



# Parents' Attitudes towards their Female Childrens' Participation in Sporting Activities and its Implication for Educational Policy and Transformation

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## Abstract

This research was conducted in 6 Educational districts in Lagos State, to determine Parents' attitude towards their daughters' participation in Sports for educational policy and transformation. 320 copies of questionnaire were administered to two groups of parent-respondents; 160 apiece of both sexes randomly selected covering parents who had engaged in sports and those who have not. 300 collated copies were analyzed with different statistical tools. Findings revealed that; Sports interest girls when guided; Sports are beneficial to parents when their daughters earn from it; Religious belief can make some parents discourage their daughters; Girls become successful through sports; Some Parents disallow their daughters to train for fear of injury; It is unverifiable that females who participate in sports are infertile in future. Recommendation: there should be education on the objectives sports, and massive advocacy to reassure parents and their daughters that, sports have no negative effects on fertility.

**Keywords:** Policy, Educational, Transformation, Infertility, Competition, Religion, Attitudes, Sporting Activities.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

For many years now, there has been an unsubstantiated belief that sporting activities are detrimental to the health of female student who engaged actively in it. This erroneous believes and generally accepted notion rested upon such vague and unfounded assumption that women in sports look like men physically (Adams, 2010; Allport, 2019, Emeka, 2011; Andrea, 2018; Obertueffer, 2006; Kanner, 2019). Some schools of thought equally believed that female student who partake in serious sporting activities may have difficulty in bearing children later in life (Godwin, 2001; Jessica, 2001; Joseph, 2020; Wilkins, 2018)

Furthermore, Roy and Ochapa (2018), Bucher (2004), Chu (2011), Fros (2011) and Godwin (2017) also assumed that activities which require jumping may cause damage to the reproductive organs of female athletes.

Though, physiologists have gradually disapproved these erroneous believes, some parents still argue that it is not part of our heritage for women to become sports heroines, that culture places them on a pedestal as something to be protected and that women should be femininely attractive objects, not big muscled athletes (Ikulayo, 2004; Richard & Humber, 2006; Peil, 2018; Obiena, 2019; Awoyinfa, 2020).

To this, Chu (2001), Sartain (2020) and Wilkins (2018) reported that the physiological and sociological values gained from sports participation by women present the effect of a new dynamic concept on physical education as a profession introduces to mankind as a whole. A concept which adds to their dignity, freedom, happiness and personal satisfaction.

Actually, in the times past, a good percentage of those who believed in sports participation do so because of the material reinforcement such as prizes, awards and other material gains. Such support though positive may have its own adverse effect on girls. Few years back, those who did not support girl's participation in sports agreed that sports aggressiveness is a male quality (Frost, 2011; Chu, 2011; Emeka 2011; Ochapa, 2018; Allport, 2019; Arua Amieke 2014). They believed that girls should only participate in expressive artistic and rhythmical exercise like dance, that women should be dependent and submissive. To them sports is unladylike. Probably these explain the types of sporting activities opened to ladies. Even now, for example, it is found that ladies do not yet participate in hammer throwing at Olympic level. That notwithstanding the world of sports, which formerly was predominant by men is now being shared by both male and females. Understandably, this development has brought forth strong mixed feelings (Bucher, 2004; Obiena, 2019; Awoyinfa, 2020).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Over the years, the researchers had noticed with keen interest that most parents forbid their female wards from active participation in sports and sporting activities, for this reason, therefore, the rationale for this study is to investigate so as to be able to determine the attitude of parents towards their girls' participation in sports. Hence, the question, do parents' attitudes affect girls' participation in sports?

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were postulated and answered in the course of carrying out this study:

- Does female students' participation in sport have any linkage with their parents' interest in sport?
- Is it really true that any female student that participates in sports will be wayward? Or make them look masculine like men?
- Does participation in sports by female students bring about barrenness in later life?

