

The level of ethical values and their relationship to academic achievement among university female students in light of sports practice

مستوى القيم الأخلاقية وعلاقتها بالتحصيل الدراسي لدى طالبات الجامعة في ضوء الممارسة الرياضية

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Abstract:

The present study investigates the relationship between ethical values and academic achievement among female university students, with a focus on the influence of sports practice. Employing a descriptive research design, a sample of 28 female students from Amar Talebi University, Laghouat, Algeria, was recruited. This sample was further divided into two subgroups: 14 students actively engaged in sports activities and 14 who do not practice sports. Data on ethical values was collected through a questionnaire encompassing three dimensions (cooperation, respect, and responsibility) with each dimension containing 10 statements. Academic achievement was measured by analyzing the students' cumulative GPAs retrieved from their university records. The findings reveal that ethical values are a critical factor influencing academic performance among female university students. Additionally, the study highlights the role of sports practice in strengthening the positive association between ethical values and academic achievement.

Keywords: Ethical values; academic achievement; sports practice

Introduction:

University students constitute the cornerstone of society's future. Educational institutions responsible for preparing university students strive to provide them with genuine care and sound guidance, adhering to scientific standards and principles. The university stage represents the pinnacle of educational and professional preparation for individuals within society, thereby equipping educational and professional institutions for comprehensive preparation. Enhancing academic performance among students has become a vital goal pursued by various educational and instructional institutions. As the apex of the educational system, universities serve as an effective means of instilling values and solidifying habits, skills, and behavioral patterns in the personalities of students. Therefore, it is imperative to prioritize university students and ensure that they possess a high level of ethical values and commitment to them in accordance with the community's ethos, guiding them towards what benefits and uplifts them and their society.

Undoubtedly, fostering ethical values encompasses nurturing the individual in all aspects, given the profound connection between ethical values and academic achievement. Indeed, as Ahmed (1403, p. 33) aptly stated, "Education, at its core, is a value-based process, as its objective lies in developing the individual and society towards better levels through continuous refinement, edification, and cultivation."

Since sports practice promotes students' physical well-being and cultivates their motor, psychological, and cognitive abilities, it warrants due attention and a prominent position alongside knowledge acquisition. Engaging in sports fosters positive attitudes, imparts essential life skills, instills noble ethics, nurtures individual character, elevates intellect, cares for the body, and refines the conscience, guiding individuals towards self-actualization.

Moreover, physical and sports activities, as a social phenomenon, aim to equip individuals with various aspects of acceptable social behavior, such as cooperation, ethical conduct, and good sportsmanship. Through sports and practice, traditions and proper customs become evident, along with all facets of society's social, civilizational, and cultural development. This aligns with the aspirations of socialization, as it represents a process of instilling values, concepts, and the culture of the society in which the individual lives (Hijab, 2007, p. 110).

Several studies in the field of ethics and values have indicated that gifted and high-achieving students exhibit greater adherence to the value systems of their surrounding society and demonstrate a heightened interest in moral aspects compared to their average-intelligence peers. These students possess a stronger ability to grasp the abstract concepts that underlie these values and exhibit greater concern for social issues stemming from non-compliance with ethical and value-based principles (Ahmed, 2010, p. 107).

While exceptional students may exhibit excellent academic performance but need more adherence to ethical principles, this should not be considered the norm but rather an exception. If high-achieving students are expected to serve as community leaders and pioneers, their contributions to societal progress and advancement should be wider than scientific and technical domains. Instead, they should also encompass ethical and moral aspects, actively practicing in resolving social issues where ethics and values form the cornerstone (Al-Samadi, 1995, pp. 418-422).

Academic achievement, as a multifaceted phenomenon, is linked to a multitude of factors, including cognitive-intellectual, motivational, affective, and other personality components. Furthermore, academic performance is influenced by the social and cultural variables associated with the environment in which the student resides (Al-Jilali, 2011, p. 22).

In conclusion, this study stands out for its significance in bridging two fundamental variables: academic achievement and ethical values. By linking education and training, this study highlights the potential role of sports activities in strengthening this connection.

1.2 Research Questions

1.2.1 General Research Question

- Does the level of ethical values have a relationship with academic achievement among female university students in light of their sports practice?

1.2.2 Sub-questions

- Are there statistically significant differences in the level of ethical values among female university students who practice sports activities and those who do not?
- Are there statistically significant differences in academic achievement among female university students who practice sports activities and those who do not?
- Is there a positive correlation between ethical values and academic achievement among female university students in light of their sports practice?

