



THE SPIRIT OF SPORT: EXPLORING SPORTSMANSHIP AMONG PHYSICAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

Louie Giray

Polytechnic University of the Philippines

Email: lggiray@pup.edu.ph

ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to explore the perception of physical education students in a Philippine school about sportsmanship. It particularly dealt with respect (1) for the opponent, (2) for rules and officials, and (3) for social conventions. This research used a quantitative descriptive method of research, with survey-questionnaire as the main data gathering tool. It was adapted from a valid and reliable instrument known as multidimensional sportspersonship orientations scale. In regard to respect for social conventions, participants perceived themselves as people who rarely congratulate the opponent, and infrequently shake hands with the opponent's coach when they lose. Respect for the rules and the officials got good scores. Respect and concern for the opponent got low scores. They professed that they rarely do necessary actions when an opponent is unjustly penalized, hurt, or forgets his or her equipment. To achieve victory does not solely undermine character. It can be a good avenue to harness physical improvement and love for the sports. However, when the virtue of sportsmanship is discounted and forgotten, the result can be disadvantageous or even disastrous. Conclusions and recommendations were presented.

Keywords: *perception; sportsmanship; physical education; Philippine school*



This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 CC-BY International license

1. INTRODUCTION

Sports are observed as the major way to educate students about social values and life skills which will be advantageous to them, most especially, into their adult years. While there are many proper social set-ups in which student learning happens, physical education sports are matchless in that it, in general, suggests a highly controlled atmosphere where different rudiments of success and failure can be assessed by a specific and definite set of rules (Muñoz-Bullón, Sanchez-Bueno, & Vos-Saz, 2017).

The educational value of sports is well recognized throughout the Philippines, as evidenced by the abundant sponsorship and support of athletic programs around the country. Sportsmanship is described by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (2003) as a collection of activities to be practiced by players, coaches, officials, administrators, and

spectators in athletic competition. These actions are founded on universal principles such as respect, dignity, civility, integrity, and accountability. According to research, sport education is a successful teaching pedagogical model to be taken into attention by physical education teachers so as to encourage moral and ethical know-how among students (Burgueño & Medina-Casabón, 2020).

However, there are students compelled by ego who choose to participate in order to beat their opponents. They play not for the sake of enjoyment and camaraderie, but for making someone inferior. They want to assert their dominance or superiority; they actually do that even at the expense of poor sports behaviors like breaking the rules or dishonesty. Research also specifies that aggression, dishonesty, and other poor sports behavior happen with disturbing frequency (Kavussanu, 2006).

Many teachers generally observed negative comments were, from time to time, evident during sports and activities in physical education. There were cases also of untruthfulness in relation to results and performance. Hence, it is also perceived that the only significant matter for many was winning. These observations led to the conduct of this research. Such practices are not good and must not be tolerated by the school and teachers. Therefore, physical education is indeed a good avenue in which teachers can inspire appropriate behaviors and communicate the virtue of sportsmanship among students. Knowing such alarming perceptions among students, the school must undertake necessary actions to promote sportsmanship among them. Therefore, this research may permit to further understand and diminish elements that could hamper or interfere with the education process (Bach, 2006).

Research Questions

This research attempted to assess the perception regarding sportsmanship in a Philippine school among physical education students. Specifically, this research answered the following questions:

1. What is the level of perception of the students in terms of respect for social conventions?
2. What is the level of perception of the students in terms of respect for the rules and the officials?
3. What is the level of perception of the students in terms of respect and concern for the opponent?

Research Significance

The uniqueness of this study can be traced upon the fact that no research had been undertaken about students' perception on sportsmanship in such a Philippine school. Understanding such paucity, this scholarly undertaking would be of great benefit to the arena of physical education and also in the further understanding the topic in line of the school context.

