

EFFECT OF SOCIAL STATUS AND SEX ON LEVELS OF ASPIRATION IN MOTOR PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

The study was carried out primarily to investigate into the effect of social Class on the level of Aspiration of boys and girls of ages 10 and 11 years. As there were two independent variables at two levels each, and a dependent variable, the 2 x 2 factorial design was used. The data collected from the 180 subjects were analyzed using the 2 - way ANOVA.

The result of the study showed that social class did not significantly affect subjects' level of Aspiration in the motor activity. The result does not suggest an interaction of the two independent variables of the study. It was concluded upon therefore, that level of Aspiration could be determined by other factors like sex, personality disposition, reinforcement etc., all of which find support in related research findings.

INTRODUCTION

The desire to develop sports in developing countries through scientific research findings should be upper most, if African countries are to continue to maintain the momentum of sports performance improvement. The constant search for the factors that affect performance of sportsmen and women is clearly manifested in the numerous researches into physiological, psychological and sociological factors to mention a few, that enhance performance. All over the world, sports performance has improved tremendously both in methods of preparation, style and teaching of techniques.

It will be recalled, that sports participation involves capital investment and as such,

the only profit should be success. In order to ensure success therefore, many factors including psychological ones must be considered. Some of these factors include, motivation, stress, anxiety level, and aggression and aspiration level. The focus of this paper is the report of a study carried out specifically on level of aspirations of boys and girls of a particular physical education class in the Abadina Primary School of University of Ibadan in Nigeria.

PURPOSE

The aim of this study was to ascertain the potency of social status and sex as factors in performance aspiration. It could be observed, that the emotional stability of sportsmen and women constitute an important factor in performance. In the same vein, the level of aspired

performance is highly related to the level of optimism as regards success.

It is therefore, of interest to the researchers, to necessarily ascertain the effect of social status, a factor in personality disposition, on the optimism or level of aspirations of boys and girls. The finding hopefully will help coaches, while taking technical decisions.

SHORT REVIEW

Many factors were identified by some researchers as influential on level of aspiration of sportsmen and women. These include cultural, performance of significant others, previous performance, rate of success and failures, personality traits, gender (sex) and anxiety levels.

Stratton (1989) opined that level of aspiration depends on the need to keep the level high and the desire to approximate the level with future performance. Sears (1940) suggested an influence of significant others on level of aspiration. He contended, that an individual's level of aspiration depend a great deal on the differences in his ability, the groups ability and familiarity with the task. Hoppe in Cratty (1984) suggests that the experience of success or failure in a task is not dependent upon some absolute score but is related to whether or not an individual's expected or projected goals were reached. Frank (1935) opined that level of aspiration is placed below the previous performance, due to the need to avoid failure. Also relating level of aspiration to personality disposition, Frank recognized ambition, prudence, courage and ability to face reality as possible determinants of level of aspiration. Many researchers have proved that ability, success and failures have effect on level of aspiration. While Festinger (1984) reported that in a study of group standards, attainment of a slated goal led to 51% of the subjects raising their level of aspiration, 41% maintained the slated level while 8% lowered their level of aspiration from the stated goal. However, there was a contrary behavior as the group failed to attain the set goal.

Following from the failure experienced, only 7% still increased their level of aspirational level, only 29% still maintained the stated goal. This finding is akin to that of Gardner (1946), who reported that slight failure resulted in slight lowering of level of aspiration, while heavy failure resulted in sharp drop in level of aspiration. Furthermore, Ogundari (1979) observed that some subjects increased their level of performance. These observations find support in the comment of Locke (1966), who commented that a high estimation of one's ability affects the setting of one's level of aspiration. Accordingly, a high estimation of ability influences level of aspiration positively while a low estimation has negative effects on level of aspiration. It could be concluded upon therefore, that mastery of the task and confidence are reflected in the level of aspiration.

A paramount factor in level of aspiration is sex of individuals. Related literature showed that Frank (1941) in a study found that women appeared to be more objective in random guessing than men. He stated that women and men involved in the same task, have their level of aspiration been influenced by the same forces. Many years after, Ogundari (1979) in his study of level of aspiration and accuracy performance of boys and girls, found that boys recorded a higher level of aspiration than girls despite a resultant homogenous accuracy score.

In another contribution to the factors affecting level of aspiration, Moulton (1978) related anxiety level to the performance factor in question. In his report, he contended that levels of aspiration of individuals are inversely related to anxiety level. Using four experimental groups namely, high achievement - low anxiety group, low - achievement - low - anxiety group, high - achievement - high anxiety group, low - achievement - high anxiety group, he found that high - achievement - low anxiety group showed the highest level of

aspiration. On the other hand, the low achievement and high anxiety group recorded the lowest level of aspiration. In another research, Sohi (1976) found that basal performance increased quantitatively with reinforcement and that the same was true of level of aspiration. However, it was also reported in the same study, that level of aspiration definitely lowered with reproof. In summary and in continuation of the endless researches into psychological variables in sports performance, it is important to investigate the social status and sex factors in level of aspiration, which is a proven performance factor. This contention derives from the definition of aspiration, which is said to be the ambition or pronouncement of an aspirant about his desire to win a thing or position. This desire will no doubt, provide the necessary tonic for the proper invigoration of the mind.

