



## EFFECT OF SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS ON CHOICE OF SPORTS AMONG SCHOOL GOING STUDENT ATHLETES

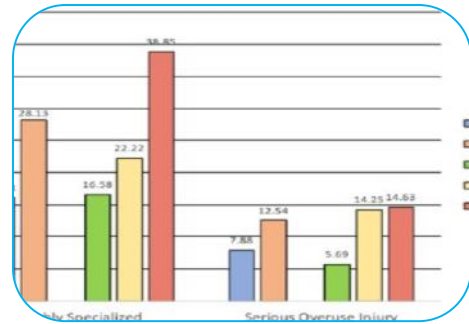
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### ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to assess the effect of socioeconomic status on the choice of sport among schoolgoing student-athletes. To conduct the study 1336 subjects i.e. 716 boys and 620 girls between the age of 14 to 18 years were chosen as a sample. The selection of student-athletes of both sexes for this study was based on a random sampling method with the study area being the Indore district. To assess the socio-economic status of selected male and female student-athletes, a scale prepared by Sunil Kumar Upadhyay (2019) was used. A raw score of 77 or above indicates High Socio-Economic Status; a raw score between 54 to 76 denotes Average Socio-Economic Status while a raw score below 53 denotes Low Socio-Economic Status. It was found that (i) the most preferred choice of sport for student-athletes of high socioeconomic status was badminton whereas volleyball was the most preferred choice of sport for average and low socioeconomic status respectively, (ii) Cricket was the next choice of sport for student-athletes of all three socioeconomic status groups, (iii) Football was also found in 05 most preferred choice of sport for student-athletes of the high, average and low socioeconomic status groups, (iv) Kho-kho was found to be on the list of the 05 most preferred sports for subjects belonging to low socioeconomic status but not found in the other two SES groups, (v) It was also noticeable that none of the student-athletes from high socio-economic status chose kickboxing, wrestling and wushu for participation and (vi) Participation of student-athletes from low socioeconomic status in games namely Baseball, Chess, Shooting, Squash, Wushu and Yoga was not observed. It was concluded that the socioeconomic status of schoolgoing student-athletes does affect their game selection.



**KEY WORDS:** Socioeconomic status, game selection, student-athletes.

### INTRODUCTION

Socio-Economic Status often referred to as SES comprise vast areas of a person's social and economical condition. Naturally, it includes a person's occupation, family structure, income level, and social status while determining their socio-economic status. When one looks into a socio-economic status of a family, the overall income of the family, social status of family members, occupation and quite a few factors are considered. The investment model of Foster et al. (2005) provided insight into resource allocation for children based on socioeconomic status. They opined that socioeconomic status decides the resource allocation such as time and money for an activity. The money spent on extracurricular and educational activities of children is also decided by the level of SES. Public life is

represented by social class. It is true that modern societies advocate equality and considers every citizen equal, the broad consensus is that every individual differs from others according to his social class. Coakley (2004) opined that social class often decides the participation of an individual in sports or spectators from a particular social class as spectators or showing interest in sports. Coakley also opined that lifestyle is associated with cultural and economical factors and lifestyle determines the participation of a person in a specific sports branch. So there is no surprise that individuals from the high-income group or high social status through occupation and education are more likely to take part in sports activities or watch it on television or as spectators. Coakley expressed that individuals with different lifestyles have varied interests and behavioural patterns. For example, it is normal for a person from high SES to pursue a daily swimming routine which is not possible for a low SES background person. Economic inequality plays its part when choosing a sporting activity because a wealthy person can regularly take part in sports such as golf or skiing apart from sports offered by sports clubs. Since these sports also require a lot of economic resources for types of equipment, sports gear etc. we often found people with high social status in it. Way back in 1973, Pavo reported that the Austrian Olympic team comprises 60% of athletes from a high socioeconomic status background. Yaprak and Unlu (2010) in a study revealed that none of the parents with very low SES preferred swimming, tennis, basketball, volleyball, and track and field as sports branches for their children and only 3% of parents from very low SES preferred soccer for their children.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