Conceptual Framework

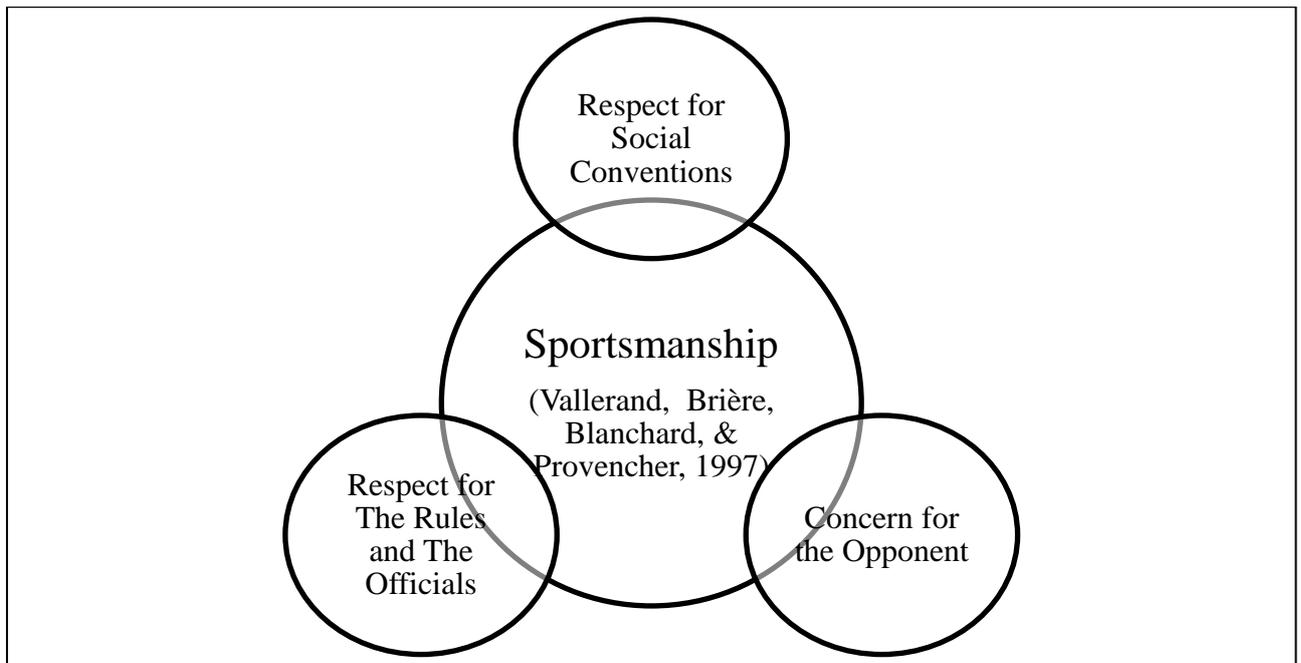


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework on Sportsmanship (Vallerand, Brière, Blanchard, & Provencher, 1997)

A conceptual framework explains a system of concepts, expectations, notions, and the theories that backs up and informs one's research (Maxwell, 2013). To concretize it, the researcher made a model to show the interrelationship of variables on sportsmanship. Using the sportsmanship model of Vallerand, Brière, Blanchard, and Provencher (1997), it illustrates that sportsmanship hinges on respect for the rules and the officials, respect for social conventions, and concern for the opponent and that they are interrelated with one another.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Sportsmanship refers to activities that represent a child's or adolescent's moral and character formation in physical activity contexts. Bolter and Kipp (2016). In a study of Murphy (1994), using eight-foot-tall basketball hoops or smaller and shorter soccer fields

helps children to learn skills quickly and gain practical guidance. This encourages task orientation—striving for task achievement and exceeding individual efficiency objectives.

Significant studies have concluded that involvement in sports and physical education activities hold plentiful potential advantages for students. The benefits forwarded by the literature drive toward positive physical and socio-cognitive development (Kremer-Sadlik & Kim, 2007). The personal growth and life skills accomplished through these endeavors are enormously pivotal to their future success.

Physical education teachers and sport coaches may have a significant and long-lasting impact on the children and youth with whom they interact, including impacts on self-perceptions, inspiration, happiness, and sportsmanship habits (Horn, 2008). Horn (2008) contends that youths' impressions of their coach's or teacher's actions can have a clear and immediate effect on their own emotions, feelings, and behaviors.

But, sports programs and physical education activities offer only a setting for development and learning and do not deliver the actual lessons (Arthur-Banning, Wells, Baker, & Hegreiness, 2009). It is the duty of the parents, teachers and coaches involved in the programs and activities to ensure that a proper environment is established and that appropriate messages are conveyed in order to encourage firm positive advancement in the character, most especially in the virtue of sportsmanship, among the students.

3. METHOD

Participants

Respondents for this study were students (N=20) in grades 7 and 8 from a Philippine school. The sample was recruited by coordinating with the school to agree in the conduct of this study. Hence, it did not utilize a random sample technique. The researcher conveniently chose the respondents based on students' availability and accessibility.

The percentage of respondents from each grade level was as follows: (a) Grade 7, 45%; and (b) Grade 8, 55%. Of the total participants, 40% were female and 60% were male. Participants ranged from 13 to 15 years of age. All respondents were enrolled in physical education, which was a required and mandatory subject in both private and public schools.

The descriptive research design was employed to achieve the purpose of the research. The descriptive method primarily utilized the weighted mean to find out the level of perception of students in terms of respect (1) for the opponent, (2) for rules and officials, and (3) for social conventions.

Data Gathering Methods

Respondents were informed that the data collated from them would assist the researcher and physical education teachers in further understanding their perception about sportsmanship. All respondents were informed that the participation in the research had no bearing in their physical education grade and their anonymity would be valued.