## **Hypotheses**

The following main null hypotheses were tested in this study:

- There will be no significant difference between parents who had once participated or engaged in sports and parents who had never taken part in sports before in their attitude towards their female children's participating in sports.
- There will be no significant relationship between female student's participation in sports, their marital status and their masculine nature in later life.

## **METHODS**

Since the problem deals with attitude, self-designed and tested via pilot study questionnaires were drafted by the researchers in accordance with the Likert (1982) type of attitudinal scale. One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used in analyzing the data collected. Also a structured personal oral interview was conducted by the researchers to gather additional in-depth information from the subjects.

### **Selection of Subjects**

For the purpose of this study, 320 parents were randomly selected and used for the study; randomization was based on individual parents willingness to participate in the exercise. The selection was also based on the hypothesis of this study which was that: there would be no significant difference between parents who had once participated or engaged in sports and parents who had never taken part in sports before in their attitude towards their female children's participation in sports.

The subjects were handpicked via a random sample. The first category of parents, one hundred and sixty (160) in number constitute those who had once took part in sports and the second category, also one hundred and sixty(160) in number comprised those who have never taken part in sports. Three hundred and Sixty copies of the questionnaire were administered and only three hundred copies that are correctly filled were recovered for further analysis.

### **Scoring the Questionnaire**

The collected data's for this study based on the various attitude traits were regrouped into three as against five, strongly agreed and agreed was taken as agreed, while strongly disagreed and disagreed were taken as disagreed while undecided maintained its neutrality.

Table 1: Statement which states that female children should be encouraged to participate in sporting events even if they do not win

(i)				
	Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed	Total
A	78	33	39	150
B	117	15	18	150
Total	195	48	57	300

  

(ii)					
	O	E	O-E	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
	78	97.5	-19.5	380.25	3.9000
	33	24	9	81	3.3750
	39	28.5	10.5	110.25	3.8684
	117	97.5	19.5	380.25	3.9000
	15	24	-9	81	3.3750
	18	28.5	-10.5	110.25	3.86.84
					<b>22.2868</b>

Calculated  $X^2 = 22.2868$

Degree of freedom = 2

$X^2$  at 0.05 level of significance = 5.991

The result has indicated a marked significant difference in the attitude of both categories of parents since the calculated  $X^2$  value is higher than the table value.

Table 2: Statement which states that parents should buy sporting requirement and equipment for their female children

(i)				
	Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed	Total
A	93	21	36	150
B	123	15	12	150
Total	216	36	48	300

  

(ii)					
	O	E	O-E	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
	93	108	-15	225	2.0833
	21	18	3	9	0.5000
	36	24	12	144	6.0000
	123	108	15	225	2.0833
	15	18	-3	9	0.5000
	12	24	-12	144	6.0000
					<b>17.1666</b>

Calculated  $X^2 = 22.17.1666$

Degree of freedom = 2

$X^2$  at 0.05 level of significance = 5.991

The result is highly significant since the calculated  $X^2$  value is by far higher than the table value. Hence most parents supported buying sports requirement and equipment for their female children.

Table 3: Statement which states that, my religious belief is a strong reason for me not allowing my daughter(s) to participate in sports

(i)				
	Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed	Total
A	27	21	102	150
B	15	15	120	150
Total	42	36	222	300

  

(ii)					
	O	E	O-E	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
	27	21	6	36	1.7142
	21	18	3	9	0.5000
	102	111	-9	81	0.7297
	15	21	-6	36	0.7142
	15	18	-3	9	0.5000
	120	111	9	81	0.7297
					<b>5.8878</b>

Calculated  $X^2 = 5.8878$

Degree of freedom = 2

$X^2$  at 0.05 level of significance = 5.991

The calculated  $X^2$  value is lesser than the table value, hence it has further revealed a no significant difference between parents attitude.

