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Research Paper

The Effectiveness of Employing Extracurricular Sports Activities in Developing Certain Life Skills During Volleyball Practice

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ABSTRACT

The research aims to identify "the effectiveness of employing extracurricular sports activities in developing certain life skills during volleyball practice for students. The research problem arises because extracurricular activities are outside the school timetable; thus, the study relied on the student's self-interest by incorporating their identity in a non-curricular school program. The researcher conducted a study on a sample of intermediate school students, focusing on the role of activities in developing life skills. The researcher used an experimental method with its steps and procedures. The sample was randomly selected from second-year intermediate students at Al-Hekma Secondary School for Boys, totaling (66) students. The researcher concluded that students perceived the importance of extracurricular sports activities and their role in developing life skills. The researcher created a questionnaire consisting of (50) sub-skills according to a five-point Likert scale for the degree of agreement (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree), with values assigned as (5, 4, 3, 2, 1) respectively. The items were distributed across three life skills: communication, capability, and thinking skills. Extracurricular sports activities have a positive impact on integrating individuals into groups during intermediate school, helping students interact with their environment and develop values and ideals that align with both their personal and societal beliefs, increasing self-confidence, independence, and a realistic self-image, fostering group integration, and fulfilling their needs and directions toward the most suitable path for achieving social harmony.

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INTRODUCTION

Sports activity is a distinguished field in providing young people with the courage to express their interests and satisfy their needs, providing them with psychological, mental, and physical health. It equips youth with social, life, practical, and scientific skills and experiences. It is also a means of nurturing youth inclinations and talents, guiding them toward proper educational and professional directions, and helping

them build a unique personality. Sports institutions are keen on implementing sports activities to achieve several objectives, including connecting youth with their surrounding environment through activities that foster cooperation and participation to enhance their life skills. Sports activities are vital for social well-being, mental health, and physical health in students during growth stages.¹ For students, sports

activities are essential for accompanying motor development and are closely linked to other aspects of life. It is undoubted that practicing sports activities in the correct educational ways affects youth and equips them with positive attitudes, values, and behaviors that help them adapt both to themselves and to the community they live in. Sports activities play a crucial role in achieving various objectives, considering the acquisition of life skills by youth. Life skills are among the most important modern trends adopted by countries striving for progress, and global interest has increased in developing and preparing youth comprehensively for life.² The importance of including life skills in various social aspects is recognized as one of the most important outcomes aimed at being acquired by youth, as they need these skills throughout all stages of life and in their daily affairs to achieve integrated and sustainable education. Life skills are now necessary for all youth in any society, as they are fundamental requirements for young people to interact effectively with themselves and their community, allowing them to deal intelligently with society, face daily challenges, and engage with life situations.

Research Problem

In order to highlight the importance of extracurricular sports activities in instilling numerous social values and positive habits that contribute to building a cultured and strong society, the researcher designed a study on a sample of intermediate students to demonstrate the role of these activities in developing certain life skills: communication skills (including necessary skills for interaction with others and positive participation in life situations), the ability to deal with others (including forming friendships, social activities, giving and taking, bearing responsibilities, and mutual benefit), and thinking skills.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

This study aims to examine (the effectiveness of employing extracurricular sports activities in developing certain life skills during volleyball practice).

Research Hypothesis

There is no statistically significant difference in the development of certain life skills between students who practiced volleyball through extracurricular sports activities and those who traditionally practiced volleyball.

Research Limits

The research is limited to:

1. The first semester.
2. Schools that have sports fields for practicing volleyball.

3. METHODOLOGY & RESEARCH PROCEDURES

First: Selection of the Experimental Design:

The experimental approach is one of the most precise and

effective methods for deriving reliable results. The selection of an appropriate experimental design depends on several factors, including the nature of the problem being studied, the conditions of the selected sample, and the type of design required. Although the experimental approach is among the most complex methods employed by researchers in behavioral and psychological sciences, it enables the researcher to manipulate study variables, measure desired responses, and control internal factors that may introduce undesired effects on the experiment's results. Its importance and fundamental role in advancing educational and psychological sciences do not eliminate the challenges faced by researchers in controlling variables. The design aims to reveal relationships between causes and effects but does not guarantee full control over all variables.³

In this study, the researcher utilized the two-group equivalent design, which includes an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group is exposed to the experimental variable, while the control group is taught using conventional methods, as illustrated in the table below:

Table 1: The Experimental Design Adopted in This Research

Group	Pre-test	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Post-test
Experimental	Life skills	Extracurricular sports activities	Life skills	
Control				

Second: The Research Population and Sample

A. Research Population:

The research population refers to the entire group of individuals sharing specific observable and measurable characteristics the researcher aims to study. Defining the research population is a crucial step in experimental research as it significantly impacts the research procedures, design, and validity of the results. The research population in this study includes second-grade intermediate students in daytime intermediate and secondary schools during the academic year 2022-2023.

