

Assessing the Relationship between College Student Leadership and Participation in Extra Curricular Sports Activities

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Abstract: This study explored the connection between participation in extracurricular sports activities and the development of leadership skills. By doing, it seeks to benefit students, educators, and the wider educational community by fostering personal growth, creating a positive environment and advancing knowledge in this field. The results show that extracurricular sports have a substantial impact on college students' academic and psychological development. Individuals who participate in extracurricular sports activities are more likely to develop leadership skills. The frequency and duration of participation, teamwork, and collaboration in extracurricular sports have a significant impact on the development of quality leadership skills. Consistent involvement and active participation are key to developing leadership skills.

Keywords: Extracurricular Sports Activities; Leadership Skills; College Student.

1. Introduction

Leadership transcends formal positions; it is a multifaceted role, a dynamic process, and a powerful influence. Every individual possesses latent leadership potential. The college years serve as a pivotal stage for nurturing youth leadership. In this era of rapid political and economic growth and the ongoing enhancement of our country's international standing, students play a crucial role in shaping the future.

One significant factor contributing to college students' employment challenges is the mismatch between their personal qualities and abilities and the talent requirements of enterprises. Additionally, unclear career plans exacerbate these difficulties. Fostering leadership skills not only enhances college students' overall capabilities but also serves as a potent driving force.

The cultivation of college student leadership is an important way to enhance national competitiveness and improve the comprehensive quality of students. In the "Outline of the National Medium- and Long-term Education Reform and Development Planning (2010-2020)", the talent training goals and college students of "focusing on improving the social responsibility of students to serve the people, the innovation spirit of the courage to explore, and the practical ability of solving problems" Leading education has essential consistency, so it can be logically understood as the cultivation of the quality of college students' leadership, which has been listed as an important connotation of the quality of talent quality of college talents at the strategic level. In the age of economic globalization and interconnected information networks, fostering leadership skills in students has emerged as a fresh imperative. This need aligns with national strategic talent development, sustainable social progress, and the individual growth of college students.

Some scholars believe that extra curricular sports activities is an important way to develop youth leadership. Extra curricular sports participation enhances the potential of individual development, helps develop students interpersonal skills and promotes their personality growth and self-

development (Mc Neil C. A. 2018). Extracurricular sports activities play a crucial role in fostering student leadership. Unlike classroom teaching, sports activities offer freedom, openness, and flexibility. While enjoyment is essential, the primary focus should be on imparting vital skills to participants. These skills include effective communication and goal-setting organization, teamwork, decision making, conflict resolution, adaptability and motivational skill.

In some research like Zhang Guoli (2019) et al., in their article on the influence of physical activity on Adolescent Leadership: the mediating effect of mental resilience, proposed that: The leadership of adolescents at the level of moderate intensity physical activity is stronger, and the psychological resilience of adolescents at the level of high intensity physical activity is better. Improving the level of physical activity of adolescents is conducive to the improvement of leadership and the enhancement of psychological resilience; The level of physical activity, psychological resilience and leadership of adolescents are poundwise related, and psychological resilience has a partial mediating effect on the influence of physical activity on adolescent leadership, that is, participation in physical activity can directly promote leadership, while physical activity can indirectly promote leadership by improving psychological resilience. Liu Na (2018) conducted a study on 15 clubs, including the Badminton Association, and found that college students generally believe that participating in club activities is beneficial for cultivating leadership. Club members generally believe that participating in club activities helps to cultivate their own leadership skills. Li Sansan (2020), in his article on the feasibility study of triathlon on the leadership improvement of college students, pointed out that there are indeed great reasons for the feasibility of triathlon on the leadership improvement of college students. This possibility does exist, and the right person who can complete the triathlon will certainly improve his leadership in some way. Zhao Wenzuo (2019) and others studied the dragon dance movement and the development of college students' responsible leadership. They found that there were significant

