

Gender in Sports: A Study

Sikha Purohit¹

Available online at: www.xournals.com

Received 20th January 2018 | Revised 26th February 2018 | Accepted 28th May 2018

Abstract:

In Sport and Exercise Psychology (SEP), the trends which are related to the gender are basically summarized in an understandable manner. All the fundamental aspects related to gender research are outlined in this paper in a very smart manner. The major one framework which is of the cultural studies is blurring and discomforting the boundaries of the discipline, where the no certainty, the manner of information or the supreme methodology sovereignties. Somewhere, the division of knowledge results in the difficult understanding that surely forms a major difference to the regions, communities, and groups that are marginalized or the individuals who are more encouraged and desired towards the gender empowerment. The one of the second background considered is the Ecological systems theory that mentions the development of human and also the impact of various systems of the environment is reflected. The environmental systems can be related to the social, societal, cultural and environmental. This particular theory impacted culture and it also differs from culture to culture. In SEP, the gap of physical activity which is gendered, the power of women in sports and the differences in gender

Keywords: Sport and Exercise Psychology, Ecological Systems Theory, Physical Activity Unit

Authors:

1. Sadguru Education Society's College of Physical Education, Jalgaon, Maharashtra, INDIA

Introduction

The challenge around the world for the health of future generations is because of rising of the problems related to the overweight and obesity. In 2010, the World Health Organization i.e., WHO has considered a factor of physical inactivity. This factor is the fourth challenging factor in the determination of mortality globally. Sometimes, the programs of physical education which are organized in schools help in the promotion of habits which are lifelong and also provide school children to be physically active and have the good or positive experience from the discipline of physical activity. For example, In Iceland, the issues related to the physical activity levels show a decrease at the time of adolescence and it is found that boys are more active than girls. In 2010, the WHO reports the parameters of physical activity that decreases the danger of having the non-communicable diseases. These non-communicable diseases are depression, cancer, hypertension and stroke or any diseases related to the heart. The physical activity that is performed regularly is considered as an important parameter for properly governing the weight. All the physical activities which are regular involves the increase in physical fitness, decrease in the fatness of body, the cardiovascular and metabolic diseases which are favorable, improvement in the health of bone and the decrease in the depression symptoms. In 1999, Must and Strauss defined the consequences related to the obesity in childhood that involves,

- Legs Bowling
- Gallstone development
- Hepatitis
- Disorders related to the sleep
- Intracranial pressure
- Abnormalities during menstruation

WHO states that “the major cause of obesity is the imbalance of the energy between the consumption of calories and the calories which are lengthened”. Then in 2004, Lobstein, Baur, and Uauy discussed the changes in the social environment that contributes to the intensification of obesity factor in both adults and children globally. As according to Lobstein et al, the changes in the social environment and their associated concerns about health are being identified by countries. These studies also recommend that social changes can be different such as the measurements for the prevention of obesity. The measurements for the prevention of obesity are offering the funds to the public for the physical education programs, facilities

provided in sports, providing safe and secure parks to the general public, the food companies are encouraged and at last but not the least schools are encouraged for the development of tools which are logically related to policies of food, physical activity and the nutrition (Smiley 2015).

In various disciplines, there exist different kinds of differences among male and female where some of the parameters are reflected as not acceptable and not reasonable whereas some are valid and authentic. According to the various researchers, biological aspects (natural) are considered to be the major reason for all these differences. The physical abilities result in the development more among males in comparison to females at the time of puberty development. The motor tasks are performed in a better way by males as all these tasks need the requirement of speed, strength or power. There are also some other factors which are involved along with the parameter of sex differences. As per the studies, sex as a factor only estimates the variance of 5% in the physical capabilities. The other parameter is the observation of the differences in sex that can be environmental as well as natural (Chalabaev et al 2013).

As per the Chalabaev et al 2013 in his article “The influence of sex stereotypes and the gender roles on participation and performance in sport and exercise: Review and future directions” that at the time of describing the differences in sex which are observed in sports and exercise performance and their participation. In this paper, this question was raised in which the individuals are affected by the stereotypes by internalization. Sufficient evidence is collected by the individuals who are learning the stereotypes and the roles of gender at the time of childhood. They depend on the social impacts, these beliefs influence “own-view” that have the competence and have some value characterized for the purpose of sports and helps in estimating the participation of individuals in sports.