B. Research Sample:

The sample is a subset of the population selected according to specific rules to represent the population as closely as possible.⁴ The research sample was drawn from Al-Hikma Secondary School for Boys due to the administration's cooperation and the willingness of the physical education teacher to benefit from the prepared teaching plans.

The researcher coordinated with the school's administration and the physical education teacher to facilitate the experiment. Al-Hikma Secondary School has two second-grade sections. Section B was randomly chosen as the experimental group, while Section A was assigned as the control group.

Table 2: Distribution of Sample Members Among Groups

Group	Section	Number of Students Before Exclusion	Number of Failed Students	Number of Students After Exclusion
Experimental	B	32	1	31
Control	A	34	2	32
Total		66	3	63

Third: Equivalence of Research Groups

Although the sample members were selected from a single area and a socially homogeneous environment and students who failed were excluded, the researcher ensured equivalence between the two groups. Both groups were equivalent across all variables.

Fourth: Research Tool

Life Skills Scale:⁵

Development of Scale Items:

Based on a review of educational literature and previous studies related to the current research topic, the researcher developed a questionnaire that, in its final form, consisted of 50 sub-skills using a five-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree) with values assigned as follows: 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively. The items were distributed across three life skills:

- 1- **Communication Skills:** Including necessary skills for interacting positively with surrounding individuals and participating constructively in various life situations.
- 2- **Interpersonal Skills:** Encompassing friendship formation, social activities, mutual exchange, and responsibility-sharing.
- 3- **Thinking Skills:**

Steps for Developing the Scale:

Initial Version of the Scale:

Define the objective of the scale.

Develop the initial scale by reviewing previous studies on life skills. Formulate scale items based on theoretical writings, psychometric tests, and other relevant sources.

Prepare an initial draft with simple and clear language suitable for intermediate students.

The initial version was printed, along with definitions for

each dimension, and presented to a panel of experts for validation.

Final Version of the Scale:

After obtaining feedback and suggestions from experts, items with 80% or higher approval were included in the final version. Any suggested modifications supported by at least 30% of reviewers were implemented. A pilot study was conducted to ensure clarity and appropriateness. The results showed that 85% of respondents followed the instructions accurately, confirming the suitability of all items.⁶

Validity of the Scale:

The initial version of the scale was reviewed by specialists in psychology, modified based on their feedback, and re-evaluated to ensure accuracy and relevance. The agreement rate among reviewers ranged between 80% and 100%.

Reliability of the Scale:

Reliability was calculated using Cronbach's alpha.

Table 3: Reliability Coefficients for Life Skills

Dimension	Reliability Coefficient
Communication Skills	0.750
Interpersonal Skills	0.731
Thinking Skills	0.753
Total Score	0.860

The above table shows that the reliability coefficients for life skills ranged between 0.731 and 0.860, indicating high and acceptable reliability and confirming the scale's stability.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

Results related to the hypothesis: The mean of the experimental group was (40.645), while the mean of the control group was (30.250). The calculated t-value was (9.496), while the tabular t-value was (1.980) at a significance level of (0.05) with 61 degrees of freedom. Since the calculated t-value is greater than the tabular t-value, the null hypothesis is rejected, meaning there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups in favor of the experimental group, which practiced volleyball according to extracurricular sports activities, as shown in Table (4).

Table 4: Shows the mean and t-test for the two groups (experimental and control) in the life skills scale.

The group	Number of sample members	mean	Standard deviation	Degree of freedom	T-value	Statistical significance
Experimental	31	40.645	4.119	61	9.496	1.980
Control	32	30.250	4.550			

Interpretation of Results: Extracurricular sports activities have a positive impact on the integration of the individual into the group during the middle school stage. They help students interact with their environment, appreciate the values and ideals upheld by society, and achieve self-satisfaction and confidence.⁷ These activities foster independence, the formation of a realistic self-image, a sense

of group integration, and the fulfillment of their needs, leading them toward the most suitable path for social adjustment.⁸ They also allow students to understand and adapt to social relationships, acquire norms and values, develop life skills, feel responsible, and live a stable social life, ultimately contributing to the development of a balanced

personality across social, psychological, and physical dimensions.⁹

CONCLUSIONS

1. Extracurricular sports activities contribute to the development of life skills in students.
2. Extracurricular activities encourage students to develop their social relationships.
3. They play a vital role in improving students' self-esteem by fulfilling their aspirations, leading to self-contentment.

Recommendations

1. Teachers should consider students' inclination towards extracurricular sports activities and seek various ways to enhance this tendency, as it significantly impacts the development of life skills.
2. The Ministry of Education should equip schools with modern devices compatible with extracurricular sports activities and train students to use them in order to develop life skills and encourage participation in extracurricular sports activities.
3. Greater emphasis should be placed on the middle school stage as it is critical for consolidating experiences and achievements.

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