**Akpata and Gitonga (2002)** in a study reported that female athletes from high socioeconomic status backgrounds mostly chose hockey and basketball, female athletes from middle socioeconomic status mostly chose tennis while volleyball and handball were the preferred choices of female athletes from low-income category. **Jarvie (2006)** conducted a detailed analysis of sports in the context of culture and society. They concluded that high-status sports are skiing, gliding, golf and sailing in which athletes come from elite social classes whereas sports such as archery, boxing and wrestling attract athletes from low socio-economic strata. **Kour and Singh (2014)** reported that the majority of the cricket and hockey players come from middle socio-economic families while 12% of players were of high SES background and around 21% had low SES background. **Eime et al. (2015)** in their study reported that participation in team sports does increase with the remoteness of that particular locality and low socioeconomic status. **Verma and Verma (2016)** concluded that there exists scientific proof that the socioeconomic status of young players affects their sports selection and the majority of the factors of socio-economic indicators have variable impacts on the sports selection of young sportspersons. **Rittsteiger et al. (2021)** concluded that young enthusiasts from low socio-economic status families need a boost in terms of financial support for them to take part in organized sports.

### AIMS & OBJECTIVE

The present study aimed to evaluate the effect of socio-economic status on the choice of sports among schoolgoing student-athletes.

### HYPOTHESIS

It was hypothesized that the socioeconomic status of student-athletes will not create a bias towards choosing a specific sport.

### Methodology

The following methodological steps were taken to conduct the present study.

### Sample

To conduct the study 1336 student-athletes were selected and the sample comprised 716 boys and 620 girls between the age of 14 to 18 years and enrolled in class VIII to class XII. The selection of subjects was done from government and private schools governed by various educational boards and

operational in the Indore district of the Malwa region. The selection of student-athletes of both sexes for this study was based on a random sampling method.

### Tools:

#### Socioeconomic Status Scale :

To assess the socio-economic status of selected male and female student-athletes, a scale prepared by Sunil Kumar Upadhyay (2019) was used. This scale consists of five sections and a total number of 31 items. This scale assesses socio-economic status based on personal information, family, education, income and cultural and materialistic aspects. A raw score of 77 or above indicates High Socio-Economic Status; a raw score between 54 to 76 denotes Average Socio-Economic Status while a raw score  $\leq 53$  denotes Low Socio-Economic Status. This scale is highly reliable and valid.

### Procedure:

1000 male and 1000 student-athletes between the age of 14 to 19 years were initially selected randomly. A socio-economic status scale prepared by Sunil Kumar Upadhyay was distributed to these selected subjects. The filled questionnaires of 1336 student-athletes comprising 716 boys and 620 girls were utilized for further analysis. The scoring of responses on the SES scale was conducted as per the author's manual and tabulated. The bifurcation of cases in high, average and low socioeconomic status was done as per norms given in the scale. The result is shown in table 1.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

**Table 4.1**  
**Effect of Socioeconomic Status of Game Selection**

Name of the Sport		High SES	Average SES	Low SES	Total
Athletics	Frequency	2	5	3	10
	% within Sport	20.0%	50.0%	30.0%	100.0%
	% within SES	0.9%	0.6%	1.1%	0.7%
Badminton	Frequency	65	52	21	138
	% within Sport	47.1%	37.7%	15.2%	100.0%
	% within SES	27.7%	6.3%	7.7%	10.3%
Basketball	Frequency	16	55	17	88
	% within Sport	18.2%	62.5%	19.3%	100.0%
	% within SES	6.8%	6.6%	6.2%	6.6%
Baseball	Frequency	2	2	0	4
	% within Sport	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	% within SES	0.9%	0.2%	0.0%	0.3%
Boxing	Frequency	1	0	5	6
	% within Sport	16.7%	0.0%	83.3%	100.0%
	% within SES	0.4%	0.0%	1.8%	0.4%

