teamwork	48	1.43	4.57	2.841	.870	Some
Goal Setting	48	1.57	4.43	2.931	.762	Some
Social Skills	48	1.20	4.00	2.891	.698	Some
Problem Solving	48	1.50	4.75	3.088	.730	Some
Emotional Skills	48	1.25	4.75	2.927	.816	Some
Leadership	48	1.50	4.75	3.033	.834	Some
Time Management	48	1.25	4.50	2.911	.840	Some
Communication	48	1.25	4.50	2.942	.866	Some
Total	48	1.79	4.23	2.946	.679	Some

Legend: 1.00 – 1.79 = Not All 1.80 – 2.59 = A Little 2.60 – 3.39 = Some
3.40 - 4.19 = A Lot 4.20 – 5.00 = Very Much

Table 2 presents the level of personal development of the basketball players. It indicates that basketball players exhibited development across various personal skills. The mean score of the teamwork skill was 2.84, while the mean scores of goal setting and social skills followed closely, namely 2.93 and 2.89 respectively, all falling within some category. Similarly, problem-solving gained a mean of 3.09, whereas emotional skills obtained a mean of 2.92, showing some level. The leadership skill received the highest score (3.03), although it remained also in some category. Time management and communication skills, with means of 2.91 and 2.94, also reflected some development levels. Overall, these findings suggest that although the players possess foundational abilities in these areas, further development is

needed to fully enhance their personal development, specifically the life skill development.

Table 3. Correlation between Number of Active Years in Sport Participation and Personal

Variables	Personal Development	Decision
Number of Active Years in Sport Participation	.801 .000	Reject H_o

Table 3 shows the results of the correlational analysis between sport participation in terms of active years in sport participation and personal development. The result of analysis gained a correlation coefficient of 0.801, indicating a strong positive relationship between the number of year the players active in sports and their level of personal development. The p-value was 0.000, which is less than the standard significance level of 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0). It indicates that the correlation is statistically significant, suggesting that the longer the players participate in sports, the more they tend to develop personal skills, such as the teamwork, leadership, and communication. This reinforces the idea that a sustained sport participation contributes to the enhanced personal growth and life skills.

Table 4. Correlation between Years of Training Experiences and Personal Development

Variables	Personal Development	Decision
Number of Years of Training Experiences	.768 .000	Reject H_o

Table 4 presents the correlation between years of training experiences and personal development. The result shows a strong positive correlation between number of years of training experiences and personal development with a correlation coefficient of 0.768. The p-value of 0.000 is below 0.05 level of significance, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0). This means that the relationship is statistically significant, indicating that as the number of years of training increases, players are more likely to learn and develop personal values. This reinforces the idea that a prolonged and consistent training contributes to the advanced personal development.

Table 5 displays the correlation between number of training sessions per week and personal development. From the result, there is a significant relationship between the number of training sessions per week and the level of personal development. The p-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05 level of significance, leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0). This statistically significant result suggests that as the frequency of training sessions per week increases, there is a corresponding improvement in the personal development. This implies that regular frequent training contributes positively to the enhancement of personal skills such as teamwork, leadership, and emotional regulation of basketball players which reinforces the value of consistent practice.

Table 5. Correlation between Training Sessions per Week and Personal Development

Variables	Personal Development	Decision
Number of Training	.588 .000	Reject H_o

Table 6. Correlation between Sport Competition Levels and Personal Development

Variables	Personal Development	Decision
Number of Training Session per Week	.588 .000	Reject H_o

Based on the findings of this study, Table 6 demonstrates the correlation between the level of sport competition and personal development. The result revealed a correlation coefficient of 0.504, indicating a significant relationship between the level of sport competition and personal development. The p-value of 0.000 is lower than the 0.05 significance level, meaning that the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. This suggests that the higher the level of competitions of the players, the better their personal development, encompassing their life skill development, such as teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving. The findings highlight the importance of higher competitive exposures in fostering personal development of players.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to assess the correlation between the sport participation and the personal develoment of the basketball players in MSU system. The findings of this study revealed a strong positive correlation between the duration of active sport participation and the personal development related to their life skills, such as leadership, teamwork, and communication, aligning with existing research emphasizing the benefits of a sustained sport engagement (Cronin & Allen, 2018). Previous studies, particularly in devel-

