



The Role Of Sport In Achieving Sustainable Of Athletic Women In Palestine

Hethnawi Maryam*

*Research Unit (UR 17JS01) « Sport Performance, & Society », Higher Health Institute of Sport and Physical Education of Ksar Saïd, University of La Manouba, Tunis, Tunisia

Citation: Hethnawi Maryam et al (2023), The Role Of Sport In Achieving Sustainable Of Athletic Women In Palestine, *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 29(4), 565-570, Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v29i4.4240

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

The study aimed to identify the role of sports in achieving the sustainable development of women in the Palestinian society, and to identify the level of knowledge of the study sample of the concept of sustainable development. Two areas, and the study population included all workers in some Palestinian institutions in Palestine. The study sample consisted of (2040) respondents. The sample studied for the role of sport in achieving sustainable development for women also came to a moderate degree, with an arithmetic mean(3.22) . The study recommended the need to promote the concept of sustainable development within the Palestinian educational curricula and sports circles, and to strengthen the sports strategies of Palestinian institutions for the important role of sport in achieving sustainable development.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Sports, Knowledge About Sustainable Development.

Background:

Sport is considered a significant component of global sustainability, as it is increasingly recognized as a tool to address economic, environmental, and social challenge [5].

Sustainable development aims to achieve greater human progress and livelihood while also ensuring that natural resources are conserved and used sustainably [15]. Empowering women and girls is a critical component of long-term development because it promotes gender equality, reduces inequality, and promotes social and economic growth [12].

Sustainable development focuses the three basic pillars of sustainable development - economic, social, and environmental - and underlines the importance of aligning economic progress with environmental and social needs [19].

At the economic level, sustainable development aims to promote economic growth and development in a way that satisfies basic needs and reduces unemployment, while also ensuring that consumption is balanced with production. This is important to ensure that resources are used efficiently and that economic development is not achieved at the expense of the environment or social well-being [3].

The sustainable development seeks to improve social indicators such as equal distribution at the social level, social mobility, public participation, and cultural diversity, this is crucial for promoting social justice, reducing inequality, and ensuring that everyone has access to basic social services such as healthcare, education, and housing [4].

At the environmental level, sustainable development aims to improve environmental indicators and preserve the ecosystem. This is important to ensure that natural resources are used sustainably and that the environment is protected for future generations [18].

The acknowledgement of sport's role in fostering sustainable development emphasizes the need of incorporating sport into development policies and programs, as well as the potential for sport to make a constructive contribution to society [5].

United Nations resolution (70/1), entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", adopted in 2015, the role of sport in promoting social progress and sustainable development was recognized. The resolution highlights the potential of sport as a tool for promoting peace, social inclusion, gender equality, and health, among other things [20].

Sport has the potential to promote sustainable development by improving health, education, gender equality and social inclusion. However, despite the growing recognition of sport as a tool for sustainable development,

women are often marginalized in sports programs and face significant barriers to participation [14] Many previous studies deal with the role of sport in achieving sustainable development for women, which includes the following areas:

Sport can have a significant impact on women's health by reducing the risk of chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. Studies have shown that women who participate in sports have a lower risk of breast cancer, depression, and anxiety [11]. Furthermore, women who participate in sports tend to have better mental health, self-esteem, and better physical image [10].

Sport can improve educational outcomes for women by enhancing academic achievement, school enrollment, and graduation rates. Research has shown that girls who participate in sports are more likely to attend and complete school, and have higher academic performance [7]. Moreover, sports can help girls develop important life skills such as leadership, teamwork and problem-solving [23].

Sport can advance gender equality by challenging youth-only stereotypes, empowering women and girls, and promoting equal opportunities for participation and leadership. Studies have shown that women who participate in sports are more likely to challenge traditional gender roles and norms, and have higher levels of self-efficacy and self-confidence [11]. Moreover, sports can provide opportunities for women to break through barriers in leadership positions, as well as to advocate for women's rights and gender equality [17].

Sport can promote social inclusion by bringing together people from different backgrounds, promoting social cohesion, and reducing discrimination and prejudice. Studies have shown that sports can create a sense of belonging and identity, and promote respect for diversity [6]. Moreover, sport can provide opportunities for women from marginalized communities to engage in physical activity and social interaction, and to challenge discrimination and stigma [23].

Authors believe that sport can play an important role in achieving sustainable development for women by improving health, education, gender equality and social inclusion. However, in order to maximize the potential of sport as a tool for sustainable development, there is a need for policies and programs that address the specific needs and challenges of women in sport, and promote equal opportunities for participation and leadership.

Women's issues in Palestine have been a focus of attention for both international and local organizations, as well as civil society institution particularly due to the impact of the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the daily lives of women and their families [8].

Palestinian women face a number of challenges, including limited access to education and healthcare, high rates of poverty, discrimination and violence against women, movement restrictions imposed by Israel's occupation, and limited participation in decision-making processes [2].

