

Role of School-Based Sports Activities in Promoting Holistic Development Among Elementary Learners in Zone Iii, Zambales

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ABSTRACT

School-based sports activities have become a vital component in promoting the holistic development of learners by enhancing their physical, social, emotional, and academic growth. This study aimed to determine teachers' perceptions of the role of school-based sports activities in promoting the holistic development of elementary learners in Zone III, Division of Zambales. The study is significant as it provides practical and academic insights that may guide the improvement of sports program implementation, particularly in public elementary schools with limited resources.

A descriptive research design was utilized, involving 105 public elementary school teachers selected through simple random sampling. Data were gathered using a validated researcher-made questionnaire and were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, and analysis of variance.

The findings revealed that teachers perceived school-based sports activities as highly contributory to learners' holistic development, particularly in improving physical fitness, enhancing social interaction, strengthening emotional well-being, developing discipline and values, and increasing academic motivation. However, several challenges were identified, including inadequate facilities and equipment, lack of training and coaching support, insufficient time allocation, low learner participation, and limited parental and community involvement.

The study concludes that school-based sports activities significantly support the holistic development of learners but are constrained by resource and implementation-related challenges. This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing localized evidence from Zone III, Division of Zambales, addressing the gap in context-specific research. The findings imply the need for strengthened institutional support, enhanced teacher training, improved resource allocation, and increased stakeholder collaboration to ensure effective implementation of sports programs in schools.

Keywords: school-based sports, holistic development, descriptive research, elementary learners, Zambales

INTRODUCTION

School-based sports activities in promoting holistic development among elementary learners have become an essential focus in contemporary education. These activities are widely recognized for their role in enhancing not only physical fitness but also social competence, emotional well-being, discipline, and academic motivation. Educational systems across the globe increasingly integrate sports into school programs as a means of fostering well-rounded learner development.

In the Philippine educational context, the Department of Education actively promotes sports through programs such as intramurals and inter-school competitions. These initiatives aim to develop learners' physical abilities while instilling values such as teamwork, perseverance, and sportsmanship. However, despite these efforts, disparities in implementation remain evident, particularly in rural areas where resources, facilities, and support systems are limited. In Zone III, Division of Zambales, variations in the availability and effectiveness of school-based sports programs highlight the need for a more localized investigation into their role and impact.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated the positive impact of school-based sports activities on learners' holistic development. According to Bailey (2025), participation in sports fosters physical fitness, resilience, and leadership skills among students. Similarly, Sharma (2023) found that regular engagement in physical activities improves cognitive performance and reduces stress levels, thereby enhancing academic outcomes.

In terms of social development, Holt and Neely (2021) emphasized that sports participation promotes teamwork, communication, and interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, studies by Santos and Reyes (2025) revealed that learners involved in sports exhibit higher levels of academic motivation and classroom engagement. These findings suggest that sports serve as a multidimensional tool for learner development. Despite these documented benefits, several challenges persist. Garcia and De Leon (2023) identified issues such as inadequate facilities, lack of equipment, and insufficient training for teachers as major barriers to effective sports program implementation. Similarly, Martinez (2022) highlighted the limited capacity of teachers to facilitate sports activities due to a lack of professional development opportunities.

While existing literature provides substantial evidence on the benefits of sports participation, there remains a gap in localized studies that examine teachers' perceptions and the specific challenges encountered in implementing school-based sports programs in rural Philippine settings. This gap underscores the need for the present study.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework/Paradigm of the Study

This study is anchored on several theoretical perspectives that explain the role of sports in holistic learner development. Holistic Development Theory emphasizes the integration of physical, emotional, social, and cognitive aspects of growth. Ecological Systems Theory highlights the influence of environmental factors, such as school and community, on learner development.

Additionally, Self-Determination Theory explains how sports participation enhances intrinsic motivation through autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Social Learning Theory further supports the idea that learners acquire behaviors, values, and skills through observation and interaction within sports activities. These theories collectively provide a framework for understanding how school-based sports activities contribute to the overall development of learners.

Significance of the Study

This study provides valuable insights into the role of school-based sports activities in promoting holistic development among elementary learners. The findings will benefit school administrators by informing policy and program improvements related to sports implementation.

Teachers will gain a better understanding of how to effectively integrate sports into their teaching practices, while learners will benefit from improved program delivery that supports their overall

development. Parents and community stakeholders may also use the findings to strengthen their involvement in school sports programs.

Furthermore, the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing localized evidence from Zone III, Division of Zambales. As a researcher, this study enhances professional competence and provides a foundation for future research in the field of education and sports development.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to examine the role of school-based sports activities in promoting the holistic development of elementary learners in Zone III, Division of Zambales.

