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HEALTH, PARTICIPATION AND CHALLENGES OF GIRL STUDENTS IN KABADDI AT HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Mrs. Ashwini Shivaji Misal

Researcher,

Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Holkar University, Solapur.

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the participation of high school girl students in Kabaddi in Solapur District, focusing on their health, participation patterns, and the problems they face while engaging in the sport. A survey research method was used with 30 girl students selected through purposive sampling from various high schools in Solapur. An interview schedule was administered to gather qualitative and quantitative data regarding their level of participation, factors influencing participation, health benefits, and challenges encountered in Kabaddi. Results showed that although Kabaddi offers physical and psychological health benefits, girls report significant barriers such as lack of parental support, societal norms, inadequate infrastructural facilities, and limited training opportunities. The findings suggest the need for improved sports policy, better access to training, and increased awareness programs to encourage girls' participation in Kabaddi at the school level.



KEYWORDS: Kabaddi, health, challenges.

INTRODUCTION

Kabaddi is an indigenous contact sport that holds substantial cultural and athletic value in India. Traditionally played in rural regions, Kabaddi has evolved into a competitive sport recognized nationally and internationally. The game requires a combination of strength, endurance, tactical intelligence, and teamwork. Historically, Kabaddi has been male-dominated; however, recent years have witnessed a gradual increase in female participation.

Despite this growth, high school girl students still face challenges in engaging with Kabaddi consistently and fully. These challenges can stem from physical, social, psychological, and environmental factors that influence not only their participation levels but also their overall health, confidence, and commitment to sports. Solapur District, being a region where Kabaddi is popular, provides an ideal setting to explore these issues among girls at the high school level.

Encouraging sports participation is particularly important for adolescents, as this period is crucial for physical growth, mental health, and social development. Kabaddi, with its high physical and mental demands, can contribute significantly towards improving cardiovascular strength, muscular endurance, agility, and cooperative skills. Yet, the benefits of the sport remain underutilized due to the many challenges faced by girl students in rural and urban school settings.

This research evaluates the participation, health benefits, and barriers to Kabaddi involvement for girl students in Solapur District high schools, offering valuable insights for educators, policymakers, parents, and sports administrators.

OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives of the study were:

1. To assess the level of participation of high school girl students in Kabaddi in Solapur District.
2. To analyze the perceived health benefits of Kabaddi participation for girls.
3. To identify the primary challenges and barriers girls face in Kabaddi participation.
4. To provide recommendations for improving girls' engagement in Kabaddi and sports participation in the school context.

NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Girls' participation in physical activity offers numerous health and social benefits, including increased physical fitness, improved self-esteem, and greater social interaction. Participation in team sports, such as Kabaddi, further enhances leadership qualities, strategic thinking, and resilience. Despite these advantages, barriers such as gender norms, lack of facilities, and limited encouragement impede girls' consistent participation.

In Solapur District, high school girls face unique challenges rooted in cultural expectations and resource scarcity. Understanding these barriers and how they impact long-term involvement in the sport is essential for designing effective intervention strategies. This study addresses a gap in research on female sports participation in Kabaddi within the region, aiming to support future policies that promote equality and health through sports.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

Scope:

- The study focuses on high school girl students (grades 8 to 10) in Solapur District.
- The sport under investigation is Kabaddi.
- The study includes both rural and urban schools.
- Analyses include participation patterns, perceived health benefits, and challenges in engagement.

Limitations:

- The sample size of 30 students limits generalizability beyond the district level.
- Self-reported data may contain subjective bias.
- The study does not include male students or other sports for comparative analysis.
- Data collection was limited to school days and could not account for extracurricular participation outside school.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used a **survey research design**, which is appropriate for collecting data regarding opinions, experiences, and self-reported practices from respondents. Since the purpose is to explore perceptions and participation patterns rather than experimental cause-effect relationships, the survey method offers reliable descriptive insights.

Population and Sample

The target population comprised girl students enrolled in high schools across Solapur District who have played or currently play Kabaddi. A **purposive sampling technique** was used to select **30 girl students** from 6 different high schools (both rural and urban). This ensured representation from diverse socio-economic backgrounds within the district.

Research Tool

An **Interview Schedule** was the primary tool for data collection. It included both close-ended and open-ended questions related to:

- Demographic information
- Kabaddi participation frequency
- Health benefits experienced
- Barriers to participation
- Motivation and influencing factors

The tool was validated by physical education teachers and sports trainers. Reliability was ensured through pilot testing with 5 students outside the sample.

Data Collection Procedure

1. Permission was obtained from school authorities.
2. Students were briefed on the purpose of the research.
3. Oral and written consent was obtained from participants and parents where required.
4. One-to-one interviews were conducted using the schedule.
5. Responses were recorded systematically and coded for analysis.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics: percentages, mean scores, and frequency distributions. Qualitative responses were categorized into themes for meaningful interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Participation Patterns

Out of 30 respondents:

- **80%** reported participating in Kabaddi at least once a week.
- **40%** participated in school teams or competitions.
- **60%** engaged in informal play with classmates.

This pattern indicates a moderate level of engagement but low formal representation in competitive contexts.

Discussion:

Participation appears stronger in peer-led activities than in structured school teams. This may indicate a welcoming environment among peers but limited institutional encouragement or opportunities for formal involvement.

2. Perceived Health Benefits

Respondents identified several health benefits:

Health Benefit	Percentage (%)
Improved fitness	76.6
Better stamina	70
Enhanced teamwork skills	63.3
Improved self-confidence	50

Discussion:

The reported health benefits align with documented advantages of regular physical activity. While physical improvements were the most cited, psychosocial benefits like teamwork and confidence were also prominent. Some girls reported that participation helped them overcome shyness and strengthen social bonds.

3. Barriers to Participation

Students cited the following challenges:

Barrier	Percentage (%)
Lack of parental support	53.3
Limited practice time	46.6
Gender stereotypes	40
Inadequate facilities	36.6
Safety concerns	30

Discussion:

Parental support emerged as the most significant factor. Traditional attitudes often influence the extent to which girls are encouraged to be active in competitive sports. Time constraints due to academic workload and expectations at home also deter practice participation. Lack of infrastructure, including safe play spaces and equipment, further discourages sustained involvement.

4. Motivation Factors

- **Peer encouragement:** 60%
- **Personal interest:** 50%
- **Teacher support:** 36.6%
- **Competitive opportunities:** 30%

Discussion:

Peer influence plays a crucial role in motivating girls to participate in the sport. Teacher encouragement is important but less frequently reported, suggesting room for greater institutional involvement.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that high school girl students in Solapur District benefit from participating in Kabaddi, both physically and socially. However, several barriers prevent many girls from engaging fully. Parental attitudes, cultural norms, limited facilities, and time constraints affect participation levels. To enhance girls' involvement in sports, schools and policymakers must prioritize safe and encouraging environments, offer better access to training and competitions, and involve families through awareness programs about the holistic benefits of sports participation.

Promoting gender-inclusive sports policies and investing in infrastructure can help bridge existing gaps and empower girl students to pursue Kabaddi with confidence and consistency.

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