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**THE EFFECT OF EIGHT WEEKS OF BASKETBALL TRAINING ON THE SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ATHLETE FEMALE STUDENTS**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to investigate the effect of 8 weeks of basketball training on the social development of non-athlete female university students. This is a semi empirical research using pretest and post-test design and control group and experimental group. The population of this study includes female students of Masjed Soleyman Azad University during 2008-2009. The sample study includes 100 non-athlete female students of Masjed Soleyman Azad University and they were randomly chosen and divided into two groups of experimental (n=50) and control (n=50). The experimental group, then, participated in the basketball training program designed for 8 weeks (two 90-minute sessions per week). The level of social development of both groups was evaluated using Weitzman social development questionnaire (1981) before and after performing 8 weeks of training, The questionnaire reliability was confirmed through Cronbach's alpha ($r=0.81$). Independent-t statistical method and paired t-test were used for data analysis. Comparing the results of two experimental and control groups showed that after 8 weeks of

Basketball training, except hope and optimism dimensions, social development, and its other dimensions had a positive significant change at the level of $\alpha \leq 0.05$ in experimental group. But there was no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test in control group.

Keywords: Social Development, Non-Athlete Girls, Group Activities, Basketball Trainings

INTRODUCTION

One of the present issues of human societies is insufficient physical activities and weak social relationships and this is in contrast to the human nature. The process of socialization is one of the most important parameters of development and one of the most basic elements of personality development. Through this process which is opposed to egocentrism the individual prioritizes group values over her personal values and finally internalizes those values. Social development is related to a balanced set of social skills and adaptable behaviors which enable the individual to have appropriate mutual relationships with others, show positive reactions and avoid actions with negative consequences. Possessing skills such as cooperation, responsibility, sympathy, self-control, and self-sufficiency are considered as parameters of social development [1].

Of the characteristics and qualities which lead to human being's development and thriving one can mention enjoying good social development. Weitzman (1986) expresses that we can call one socially developed who has

fully flourished, in other words, has reached a level in social skills and relationships which enables her to easily adapt to other people and live with them. Talking about social skills it could be said that social skills refer to acquired and socially acceptable behaviors in the society. Behaviors helping the individual to communicate with others in a manner which will lead to showing positive responses, and avoiding negative ones [2].

Social skills are the foundation of all things the individual wants to do. Therefore, in physical education courses we should try to improve these skills and team playing activities [3]. Of values associated with social development one can mention devotion, compassion, ability to work with others, empathy, respecting and caring for others and tolerance [4]. In societies with deficiencies in the quality and number of sport facilities, underdevelopment is prevalent; hence, sport is studied in developed societies as a social phenomenon and economic factor as well as an important element in the health of their nations [5].

Undoubtedly playing, exercising, and physical activity affect individuals' socialization. In the world of sports, due to necessity of spontaneous decision-makings, dynamism and vitality, sportspeople are engaged in good personality-developing opportunities. These educational opportunities can be put to use as constructive forces for development of social values and induction of the meaning of life [6]. Most of the studies about socialization through sports concentrate on children and teenagers, and adults are seldom studied because it is assumed that adult life is so complicated that the effects of partaking in sport activities are negligible compared to the effects of other factors involving social development [7].

To sum it up since social qualities are not innate and they are mostly environmental and established through mutual social reactions [8], it is observed in numerous studies that participation of university students in physical and group activities in dormitories helps them adapt to the environmental incompatibilities and to gain a better social development. Vishak, Norisand Douglas stated that one session of exercise per week can lead to fundamental improvement of people's moods and reduction of the severity of their depression, anxiety and mental behaviors [9].

In research carried out by Wang et al the results showed that physical activity in any form can have a substantial effect on protection and maintenance of young people's mental health and social compatibility [10]. Louis, Timothy et al (1998) consider participation in group, sport and extracurricular activities effective on the social development of the individuals [11]. Also, Drayton, Sherry, and Ceerci (1997) according to their studies stated that participating in sport and physical activities is an important element of individual's socialization [12]. In addition, Garita, Ann, Ewaldson and William Cersaro(1998) in a research investigated students' activity and their participation in extracurricular group sports in Sweden and Italy concluded that individuals learn a great deal of their communicational and social skills by participating in group sports and employ those skills in their lives [13]. Also, individuals who have behavioral issues should participate in group physical activities in order to be able to communicate with others which consequently reduces their antisocial behaviors [14].

