The study investigated motivational factors that affect pupil participation in organised sport in Shinyalu Division of Kakamega District. The research examined the most important factors in youth sport, which included interest in sport, perceptions of success in sport and perceptions of failure in sport. Data were collected by survey, which was conducted in nine schools in Shinyalu Division of Kakamega District. The study sample consisted of 20 pupils from each school, five boys and five girls from class 5 and also five boys and five girls from class 6. Three schools from Shinyalu Division were used for pilot study, but did not feature in the main study. Pupils responded to a questionnaire that focused on three salient factors in children's sports, that is; interest in sport, success in sport and failure in sport. The questionnaire, with a three point Likert scale required pupils to tick either “Agree”, “Not sure” or “Disagree”. Data obtained from the research instrument were analysed using frequencies, percentages and Chi-square. Findings of the study showed that interest of pupils in sport is high and by more training, they will do well in sports. The core reason for participating in sports was identified as learning the sport skills while winning was not a setback to participation. The main hinderances to participation were physiological factors and restrictions during playtime. Appropriate recommendations were made based on the findings of this study.

Introduction

The need for children to play cannot be downplayed. This is because play is very important to the physical, affective and cognitive development of children (Corbin, 1987; Hittinger, 1992; Piaget, 1954). Many educationists have singled out play as one of the key elements in the learning of children. The ideas of learning through discovery, learning by doing and learning through movement have been proclaimed throughout the ages by educators like Socrates, Locke, Rousseau and Dewey (Bucher & Wuest, 1995).

Despite all these positive aspects of sport, children still drop out of sport due to varied reasons. They include conflict of interest (lack of playing time, little skill development, lack of fun, injuries sustained during play and overemphasis on winning by teachers/parents (Francois, 1997; Weinberg, 1981). Goodway and Rudisill (1997) have also reported that dropping out could be due to lack of competence in motor skills. This is the dimension taken by the current study. Understanding competence motivational factors towards participation in sport is important to help give direction on how and why participation towards sports is changing. This is because sport participation is a psychological factor and always dynamic.

Hypotheses of the Study

The purpose of the study was to establish competence motivational factors that affect children's participation in organised sport. The major research question was; Does competence motivation affect children's participation in organised sport. From this question, it was also hypothesized that; There is no significant difference between responses of boys and girls on participation in organised sport. From the above main hypothesis, the following three
sub-hypotheses based on the research questions were derived;  

a) There will be no significant differences between primary school boys and girls regarding the extent to which their interests affects participation in organized sport.

b) There will be no significant difference between primary school boys and girls concerning the extent to which their success affects participation in organized sport.

c) There will be no significant difference between primary school boys and girls concerning the extent to which their failure affects participation in organized sport.

Review of Related Literature

Different authors have stated various reasons why children engage in sport, play and physical exercise. Some of these reasons are, having fun (Birch & Veroff, 1966; Duda, 1992). Improving on skills and learning new skills (Ewing, 1981; Goodway & Rudisill, 1987) and making new friends (Howe, 1995, Weinberg, 1981). Additionally, Rink (1993) identified excitement of competition and success or winning, while Flavel (1966) noted exercising or becoming fit as the other factors. Studies on participation have also been observed from a motivational point of view. Harter (1978, 1981) based her studies on competence motivation in sports. Competence motivation has been viewed as a multidimensional construct that influenced both the initiation of mastery attempts in particular achievement domains and the development of characteristic achievement behaviours such as perceived competence, perceptions of performance control and effect. These factors turn serve to maintain increase or decrease competence motivation or influence the development of a primarily intrinsically oriented person.

Methodology

Design of The Study

The study sought to investigate motivation factors that affect pupil's participation in organised sport. A descriptive survey design was used (Borg & Gall, 1983; Hinton 1995) because it attempts to describe what was/is in a social system without manipulating the variables under study.

Population Sample and Sampling Techniques

The target population for the study was primary school pupils from Shinyalu Division of Kakamega District, Kenya (class 5 and 6 pupils). Stratified simple random sampling was used in sampling. Each class represented strata, from which the respondents were picked randomly. A sample of nine schools from 59 was picked for the study, each school producing 10 boys and 10 girls.

Instrument of the Study

The research instrument used was direct contact questionnaire, which was administered to the pupils and picked on the spot after completion. Direct contact questionnaire was found necessary as it facilitates rapport with the respondent clarify points and encourage the respondent to answer all the items (Clark & Clark, 1984). The questionnaire sought information pertaining
general and personal information, interest in sports, success in sports and failure in sports. The questions were completed on a 3 point Likert scale where the pupils either “Agreed”, “Were not sure” or “Disagreed”. Expert judgement was used to validate the instrument (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996) during framing of the questionnaire. Spearman’s Brown Prophecy formula (Scott & French, 1959) was used to assess the validity of the study, where a coefficient correlation of 0.80 were obtained during the pilot study.