The engagement of the students in physical education who are female has been known as a major risk factor for teachers in high school. Traditionally, the girl or female students are localized as the problem. It is sometimes blamed for not getting engaged in the component of physical activity in physical education. In rural, regional or urban settings, the female students possess some of the supplementary instruments and the services. Earlier, this physical education is known to be gendered in philosophical thinking, the structure of the organization and by its linkage to the sports education. The research based on the gender is

constructed socially that represents the role of the teacher in gender construction and the new relations are produced using all the practices of teaching. In Australia, the health, sports, and the physical education main objective are to define the role for the constructions in the social environment. The social constructions are stereotypes on the basis gender which restricts the engagement of student. The issues or concerns related to the gender in recent years of physical education are not majorly focused on the policy of Australia or agendas of education (Murphy, Dionigi and Litchfield 2014).

The sport is considered to be creating a space for the physical activity that results in the enhancement of physical health. In 2013, World Health Organization (WHO) reports that around 1.4 billion of adults and approximately 40 million children which are below five years of age are found to be obese in data of 2008. The young generation who got involved in the sports activity decreases their opportunity of gaining weight and become obese and considered to become more likely to be healthy (Roper 2013).

The VicHealth report states that the females (all ages) are usually found to have low physical activity and the degree of participation in comparison to males. In the case when the levels of physical activity increases in females are considered necessary for their health and mental comfort. There are some of the barriers that hinder the prevention of participation of females in works related to the physical activity and the understanding and addressing these kinds of barriers is a compound process. Some trends have been noticed on the basis of organized and non-organized levels of activity. As in Victoria, as per the statistical survey, 44% of females are selecting to get participated in the non-organized trends or can say physical activity which is flexible in comparison to the 9% of the physical activity which is organized. The participation of females in case of sporting clubs is found to be low while comparing to males. There are some of the benefits in case of participation of females in sports and physical education which are,

This helps in the appropriate management and prevention of the diseases. These diseases are heart stroke, diabetes, coronary heart disease and dementia.

- Elevation and the improvement in the mental health and the well being.
- The mortality risk got decreased.
- The connections in the social environment and the enjoyment increases.

- The fitness, strength of body and bone and health increases.
- The loss in weight and the prevention from the obesity

If the barriers to the physical activity are addressed, then that can be the major influencer on females towards the more activity in the case when it is allowed to compare to the physical activity benefits. The perception or the real barriers are decreased, that is considered as important for the participation process.

As according to the La Voi study on Trends in “Gender-related research in sport and exercise psychology”. The points or the perspectives related to the sports and Exercise Psychology (SEP) basically emphasize on the female participants in sport. There is a sociologist Ann Hall related to the sports, argued in North America in 1988 that the proper meaning of the gender is women. The theory of ecological system includes the development of human that redirects impacts of various systems of the environment. The environmental systems include cultural, social, societal and environmental. This particular theory impacted the various researchers to understand the humans and their associated environment and that environment differs from culture to culture. There is a report which is “Developing Physically Active Girls: An Evidence-based Multidisciplinary Approach” that have summarized the understanding of the physical activity of girls. The major one section is the participation of girls in MVPA i.e., Moderate to Vigorous Physical Activity that extends from the environment that is informed to the Olympic sports world. The second section is the participation of girls in MVPA that is present outside the sports that are organized and is declining. The declines that are occurring are high for the girls of color and girls having low income. In the third part, the degree of participation and all kinds of behaviors of the physical activity that is performed from the sports that are organized to the outdoor recreation, to clubs that are for youths and then to the physical education. The participants who are male overtakes their associated female participants where the females are found to be less active in comparison to the boys. The participation of girls is with the less intensity than the boys. The social parameters have also been studied by the SEP researchers includes the influence of the parent ship. According to this study, the girls who are not deserving have low levels of participation in the physical activity. This may be because of the less time consumption because of the obligations by the family,

some of the families think that the sports are only for the boys – these people do not value the importance of sports for girls. The examination is performed by sport sociologist in which the gap existed between the physical activity by asking, interviewing, questioning the structures of the society, norms of the society and some of the cultural parameters. The norms of the society include how females think to conform to the norms of feminism whereas the cultural factors involve the behaviors and norms which are shared and the passing of the traditions to generations and generations.

As per the report of WHO, the guidelines which are followed internationally for children and youth related to the physical activity recommend that the all the people who are in their young age should participate in sports or other kinds of activities or may get accommodated in a kind of activity that have modest intensity and it lasts for an hour. The genetic predisposition is also considered as a reason for being less physical active. These factors include personal factors such as biological, hereditary, motivational, attitudes, obesity, age, level of fitness, perceived barriers and the level of competence whereas the environmental factors involve the social, culture, environmental., activity type, school, mobility that is independent. WHO reports suggests some of the policies that will help in the improvement of the practices which are child-friendly and these practices also helps in the physical activity that is regular and is considered to be more supportive of the experiences related to the sporting.