differences in responsible leadership between college students who participated in the dragon dance and those who did not, and responsible leadership would increase with the number of years of dragon dance participation. Cao Liwen (2019) pointed out in his article "The Role of Sports in Cultivating Leadership among College Students" that sports play an important role in cultivating college students' leadership, vision, change, balance, and sustainability. Li Yan (2020) actively explores effective measures to strengthen the cultivation of student leadership, promote the improvement of student leadership level, and from the perspective of modern physical education teaching, strengthen the cultivation of student leadership through university physical education teaching, including cultivating students' independent consciousness, training their teamwork ability, cultivating their sense of responsibility, and enhancing their innovative and practical abilities. Zhu Wei (2020) believes that whether college students participate in clubs has a significant impact on their leadership. Students who do not participate in clubs have lower levels of leadership than those who participate in clubs. Jin Anming (2022) focuses on the group of mobile teenagers (referring to rural teenagers who come to the city with their parents who work in the city) and proposes a model of promoting their leadership development through sports activities, allowing mobile teenagers to participate in the organization, arrangement, competition, and referee work of sports activities. Through the implementation of sports activities, the scores of four dimensions of cooperation ability, communication ability, decision-making ability, and self-understanding ability of mobile teenagers are higher than the baseline assessment, with a more significant improvement in the scores of cooperation ability, communication ability, and decision-making ability. The improvement in decision-making ability of male students is more significant than that of female students, while female students have significantly improved their collaboration and communication abilities compared to male students. Zhuang Zhuohong (2022) pointed out that leadership training in outdoor sports has an effective intervention effect on the leadership level of college students, significantly improving their self-awareness in leadership, and the effect of leadership training is also long-lasting. It is recommended to introduce leadership training into outdoor sports for college students to promote the cultivation of various abilities and the development of comprehensive qualities. Li Chunyu (2023) et al., in their study on the difference between participation and non-participation in collective sports on the leadership level of college students - a case study of college students in Guangdong Province, pointed out that participation in sports events has a positive effect on the improvement of college students' cognition and problem-solving ability, and thus enhances their leadership skills.

Numerous studies indicate that participating in extracurricular sports can enhance students' leadership qualities. It serves as an effective avenue for fostering leadership development and improving social adaptability. Additionally, these activities offer opportunities for students to both lead and follow, thereby cultivating valuable skills and abilities they need to master as leaders and followers, to shape their personalities. Given the absence of research at our school, the researcher asserts that a strong link exists between students' leadership skills and their involvement in extracurricular sports. Consequently, a thorough investigation is needed to delve into this connection. Despite the scarcity of

existing studies, the researcher aims to demonstrate that participating in extracurricular sports not only improves physical fitness but also nurtures leadership capabilities. As such, an in-depth study will be conducted to explore this connection.

2. Statement of the Problem

This study aims to explore the relationship between college students' leadership and extracurricular sports activities, and provide practical guidance for the education and training of the leadership of college students in my country. Therefore, the researcher seeks to answer the following Problems:

(1) What is the assessment of the respondents of their leadership skills in terms of

- 1) Social Intelligence
- 2) Decision Making and Conflict Resolution
- 3) Motivational skills
- 4) Empathy

(2) What is the assessment of the respondents on the influence of participation in extracurricular sports activities In terms of

- 1) Frequency of participation
- 2) Leadership roles in sports teams or clubs
- 3) Duration of Participation
- 4) Teamwork and collaboration
- 5) Leadership Achievement and Awards

(3) Does the indicator variables in the participation in extracurricular sports has an influence on the leadership skills of college students

(4) Based from the results of the study what equation model can be constructed to be able to define a leadership model for students that will incorporate the extracurricular sports variable that have a strong association

3. Scope and Limitation

The purpose of this study is to investigate the link between extracurricular sports activities and leadership skills that will benefit students, educators and the broader educational community by promoting personal growth, fostering a positive environment and advancing knowledge in the field.

In this study stratified sampling will be utilized to select 398 respondents from the five universities in Hunan Province.