Table 4: Statement which states that I believe that girls participation in sports can damage their reproductive organ

(i)				
	Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed	Total
A	39	48	63	150
B	36	42	72	150
Total	75	90	135	300

  

(ii)					
	O	E	O-E	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
	39	37.5	1.5	2.25	0.06
	48	45	3	9	0.2
	63	67.5	-4.5	20.25	0.3
	36	37.5	-1.5	2.25	0.06
	42	45	-3	9	0.2
	72	67.5	4.5	20.25	0.3
					<b>1.1200</b>

Calculated  $X^2 = 1.1200$

Degree of freedom = 2

$X^2$  at 0.05 level of significance = 5.991

The result has indicated a marked insignificant difference in the attitude of both categories of parents, since the calculated  $X^2$  value is far lesser than the table value. Therefore the hypothesis is hereby rejected.

Table 5: Statement which states that sports is for those who never do well in academics

(i)				
	Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed	Total
A	39	30	81	150
B	9	12	129	150
Total	48	42	210	300

  

(ii)				
O	E	O-E	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
39	24	15	225	9.3750
30	21	9	81	3.8571
81	105	-24	576	5.4857
9	24	-25	225	9.3750
12	21	-9	81	3.8571
129	105	24	576	5.4857
				<b>37.4357</b>

Calculated  $X^2 = 37.4356$

Degree of freedom = 2

$X^2$  at 0.05 level of significance = 5.991

As regards parents' attitude as to whether sports is for "never do wells", the result has further revealed much significant difference. The calculated  $X^2$  value is higher than the table value. Hence the stated null hypothesis was rejected.

## CONCLUSION

In the light of the results of the various items analyzed, it is proper to conclude generally that there was a great significant difference between parents who have once participated in sports and those who have never participated in sports in their attitudes toward girl's participation in sporting activities, this supports the claim of Awoyinfa (2019).

Secondly, the study also revealed that the majority of parents in both group A and those in group B do not believe that sports can damage female reproductive organ, for only 24% have such belief, while 76% never believed such. The researcher therefore suspected ignorance on the part of some parents in group A and B who believed such, after all they may had no formal education and may have thought sports is for mere jumping and running about. They lack knowledge of the objectives of physical education generally and sports in particular. Hence female children who have such parents are denied the freedom to participate even if they show marked aptitude and a strong desire for participating in sports. Girls should be allowed to pursue their interests without their actions being considered unfeminine, especially in sports by their family, friends and the society at large. On their own part (girls) must learn how not to be discouraged or suppress in their urges under any pressures. Rather they must stand tall in the society and play their own role like the super falcons of Nigeria and the lady stars of the current World champion of Germany who won the 2014 female FIFA under twenty world cup competition (Wilkins, 2018).

It is high time parents have to admit that their female children are human beings entitled to an identity separate from their roles as sex objects, wives and mothers. It is plain therefore, that a woman cannot have a personal identity if her anatomy and physiology decide her destiny.

There is therefore, the need for a changed of opinion as regards women not participating in sports most especially the unschooled parents.

## **Recommendations**

In view of the findings of this research, the following recommendations are put forth by the researchers:

- Parents should regard the provision and supply of sports requirements for their female children in particular and every female child in general as one of the most pressing problems that should be met with the urgency it deserves;
- More emphasis and education through lectures, film shows symposia, mass media etc. is needed to reassure the general public that sports has no any adverse effect on girls who participate in it and that it does not in any way damage their reproductive organ. Rather, that sport promotes the physical well-being of an individual including girls;
- The objectives of physical education and sports should be well spelt out in a clearly defined terms to parents, for easy comprehension;
- Sports organizers, officials, coaches, Administrators and a host of others should live up to expectations by proving to the public and parents in particular that they do not harbor any ulterior motives for female athletes, and where such obtains, the necessary disciplinary measures should be meted to offending coaches or officials by the appropriate committee without any reservation;
- The physical fitness values of sport in terms of good health wellness and longevity should be explained to all and sundry in the society today, most especially parent in the rural areas in any given society;
- Government should step up more actions in the areas of provision of sporting facilities and equipment for both boys and girls alike in our schools and colleges to ensure equal participation among all sex.

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