

**Academic Engagement of the Students and its Effects upon  
University Sport; a Comparative Study of Public and Private Sector  
Universities of KP, Pakistan**

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**Abstract**

*The main objectives of the study were, to investigate the existing of academic engagement of the students as factor influencing sports both in public and in private sector universities of KP, Pakistan, b) to examine the effect of academic engagement of the students influencing organized sport program at public and private universities of KP, Pakistan. c) to determine the gender wise difference among respondents regarding the academic engagement of the students influencing organized sport program at public and private Universities of KP, Pakistan. Five main hypotheses were formulated and were tested through linear regression and t-test. The population of the study was comprised all male, female athletes and director sports of both public and private sector universities of KP, Pakistan. A sample of 702 was selected from the whole population through proportionate random sampling techniques. The results of the study revealed that academic engagement of the athletes is exist as factor and significantly affects the performance and participation level of the athletes.*

**Key words:** academic engagement, Athletes, sports, public, private, universities, KP, Pakistan.

**Introduction**

According to Rial, Varela, and Real (2010) that sport activities have the capability to be considered as imperative constituent of education specially at university level. Aquilina (2013) shows that in the last twenty years of the Olympic Games, many of the athletes were from the universities and portrays the image of their countries in Sport competition. The author further indicates that from Barcelona Olympics 1992 to 2012, Olympics 61% of the athletes participated from universities and in 2012 (London Olympics) participation of the student's athlete in pentathlon event was 100% respectively. Claudia (2013) disclosed that unsupportive environment, extreme involvement in

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academic activities, lack of time, financial barriers, and poor attitude of family leads to psychological disturbance and provides huge space for the failure and low performance in the field sport in different stages i.e. initiative stage, developmental stage, mastery and maintenance stage. According to Wylleman, Knop, Verdet, and Cecič-Erpič (2007) lack of enjoyment, serious injury and dominance of academics are among the responsible factors influencing sport. White (1998) argued that psychological weakness, academic burden and lack of delight affect the participation of athletes in sport activities.

### *Statement of the Problem*

The basic philosophy behind the selection of this particular study was, to why the performance level of the Pakistani athletes in sport activities is not up to the mark like other countries at international level and to why our universities are failed to produce such athletes to perform better at national and international level sport competitions. Keeping in view the above philosophy an effort initiated by the researcher to investigate the role of academic engagement of the university students and its effect upon their sport participation both in public and in private sector universities of KP, Pakistan.

### *Objectives of the Study*

1. To investigate the existing of academic engagement of the students as factor influencing sports both public and private sector universities of KP, Pakistan.
2. To examine the effect of academic engagement of the students influencing organized sport program at public and private universities of KP, Pakistan.
3. To determine the gender wise difference among respondents regarding the academic engagement of the students influencing organized sport program at public and private Universities of KP, Pakistan.

### *Hypotheses of the Study*

Following hypotheses were formulated for study.

1. Academic engagement of the students is exist as factor influencing sports both in public and in private sector universities of KP, Pakistan.

2. There is a significant effect of academic engagement factor upon university sport as perceived by the athletes and director sport of public sector universities of KP, Pakistan.
3. There is a significant effect of academic engagement factor upon university sport as perceived by the athletes and director sport of Private sector universities of KP, Pakistan.
4. There no significant difference between the perception of public and private sector universities respondents regarding the effect of academic engagement of the students upon university sport in KP, Pakistan.
5. There is no Gender wise significant difference regarding the effect of academic engagement of the students upon university sport as perceived by the male and female respondents of both public and private sector universities of KP, Pakistan.

### **Literature Review**

Sport activities help to handle the stress condition among the students, and provide them a chance of added advantages, to boost their social execution in the society and their academic achievements (Veronesi & Gunderman, 2012). Chuan, Yusof, and Shah (2012) illustrated that in western countries, equal opportunity is provided to the students for sport and academics in educational institutions. According to Muscalu and Dumitrascu (2014) that in German university students follow sports as optional course for their mental and social development. Pasli and Harbalioglu (2014) carried out that most of the students do not participate in sport and recreational activities in education institutions because of their burden of academic work. Pangrazi and Beighle (2014) suggested that reward should be given to the students in the shape of sport and physical activities, fun, enjoyment and should not to use physical activities as a mode of punishment. Clemes and Biddle (2013) were of the opinion that environment of the educational institutions may affect sport activities. Huberty, Dinkel, Coleman, Beighle, and Apenteng (2012) stated that opportunities should be provide to the students for sport participation to improve their physical and mental abilities. Uijtdewilligen et al. (2014) and Zheng and An (2015) the poor provision of sport services in the educational organization limits the sport participation among the students.