- The implementation of the policies is based upon the enjoyment as most of the girls do enjoy engaging in the physical activity. The implementation of these policies allows everyone to participate fully by means of chances or opportunities and the satisfaction to gain the achievement.
- The practices should be in a way that it can identify the necessity of interaction with the factors such as fun, health and social during the participation in sports.
- The physical education in a school is the basis of physical activity that should be lifelong. The skills for the fundamental movements required to be advanced from its early age in case of all the children along with the focus on the body of an individual instead of sporting outcomes.
- The examination of the practices become important which is inherent in the sports and that

may prevent the children from participating in the sporting activities.

The National Federation of State High School Associations reports the involvement of female which has increased in 1972 to 300,000 to the 2.9 million during 2005-2006 which shows the 875% of elevation in the participation of girls present in the high school.

Brighton Declaration on Sport and Women

- There should be equality in sports and the society.
- The facilities of the sport that fulfills the women's needs.
- The number of coaches of women, advisers and the power of making a decision in sporting activities.
- The programs or the policies that are organized for gender equality.
- The research and the knowledge about the women in sports.
- The program for the sportswomen are allocated (<http://www.un.org>)

In 2002, McClung and Blinde, validate the stereotypes of gender in case of sports it persists and in this study, the exploration is performed about women intercollegiate athletes that are recognized with and under the concerns related to gender. In this study participants in majority reports that their belief is that participants for sports who are women to be perceived as highly positive and their involvement influences the perception of society and the recognition of women in sporting activities (<http://wgst.athabasca.ca>).

Vilhjalmsson and Kristjansdottir 2003, this paper explained the differences in gender for the physical activity by means of sport and activities related to the exercise. The experiences related to the social process and the attitudes exist in the family, peer groups and in the schools. This type of research is considered to have the restricted access to the differences which are keenly observed.

Conclusion

This paper discussed the trends which are gender specific in SPE i.e. Sports and Exercise Psychology were briefed. All the patterns and the assumptions which are common patterns and the research that is encompassed is framed. The suggestions for the future are effective that moves the SEP in the forward direction and in the ways which are sensitive culturally. The cultural competence is encompassed as

a way to conduct research. The two most important frameworks are discussed which are Cultural Studies and the Ecological Systems Theory. All these theories offer the utilization for overcoming the problems related to the SEP research. This particular paper

focuses on the inquiry area specifically restricted to the gaps in the gendered physical activity present between the male and female. At last, the gender-related research is provided.



References:

Chalabaev, Aina, et al. "The Influence of Sex Stereotypes and Gender Roles on Participation and Performance in Sport and Exercise: Review and Future Directions." *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, vol. 14, 2013, pp. 136–144.

Smiley, Sarah. "Gender Issues in Physical Education." *Skemman, Kennaradeild Hug- Og Félagsvísindasvið Háskólinn á Akureyri*, 2015.

Murphy, Brooke, et al. "Physical Education and Female Participation: A Case Study of Teachers' Perspectives and Strategies." *Issues in Educational Research*, vol. 24, no. 3, 2014, pp. 241–259.

Female Participation in Sport & Physical Activity." VicHealth, *Female_participation_in_sport_Evidence_Aug15.pdf*.

LaVoi, Nicole M. "Trends in gender-related research in sport and exercise psychology." *Revista de iberoamericana de psicología del ejercicio y el deporte*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 269–281.

Wilde, Kristin. "Women in Sport: Gender Stereotypes in the Past and Present." Athabasca University, *wgst.athabascau.ca/awards/broberts/forms/Wilde.pdf*

"Women, Gender Equality, and Sport." *United Nations, Department of Economics and Social Affairs*, Dec. 2007, [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/public/Women and Sport.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/public/Women%20and%20Sport.pdf).

Roper, Emily A. *Gender Relations in Sport*. Sense Publishers, 2013.

Vilhjalmsson, Runar, and Gudrun Kristjansdottir. "Gender Differences in Physical Activity in Older Children and Adolescents: the Central Role of Organized Sport." *Social Science & Medicine*, vol. 56, 2003, pp. 363–374.

Staurowsky, Ellen J., et al. "Gender Equity In Physical Education And Athletics." *Feminist Majority Foundation*.