



IMPACT OF SPORTS ON THE  
SELF- ESTEEM OF SPORTSWOMEN IN PAKISTAN

By

Sana Mahmud

A Thesis Submitted in  
Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

Bachelors of Social Sciences

In Development Studies

at

Bahria University, Islamabad

June 2012

Completed under the co-supervision of Mr. Labib Malik and Dr. Huma Haque

I wish to dedicate this work to the talented and passionate sports women of Pakistan, who continue to battle traditional gender norms every day, and who can understand the true significance of this research.

While on their own paths to self-discovery, these women have been able to redefine the capabilities of the 'Pakistani woman' and continue to serve as an inspiration

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

After two years of hard work, dedication and sleepless nights, it is finally time to write this section of my thesis. No matter how much effort I put into this project, I could not have completed it without the help of a few very important people, who not only facilitated the process but made it an enjoyable and memorable experience for me, and who I feel must be acknowledged.

First and foremost I would like to express my gratitude towards my research supervisors, Mr. Labib Malik and Dr. Huma Haque whose constant guidance and support motivated me to pursue my research and encouraged me to do better. Mr. Labib's advice and constructive criticism allowed me to learn and grow as a researcher and I am thankful to him for helping me realize my true potential. My co-supervisor, Dr. Haque, has been the guiding hand throughout this entire process. Besides her constant help and support, I am extremely grateful to Dr. Haque for taking out time from her hectic schedule and dedicating time and energy into making this a successful project. Dr. Haque's enthusiasm towards her work has allowed me to understand the joy of research, which I will carry with me forever.

I would also like to thank Miss Shirin Gul, who was the first person to familiarize me with the complexities involved in research. When I momentarily lost interest in my work, she reminded me to stay focused by telling me that a person's research was like their baby – and this, was to be my first! Her words helped me continue my research with the same fervor and passion with which I had begun.

This research would also not have been possible without help from some of my good friends and sports women who provided me with necessary information and helped me get access to my target population. I thank Mejjgaan Orakzai for arranging interview sessions in the comfort of a fellow teammate's home; I thank Sara Mahmood for her prompt replies to my emails and for allowing me to bother her and her teammates during their practice sessions; I thank Asmaa Usman for being gracious enough to drive me all the way to WAPDA complex across Lahore on her trusty motorbike, and not complain because I was holding on too tight!

Due to unforeseen circumstances I had to leave Islamabad and complete my research in Lahore, while at National Football Training Camp; which seemed impossible without internet, electricity and the availability of an empty room to work in. At this point, a fellow

sportswoman and good friend, Almeera Iftikhar Chaudhry and her family were no less than saviors, who welcomed me into their home where I could work uninterrupted and was able to get a massive amount of work done. Thank you Almeera for being the angel that you are and for making me delicious fruit chaat to take back to camp during Ramzan.

Owing to the fact that I am probably the least tech savvy person I know, I must thank two of my best friends and fellow teammates, Aniq Qadir and Uzair Ahmed (who in fact are experts in this area), for being there when I needed them most. I could not have completed my thesis if I didn't have the two to rant to when things got too much to handle. Thank you Aniq for staying up the entire night and helping me with the entire urdu section of my thesis, and for being the friend that you are. Thank you Uzair for doing all the other things I did not understand; for spending long hours working on excel for me, for helping me analyze my data, and for making beef chilli for me as we worked!

Lastly, I would like to thank my parents, Tanvir and Sophia Mahmud for always being supportive of my involvement in sports and encouraging me to keep a balance between both sports and studies. I am grateful to have such trusting parents who have always allowed me to travel to different cities for my tournaments and for my research work. I would not have been here today if it weren't for them. I thank my sister Nida for helping me with my research work while I was away at training camp, and my eleven- year- old brother Hamza, for constantly telling me that "Girls can't play", so that I may be motivated to prove him wrong every time. I hope when he grows older, he will recognize and respect the true strength of a woman.

I have been occupied with this research for a long time and I am grateful to my entire family and group of friends for understanding how important this thesis was for me and condoning my absence at family vacations and gatherings. I am grateful for their support, wishes and prayers.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	ii
List of Illustrations.....	vi
<b>CHAPTER 1: Introduction</b>	
1.1. Introduction to the topic.....	2
1.2. Rationale.....	5
1.3. Statement of the Problem and Explanation.....	6
1.4. Definition of Concepts.....	7
1.4.1. Development.....	7
1.4.2. Empowerment.....	8
1.4.3. Self- esteem.....	9
1.4.4. Sports and Active Participation in sports.....	10
1.5. Objectives of the research.....	11
1.6. Methods and Methodology.....	11
1.6.1. Epistemological Position.....	11
1.6.2. Method.....	12
1.6.3. Tools of Data Collection.....	13
1.6.4. Units of Analysis and Data Collection.....	13
1.6.5. Sampling.....	14
1.7. Significance of the study.....	18
<b>CHAPTER 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework</b>	
2.0. Introduction to Literature Review.....	21
2.1. Development Studies.....	22
2.1.1. Theories of Economic Growth.....	22
2.1.1.1. Traditional Economic Paradigm.....	23
2.1.1.2. Radical Political Economy Paradigm.....	26
2.1.2. Theories of Alternative Development.....	29
2.2. Feminist Theories.....	35

2.2.1. Enlightenment Liberal Feminism.....	35
2.2.2. Cultural Feminism.....	38
2.2.3. Marxism, Freudianism and Feminism.....	41
2.2.4. Radical Feminism.....	42
2.3. Women, Sports and Empowerment.....	44
2.3.1. Development through Sport.....	44
2.3.2. Masculinity and Femininity in Sports.....	45
2.3.3. Women, Body image and Sports.....	48
2.3.4. Using sports to challenge gender norms and stereotypes.....	49
2.3.5. Impact of sports on character, self- esteem and women empowerment.....	51
2.4. Theoretical Framework.....	53
<b>CHAPTER 3: Data Collection Part I: Quantitative Data</b>	
3.0. Introduction to Data Collection.....	59
3.1. Results from the Quantitative Method.....	60
<b>CHAPTER 4: Data Collection Part II: Qualitative Data</b>	
4.0. Results from the Qualitative Method.....	85
<b>CHAPTER 5: Analysis and Conclusion</b>	
5.0. Introduction to the chapter.....	120
5.1. Analysis.....	120
5.2. Conclusion.....	126
5.3. Limitations of the Research.....	128
5.4. Recommendations.....	128
<b>References.....</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>Annexures</b>	
Annexure A (Proportionate Stratified Sampling Procedure).....	136
Annexure B (Interview Schedule).....	137
Annexure C (Interview Guide).....	141

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

## Table

### Page

1. Number of women in each of the 8 sports teams selected for the research.....	15
2. Categories of Sports women.....	16
3. Number of women involved in sports from a particular year.....	61
4. Disaggregated results (overall) from the interview schedules.....	62
5. Disaggregated results for Category I.....	70
6. Disaggregated results for Category III.....	72
7. Disaggregated results for Category IV.....	74
8. Disaggregated results for Category V.....	76
9. Disaggregated results for Category VI.....	78
10. Disaggregated results for Category VII.....	80
11. Disaggregated results for Category VIII.....	83

## Figure

1. Sampling Procedure.....	17
2. Theoretical Framework.....	57