*Annual System of Examination and Sport Participation*

According to Miller, Ogilvie, and Branch (2008) students feel hesitant to participate in sport because they supposed that their academics grade will get hampered. Al-Ansari et al. (2016) illustrate that due to preparation of academic examination in educational institutions, 50% of the students have no opportunity to participate in sport activities. Chen et al. (2017) also were of the view that attainment of educational objectives is the factors that restrict the interest level of the students. Because the students has spent large quantity of time to achieve their educational goals and have no free time to participate in sport event. Chuan et al. (2012) states that in their research by skillful execution of time, proper schedule of the classes in the universities and attractive incentives can stimulate the university's athletes to achieve a better academic record. Wilson (2009) revealed that balanced co-curricular activities with academic learning process help to get mindful self-respect, boost up the spirit of good student-ship, and also improve the quality of attachment with public in a constructive manners.

*Teachers and Parents focus upon Academics more than Sport*

Reeves (2008) illustrated that parents and teachers might feel fright, that involvement of their children in sport may fall their attention from their academics targeted goal. Huberty et al. (2012) recommended that educational institutions should considered the engagement of parents in sport activities to encourage their children to be active. Chuan et al. (2012) illustrate that, if parents and teachers provide positive support to the student-athletes, they can achieve the destination in the shape of good academics. Wetton, Radley, Jones, and Pearce (2013) focused in their research paper that four barriers are prominent restricting the sport participation. One of them is the role of the teacher that restricts sport participation of the student in educational institutions particularly in the girl student. Wetton et al. (2013) recommended that participation of the students in sport activities improve both their health and excellence of life. Atwater (2010) indicated that some of the faculty members possess attitudes that student-athletes are poor-standard and not competent to secure satisfactory grad in the academics.

*Population of the Study*

The population of this particular study was the entire directors' sport and athletes in both public and private sector universities of K.P.

*Description of population as a whole of public and private universities*

S # No	Universities	N	Male	Female	Total	Director sport
1	Public Sector Universities	21	2040	411	2451	21
2	Private Sector Universities	10	567	287	698	10
Total		31	2607	698	3305	31
Grand Total			3305+31= 3336			

*Sample size and Sampling Technique*

The researcher followed L. R. Gay suggestion and took 20% sample from both public and private sector universities through proportionate random sampling technique.

*A detailed table of sample selection*

#	University	Male	20% Male	Female	20% Female	Total M/F athletes	Total 20% M/F Athletes	Director Sport
1	Public	2040	410	411	84	2451	494	21
2	Private	567	119	287	58	854	177	10
Total		2607	529	698	142	3305	671	31
Grand Total of 20% sample both from public and private sector universities			671+31= 702					

**Instrumentation**

The Likert type questionnaire was used for purpose of data collection having five options from strongly agree to strongly disagree having score of 5 to 1 respectively.

*Data analysis*

For the purpose of data analyses, sample linear regression and t-test to check the formulated hypotheses.

**Results of the Study**

*Academic engagement of the students is exist as factor influencing sports both in public and in private sector universities of KP, Pakistan.*

Testing Variables	N	Mean	S.D	Mini:	Maxi:	df	$\chi^2$	Asymp. Sig.
AE	573	4.11	.59	1.42	5.00	34	469.61	.000

The table illustrated that significantly the academic engagement ( $M= 4.11$ ,  $SD= .59$ ,  $n= 573$ ) of the students is exist as a factor influencing sport both in public and in private sector universities of KP, Pakistan  $\chi^2 (34) = 469.61$ , Asymp. Sig.= .000 <  $\alpha = .05$ . Hence the above mentioned hypothesis tested with chi-square test and the researcher concluded that the hypothesis is hereby accepted.

*There is a significant effect of academic engagement factor upon university sport as perceived by the athletes and director sport of public and private sector universities of KP, Pakistan.*

Predictor	Criterion	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	t	B	Sig.
academic Engagement of Athletes	University Sports	.706	.499	.498	568.7	23.85	.552	.000

The above table shows the results of simple linear regression regarding the effect of academic engagement upon organized sports both in public and in private sector universities of KP, Pakistan. The influence of academic engagement upon university sports was .499 (50%) in KP, Pakistan. The academic engagement significantly predicted university sports  $\beta = .552$ ,  $t (572) = 23.85$ , Sig.= .000 <  $\alpha = .01$ . Academic engagement also explained a significant proportion of variance in university sports  $f(1,571) = 568.7$ , Sig.= .000 <  $\alpha = .01$ . The table also indicates that if one unit increase in academic achievement (predictor) will cause of .552 unit increase in university sports (Criterion). Hence the hypothesis is hereby accepted.

