

The Parents' and Girls' Perceptions of Sports Participation in the Jaffna District

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This study focuses on parents' perception of their girls' participation in different sports in the Jaffna district. The study used a modified questionnaire to use a quantitative inquiry method. The questionnaire consisted of thirty-five of three points Likert scale questions. The study sample of 200 girls and their parents from the two national schools of five zonal (Valikamam, Jaffna, Vadamarachchi, Thenmarachchi, and Delft) in the Jaffna district was chosen by multi-stage sampling method. The collected data were coded and analyzed using the SPSS software version 25. The assumption validation was tested initially and the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was conducted since the data did not follow a normal distribution. The results showed that 80% of girls have expressed a desire to participate in sports, but more than 75% of their parents disagreed with their girls for participation. There were significant differences were found between girls' and parents' perceptions about; participating in sports is disgraceful to the culture ($\mu_G=0.52$ & $\mu_P=1.41$, $P<0.01$), cause serious injuries and that will lead to future difficulties ($\mu_G=0.96$ & $\mu_P=1.67$, $P<0.01$), and participation in sports is a waste of time and it is a barrier for their studies ($\mu_G=0.79$ & $\mu_P=1.71$, $P<0.01$). However, girls and parents showed their desire to participate in sports for improving their fitness ($\mu_G=1.83$ & $\mu_P=1.31$, $P>0.05$), achieve medals ($\mu_G=1.54$ & $\mu_P=1.48$, $P>0.05$), improve self-esteem and confidence through sports ($\mu_G=1.89$ & $\mu_P=1.77$, $P>0.05$). The support and encouragement of their parents were the barriers because of cultural perspectives, for girls to participate in sports in the Jaffna district. Moreover, the study concluded that the local government should develop positive advertising campaigns and seminars for girls and parents to minimize misperceptions and to encourage girls' engagement in sports.

Keywords: Perception, Sports Participation, Questionnaire Method, Women Sport