Problem statement:

Despite the great progress in many aspects of sports in general and women in particular, the need still exists, and we note that there are still challenges that impede the role of sport in achieving sustainable development for Palestinian women. There is a widespread belief in academic and popular circles that traditional values and standards limit women's freedom and opportunities, and thus stand as a solid barrier to women's integration into the development process [9]. Although women have a prominent position in all sports (school, university, national, regional and international), sports women need an opportunity to obtain administrative positions and real opportunities [16].

However, when examining the factors affecting women's participation in the development process, researchers realize that there are a number of tangible material factors, in addition to the traditional view of women, that work together to limit the utilization of women's energies. The divergent relationship between women's contribution to development and the prejudice practiced against them constitutes the best evidence, and this was confirmed by the study [2].

From the foregoing, it is clear that the most important goals of sustainable development is the embodiment of a social and economic protection network for women so that the social protection system guarantees the preservation of their civil rights , and appreciates their contribution to society, and economically that guarantees them an adequate income that provides them with a healthy and decent life, and in general, the indicators related to sustainable development lead us to the realization of the need to quickly develop a vision about the path that must be taken to achieve the role of sport in achieving the sustainable development of sports women, while being aware to the specificity of the Palestinian situation. Hence, the researcher decided to conduct this study in order to answer the main problem of the study, which is represented in the following question: "The role of sport in achieving sustainable development for sports women in Palestine."

Research aims:

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the level of knowledge about the concept of sustainable development and to examine the role of sport in sustainable development in Palestine.

Methodology and tools:

The study is relying on quantitative approach based on online questionnaire as study tool to assess the role of sport in achieving sustainable development for Palestinian women, the answer of questionnaire based on the five-point Likert scale, and to interpret the results. The standard means were adopted for the scale, which are

(1.80) for a very low level, (1.81-2.60) for a low level, (2.61-3.40) for a medium level, (3.41-4.20) for a high level, and greater than (4.20) for a very high level.

The study sample consisted of (2040) individuals working in institutions (the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, the Palestinian Olympic Committee, the Palestinian Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Higher Education, the Ministry of Education, and the Palestinian Sports Federations), and they were chosen in the selected randomly due to the large size of the study population, and the lack of political stability in West Bank when collecting data. Table No. (1) shows the characteristics of the study sample according to demographic variables.

Table 1. Characteristics of the study sample individuals according to demographic or independent variables (n = 2040).

Demographic variables	Variable level	Frequency	Percentage %
Geographical area	North of the Palestinian Bank	800	39.2
	center of the Palestinian West Bank	600	29.4
	south of the Palestinian West Bank	640	31.4
	Total	2040	%100
Age	30 years and under	646	31.7
	From 31-40 years old	720	35.3
	More than 40 years old	674	33
	Total	2040	%100
marital status	Single/single	460	22.5
	married	1394	68.3
	otherwise	186	9.1
	Total	2040	%100
Gender	male	880	43.1
	Female	1160	56.9
	Total	2040	%100

Validity and reliability of the study tool:

The results of Table No. (2) indicate that the value of the stability coefficient for the study tool as a whole was (0.87), and the values of the stability coefficient for the domains ranged between (0.79-0.87), which indicates the stability of the tool and its validity to achieve the purposes of the study.

Table 2. Reliability of the study tool (n = 45).

No.	Domain	Items	Cronbach alpha
1	Knowledge of sustainable development	10	0.79
2	The role of sport in achieving sustainable development for sports women	13	0.85
	Total	34	0.87

Results and discussion:

1- Knowledge of sustainable development:

The results of Table No. (3) indicate that the overall level of knowledge of the concept of sustainable development among the study sample was moderate, as mean= (3.22).

Table 3. Means and standard deviations for level of study sample's knowledge about sustainable development concept (n = 2040).

No.	Item	standard deviation	Mean
1	The concept of sustainable development is clear to you	1.13	3.16
2	I have read about sustainable development already	1.13	3.11
3	Know the importance of sustainable development	1.13	3.20
4	Sustainable development preserves public facilities	1.16	3.22
5	Sustainable development earns people positive ethics in dealing with the environment	1.18	3.32
6	Sustainable development spreads awareness among members of society	1.17	3.28
7	Sustainable development is concerned with the education of community members	1.15	3.26

No.	Item	standard deviation	Mean
8	Sustainable development achieves equality without discrimination between women and men	1.13	3.14
9	Sustainable development contributes to achieving equity in job opportunities	1.15	3.20
10	Sustainable development enhances the degree of awareness of societal issues	1.16	3.27
Total		1.07	3.22

2- Knowledge of sustainable development:

The results of Table No. (4) indicate that total score for the role of sport in achieving sustainable development for sports women in the northern governorates / Palestine from the point of view of the study sample was moderate; mean= (3.32).