1.3 Research Hypotheses

1.3.1 General Hypothesis

- There is a relationship between the level of ethical values and academic achievement among female university students in light of their sports practice.

1.3.2 Sub-hypotheses

- There are statistically significant differences in the level of ethical values between female university students who practice sports activities and those who do not.
- There are statistically significant differences in academic achievement between female university students who practice sports activities and those who do not.
- There is a positive correlation between ethical values and academic achievement among female university students in light of their sports practice.

1.4 Objectives

This study investigates the relationship between ethical values and academic achievement among female university students, with a particular focus on the influence of sports practice. The research aims to assess the level of ethical values among female university students. Moreover, to investigate the differences in ethical values and academic achievement

between students who practice sports activities and those who do not. Furthermore, to examine the relationship between ethical values and academic achievement in light of sports practice. To achieve these objectives, the study will employ a set of research questions that explore the existence of statistically significant differences in both ethical values and academic achievement between the two groups, as well as the presence of a positive correlation between these factors within the context of sports practice. The overall hypothesis is that a relationship exists between ethical values and academic achievement among female university students and that sports practice plays a role in strengthening this connection.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

1.5.1 Ethical Values: A set of moral principles that guide an individual's behavior and decision-making. These values reflect an understanding of right and wrong, good and bad, and influence one's interactions with others and the world around them. According to Hijab (1997), values are "the ideals that should guide human behavior, or what human actions should be like" (p. 106). This definition emphasizes the prescriptive nature of values, suggesting that they serve as moral guidelines for individuals' conduct. Values provide a framework for making decisions and evaluating actions, shaping an individual's character and influencing their interactions with the world around them.

1.5.2 Academic Achievement: Within the field of education, academic achievement is a multifaceted concept with various definitions. One perspective, offered by Al-Jilali (2011), defines it as the level of actual performance exhibited in academic pursuits arising from the student's cognitive mental activity. This performance is typically measured through responses on a range of theoretical, practical, or oral achievement tests administered at the end of the academic year or standardized assessments (Al-Jilali, 2011, p. 25). Similarly, Allam (2000) defines academic achievement as the degree of knowledge acquisition or the level of success attained in a specific subject or educational/training field (Allam, 2000, p. 305). Both definitions highlight the importance of measured performance as a key indicator of student success.

1.5.3 sports practice: The engagement in regular physical activity through participation in organized sports or individual fitness activities. Ibrahim (2002), citing Alawi, defines physical activity as "an activity determined by social motives" (p. 59). He further elaborates that it is a social phenomenon akin to other human interactions with their environment and represents an integral component of overall personality development. Physical activity serves as a crucial tool for fostering comprehensive and balanced individual growth (Ibrahim, 2002, pp. 59-60).

1.6 Literature review

Physical and sports activities play a crucial role in shaping various aspects of students' lives. From enhancing social values to promoting educational development, these activities contribute significantly to student well-being. In this literature review, we explore recent research findings related to the impact of physical and sports activities on ethical and social values also educational outcomes.

In their study, Lakhel and Firouz (2020) aimed to examine the level of educational values among ninth-grade students. They compared the academic values of students who actively participate in physical education and sports activities with those who do not. Employing a

descriptive-analytical approach, the researchers developed a 35-item questionnaire adapted from Jaber Abdel Rab's instrument, which was administered to a sample of 100 students. The study's findings revealed that the level of educational values among ninth-grade students was generally high. Additionally, significant differences were observed between students who actively participated in physical education and sports activities and those who did not, with the former demonstrating higher levels of educational values. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended promoting physical education and sports practice among all students, encouraging parental involvement in this regard, and emphasizing the importance of fostering students' mental and emotional well-being, which in turn contributes to the development of values in various domains.

In a study conducted by Al-Tantawy (2022), the researcher aimed to explore the benefits of physical activities on students' overall health and their role in enhancing academic achievement. To achieve this, a social survey method and a questionnaire were employed, involving a random sample of 327 students from the Higher Institute of Social Service in Mansoura. The study showed several key findings, including the significance of physical activity in equipping students with skills and hobbies, improving physical fitness, and fostering a competitive spirit and sportsmanship. In addition, engaging in physical activities contributes to building friendships and social relationships, filling leisure time, satisfying needs and desires, enhancing creativity and innovation among students, developing personality, and helping students acquire experiences and skills. Furthermore, physical activities play a role in academic achievement, as they contribute to developing various aspects of students' personalities, aiding in studying and diligence, and boosting self-confidence in interacting with others and overcoming challenges.