Procedure for Data Collection and Analysis
After obtaining a research permit, the researcher with the help of a research assistant collected data from the sampled schools. All the sampled 180 pupils successfully completed the questionnaires. Analysis of data was done using frequencies, percentages, means and chi-square ($\chi^2$) test of independence to test the hypothesis. Analysis was done with the level of significance as 0.05, degree of freedom as 2, and critical value of 5.99.

Results
From the personal and general information, it was found that the average age for boys is 12.9 years and for girls is 13.0 years. Generally, the average age of the whole population was 12.9 years. This shows that the age under study comprise of adolescent children. At this stage, children have mastered fundamental motor skills (Hottinger, 1992) and are capable of internalizing most of the skills being learned (Goodway & Rudisill, 1997).

The percentage of pupils with interest in sports was high on the following items: participating in sports (66.9%), improve sport skills (70.6%); being part of the school team (75%); train to be selected in the school team (81.7%) and aiming to be selected in the secondary school team (80.6%). However, dropping out of school team had a lower percentage (39.5%). It may be observed that interest of children in sports is higher and this could be because of the success they have experienced in their sporting activities. This is in accordance with a study’s theoretical predictions.

The chi-square value was only significant in one out of the six components concerning improvement of sport skills and making up of the school team. This was concerning selection in the school team at secondary school, where many boys (87.8%) agreed compared to girls (73.3%). Boys at this age are greatly influenced by their peers and will want to ‘show off’ by engaging in sport, while seeking for identification (Bucher, 1982). Therefore, there was no significant difference between primary school boys and girls regarding the extent to which their interests affect participation in organized sport.

Another component of the study was success in sports, where pupils’ views on performance in sports were positive. Many pupils (86.1%) aim to be the best in school sports, while 65.6% aim to be on the first line up of the school team as 88.3% agreed to more training to better their performance. Concerning perceptions towards
watching sports competitions, the pupils agreed to hosting and watching sports competitions. The reasons given by pupils for participating in school sports includes having fun (74.5%), play with friends (75.6%), teachers' instructions (75.6%) competition (73.9%) and improve on talent (78.3%). Few agreed on career in sports (61.7%). These factors are similar to those availed by Orlick's (1974) study on Canadian children.

The chi-square values obtained were significant on two questions; these are, aiming to be the best in school sports (6.024) and being on the first line-up of the school team always (7.134) (critical value of 5.99). Majority of girls who responded positively on these two questions was high (92.2% and 72.2%) compared to boys (80% and 58.9%) respectively. In class 5 and 6, girls already are capable of making up the school team, but at adolescence age (class 7 and 8) they 'shy off' from public because of the physiological changes they are experiencing (Bucher, 1982; Hottinger, 1992). On the other hand, the opposite is true with the boys. Thus, there was a significant difference on responses of boys and girls on the above two items.

As concerns failure in sports, many pupils agreed that sports is the most popular co-curricular activities (85.6%) as opposed to clubs (61.7%) and community work (73.9%). About spending break time while in school, pupils agreed to go for games (85.6%) unlike be with friends (72.8%) or have private studies (68.3%). The pupils also responded on where to represent the school in sports competition where they agreed more on representing the school anywhere but not to miss studies (61.1%). This was higher than representing the school in sports away from the school and miss studies. Therefore, pupils' studies should be considered when sport is organised.

The pupils also agreed more to having evening practice (80.6%) unlike morning practice (59.4%). This is due to the nature of school which are day schools and do not have changing room facilities. Timetabling is therefore a key issue in school sports as mentioned by Mullins (1998).

As concerns setbacks to participation in school sports, injuries (62.2%), get tired (63.9%) and feel hungry (47.7%) were the main factors. Others like never win, have no partners, feel time wasting, fighting, the captain being so hard and the teacher being very strict had few pupils agreeing as setbacks to participating in school sports.

Pupils responses were varied by gender on two items never win and get tired. Many girls thought boys were either not sure or disagreed on the two items. Many studies have shown that girls usually participate in sports for other reasons not mainly winning (Bucher, 1982). Also, studies have shown that getting tired while participating in sports is a reason raised mainly by boys than girls for attrition from sports (Orlick, 1974). There was a significant difference based on gender on these two aspects.
It can be concluded that interest of children is high because of the success level they experience. Factors that attract children in sports like play with friends, improve on skills and talent should be enhanced. However, those that hinder participation like hunger, injuries and exhaustion should be controlled to avoid withdrawal from sports. It is recommended that children be involved in deciding the sports activities for the school. The learning environment for the children should be checked so that setbacks to participation are controlled. There is also need to identify ways through which improved sports skills may be achieved. Studies should also be carried out so that the hindering factors in sports are identified and corrected before they limit youth participation in sports.

References