Table 4. Means and standard deviations for role of sport in achieving sustainable development for sports women in the northern governorates / Palestine from the point of view of the study sample (n = 2040).

No.	Item	standard deviation	Mean
1	Sport contributed to the participation of sports women in workshops, seminars and scientific sports conferences	1.12	3.38
2	Sport provided the opportunity for athletic women to overcome the difficulties and problems they face	1.13	3.33
3	Sport provided an economic return through the work of sports women in various fields of sports	1.10	3.25
4	Sport has helped achieve justice and equality between the sexes	1.11	3.23
5	Sport has enhanced the role of sports women in achieving sustainable development	1.11	3.31
6	Sports promoted the concept of health awareness for women in general and sports women in particular	1.16	3.40
7	Sport contributed to the participation of sports women in decision-making	1.11	3.33
8	Supported sports in promoting positive behaviors and values among sports women	1.15	3.39
9	Sport contributed to the participation of sports women in national teams and the representation of Palestine on the Arab, regional and international levels.	1.12	3.36
10	Sports helped athletic women motivate their children to practice various sports	1.17	3.40
11	Sport provided the opportunity for the participation of sports women in the Olympic Committee and sports federations	1.12	3.30
12	Sports projects have contributed to the sustainable development of sports women	1.10	3.30
13	International donor institutions have provided various opportunities for sports women	1.08	3.13
Total		1.02	3.32

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendation:

Sustainable development is a complex and multifaceted concept that lacks a clear and universally accepted definition, this lack of clarity can lead to different interpretations and perspectives on what sustainable development means and how it should be achieved [25]. The finding illustrates the level of knowledge about sustainable development among Palestinian people is moderate; hence there are several reasons why Palestinian people viewpoints about sustainable development concept is vary because there is a differences Palestinian people cultural and ideological backgrounds. These differences influence how Palestinian perceive and prioritize the various dimensions of sustainable development, such as economic growth, social equity, and environmental protection.

Sport has the ability to contribute to many facets of sustainable development and may be an effective vehicle for fostering positive social, economic, and environmental change [13]. Sport can raise awareness and promote action on environmental issues, such as climate change, pollution, and conservation. Thus, promoting sport as

a means of achieving sustainable development is essential, and stakeholders must work together to ensure that sport is used effectively as a tool for positive social, economic, and environmental change [14].

The results show sports play an important role in achieving development from study sample view point. The researcher attributes the reason for this result to the fact that the respondents agree in their answers about the role of sport in achieving the sustainable development of sports women in governorates Palestine, where sport can play an important role in achieving sustainable development for the Palestinian people, who face numerous challenges related to social, economic, and political instability. Throw promoting health and well-being which is essential for the Palestinian people who face high levels of stress and trauma due to the ongoing conflict and occupation [27]. Sport can also provide a safe space for children and youth to engage in physical activity and promote healthy lifestyles [24]. Sports also fosters social cohesion and inclusion in Palestine where the community is divided along political and geographical lines [21]. In addition, sport sector has potential to create jobs and stimulate economic growth, particularly in the areas of sports tourism and sports equipment manufacturing [23]. For Palestinian Sport can raise awareness and promote action on environmental issues, such as water scarcity and waste management, which are significant challenges in Palestine [22]. Sport can provide opportunities for vocational training in areas such as coaching, sports medicine, and sports administration, as well as opportunities for personal development and social learning [23].

Authors believes that the role of sport in achieving sustainable development in Palestine can be enhanced through a set of policy and program interventions that focus on increasing access, promoting gender equality, supporting popular sports, investing in sports infrastructure, involving youth and women in particular, and using sports to promote concepts of social cohesion, development of sports tourism and encouragement of partnerships and cooperation.

In the light of study finding; Authors can provide several recommendations proposed to enhance the role of sport in achieving sustainable development in Palestine include:

- Increased access to sports facilities: There is a need to increase access to sports facilities, particularly in rural marginalized communities, to ensure that everyone has equal opportunity to participate in sports.
- Promote gender equality: Women and girls should be encouraged to participate in sports, and efforts should be made to address the barriers they face in accessing sports facilities and training.
- Supporting Grassroots Sports Programs: Basic sports programs can provide opportunities for children and youth to develop athletic abilities, learn teamwork and build leadership skills.
- Investing in sports infrastructure: Investing in sports infrastructure can help create jobs, improve health outcomes, and enhance community cohesion.
- Increase women's participation. Women should be involved in the design and implementation of sports programs, as they are the primary beneficiaries and can provide valuable insights into what works best.
- Using sports to enhance social cohesion, as sports can be used as a tool to enhance social cohesion and bridge divisions between different communities in Palestine.
- Developing sports tourism: Developing sports tourism can help generate revenue and promote Palestine as a tourist destination.
- Encouraging partnerships and collaboration: Partnerships and collaboration between government, civil society and private sector stakeholders can help create a more sustainable sports ecosystem in Palestine.