*There is a significant effect of academic engagement factor upon university sport as perceived by the athletes and director sport of Public sector universities of KP, Pakistan.*

Predictor	Criterion	R	R Square	F	t	$\beta$	Sig.
Academic engagement	Organized university Sports	.631	.398	283.471	16.837	.478	.000

The above table shows the results of simple linear regression regarding the effect of academic engagement upon public sector university sports. The influence of academic engagement upon public university sports was .398 (40%) in KP, Pakistan. The academic engagement significantly predicted public university sports  $\beta = .478$ ,  $t = 16.837$ ,  $\text{Sig.} = .000 < \alpha = .01$ . Academic engagement also explained a significant proportion of variance in public university sports  $f = 283.471$ ,  $\text{Sig.} = .000 < \alpha = .01$ . The table also indicates that if one unit increase in academic achievement (predictor) will cause of 0.478 unit increase in public sector university sports (Criterion). Hence the hypothesis is hereby accepted.

*There is a significant effect of academic engagement factor upon university sport as perceived by the athletes and director sport of Private sector universities of KP, Pakistan.*

Predictor	Criterion	R	R Square	F	t	$\beta$	Sig.
Academic engagement	Organized university Sports	.893	.798	623.688	24.974	.698	.000

The above table demonstrates the results of simple linear regression regarding the effect of academic engagement upon private sector university sports. The influence of academic engagement upon private university sports was .798 (80%) in KP, Pakistan. The academic engagement significantly predicted private sector university sports  $\beta = .698$ ,  $t = 24.974$ ,  $\text{Sig.} = .000 < \alpha = .01$ . Academic engagement also explained a significant proportion of variance in private sector university sports  $f = 623.688$ ,  $\text{Sig.} = .000 < \alpha = .01$ . The table also indicates that if one unit increase in academic achievement (predictor) will cause of .698 unit increase in private sector university sports (Criterion). Hence the hypothesis is hereby accepted.

*There no significant difference between the perception of public and private sector universities respondents regarding the effect of academic engagement of the students upon university sport in KP, Pakistan.*

Testing Variable	University type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig.
Academic Engagement of Athletes	Public	413	4.0866	.57623	-1.239	571	.216
	Private	160	4.1547	.62563			

The above Table proves the results of independent sample t-test regarding the the effect of academic engagement upon organized sports in public and private sector universities of KP, Pakistan. The table indicates that public ( $M= 4.08$ ,  $SD= .576$ ,  $n= 413$ ) and private ( $M= 4.15$ ,  $SD= .625$ ,  $n= 160$ ) sector universities has similar significant effect of academic engagement upon university sports  $t(571)= -1.239$ ,  $Sig.= .216 > a= .05$ . Hence the hypothesis is hereby accepted.

*There is no Gender wise significant difference regarding the effect of academic engagement of the students upon university sport as perceived by the male and female respondents of both public and private sector universities of KP, Pakistan.*

Testing Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig.
academic Engagement of Athletes	Male	454	4.1120	.59575	.538	570	.591
	Female	118	4.0791	.57466			

The above Table shows the result of independent sample t-test regarding the effect of academic engagement upon organized sports in male and female. The researcher concluded that male ( $M= 4.11$ ,  $SD= .595$ ,  $n= 454$ ) and female ( $M= 4.07$ ,  $SD= .574$ ,  $n= 118$ ) respondents has similar response and no significance difference was found regarding the effect of academic engagement upon university sports  $t(570)= .538$ ,  $Sig.= .591 > a= .05$ . Hence the hypothesis is hereby accepted.

### *Findings and discussion*

In present study, it was found that academic engagement of the students is exist as influential factor and significantly affect sports both in public and private sector universities of KP, Pakistan. the results of Meyer (1990); Parham (1993) inline with the present results of the current study. Similarly the current research study result support the results Cantor and Prentice (1996). Engagements in sport activities and



less to academic is associated with poor academic grade point average in an educational institution (Simons, Van Rheenen, & Covington, 1999).

### *Conclusion*

On the bases of results, in current study the researcher concluded that academic engagement of the athletes is significantly exist in the universities of KP, Pakistan both in public and in private sector as factor. It was also finalized that the academic engagement of the athletes significantly affects sport participation of the athletes both in public and in private sector universities of KP, Pakistan. The result of the study indicates that academic engagement of the athletes at university level is among the responsible factors influencing sports and also be responsible for low representation of the athletes at national and international sports competitions.

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