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

SUBJECTS

The subjects were boys and girls of different social status classified according to the socio-economic condition of their parents. The boys and girls whose ages range from 10-11 years were divided into low social status and high social status, according to the occupation and job description of their parents. This classification finds some degree of support in Pouthreux and Baker (1965) who, while investigating the relationship between socio-economic status and physical fitness of elementary school children, used four rating scales, that included occupation of parents. Other rating scales used were income, occupational status and educational qualification. An appraisal of this rating scales no doubt determine social status.

The occupation of parents therefore takes its toll on the social status of these children among their peers. This in turn, may affect the personality disposition and

aspiration of the children. Following from all these social status determinants, all children whose parents' salary ranges from University salary scale (USS) 01 - to 05 were regarded as low status, while those on 09 - 12 were regarded as high status in this study. Any children whose parents earn above University system scale (USS) 12 were eliminated from the study as they fall outside the inclusion criteria of parents socio-economic status set for this study. Through random selection, one hundred and eighty (180) boys and girls were involved in the study. All the 180 boys and girls have undergone physical education lessons and have participated in various activities including standing broad jump, which was the activity in which their aspired performance was sought.

DESIGN, DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The study involved two independent variables each at two different levels. These include social status at low and high levels. These include social status at low and high levels and sex, which naturally are boys and girls. This permitted the adoption of 2 x 2 factorial design and subsequent use of 2-way analysis of variance as major statistic for data analysis

The subjects were brought to the playground to observe the demonstration of standing broad jump. This is the most popular jump, which has been employed to evaluate motor abilities in children (Cratty, 1986). The measurement of the pinpointed place was then taken from the restraining line. The meter tape value measured was recorded as level of aspiration of the subjects. No markings were made on any pinpointed place so that the subjects will not influence each other. The data so collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics as necessary and 2 - way ANOVA in consonance with the design of the study.

RESULTS OF ANALYSIS

Table I

GROUPS	MEAN	SD	N
Boys of low social status	1.62	0.131	45
Girls of low social status	1.32	0.234	45
Boys of high social status	1.48	0.290	45
Girls of high social status	1.43	0.208	45

The result on table I showed that boys of low social status had a mean level of aspiration of 1.62. This represented the highest mean performance. Girls of low social status recorded the lowest level of aspiration with a mean of 1.36. Boys and girls of high social status demonstrated a high degree of homogeneity with mean

levels of aspiration of 1.48 and 1.43 for boys and girls of this social status computed at + .290 and + .208 however does not fully suggest the degree of homogeneity as they represented the highest and third highest deviations from the mean.

Table II
Summary of 2 - Way ANOVA

Source of variability	Sums of squares	df	Mean of squares	F
Total	33.1709	179		
Rows (social status)	0.0565	1	0.0565	0.3149
Columns (sex)	1.0381	1	0.0381	5.7842*
Interaction (social status & sex)	0.4877	1	0.4877	2.7176
Within cell error	31.5885	176	0.1794	

Table II contains the summary of 2-way ANOVA. Variable one, which is social status, had an F value of 0.3149 while variable two, which is sex had an F value of 5.7842. The test of interaction of the two variables was 2.7176.

significant while that of social status and that of interaction of the two variables were not significant. As a follow up to the significant F ratio value, the multiple comparison t-test post hoc analysis was computed and the result is shown on table III.

According to these values, and the table value, the value obtained for sex was

Table III

RESULT OF MULTIPLE COMPARISON t-test				
	1	2	3	4
1		0.256*	0.139*	0.187*
2			0.117	0.069
3				0.049
4				

$$\begin{aligned}
 C(\text{diff}) &= t \text{ at } .05 \times \text{SE} \\
 &= 1.664 \times 0.44784153 \\
 &= 0.07652645
 \end{aligned}$$

Table III indicates that the significant F obtained for sex is due to significant difference between boys of low social status and boys of high social status and girls of high social status. Also, the significant difference between boys of high social status and girls of low social status may be contributory.

DISCUSSION

From the result, it could be concluded upon, that social status has no significant effect on the level of aspiration of the boys and girls of the study. Hilgard, Sait and Margaret in Drowatzky (1984) report that social status influences goal performance if only the desire for social conformity has been internalized. However, sex was effective as factor in level of aspiration of the subjects. A suggestion as to an interaction of the two variables cannot be made, as the F value obtained was not significant. The contention therefore, that social status could be a factor in level of aspiration cannot hold as per the result of this study. The fact that sex was significantly effective, finds support in some research findings according to review of literature. Ogundari (1979) reported that Summer and Johnson (1949) and Marzolf (1951) also reported sex differences in the findings of studies of relationship of sex, age, school achievement and level of aspiration. Furthermore, it could be inferred therefore that all other factors mentioned in literature but social status could be confirmed as potent factors in level of aspiration.

In closing, it is recommended that in enhancing performance, factors like personality disposition, success rate, mastery of improvement of skill, confidence, anxiety and reinforcement should be manipulated to raise level of aspiration. This then is expected to result

in self-challenge, which is an important motivating factor. Another study that will involve a larger number of subjects with more maturity is also recommended to further increase knowledge in the area of level of aspiration.

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