Limit of the Study

The findings of the study may be specific to the Northern Governorates of Palestine and may not be easily applicable or generalizable to other regions or countries, further investigation for all the governorates of Palestine would be preferable.

Acknowledgements

The authors appreciate all workers in Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, the Palestinian Olympic Committee, the Palestinian Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, and Palestinian Sports Federations for their collaboration in this study.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Funding

This research received no external funding.

References

1. Abu Ali, N. (2018). Women's empowerment and their role in sustainable development 2030, a field study in the city of Mansoura. *Journal of the College of Arts. Mansoura University*, 63(63), 475-536. doi: 10.21608/artman.2018.146543
2. Aghabekian, V. (2017). Palestinian women, conflict and human rights. *Medicine, conflict and Survival*, 33(3), 168-176.

3. Barbier, E. B., & Burgess, J. C. (2017). The Sustainable Development Goals and the systems approach to sustainability. *Economics*, 11(1).
4. Barbosa, G. S., Drach, P. R., & Corbella, O. D. (2014). A conceptual review of the terms sustainable development and sustainability. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(2), 1.
5. Beutler, I. (2008). Sport serving development and peace: Achieving the goals of the United Nations through sport. *Sport in society*, 11(4), 359-369.
6. Chalip, L., & Costa, C. (2016). Sport events and social inclusion. In J. Higham & T. Hinch (Eds.), *Sport Tourism Development* (2nd ed., pp. 273-285). Channel View Publications.
7. Dwyer, J. J., Allison, K. R., Goldenberg, E. R., & Fein, A. J. (2015). Adolescent girls' physical activity levels, fitness levels, and knowledge of heart disease risk factors. *American Journal of Health Education*, 46(2), 93-100.
8. Farr, V. (2011). UNSCR 1325 and women's peace activism in the occupied Palestinian territory. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 13(4), 539-556.
9. Gordon, L. (2002). *The moral property of women: A history of birth control politics in America*. University of Illinois press.
10. Greenleaf, C., Petrie, T. A., & Martin, S. B. (2014). Psychosocial aspects of body weight and body image among adolescent girls and young women. In E. F. Etzel, J. L. Sage, & T. W. Freeman (Eds.), *Sport and Physical Education in the 21st Century* (pp. 163-178). Nova.
11. Lawal, F. A., Ayoade, O. E., & Taiwo, A. A. (2016). Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment for Sustainable Development in Africa.
12. Lawson, H. A. (2005). Empowering people, facilitating community development, and contributing to sustainable development: The social work of sport, exercise, and physical education programs. *Sport, education and society*, 10(1), 135-160.
13. Lindsey, I., & Chapman, T. (2017). *Enhancing the contribution of sport to the sustainable development goals*. Commonwealth Secretariat.
14. Mensah, J. (2019). Sustainable development: Meaning, history, principles, pillars, and implications for human action: Literature review. *Cogent social sciences*, 5(1), 1653531.
15. Murtaja, A. (2017). The role of women in promoting the values of sustainable development in the governorates of Gaza. Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference: Palestinian Women, Building and Roles in light of Challenges, Volume 1, Gaza: The Islamic University of Gaza - College of Education and Research and Studies Center (Marsad), 112-151.
16. Purvis, M., & Grainger, A. (2013). *Exploring sustainable development: Geographical perspectives*. Routledge.
17. Sachs, J. D. (2012). From millennium development goals to sustainable development goals. *The lancet*, 379(9832), 2206-2211.
18. Springett, D. (2003). Business conceptions of sustainable development: A perspective from critical theory. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 12(2), 71-86.
19. UN General Assembly, transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 21 October 2015, A/RES/70/1, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/57b6e3e44.html> [accessed 6 March 2023].
20. UNDP. (2018). Social Cohesion in Palestine. Retrieved from <https://www.ps.undp.org/content/papp/en/home/ourwork/democratic-governance-and-peacebuilding/successstories/social-cohesion-in-palestine.html>
21. UNEP. (2016). State of Palestine: Environmental Assessment of the Gaza Strip. Retrieved from https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/16058/Gaza%20Environmental%20Assessment_English.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
22. UNESCO. (2015). Sport for Development and Peace: Towards Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002325/232522e.pdf>
23. UNICEF. (2020). Sport for Development and Peace in the State of Palestine. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.org/oPt/media/5336/file/Sport%20for%20Development%20and%20Peace%20in%20the%20State%20of%20Palestine.pdf>
24. United Nations Women. (2020). Gender equality: women's rights in review 25 years after Beijing.
25. WHO. (2018). Health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including east Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan. Retrieved from https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB144/B144_10-en.pdf