Chess	Frequency	6	6	0	12
	% within Sport	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	% within SES	2.6%	0.7%	0.0%	0.9%
Cricket	Frequency	38	214	54	306
	% within Sport	12.4%	69.9%	17.6%	100.0%
	% within SES	16.2%	25.8%	19.9%	22.9%
Football	Frequency	13	102	39	154
	% within Sport	8.4%	66.2%	25.3%	100.0%
	% within SES	5.5%	12.3%	14.3%	11.5%
Handball	Frequency	6	12	12	30
	% within Sport	20.0%	40.0%	40.0%	100.0%
	% within SES	2.6%	1.4%	4.4%	2.2%
Kabaddi	Frequency	10	46	16	72
	% within Sport	13.9%	63.9%	22.2%	100.0%
	% within SES	4.3%	5.5%	5.9%	5.4%
Kho-kho	Frequency	11	36	23	70
	% within Sport	15.7%	51.4%	32.9%	100.0%
	% within SES	4.7%	4.3%	8.5%	5.2%
Kickboxing	Frequency	0	14	6	20
	% within Sport	0.0%	70.0%	30.0%	100.0%
	% within SES	0.0%	1.7%	2.2%	1.5%
Shooting	Frequency	6	2	0	8
	% within Sport	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	% within SES	2.6%	0.2%	0.0%	0.6%
Squash	Frequency	6	0	0	6
	% within Sport	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	% within SES	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Swimming	Frequency	2	3	1	6
	% within Sport	33.3%	50.0%	16.7%	100.0%
	% within SES	0.9%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%

Table Tennis	Frequency	13	15	4	32
	% within Sport	40.6%	46.9%	12.5%	100.0%
	% within SES	5.5%	1.8%	1.5%	2.4%
Volleyball	Frequency	34	248	60	342
	% within Sport	9.9%	72.5%	17.5%	100.0%
	% within SES	14.5%	29.9%	22.1%	25.6%
Wrestling	Frequency	0	3	3	6
	% within Sport	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	% within SES	0.0%	0.4%	1.1%	0.4%
Wushu	Frequency	0	2	0	2
	% within Sport	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	% within SES	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%
		High SES	Average SES	Low SES	Total
Yoga	Frequency	2	2	0	4
	% within Sport	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	% within SES	0.9%	0.2%	0.0%	0.3%
Karate	Frequency	2	10	8	20
	% within Sport	10.0%	50.0%	40.0%	100.0%
	% within SES	0.9%	1.2%	2.9%	1.5%
Total		235	829	272	1336

**Game wise distribution of student-athletes as given in table 1 is given in detail:**

- 02 student-athletes from high socioeconomic status, 05 student-athletes from average socioeconomic status and 03 student-athletes from low socioeconomic status are participating in athletic events. This shows that within sport 50% of student-athletes from average SES, 30% of student-athletes from low SES and 20% of student-athletes from high SES chose athletics. Within SES 0.9% of student-athletes from high SES, 0.6% of student-athletes from average SES and 1.1% of student-athletes from low SES decided to participate in athletic events.
- 65 student-athletes from high socioeconomic status, 52 student-athletes from average socioeconomic status and 21 student-athletes from low socioeconomic status are badminton players. This shows that within sport, 47.1% of student-athletes from high SES, 37.7% of student-athletes from average SES and 15.2% of student-athletes from low SES chose badminton. Within SES 27.7% of student-athletes from high SES, 6.3% of student-athletes from average SES and 7.7% of student-athletes from low SES decided to participate in badminton. Hence it was observed that the percentage participation of student-athletes from high SES is high as compared to student-athletes from average and low SES.
- 16 student-athletes from high socioeconomic status, 55 student-athletes from average socioeconomic status and 17 student-athletes from low socioeconomic status are basketball

players. This shows that within sport, 18.2% of student-athletes from high SES, 62.5% of student-athletes from average SES and 19.3% of student-athletes from low SES chose basketball. Within SES 6.8% of student-athletes from high SES, 6.6% of student-athletes from average SES and 6.2% of student-athletes from low SES decided to participate in a game of basketball. Hence the participation of student-athletes from average SES was highest in average SES and lowest in student-athletes of high SES.