4. Methodology

4.1. Research Design

This research applied the descriptive, and predictive correlational research design method. Descriptive research design is a scientific method that involves observing and describing the behavior of a subject without influencing it in any way (Rebmann, 2020). The researcher used the quantitative method because the primary source of information came from the self-made survey questionnaire which was more comfortable to the respondents to provide the information that will be needed in this study. Predictive correlational research, also known as trend research, is the establishment of a certain predictive model based on information and data about the past situation of the research object, and the confirmation of the model's consistency with the actual situation through further multiple observations. The time span of trend research should be determined based on the research purpose. Under conditions with a large time span, it is easy to intervene in many irrelevant factors, which can

affect and interfere with research results.

4.2. Research Instruments

The instrument used to gather the data is a research made questionnaire on the College Students' Extracurricular Sports Activities and College Students' Leadership in constructing and developing the indicators the researcher referred to relevant literature, combining the research content and taking the advice of tutors. The questionnaire consists of 2 parts: The 1st part is about the leadership skills of the students. The second part is the assessment of the participation of the students extracurricular sports activities. A pilot testing was carried out using a small sample. To ensure the reliability and consistency of the developed instrument the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was computed. By following this careful and detailed method, the instrument was fine-tuned to accurately measure the research goals.

4.3. Data Gathering Procedure

Through the collection of literature and consulting the supervisor's opinions, find and raise questions, clarify the research plan, and make the research design.

Verify and adjust the research questionnaire according to experts in the fields of education, psychology and management. Then I wrote to the relevant schools to get their permission and approval for this research.

Selection of research tools and research objects. Five local schools were selected as research objects, and questionnaires were distributed and collected online.

This study will be carried out in April this year. Using online programs to distribute the survey questionnaire.

5. Results and Discussion

Preliminary Analysis Reliability

Table 1. Reliability Measurement – Assessment of Leadership Skills (Cronbach's Alpha)

| Construct | Cronbach's Alpha | No. of Item/s Deleted | No. of Item/s Retained |
|---|------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Social Intelligence | 0.94 | 0 | 10 |
| Decision Making and Conflict Resolution | 0.88 | 0 | 10 |
| Motivational skills | 0.90 | 0 | 10 |
| Empathy | 0.91 | 0 | 10 |
| Frequency of participation | 0.81 | 0 | 5 |
| Leadership roles in sports teams or clubs | 0.85 | 0 | 5 |
| Duration of Participation | 0.81 | 0 | 5 |
| Teamwork and collaboration | 0.87 | 0 | 5 |
| Leadership Achievement and Awards | 0.87 | 0 | 5 |

Influence of Participation in Extracurricular Sports Activities

Table 1 outlines the reliability assessment, specifically focusing on measuring the Cronbach's alpha of the scales, assessment of leadership skills (social intelligence, decision making and conflict resolution, motivational skills, and empathy) and influence of participation in extracurricular sports activities (frequency of participation, leadership roles in sports teams or clubs, duration of participation, teamwork and collaboration, and leadership achievement and awards). A statistic known as Cronbach's alpha (CA) is taken into consideration in order to determine whether or not the constructs that are going to be investigated are reliable or consistent within themselves. The CA value, which must be equal to or greater than 0.70 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Nunnally, 1978), determines which items are considered excellent. The tabulated data indicates that all items are considered to be good items with high internal consistency based on the CA values ranging from CA = 0.81 to 0.94.

6. Conclusion

1)Based from the result of the study the student respondents demonstrated a moderate leadership skills such as Social intelligence, decision making, conflict resolution, motivational skills and empathy. These suggests that there is room for growth. It indicates that the students have a foundation in leadership but may need further development to fully realize their potential. They might perform adequately in some situations but could struggle in more challenging or complex scenarios. In terms of social intelligence: They can interact well with peers, but may occasionally misread social cues or find it difficult to manage more intricate group dynamics. They can make decisions, but may sometimes hesitate or lack confidence in their choices particularly under pressure. On the overall the findings suggest potential and a decent foundation, but emphasize the need for further training and experience to polish these abilities. It is a good starting point, and with the right support and opportunities, these students can enhance their leadership abilities.