The instrument administered was a quantitative survey-questionnaire. Respondents took approximately five minutes to complete the task. In this research, the multidimensional sportpersonship orientations scale (Vallerand, Brière, Blanchard, Provencher, 1997). was adapted as a research instrument and a tool to gather data from the respondents. It was proven valid and reliable to use for students. It assessed three different types of sportpersonship orientations.

Particularly, they were respect (1) for the opponent, (2) for rules and officials, and (3) for social conventions. It contains 15 items (5 items per subscale). It used a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The data were gathered through the survey-questionnaire. It was interpreted using descriptive statistics. This gave the researcher the data needed in realizing the goal of the study.

Data Analysis

The data gathered from survey-questionnaire were interpreted using descriptive statistics. Particularly, it utilized mean. This gave the researcher the data needed in realizing the goal of the study.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Respect for Social Conventions

ACTIVITY	MEAN	INTERPRETATION
1. When I lose, I congratulate the opponent whoever he or she is.	2.49	Rarely
2. After a defeat, I shake hands with the opponents' coach.	3.30	Always
3. After a competition, I congratulate the opponent for his good performance.	3.54	Always
4. After a win, I acknowledge the opponent's good work.	3.33	Always
5. Win or lose, I shake hands with the opponent after the game.	2.35	Rarely

Respect for social conventions is the first variable observed in this study. It is evident from the results that students perceived themselves in this criterion as low. They rarely congratulate the opponent when they lose, and infrequently shake hands with the opponent's coach. The respondents got high with the interpretation of doing always in the following activities: congratulating the opponent for good performance, acknowledging him or her for doing good work, and shaking the hands of opponents.

It can be concluded from the results garnered from the category, respect for social conventions, that they did not like losing. Such could increase the likelihood of them doing unsportsmanlike behaviors. When they lose, they commonly do not follow social conventions. This is in alignment with the observation of Fox (2008) that in the context of sports, fear of failure is manifested.

This also was seconded by Hanin (2008) expressing fear of failure is an intrinsic part of sport competition. Hence, when it turns to reality, students may become jealous, disagreeable, and even hostile. Therefore, it should be emphasized to the students that winning is not the prime award that they can get from playing sports or other physical education activities. The fun of playing should be put forward. Character building in this arena must be strengthened, also.

Table 2. Respect for The Rules and The Officials

ACTIVITY	MEAN	INTERPRETATION
1. I obey the referee.	3.65	Always
2. I respect the rules.	3.87	Always
3. I really obey all rules of my sport.	3.91	Always
4. I respect an official's decision even if he or she is not the referee.	3.45	Always
5. I respect the referee even when he or she is not good.	3.22	Often

Respect for the rules and the officials is the second variable in this research. The students often respect the referee even he or she is not good. Majority of the activities got high scores which mean that they always do practices like obeying the referee, respecting the rules, obeying all rules in all his or her sports, and respecting the official decision of the referee.

This is in conjunction with Cecchini and colleagues' research (2007), which cogently argues that the rules can reduce harsh playing, contact failures and a negative sportive

behavior, since they indicate individual and social responsibility. In addition, these rules restrict behavior regardless of the sport itself (Vamplew, 2007). It is anticipated that fair play shall be manifested.

Reinforcing the respect for the rules and the officials indeed plays an indispensable role toward the development of physical education among students. Students must be bound to act in a sportsmanlike way toward fellow players. This idea must be advanced by the teachers, school authorities, and parents. This could help them show how to master their feelings and to handle to social conduct during games that would urge to react likewise.

Table 3. Concern for the Opponent

ACTIVITY	MEAN	INTERPRETATION
1. I help the opponent get up after a fall.	3.22	Often
2. I refrain from swearing or cursing when things do not go on my way.	3.23	Often
3. If I see that the opponent is unjustly penalized, I try to correct the situation.	2.41	Rarely
4. When an opponent gets hurt, I ask the referee to stop the game so that he or she can get help.	2.40	Rarely
5. If by misfortune, an opponent forgets his or her equipment, I lend him a spare one.	2.38	Rarely

Respect and concern for the opponent is the last variable in this research, this got low scores from the respondents. They rarely do necessary actions when an opponent is unjustly penalized or hurt. They also do not want to let them borrow an equipment if an opponent forgot his material. They often help the opponent to get up. They also refrain from swearing when things do not go on their way.

This is similar to the results gathered by Stornes and Bru (2002) which shows that the participant adolescent players had low respect for their opponents. Similar to this, Bolter and Kipp (2018)'s findings indicate that the coach conduct has an effect with antisocial behavior toward teammates and opponents. Moreover, the lack of concern toward opponents is linked with the antisocial behavior toward teammates (Benson & Bruner, 2018).