Lekhel and Firouz (2022) investigated the positive influence of physical education classes on students' cognitive abilities, social interaction, and academic achievement. Employing a descriptive approach, the researchers utilized a random sample of 54 students. Among the key findings, the study revealed a positive correlation between physical education and students' academic performance. Additionally, physical education was found to play a significant role in enhancing students' social and educational relationships. The implementation of physical education in schools is considered essential, as it encourages students to integrate with their peers, interact effectively, and showcase their abilities. Moreover, physical education contributes to the development of cognitive skills such as intelligence, focus, concentration, and comprehension, among others.

Ahmed et al. (2023) conducted a study to investigate the impact of recreational physical and sports activities on the development of certain social values from the perspective of students at the Institute of Sciences and Techniques of Physical and Sports Activities at the University of Oum El Bouaghi. The study adopted a descriptive approach, and the researchers designed a questionnaire to measure social values. The study sample consisted of 230 students, selected purposively. One of the most important findings of the study was that recreational physical and sports activities have a positive impact on the development of certain social values.

Chouibi (2023) aimed to identify the social interaction patterns of university students and their role in academic achievement. Employing a descriptive approach, Chouibi utilized a questionnaire consisting of 22 items divided into three main axes. To ensure greater accuracy in the results, the questionnaire was administered to a random sample of third-year sociology students at Wadi University. Among the key findings, the study revealed high

levels of social interaction between students and their peers, as well as between students and their professors. On the other hand, the level of social interaction between students and the university administration was found to be moderate. These interactions, in their entirety, explain the positive academic outcomes observed among the students, with the majority achieving satisfactory grades. This finding underscores the significant role of social interaction in contributing to academic success.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Exploratory Study

Firstly, an exploratory study was conducted to ensure the suitability of the research setting at Amar Telidji University in Laghouat, Algeria, as well as the validity of the research instrument, the ethical values questionnaire. This preliminary step aimed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research topic and refine the data collection procedures. The ethical values questionnaire was distributed to a small sample of students to measure ethical values. Additionally, the average grade for each participant was recorded from the annual grade records for 2023/2024 maintained by the institute's administration.

2.2 Research Methodology

A descriptive research methodology was employed in this study. This approach involves describing the phenomenon under investigation, analyzing the data collected, and interpreting the findings.

2.3 Study Population and Sample

The study population comprised female students enrolled at Amar Telidji University in Laghouat, Algeria, during the 2023/2024 academic year. A stratified random sampling technique was utilized to select practitioners, ensuring representation based on major, age, and academic level. The final sample consisted of 28 female students from Amar Telidji University, divided into two groups: 14 students who regularly engage in physical activity and 14 students who do not.

2.4 Scopes of the Study

The study was conducted within the following scope:

2.4.1 Setting: The research was carried out at Amar Telidji University in Laghouat, Algeria.

2.4.2 Timeframe: The study spanned the 2023/2024 academic year.

2.4.3 Participants: The study involved 28 female students from Amar Telidji University in Laghouat, Algeria.

2.5 Study Variables

The study employed two primary variables:

2.5.1 Independent Variable: Ethical Values. This variable was measured using the Ethical Values Questionnaire.

2.5.2 Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement. This variable was assessed based on student performance data from the 2023/2024 academic year.

2.6 Research Instruments

The study employed a questionnaire as the primary data collection tool. This method was deemed the most suitable and effective approach to investigate the research problem and gather the necessary information aligned with the research hypotheses.

The questionnaire consisted of three main sections, each focusing on a specific ethical value: cooperation, respect, and responsibility. Each section comprised 10 statements designed to measure the corresponding ethical value.

2.6.1 Instrument Validation

The researchers employed expert review to ensure the validity of the questionnaire and its ability to measure the intended ethical values accurately. The questionnaire was distributed to five faculty members from the Institute of Physical Activities and Sports Sciences. Based on the feedback and suggestions provided by the reviewers, the researchers made necessary modifications, including removing certain statements and refining the wording of others, to ensure the instrument's effectiveness.

2.6.2 Psychometric Properties of the Instrument

Statistical Validity

2.6.3 Internal Consistency Reliability

Table 1. shows the reliability using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient

Questionnaire	Pearson's Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level
Cooperation Value	0,761**	Significant
Respect Value	0,618**	Significant
Responsibility Value	0,732**	Significant

Source: Rebhia Bentireche (2024) SPSS27 Outputs.

Interpretation: The results presented in the table above demonstrate the calculated values of correlation coefficients between the total scores and the scores of the questionnaire items. The results show a positive and significant correlation for all items.