oped countries, have consistently shown that structured sport programs could enhance personal growth through similar mechanisms. These findings align with the statement that the aspects of personal development should be seamlessly integrated into the sport experience, rather than being treated as distinct components (Strachan et al., 2016). This approach is crucial for fostering youth development through sports. However, the present study uniquely contributes to the literature by exploring these dynamics in a resource-constrained environment, filling a critical gap in understanding how personal development manifests in regions with limited access to the sport infrastructure. While previous studies from developed nations, such as those by (Eime et al., 2017; Wicker et al., 2013) and Bean & Forneris (2016), emphasized the intentional incorporation of life skill discussions into training sessions could result in notable enhancements in the player ability to handle challenges beyond the realm of sports, this study demonstrated the enhancement even in the less privileged settings. The prolonged sport participation can yield similar benefits though the level of development may not be as pronounced.

Furthermore, the study critically assessed how the relationship between training volume and personal development of the basketball players in the MSU system compared with findings from more affluent contexts. Although there was a significant correlation between training volume and personal growth, the relationship was not as strong as reported in studies from regions with better sport infrastructure. The increased training volume is essential for preparing athletes for competitive demands (Lesinski et al., 2017), especially when the sport training is intentionally structured to teach life skills (Hemphill et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2017; Rohmanasari et al., 2019). This suggests that, in resource-limited settings, other factors such as coaching quality (Strachan et al., 2016) and socio-cultural (Ogbuinya et al., 2023) influences may play a more substantial role in shaping personal development. For instance, while the current study showed that basketball players in the MSU system exhibited development in the key life skills, for instance teamwork, goal setting, and communication, these levels are lower compared to athletes in high-resource environments. This underscores the challenges faced by athletes in developing regions where access to competitive opportunities and training facilities is uneven. It is in line with the result of previous research that athletes from countries with higher Human Development Index (HDI) scores generally achieve better performance outcomes, highlighting the importance of access to quality training facilities for athletic success (Gomes-Sentone et al., 2019). Nevertheless, the findings indicate that consistency in training and sport engagement, even with fewer resources, is crucial for fostering personal development (Xiao et al., 2020), hence the life skills should also be intentionally taught appropriately.

In addition, the findings of the study are consistent with other research examining the sport participation in less privileged environments. For example, a study found that participation in sports, regardless of resource availability, contributes to physical and cognitive improvements (Tahira, 2021). The present study extended this understanding by revealing how sport participation fostered life skill development in a limited infrastructure context. Moreover, it is relevant with a previous study exploring self-efficacy among basketball players in the Philippines, demonstrating that the sport participation also enhanced broader personal skills beyond self-efficacy (Santua, 2020). These findings highlight the potential of sports as a vehicle for a holistic personal development, even in challenging environments.

For this reason, this study has significant implications for coaches, physical education teachers, and policymakers. For coaches, it emphasizes the importance of a consistent and structured training to promote athletic performance, personal development, and participation (Côté & Hancock, 2016) even in under-resourced settings. Similarly, physical education teachers are encouraged to integrate life skill trainings into sport programs and physical education classes, recognizing the broader social and emotional benefits of the sport participation (Rohmanasari et al., 2019). For policymakers, the study suggests that efforts should focus on reducing regional disparities in access to the sport infrastructure and competitive opportunities. Ensuring an equitable access will allow athletes from less privileged regions to experience the same developmental benefits as those from more affluent areas. Thus, while the MSU system provides an encouraging example of how sport participation fosters personal growth, further investments in sport infrastructure are necessary to optimize these outcomes across different regions. Ultimately, this study underscores the need for future research to explore spe-

cific strategies for enhancing personal development through sports in resource-limited settings, with particular attention to the role of coaches, training quality, and socio-cultural factors.

CONCLUSION

The study demonstrated a strong positive correlation between sport participation and personal development among basketball players in the MSU System. It revealed that the prolonged participation and frequent training sessions significantly enhanced personal development, specifically development of life skills such as leadership, teamwork, and communication, even in resource-constrained environments. However, compared to athletes in well-supported regions, the level of development was moderate, suggesting that coaching quality and socio-cultural influences might play a critical role in shaping the outcomes. The study underscores the importance of structured sport programs for fostering a holistic development and highlights the need for further investigations into how limited resources would impact the athlete growth. Future research should explore the influence of coaching, socio-cultural factors, and long-term participation in such settings, along with intervention-based approaches that incorporate life skill trainings into sport programs.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

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