Specifically, it seeks to:

- To determine the profile of the teacher-respondents in terms of age, sex, educational attainment, teaching experience, and training related to sports
- To evaluate the role of school-based sports activities in promoting holistic development in terms of:
 - Physical development
 - Social and interpersonal skills
 - Emotional well-being
 - Discipline and values formation
 - Academic motivation
- To investigate the challenges encountered by teachers in implementing school-based sports activities
- To determine if there are significant differences in perceptions when grouped according to profile variables
- To propose an action plan to strengthen the implementation of school-based sports programs

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

This study utilized a quantitative descriptive research design to examine teachers' perceptions of the role of school-based sports activities in promoting the holistic development of elementary learners. The variables of the study included teachers' profile characteristics as independent variables and their perceptions of the role of sports activities and challenges encountered as dependent variables. The design allowed the collection of measurable data to describe existing conditions and determine relationships among variables without manipulation.

Sample/Population of the Study

The target population of the study consisted of public elementary school teachers in Zone III, Division of Zambales. A total of 105 teachers were selected as respondents using simple random sampling to ensure representativeness and minimize selection bias.

The participants varied in terms of age, sex, educational attainment, teaching experience, and training related to sports. Inclusion criteria required that respondents were currently employed as public elementary school teachers within the identified schools and were involved in school-based activities. Teachers who were on leave or not actively teaching during the data collection period were excluded from the study.

Data Gathering Tools

The primary data-gathering tool used in the study was a researcher-made questionnaire. The instrument was structured into three main parts:

- Part I: Profile of the respondents (age, sex, educational attainment, teaching experience, and sports-related training)

- Part II: Perceptions of teachers on the role of school-based sports activities in promoting holistic development in terms of physical, social, emotional, discipline, and academic motivation
- Part III: Challenges encountered in the implementation of school-based sports activities

To ensure content validity, the instrument was reviewed and validated by experts in education and research. Necessary revisions were made based on their recommendations. Reliability testing was conducted to ensure internal consistency of the instrument prior to its administration.

Data Gathering Procedures

Prior to data collection, formal permission was secured from the Schools Division Office of Zambales and from the respective school heads of the selected schools. Coordination with school administrators was conducted to facilitate smooth data collection.

The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents through both printed copies and online platforms. Clear instructions were provided to guide the respondents in answering the questionnaire accurately. The respondents were given sufficient time to complete the instrument.

After completion, the questionnaires were retrieved and checked for completeness and consistency. The data collection process was conducted within a specified period to ensure efficiency and accuracy in gathering responses.

Treatment of Data

The data collected were systematically organized, encoded, and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. The following statistical treatments were applied:

- **Frequency and Percentage** were used to describe the profile of the respondents
- **Mean** was used to determine the level of teachers' perceptions regarding the role of school-based sports activities
- **Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)** was employed to determine significant differences in perceptions and challenges when grouped according to profile variables

All statistical tests were conducted at a 0.05 level of significance to determine the reliability of the results.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were strictly observed throughout the conduct of the study. Participation of respondents was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was obtained prior to data collection. The anonymity of the respondents was ensured by not requiring any identifying personal information in the questionnaire.

Confidentiality of the data was maintained at all times, and the information collected was used solely for academic and research purposes. Non-discriminatory selection of participants was observed by applying uniform inclusion criteria.

Risk management measures were considered minimal, as the study involved only survey responses; however, respondents were assured that they could withdraw from participation at any time without any consequence.

The findings of the study will be disseminated to the beneficiaries, including school administrators, teachers, and educational stakeholders, to support the improvement of school-based sports programs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the study following the sequence of the stated objectives. The results are presented using tables and are discussed based on the most significant trends and patterns observed. Each table is introduced and interpreted to highlight key findings related to the role of school-based sports

activities in promoting the holistic development of elementary learners, as well as the challenges encountered by teachers.

Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents according to their profile variables.

Table 1
Distribution of respondents according to profile variables

Profile Variables		Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	27	25.70
	Female	78	74.30
Total		105	100.00
Age (Years) Mean = 39.74 or 40 years old	60 & Above	2	1.90
	50 - 59	17	16.20
	40 - 49	30	28.60
	30 - 39	41	39.00
	20 - 29	15	14.30
Total		105	100.00

Note. Data are based on survey responses.

Note. The majority of the respondents are female (74.30%) and belong to the 30–39 age group. The mean age is 39.74 years (approximately 40 years old).

The data indicate that the majority of the respondents were female and belonged to the 31–40 age group. This suggests that the teaching workforce in the selected schools is predominantly composed of mid-career educators, which may influence perceptions regarding school-based sports activities.

Role of School-Based Sports Activities in Promoting Holistic Development

Table 2 presents the summary of teachers’ perceptions regarding the role of school-based sports activities in promoting holistic development.

Table 2
Level of teachers’ perceptions on the role of school-based sports activities

Dimensions	Overall Mean	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Equivalent	Rank
1 Physical Development	3.68		Strongly Agree	3.5
2 Social and Interpersonal Skills	3.70		Strongly Agree	2
3 Emotional Well-being	3.68		Strongly Agree	3.5
4 Discipline and Values Formation	3.71		Strongly Agree	1
5 Academic Motivation	3.64		Strongly Agree	5
Grand Mean	3.68		Strongly Agree	

Note. Rankings are based on weighted mean scores.