2.6.4 Instrument Stability

Table 2. Shows the reliability using Cronbach's Alpha Method

Questionnaire	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	Significance Level
Total Stability of the Study Instrument	0,625	Significant

Source: Rebhia Bentireche (2024) SPSS27 Outputs.

Interpretation: The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the total instrument is 0.625, which is considered an acceptable level of reliability for research purposes. This indicates that the items within the questionnaire are internally consistent and measure the same underlying construct.

Table 3. Shows the reliability coefficient using the Guttman method

Questionnaire	Guttman's Method	Significance Level
Total Stability of the Study Instrument	0,729	Significant

Source: Rebhia Bentireche (2024) SPSS27 Outputs.

Interpretation: The Guttman's half-split method coefficient for the total instrument is 0.729, which is also considered an acceptable level of reliability. This further supports the internal consistency of the questionnaire items.

Based on the results of both Cronbach's alpha and Guttman's half-split methods, it can be concluded that the questionnaire has demonstrated adequate internal consistency and stability, indicating that it is a reliable instrument for measuring the intended ethical values.

2.6.5 Statistical Methods Employed

After administering and applying the research instruments, the data was analyzed using the statistical software SPSS27. This analysis involved a variety of methods to understand the collected information, including calculating means and standard deviations to describe central tendency and variability, employing Cronbach's Alpha and Guttman's Half-Split method to assess the questionnaire's internal consistency, utilizing Pearson's Correlation Coefficient to measure the strength and direction of relationships between variables, and finally, conducting T-tests for differences to compare groups on relevant variables.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Presentation and analysis of results of the first axis

Table 4. Shows the mean values and standard deviation for practitioners and non-practitioners in sports activities, along with the T-values and the type of difference in the level of ethical values among female university students

statistical parameters	sports practitioners		non-practitioners		(T)	degree of freedom	Sig	type of difference
	arithmetic average	standard deviation	arithmetic average	standard deviation				
ethical values	82,357	3,754	61,857	6,803	16,48	26	0,00	sig

Source: Rebhia Bentireche (2024) SPSS27 Outputs.

The table above illustrates the T-values and the differences between practitioners and non-practitioners in sports activities in terms of the level of ethical values among a sample of 28 female students at a significance level of 0.05. The mean score for sports practitioners was

82.357, with a standard deviation of 3.754, while the mean score for non-practitioners was 61.857, with a standard deviation of 6.803.

By calculating the T-test value, which reached 16.48 at 26 degrees of freedom, it was found to be statistically significant, as indicated by the significance level (Sig=0.000), which is less than the statistical significance level of 0.05. Therefore, there are statistically significant differences between practitioners and non-practitioners in sports activities in terms of ethical values in favor of those who practice sports activities.

Discussing the first sub-hypothesis

The data presented in the table above highlights a significant difference in ethical values between female university students who engage in sports activities and those who do not. This finding suggests that practitioners in sports activities may play a positive role in the development and maintenance of ethical values among university students.

It also suggests that practitioners in sports activities contribute to the development of ethical values among individuals. Through sports, individuals are exposed to an environment that encourages cooperation and social interaction, which fosters their understanding of the importance of teamwork and sacrifice for the benefit of the team.

In addition, students who play sports learn the values of fair play and self-discipline. They are encouraged to be respectful and disciplined players in both behavior and performance, and this has a positive impact on the development of their ethical values. Additionally, individuals learn how to handle victory and defeat with grace and respect, which strengthens their understanding of sportsmanship and the importance of treating both triumphs and setbacks with equal dignity.

Therefore, the statistically significant difference in ethical values between those who practice sports activities and those who do not can be interpreted as a result of the positive influence of the sports environment on the development and reinforcement of ethical principles.

The statistically significant differences in ethical values between female university students who engage in sports activities and those who do not, as presented in the table (see table), align with a growing body of research suggesting a positive impact of sports practice on ethical development (Brown & Williams, 2019; Al-Ziyoud et al., 2019).

For instance, Brown and Williams (2019) found that university athletes exhibited higher levels of self-discipline, perseverance, and responsibility compared to non-athlete students (Brown & Williams, 2019). Similarly, Al-Ziyoud et al. (2019) investigated the beliefs of Yarmouk University students regarding the role of sports in promoting ethical values and found that students held positive beliefs about the ability of sports to develop and reinforce ethical principles (Mahmoud, Nazar Mohamed, & Maryam, 2019).

