



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

THE LIFELONG ARC OF DEVELOPMENT: ANALYSIS THE IMPACT OF CHILDHOOD ACTIVITIES OF 12TH GRADE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND ADULT PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILES IN SPORTS

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Abstract

Childhood experiences significantly influence an individual's academic achievement, psychological well-being, and lifelong participation in sports and physical activities. This study investigates the relationship between childhood activities, 12th-grade academic performance, and adult psychological profiles among individuals involved in sports. A quantitative, cross-sectional research design was adopted using a hypothetical sample of 300 participants aged 18–35 years. Data were collected through structured questionnaires measuring childhood activity engagement, academic achievement, and psychological characteristics, including resilience, self-esteem, motivation, emotional intelligence, and stress management. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, multiple regression, and one-way ANOVA were employed to examine the relationships among variables. The findings suggest that participation in structured childhood sports and recreational activities positively predicts higher academic performance and healthier adult psychological profiles. Individuals who engaged consistently in sports during childhood demonstrated greater resilience, emotional regulation, and self-confidence than those with minimal participation. The study emphasizes the importance of promoting organized physical activities during childhood to foster academic excellence and psychological well-being throughout life.

Keywords: Childhood activities, sports participation, academic achievement, psychological development, resilience, self-esteem, adolescent development.

Introduction

Human development is a continuous process shaped by biological, psychological, social, and environmental influences. Childhood represents one of the most critical developmental stages because experiences during this period influence educational attainment, personality formation, emotional intelligence, and physical health.

Participation in sports during childhood contributes not only to physical fitness but also to cognitive development, discipline, teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving abilities. Numerous educational psychologists have suggested that children involved in organized sports demonstrate superior executive functioning, stronger motivation, and better academic achievement compared with non-participants.

Academic performance in Grade 12 is particularly important because it determines higher education opportunities and future career pathways. At the same time, psychological traits developed during childhood continue into adulthood, affecting stress management, confidence, interpersonal relationships, and occupational success.

This study explores how different childhood activities influence both educational outcomes and adult psychological characteristics among individuals engaged in sports.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the relationship between childhood sports participation and 12th-grade academic performance.
2. To investigate the association between childhood recreational activities and adult psychological profiles.
3. To determine whether childhood sports participation predicts adult resilience and self-esteem.
4. To identify significant psychological differences among individuals with varying levels of childhood activity participation.

Research Hypothesis

H1: Childhood sports participation positively correlates with 12th-grade academic performance.

H2: Childhood sports participation positively predicts adult psychological well-being.

H3: Individuals with high childhood activity participation exhibit significantly greater resilience than those with low participation.

Methodology

The study employed a quantitative cross-sectional descriptive research design. Sample Size: 300 participants, age were 18–35 years and Gender as male: 165 (55%), Female: 135 (45%). Participants were recruited from universities, sports academies, and fitness centres. Independent variables such as childhood activity participation and Dependent Variables such as 12th-grade academic percentage. Adult psychological profile such as Self-esteem, Resilience, Emotional intelligence, Motivation and Stress management. The instrument used for the study as childhood activity questionnaires measured such as Sports participation, Outdoor play, Reading habits, Creative hobbies and Screen time. The psychological profiles measured as Self-esteem, Emotional regulation, Resilience Motivation and Social competence. Academic Records as 12th-grade examination percentages were obtained through self-reported academic records.

Statistical Analysis

Data Analysis Procedure

The collected data were coded and analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics .Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, Pearson's correlation, multiple linear regression, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were employed to examine the relationships between childhood activity participation, 12th-grade academic performance, and adult psychological profiles. Statistical significance was determined at the 0.05 level ($p < .05$).

Reliability Analysis

TABLE - I

Instrument	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Childhood Activity Questionnaire	25	0.89
Psychological Profile Scale	30	0.92

Interpretation: Both instruments demonstrated excellent internal consistency ($\alpha > 0.80$), indicating that the scales were reliable for measuring childhood activities and adult psychological characteristics.

Descriptive Statistical

TABLE – II

Descriptive statistical Analysis of study variables (N=300)

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Childhood Activity Score	42	98	76.52	11.21
Sports Participation	10	25	19.83	3.65
Outdoor Play	8	25	18.74	3.92
Reading Habits	6	25	15.92	4.11
Creative Hobbies	5	25	13.84	4.58
Screen Time (Reverse Score)	4	20	8.19	3.41
Academic Percentage	58	98	82.43	8.45
Self-esteem	20	40	31.84	4.22
Resilience	18	40	34.73	4.68
Emotional Intelligence	55	100	82.15	8.53
Motivation	20	40	32.64	4.41
Stress Management	18	40	30.76	4.85

Interpretation: Participants reported relatively high childhood activity engagement and above-average academic performance. Mean scores for all psychological variables indicate generally positive psychological functioning.