The students got low scores on the category of respect and concern for the opponent. They seldom do crucial actions when an opponent is unjustly penalized or hurt. The researcher suggests that physical education should execute programs or seminars that will aid them toward the development of positive character. It is not tolerable if the school will breed

students who are excellent in sports but not in character. They should be taught on how to be concerned when unpleasant scenarios happened and must not utilize such for their own welfare.

5. CONCLUSION

In this research, it showed the perceptions of physical education students when it comes to the sportsmanship. The intuitive sense of the researcher led to the realization of this scholarly undertaking. Indeed, this variable must be scrutinized and be taken into observation. In actuality, it drove to the revelation that students' concerns when playing was more of winning only.

Their beliefs were explored and what emerged were certain aspects in which they needed to improve. To achieve victory does not solely undermine character. It can be a good avenue to harness physical improvement and love for the sports. However, when the virtue of sportsmanship is discounted and forgotten, the result can be disadvantageous or even disastrous.

Before sportsmanship can be manifested by the students, it indeed must first be evident from teachers, coaches, referees, and other stakeholders. One avenue in which they can learn such virtue is through modeling. When many people in the school display sportsmanlike behaviors then it becomes a culture in which students learn that through socialization. At a later time, it can lead to the positive change of the school climate.

The school must require competitors, referees and teachers to hold fast to key qualities of sportsmanship. It is proposed that they publish an improved code of conduct which are conveyed to students. Such can empower them to exercise restraint in undertaking unsportsmanlike practices. Plus, there should quantifiable standards for monitoring purposes.

Continuing personal and professional development for the teachers and students must be undertaken also. Furthermore, thorough checking and assessment of the effectiveness of sportsmanship education efforts should be undertaken. Future researchers may pursue to fill the research gap by replicating this research in different schools or environments.

REFERENCES

- Arthur-Banning, S., Wells, M. S., Baker, B. L., & Hegreness, R. (2009). Parents Behaving Badly? The Relationship between the Sportsmanship Behaviors. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 32(1), 3-18.
- Bach, G. (2006). The parents association for youth sports: A proactive method of spectator behavior management. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 77(6), 16-19.

- Benson, A. J., & Bruner, M. W. (2018). How teammate behaviors relate to athlete affect, cognition, and behaviors: A daily diary approach within youth sport. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 34*, 119-127.
- Bolter, N. D., & Kipp, L. E. (2018). Sportspersonship coaching behaviours, relatedness need satisfaction, and early adolescent athletes' prosocial and antisocial behaviour. *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 16*(1), 20-35.
- Bolter, N. D., & Kipp, L. E. (2018). Sportspersonship coaching behaviours, relatedness need satisfaction, and early adolescent athletes' prosocial and antisocial behaviour. *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 16*(1), 20-35.
- Burgueño, R., & Medina-Casabón, J. (2020). Sport Education and sportsmanship orientations: An intervention in high school students. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 17*(3), 1-16.
- Cecchini, J. A., Montero, J., Alonso, A., Izquierdo, M., & Contreras, O. (2007). Effects of personal and social responsibility on fair play in sports and self-control in school-aged youths. *European Journal of sport science, 7*(4), 203-211.
- Fox, A. (2008). Fear of failure in the context of competitive sport. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching, 3*(2), 173-177.
- Hanin, Y. (2008). Fear of failure in the context of competitive sport: A commentary. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching, 3*(2), 185-188.
- Horn, T. S. (2008). Coaching effectiveness in the sport domain. In T. S. Horn (Ed.), *Advances in sport psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 240-267). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Kavussanu, M. (2006). Motivational predictors of prosocial and antisocial behaviour in football. *Journal of Sports Sciences, 24*(06), 575-588.
- Kremer-Sadlik, T., & Kim, J. L. (2007). Lessons from sports: Children's socialization to values through family interaction during sports activities. *Discourse & Society, 18*(1), 35-52.
- Muñoz-Bullón, F., Sanchez-Bueno, M. J., & Vos-Saz, A. (2017). The influence of sports participation on academic performance among students in higher education. *Sport Management Review, 20*(4), 365-378.
- Murphy, S. (1994). *Sport psychology interventions*. Human Kinetics.

- National Collegiate Athletic Association. (2003). *Report on the sportsmanship and fan behavior summit*. <http://www.ncaa.org/sportsmanshipFanBehavior/report.pdf>
- Stornes, T., & Bru, E. (2002). Sportspersonship and perceptions of leadership: An investigation of adolescent handball players' perceptions of sportspersonship and associations with perceived leadership. *European Journal of Sport Science*, 2(6), 1-15.
- Vallerand, R. J., Brière, N. M., Blanchard, C., & Provencher, P. (1997). Development and validation of the Multidimensional Sportspersonship Orientations Scale. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 19(2), 197–206.
- Vamplew, W. (2007). Playing with the rules: Influences on the development of regulation in sport. *The international Journal of the History of Sport*, 24(7), 843-871.