- Only 2 student-athletes from each of the high and average SES participated in baseball. Due to the low participation level, the result can not be generalized.
- Only 01 student-athlete from high SES and 05 student-athletes from low SES participate in boxing indicating that preference for sports such as boxing is higher among student-athletes of low SES but again due to the lesser number of subjects the result can not be generalized.
- In chess, the frequency and percentage show that 06 student-athletes (50%) from high SES and 06 student-athletes from average SES took interest while no participation was recorded from student-athletes of low SES. This shows that the total number of subjects is fewer it indicating a distinct preference for chess based on socioeconomic status of the student-athletes.
- Cricket: Out of the 306 student-athletes who selected cricket, 12.4% belonged to high SES, 69.9% belonged to average SES and 17.6% belonged to low SES. Within SES percentage shows that 16.2% of subjects from high SES, 25.8% of subjects from average SES and 19.9% of subjects from low SES chose cricket and the data indicate that the craze for sports such as cricket is higher in players of average SES.
- Out of the total 154 student-athletes choosing football, 8.4% belonged to high SES, 66.2% belonged to average SES and 25.3% belonged to low SES. Within SES, 5.5% of subjects from high SES, 12.3% of subjects from average SES and 14.3% of subjects from low SES opted for football as their choice of sport.
- Out of the total 30 student-athletes choosing handball as their choice of sport, 20% belonged to high SES, 40% belonged to average SES and 40% belonged to low SES. Within SES, 2.6% of subjects from high SES, 1.4% of subjects from average SES and 4.4% of subjects from low SES opted for handball as their choice of sport. It shows that inclination towards handball is higher in student-athletes from the low socioeconomic status group.
- Out of the total 72 student-athletes choosing kabaddi as their choice of sport, 13.9% belonged to high SES, 63.9% belonged to average SES and 22.2% belonged to low SES. Within SES, 4.3% of subjects from high SES, 5.5% of subjects from average SES and 5.9% of subjects from low SES opted for kabaddi as their choice of sport. It shows that among three socioeconomic status groups, the inclination to choose kabaddi was higher in student-athletes of the average socioeconomic group.
- Out of the total 70 student-athletes choosing kho-kho as their choice of sport, 15.7% belonged to high SES, 51.4% belonged to average SES and 32.9% belonged to low SES. Within SES, 4.7% of subjects from high SES, 4.3% of subjects from average SES and 8.5% of subjects from low SES opted for kho-kho as their choice of sport. It shows that among three socioeconomic status groups, the inclination to choose kho-kho was higher in student-athletes of the low socioeconomic group.
- Out of the total 20 student-athletes choosing kickboxing as their choice of sport, 70% belonged to average SES and 30% belonged to low SES with student-athletes from high SES having no interest in kickboxing. Within SES, 1.7% of subjects from average SES and 2.2% of subjects from low SES opted for kickboxing as their choice of sport. It shows that among three socioeconomic status groups, the inclination to choose kickboxing was non-existent in student-athletes of the high socioeconomic group.
- Very few student-athletes (N=8) choose shooting with which 75% belonged to high SES and 25% belonged to average SES with no representation of student-athletes from low SES in this sport i.e. shooting.
- A total of 06 student-athletes choose squash and all of them belonged to the high socioeconomic status group confirmed squash as a sport for the elite social class.