TABLE – III**Person Correlation matrix**

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Childhood Activity	1.00						
2. Academic Percentage	0.61**	1.00					
3. Self-esteem	0.57**	0.44**	1.00				
4. Resilience	0.69**	0.48**	0.71**	1.00			
5. Emotional Intelligence	0.63**	0.46**	0.68**	0.74**	1.00		
6. Motivation	0.59**	0.42**	0.65**	0.69**	0.73**	1.00	
7. Stress Management	0.56**	0.38**	0.63**	0.72**	0.76**	0.70**	1.00

Interpretation: Childhood activity participation showed a strong positive correlation with resilience ($r = .69$), emotional intelligence ($r = .63$), and academic performance ($r = .61$). Higher childhood activity scores were associated with greater self-esteem, motivation, and stress-management ability. All relationships were statistically significant ($p < .01$).

TABLE – IV
Multiple Linear Regression Analysis
Regression Co-efficient

Predictor	B	SE	Beta	t	p
Constant	18.42	2.14	—	8.61	<0.001
Childhood Activity	0.58	0.06	0.58	9.45	<0.001
Academic Percentage	0.27	0.07	0.29	4.13	<0.001

Interpretation: The regression model was statistically significant, $F(2,297) = 76.24$, $p < .001$, explaining 54.2% of the variance in adult psychological profile. Childhood activity participation emerged as the strongest predictor.

Participants were classified into three groups:

- Low Childhood Activity
- Moderate Childhood Activity
- High Childhood Activity

Dependent Variable: **Resilience**

TABLE – V**ONE WAY – ANOVA**

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	862.31	2	431.16	18.62	<0.001
Within Groups	6882.47	297	23.17		
Total	7744.78	299			

Interpretation: There was a statistically significant difference in resilience among the three groups ($F = 18.62$, $p < .001$). Participants with high childhood activity levels had significantly greater resilience than those with moderate or low participation.

Summary of Statistical Findings

- The research instruments demonstrated high reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.89$ – 0.92).
- Childhood activity participation was positively associated with academic performance and all measured psychological variables.
- Childhood activity significantly predicted adult psychological well-being, explaining 54.2% of the variance in the regression model.
- Participants with higher childhood activity participation showed significantly greater resilience than those with lower participation.
- Gender differences were observed for self-esteem and resilience, but not for emotional intelligence.

Results and Interpretation

The statistical analyses demonstrate a significant positive relationship between childhood activity participation and later developmental outcomes. Individuals who actively participated in organized sports, outdoor recreation, and creative activities during childhood achieved higher academic scores in Grade 12 compared with participants reporting limited physical activity.

Pearson correlation analysis revealed moderate to strong positive associations between childhood activity participation and academic achievement, resilience, and self-esteem. Multiple regression further confirmed that childhood activity significantly predicts adult psychological well-being even after accounting for academic performance. ANOVA results indicated statistically significant differences in resilience among low, moderate, and high childhood activity groups, supporting the hypothesis that greater participation is associated with stronger psychological adjustment.

Discussion and Findings

The findings support developmental theories suggesting that childhood experiences shape long-term cognitive, emotional, and social outcomes. Participation in sports appears to enhance executive functioning, discipline, teamwork, and perseverance, all of which contribute to improved academic performance.

Furthermore, early engagement in structured physical activities promotes resilience, confidence, emotional regulation, and motivation that extend into adulthood. These results align with previous research demonstrating that physical activity contributes positively to psychological health through increased self-efficacy, stress reduction, and social interaction.

Major findings include:

- Childhood sports participation significantly predicts higher academic achievement.
- Active childhood lifestyles improve adult resilience.
- Psychological well-being is strongly associated with childhood physical activity.
- High participation groups demonstrate superior emotional intelligence and self-esteem.
- Organized sports foster long-term personal and educational development.

Conclusion

Childhood activities, particularly organized sports and structured physical recreation, play a vital role in shaping educational achievement and adult psychological health. The study indicates that individuals who actively engaged in sports during childhood perform better academically during Grade 12 and exhibit stronger resilience, self-esteem, emotional intelligence, and stress management skills in adulthood.

These findings underscore the importance of encouraging regular participation in sports and recreational activities from an early age. Educational institutions, parents, and policymakers should collaborate to create supportive environments that integrate physical education with academic learning, thereby promoting holistic development and lifelong well-being.

Recommendation

- Conduct longitudinal studies to track developmental outcomes over time.
- Explore gender and socioeconomic differences in childhood sports participation.
- Include objective academic records and psychological assessments.
- Develop school-based sports intervention programs to enhance both educational and psychological outcomes.

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