As reflected in Table 2, all indicators were interpreted as “Strongly Agree,” with Discipline and Values Formation obtaining the highest mean. This indicates that teachers perceive school-based sports activities as most effective in developing discipline and values among learners. Social and Interpersonal Skills ranked second, while Physical Development and Emotional Well-being shared the third rank with equal means (tied). Academic Motivation obtained the lowest mean but was still interpreted as “Strongly Agree.”

Overall, the findings show that teachers strongly agree that school-based sports activities contribute to the holistic development of learners.

Challenges Encountered in Implementation

Table 3 presents the challenges encountered by teachers in implementing school-based sports activities.

Table 3
Challenges encountered in school-based sports activities implementation

Dimensions		Overall Mean	Weighted	Descriptive Equivalent	Rank
1	Limited Facilities and Equipment	3.04		Agree	4
2	Lack of Training and Coaching Support	3.14		Agree	3
3	Insufficient Time Allocation	3.23		Agree	1
4	Low Participation of Learners	3.10		Agree	2
5	Limited Parental and Community Support	2.92		Agree	5
Grand Mean		3.09		Agree	

Note. Based on weighted mean and ranking. Interpretation scale is consistent with Table 2.

The findings reveal that insufficient time allocation was the most pressing challenge, followed by low participation of learners and lack of training and coaching support. These results indicate that despite the recognized benefits of sports activities, implementation is hindered by resource and capacity limitations. This supports earlier findings that inadequate infrastructure and teacher preparedness are major barriers in school sports programs.

Significant Difference in Perceptions

The results of the analysis of variance across the different indicators of school-based sports activities reveal that significant differences are consistently observed in terms of years of teaching experience and grade level taught. These variables show significant effects across most dimensions, indicating that teachers’ perceptions are influenced by their length of service and instructional level. On the other hand, sex, age, educational attainment, and seminars and trainings related to sports generally do not show significant differences in teachers’ perceptions across the dimensions. This implies that practical teaching experience and classroom context play a more important role in shaping teachers’ views on school-based sports activities compared to demographic and formal qualification factors

Discussion of Findings

Overall, the findings confirm that school-based sports activities play a significant role in promoting the holistic development of learners. Teachers recognize their value in enhancing physical fitness, social rel-

ationships, emotional stability, discipline, and academic motivation.

However, the study also highlights critical implementation challenges, particularly in terms of facilities, training, and stakeholder support. These limitations suggest that while the perceived benefits are high, actual program effectiveness may be constrained by external factors.

Interestingly, differences in perceptions based on age and experience indicate that exposure to teaching and sports programs may shape attitudes toward their importance. This suggests the need for continuous professional development and training for teachers.

Some limitations of the study include reliance on self-reported data and the focus on a specific geographic area, which may limit generalizability. Nevertheless, the results provide valuable insights into improving school-based sports programs in similar contexts.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the research questions on the role of school-based sports activities in promoting holistic development of elementary learners and the challenges encountered by teachers have been adequately answered. The results show that teachers strongly agree that school-based sports activities significantly contribute to learners' holistic development, particularly in developing discipline and values formation, social and interpersonal skills, physical development, and emotional well-being, while academic motivation was perceived as less strongly influenced. This indicates that the hypothesis on the positive contribution of school-based sports activities to holistic learner development is strengthened.

However, the study also revealed that the implementation of school-based sports activities is affected by several challenges, with insufficient time allocation as the most pressing concern, followed by low learner participation, lack of training and coaching support, and limited facilities and equipment. These findings confirm that although sports programs are highly valued, their effective implementation is constrained by structural and resource-related limitations.

In terms of differences in perception, the results showed that teachers' responses vary significantly depending on certain profile variables such as age, teaching experience, educational attainment, and grade level taught in specific dimensions of both the role of sports activities and the challenges encountered. This implies that teacher experience and context influence how they perceive both the benefits and difficulties of implementing school-based sports programs.

In response to these findings, it is recommended that schools strengthen structured and well-integrated sports programs to maximize their contribution to learners' holistic development. Time management strategies and balanced academic-sports scheduling should be implemented to address the issue of insufficient time allocation. Schools should also improve access to training and coaching support for teachers to enhance program delivery and learner engagement.

Furthermore, upgrading sports facilities and equipment through partnerships with Local Government Units and other stakeholders is strongly encouraged to address resource limitations. Programs that promote learner participation and engagement should also be enhanced through motivation strategies, inclusive activities, and recognition systems. Continuous professional development for teachers is likewise recommended to improve their capacity in handling sports-based activities effectively.

Finally, strengthening collaboration among schools, parents, and the community is essential to ensure sustained support for school-based sports programs. The proposed action plan for enhancing school-based sports activities in promoting holistic learner development in Zone III, Division of Zambales is

recommended for review and possible implementation, while future studies may further explore additional variables and broader contexts.

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