- The representation of student-athletes in swimming is very low (N=6) in which 33.3% belonged to high SES, 50% belonged to average SES and 16.7% belonged to low SES. Due to fewer cases of swimming as a choice of sport, the result can not be generalised.
- Out of the total 32 student-athletes choosing table tennis as their choice of sport, 40.6% belonged to high SES, 46.9% belonged to average SES and 12.5% belonged to low SES. Within SES, 5.5% of subjects from high SES, 1.8% of subjects from average SES and 1.5% of subjects from low SES opted for table tennis as their choice of sport. It shows that among three socioeconomic status groups, the inclination to choose table tennis was least in student-athletes of the low socioeconomic group.
- Out of the total 342 student-athletes choosing volleyball as their choice of sport, 9.9% belonged to high SES, 72.5% belonged to average SES and 17.5% belonged to low SES. Within SES, 14.5% of subjects from high SES, 29.9% of subjects from average SES and 22.1% of subjects from low SES opted for volleyball as their choice of sport. It shows that among three socioeconomic status groups, the inclination to choose table tennis was highest in student-athletes of the average socioeconomic group.
- Only 06 student-athletes choice of sport was wrestling and among them, 50% each belonged to average and low socioeconomic status with student-athletes from high socioeconomic status showing no interest in wrestling.
- Only 2 student-athletes are participating in Wushu and come from average SES backgrounds.
- Only 04 students are taking part in yoga and 50% of them come from high SES and an equal percentage from average SES while no representation of low SES was observed in this sport.
- Out of the total 20 student-athletes choosing karate as their choice of sport, 10% belonged to high SES, 50% belonged to average SES and 40% belonged to low SES. Within SES, 0.9% of subjects from high SES, 1.2% of subjects from average SES and 2.9% of subjects from low SES opted for karate as their choice of sport. It shows that among three socioeconomic status groups, the inclination to choose karate was highest in student-athletes of the average socioeconomic group.

After analysing the effect of socioeconomic status on the choice of sport, it was decided to reanalyse the group-wise data to get the statistics on the actual preference of student-athletes. The result is shown in table 2

**Table 2**  
**Most Preferred and Least Preferred Sport by Student-athletes belonging to Different Socioeconomic status**

<b>High Socioeconomic Status</b>	<b>Average Socioeconomic Status</b>	<b>Low Socioeconomic Status</b>
Most Preferred 05 Choice Badminton (27.7%) Cricket (16.2%) Volleyball (14.5%) Basketball (6.8%) Football (5.5%)	Most Preferred 05 Choice Volleyball (29.9%) Cricket (25.8%) Football (12.3%) Basketball (6.6%) Badminton (6.3%)	Most Preferred 05 Choice Volleyball (22.1%) Cricket (19.9%) Football (14.3%) Kho-Kho (8.5%) Badminton (7.7%)
No Participation Kickboxing Wrestling Wushu	No Participation Boxing Squash	No Participation Baseball Chess Shooting Squash Wushu Yoga

### Analysis of the information given in table 2 reveals the following facts:

1. The most preferred choice of sports for student-athletes of high socioeconomic status was badminton whereas volleyball was the most preferred choice of sport for average and low socioeconomic status respectively.
2. Cricket was the next choice of sport for student-athletes of all three socioeconomic status groups.
3. Football was also found in 05 most preferred choice of sport for student-athletes of the high, average and low socioeconomic status groups.
4. Kho-kho was found to be on the list of the 05 most preferred sports for subjects belonging to low socio-economic status but not found in the other two SES groups.
5. It was also noticeable that none of the student-athletes from high socio-economic status chose kickboxing, wrestling and wushu for participation.
6. Participation of student-athletes from low socioeconomic status in games namely Baseball, Chess, Shooting, Squash, Wushu and Yoga was not observed.

Yaprak and Unlu (2010) in a study revealed that none of the parents with very low SES preferred swimming, tennis, basketball, volleyball, and track and field as sports branches for their children and only 3% of parents from very low SES preferred soccer for their children. In the present study sport such as baseball, chess, shooting, squash, wushu and yoga has no representation from the low and average socioeconomic status group while sports such as kickboxing, wrestling and wushu are not presented in the high socioeconomic status group. But the scenario is different in modern days with various talent identification programs conducted by various sports organizations and that is why a sport like cricket has a fair representation of student-athletes belonging to low socioeconomic status strata.

### CONCLUSION

It was concluded that the socioeconomic status of schoolgoing student-athletes does affect their game selection.

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