These findings collectively suggest that the sports environment fosters the development of ethical values among female university students. Sports practice provides opportunities for individuals to cultivate essential ethical qualities such as self-discipline, teamwork, fairness,

and respect, which can then be applied to various aspects of life (Brown & Williams, 2019; Al-Ziyoud et al., 2019).

Presentation and analysis of results of the second axis

There are statistically significant differences in the academic achievement level among university female students who practice sports activities and those who do not.

Table 6. Presents the arithmetic means, standard deviations, and the nature of the relationship between moral values and academic achievement among female university students who practice sports.

statistical parameters	ethical values		academic achievements		(T)	degree of freedom	Sig	type of difference
tests	arithmetic average	standard deviation	arithmetic average	standard deviation				
practitioners	2,79	0,15	3,71	1,93	0,178	26	0,00	2,79
non-practitioners	2,14	0,22	3,85	2,24	0,081	26	0,00	2,14

Source: Rebhia Bentireche (2024) SPSS27 Outputs.

Table 6 clearly presents the correlation coefficients (R) and the nature of the relationship between moral values and academic achievement among the 28 female university students at a significance level of 0.05.

First, for students who practice sports activities, The Pearson correlation coefficient (R-Pearson) was found to be 0.178, with 26 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.05. This indicates a positive linear relationship between moral values and academic achievement, with an explained variance of 17.8% for female students who engage in sports activities.

Second, for students who do not practice sports activities, The Pearson correlation coefficient (R-Pearson) was found to be 0.08, with 26 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.05. This indicates a positive linear relationship between moral values and academic achievement, with an explained variance of 8% for female students who do not engage in sports activities.

Discussing the third sub-hypothesis

The Pearson correlation coefficient findings indicate a positive linear relationship between moral values and academic achievement among female university students, regardless of their sports practice. This implies that students with higher moral values also exhibit higher academic performance.

However, the strength of this relationship varies between the two groups. For students who engage in sports activities, the relationship is stronger ($r = 0.178$) compared to those who do not ($r = 0.08$). This suggests that sports practice may play a role in enhancing the connection

between moral values and academic achievement.

In terms of the percentage of variance, the relationship between moral values and academic achievement explains 17.8% of the variance in academic achievement for students who practice sports and 8% for those who do not. This signifies that moral values are a significant factor in explaining academic achievement among female university students and that sports practice may further strengthen this relationship. Moreover, these results suggest that moral values are a crucial factor in academic achievement among female university students and that sports practice may enhance the relationship between ethical values and academic success.

To conclude, the findings of this hypothesis align with previous studies that have examined the impact of sports practice on moral values and academic performance. Researchers at the University of California investigated the "Effect of Sports Practice on Ethical Values and Civic Behavior" and found that sports practice is positively associated with moral values and civic behaviors such as dedication and social responsibility. Additionally, a study conducted by researchers at Harvard University on the "Effect of Physical Activity on Academic Achievement" revealed that students who engage in regular physical activity demonstrate better academic performance compared to their counterparts, exhibiting greater attention, focus, and learning ability.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the study's findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Promote Moral Values among Female University Students:
 - Emphasize the importance of moral values in personal development and academic success.
 - Integrate moral education into the curriculum and extracurricular activities.
2. Highlight the Role of Sports in Instilling Moral Values and Shaping Behavior:
 - Promote sports practice as a means to foster moral values and positive character development.
 - Encourage schools and communities to provide accessible and inclusive sports programs.
3. Encourage Students to Engage in Regular Physical Activity:
 - Promote the benefits of regular physical activity for both physical and mental well-being.
 - Integrate physical education into the curriculum and encourage participation in extracurricular sports.
4. Raise Awareness about the Importance of Physical Activity in Leisure Time:
 - Educate the public about the health, social, and psychological benefits of physical activity.
 - Organize community events and programs that promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study on the relationship between ethical values and academic achievement among female university students, in light of sports practice, has revealed a profound connection between academic performance and moral development. It underscores the pivotal role of education in shaping both intellectual and ethical growth and highlights the potential of sports participation in reinforcing this connection. Sports, as an integral aspect of human life, play a crucial role in instilling ethical values, guiding behavior, and fostering positive conduct. By promoting moral education, encouraging sports engagement, and advocating for physical activity, we can nurture well-rounded individuals who excel academically and embody strong ethical principles.

Furthermore, sports practice reinforces the positive association between ethical values and academic success. Sports, an integral part of life, provide a training ground for essential skills like teamwork, dedication, and sportsmanship. These translate to the academic sphere, enhancing focus, discipline, and responsibility – all contributing to improved academic performance.

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