Proper offering of physical activities result in progress in social skills and behaviors, it creates self-esteem, self-respect and positive attitudes in special situations and conditions

and it also result in progress in academic, perceptual and cognitive sciences. Also physical activities provide a link and subscription between the expectancies and anticipations from the final progress in education matters in schools, and it results in proper progresses in healthy lifestyle. Young and Smile (1976) also stated that all of the examinees being exposed by physical trainings clearly became more socialized. On the other hand playing, sport and physical trainings are considered as socializing factors for individuals. Regarding the fact that girls face more restrictions than boys in all the fields that could result in improvement of social development in all societies.

Thus we should seek for solutions for improving the social development of girls in society and specially the girls studying in universities that have an important role in development and progress of the future of the country. Therefore this research surveys the effect of physical activities on the social development in order to answer these questions:

Is it possible that the basketball training- which is considered as one of the group sports affect the social development of girls?

What type of effects does basketball training have on the sense of independency, responsibility, communication and

adaptability, moderation and optimism of girls in universities?

Regarding the importance of social development in the individuals' lives and existing restrictions for girls in social interactions for improving the social development, this research studies the effect of eight weeks of basketball training on the social development of non-athlete female university students in order to find out that whether these sport trainings could lead to social development of female university students

METHODOLOGY

The present study is a semi empirical and field study which employs pretest-post-test and control group research design. The research population consisted of all non-athlete female undergraduates of Masjed Soleyman Azad University during 2008-2009. To this end, a number of 100 non-athlete female students from within the range of 19-24 years old were randomly sampled out to take part in this research. The examinees were divided into two groups (50 students for the control group, 50 students for the test group). None of the examinees had prior constant exercising background. In this research the experimental group participated in the basketball program designed for 8 weeks in two 90-minute sessions per week. The control

group examinees were not engaged in any kind of sport activity. Both groups were evaluated by the social development questionnaire of Alice Weitzman (1981) before and after 8 weeks of performance. Sima Nazai has translated this questionnaire [15]. The reliability coefficient of this scale was reported between 0.81 and 0.85 by Nazari (1988), Shadfar (1998) and Forutan (2001). Cronbach's alpha was used to test the reliability of the research which was ($r=0.81$) and this score is significant at level of $p<0.05$. This questionnaire comprises 27 three- or four-choice questions in the four aspects of independence-seeking, responsibility, communication and adaptability with others, and hopefulness and optimism. Maximum score for an individual is 57 which is measured based on the choice the person makes on the answer sheet on a range of 0-3 for each question. Examinee reads the question and chooses the best choice to her decision and marks it with a cross. After answering the questions by examinees, they turn to the answer key and calculate the scores based on the chosen item and the total score is calculated. Furthermore, in order to determine the reliability, the questionnaire was presented to 10 professors of Physical Education and after some revisions the

reliability was ascertained. Descriptive data (mean, standard deviation, tables, diagram and...) and inferential statistics (analysis of variance and t-test) were used for analyzing the findings, and all the statistical operations were conducted by the use of Excel and SPSS software version 11.5 and with coefficient of error of $\alpha \leq 0.05$.

RESULTS

Descriptive Part of the Research Findings

Table 1 shows research examinees' age. As it is observable in the table, majority of the examinees are in the age range of 22-24. And according to the results most of the examinees were single students.

Deductive Part of the Research Findings

Table 2 shows that no significant difference exists between two experimental and control group before 8 weeks of training in social development and its components. Thus it could be said that both groups were equal in this manner. This table also shows that experimental group outranks the control group in social development and all its components except hopefulness and optimism. Thus it could be claimed that 8 weeks of basketball training result in the superiority of experimental group compared to the control group in social development and its components.

Table 1: Absolute frequency and Relative frequency of research examinees' age and marital status based on social classes

Examinees' age	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency	Marital status	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
19-21	33	33	Single	80	80
22-24	50	50	Married	20	20
24	17	17	Total	100	100
Total	100	100			

Table 2: Comparing the experimental and control groups in social development and its components in pretest and posttest