2)Leadership qualities are vital for college students as they embark on their academic and career journey. If college students have mediocre leadership qualities, a number of problems may arise. Firstly, students with mediocre leadership abilities may fail to effectively communicate, allocate work, and motivate their classmates during group projects and extracurricular activities. This may lead to substandard results and lost learning opportunities. Second, students with mediocre leadership qualities may struggle to distinguish out in competitive job markets after graduation. Employers frequently seek applicants with good leadership skills, since they are viewed as valuable assets in promoting innovation and growth inside firms.

3)The respondents assessed the influence of frequency of participation, leadership role in sports team or clubs, duration of participation, teamwork and collaboration and leadership achievement and award to be average in influence. From these findings. Here's what can be inferred: In terms of frequency and participation: Students might participate occasionally but aren't fully committed. Leadership in sports teams or clubs: Students take on leadership roles but might not be fully confident or effective leaders. There is potential but its not fully realized. Duration of Participation: Students are involved for a moderate period, indicating some interest but also room for improvement in sustained engagement.

Teamwork and collaboration : They work well in teams , but there might be occasional challenges in collaboration or fully realizing team potential. Leadership Achievement and Awards : Students achieve some recognition , indicating potential but also suggesting there's more they could achieve with greater effort or support. Overall , these findings imply that while there is a foundation of participation and leadership , there is significant room for growth . Enhancing these factors could lead to a higher engagement and more pronounced benefits from extra curricular activities . It points to the need for strategies to boost these influences , perhaps through more engaging programs , better support systems or greater emphasis on the benefits of these activities

4)Extracurricular sports may have a substantial impact on college students' academic and psychological development. If the influence of participation in these activities is deemed typical for college students, it implies that the advantages may be moderate yet significant. On an academic level, sports participation may assist students improve their time management skills, focus, and overall mental health. These skills may lead to improved academic success since students can better balance their schoolwork and extracurricular activities. Furthermore, extracurricular sports may help college students develop a feeling of community, teamwork, and leadership abilities. These experiences may help students form essential social relationships, gain confidence, and improve their ability to collaborate with others.

5)Individuals who participate in extracurricular sports activities are more likely to develop leadership skills. The frequency and duration of such activities have a significant impact on one's leadership ability. Regular participation in sports allows individuals to practice and refine these talents, eventually leading to an increase in leadership qualities.

6)Furthermore, teamwork and collaboration are vital components of sporting activities, which help to develop leadership qualities. Individuals who participate in team sports must collaborate to achieve a common objective, communicate effectively, and provide support to one another. These experiences help people develop important leadership skills like communication, motivation, and problem-solving.

7)Finally, engagement in extracurricular sports activities on a regular and long-term basis can improve individuals' leadership qualities. Individuals can develop key leadership traits through teamwork and collaboration, which are extremely valuable in many facets of life. As a result, it is apparent that participation in sports activities can greatly help to improve leadership qualities.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researcher recommended the following:

1)The school may provide the students with opportunities for experiential learning and skill development. Colleges and universities can offer leadership development programs, mentorship opportunities, and experiential learning experiences that simulate real-world decision-making and conflict resolution scenarios. By practicing these skills in a supportive and educational environment, college students can build their confidence and competence in leadership roles.

2)Colleges and universities may recognize the importance of extracurricular sports activities and encourage student engagement. Institutions may take initiatives to encourage

and ease student sports involvement, such as providing financing for sports programs, offering incentives and rewards for participation, and making sports facilities conveniently accessible to all students.

3)College students may actively seek out opportunities to take on leadership roles within their teams and clubs to enhance their communication skills, build confidence, and strengthen their ability to work effectively with others.

4)Teachers may assist students reach their full potential as leaders within their sports teams and clubs by providing training and mentorship opportunities, as well as fostering a supportive team environment that encourages collaboration and participation.

5)College students who look to enhance their leadership skills through sports may actively seek out leadership roles within their team. By taking on responsibilities such as captain or team leader, students may have the opportunity to practice leading and inspiring their peers, making decisions that impact the team, and communicating effectively with coaches and team members.

6)The teachers may provide feedback and mentorship to the students. Students who receive constructive criticism and guidance can identify areas for improvement and work towards developing their leadership skills.

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