Titles topic	groups		Mean Value	Standard Deviation	The difference between pre-test/post-test results	T-Value	p_Value
Independence	experimental group	pre-test	4.678	1.634	-0.607	3.117	0.004
		Post-test	5.285	1.049			
	Control group	pre-test	4.482	1.901	0.551	1.155	0.258
		Post-test	5.034	1.523			
Responsibility	Experimental group	pre-test	4.571	1.399	-0.142	0.803	0.045
		Post-test	4.714	1.356			
	Control group	pre-test	4.655	1.391	0.103	0.31	0.751
		Post-test	4.551	1.241			
Make contact	Experimental group	pre-test	21.047	2.246	0.714	1.892	0.048
		Post-test	20.333	2.352			
	Control group	pre-test	19.818	2.538	0.545	0.764	0.453
		Post-test	19.272	3.119			
Hope	Experimental group	pre-test	9.739	2.073	-0.608	-1.62	-0.12
		Post-test	9.13	1.912			
	Control group	pre-test	9.736	3.056	0.052	0.083	0.935
		Post-test	9.684	2.232			
Social development	Experimental group	pre-test	39.86	4.13	-.06	1.74	0.047
		post[est	40.46	3.6			
	Control group	pre-test	38.733	3.654	0.8	0.501	0.624
		Post-test	37.933	5.725			

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Findings indicate that eight weeks of basketball training is effective on the social development of female non-athlete students. In other words, students who participated in group basketball training courses enjoyed a significantly higher social development than those who did not participate in the courses.

These findings conform with the findings from the studies carried out by Seyyed Zade Noosh Abadi (2001), Mohammadi (1998), and Hussein ZadehDehnavi (1983), Drayton, Sherry and Cierci (1997), RamezaniNejad (1995) [16-17-18-9-19].

Furthermore, results show that independence-seeking of the students who had participated

in group basketball trainings was significantly higher than those who had not. It seems that most studies have investigated social development in general and any research which studies aspects of social development singularly can hardly be found. Hence, regarding independence-seeking, the results of the present study do not conform to those of Stevenson's (1975) which declare socialization and finding independence through engagement in sports is negligible. The reason for divergence between these two studies might be attributed to the difference between the environments of research and/or the type of sport employed in the researches [20]. Since the independence-seeking levels obtained from the students who participated in the group basketball trainings are in an acceptable range, we can conclude that group exercises provide good grounds for the improvement of the individuals' level of independence-seeking. Having a sense of independence-seeking at a reasonable level can have considerable effects on people's lives so that the individual can take desirable decisions in life with high confidence and reach her goals only by relying on her own abilities and not by depending on others. Having such people together in a society leads to the advancement of that society.

In the present study, comparing the feeling of responsibility in experimental and control groups demonstrated that a significant difference exists between the feelings of responsibility of the two groups after 8 weeks of basketball training. In other words, responsibility among students who had participated in basketball training courses had a higher level compared to those students who did not partake in the trainings. In the studies done so far, responsibility as one of the aspects of development has been investigated in the light of social development and not exclusively per se. However, the results obtained from this variable conform with those obtained from studies carried out by Elis (1973) and Damuno (1983) [16, 19, 21, 23]. Studies show that participating in physical education courses, learning the rules and imperatives of sports, acquiring necessary athletic skills and practical employment of them frequently in competitions and matches represent situations which the individual will ultimately encounter in future and in society. Therefore, she learns well the true meaning of responsibility and distribution of tasks in order to reach goals [23]. Since individuals' responsibility is considered as one of the characteristics of development in any society, let us hope that by involving individuals in

group activities, we may drive the society toward better development.

Results from a comparison between the two experimental and control groups in terms of adaptability and communication with others indicated that after 8 weeks of basketball training there is a significant difference between the two groups. In other words, adaptability and communication skills among those students who participated in group basketball trainings had a higher level than among those who had not partaken in these courses; and these results conform with those obtained on other studies performed in this regard [24-30].

The results obtained from comparing the hopefulness and optimism aspect between the two groups of experimental and control indicated that after 8 weeks of basketball training there is no significant difference between the two groups, i.e. the level of hopefulness and optimism between the students who participated in the group basketball trainings and those who did not is almost the same and there is no significant difference. These findings do not conform with findings of many others researchers [31-34, 44]. Lack of conformity between these findings and those of other studies might be due to the differences in statistical

populations' levels of education, their cultures and economies.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings obtained from the current research and other researches in this regard, we can conclude that regarding the importance and influence of sport and group activities on social development of girls, by organizing sport contests and providing group sport activities, we can prepare the basis for the better social development of female students in universities.

According to the human being's natural need for social life and the necessity of ever improvement of social interactions between individuals to be able to recognize one's own positive qualities and others' in order to set a successful relationship with others and defy everyday stresses, universities can provide more opportunities for various group activities including group sport activities to aid female university students' social development.

Generally, through group sport activities we can transfer the components of social development because these parameters can be learned, taught, developed, improved and completed.

Therefore, it is necessary that university authorities do their best to develop and improve female students' social development

by directing them to sport activities and by organizing regular sport programs.

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