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# The Nexus Between Sports Participation Sustainable Peace: Mediating Role Of Religious Orientation

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#### **ABSTRACT**

This study examined linkages between sports participation, religious orientation and sustainable peace among students in higher education institutions in Southern Region of KP, Pakistan. In this linking, recognizing potential of sports as a catalyst for positive social change and peacebuilding, this study delves into how the religious orientation may influence the relationship among sports participation and sustainable peace. The research methodology involves the quantitative survey administered to a representative sample of students from various HEIs in region. The statistical analyses, including association and mediation, are employed to examine the relationships among these variables. The study aimed to examine hypothesized relationships <sup>1</sup> amid the research leading variables like independent, mediator and dependent variables to examine desired relationship and extract the desired information to reach the conclusion, make recommendations and contribute the existing literature. The results provide innovative information about novel topic which are expected to contribute the knowledge from different leading parameters in order to produce new knowledge in existing literature that may help the readers in understanding the research issues from different dimensions.

**Keywords:** Nexus, Sports Participation Sustainable Peace, Religious Orientation & Higher Education Institutions.

#### INTRODUCTION

The sports participations are widely recommended as significant tools for bringing positive and desired changes in attitudes and behaviors of individuals especially students leading toward the sustainable peace [1]. The sports participations inspire students to make sure their contribution in sports for shaping their behaviors towards social adjustments that are important for producing the expected outcome [2]. The sports and religion have been explored in diverse context with the diverse significant outcomes likewise participation sports in always encouraged by religion due to its significant role in nurturing the students' behaviors toward peaceful environments [3]. The sports participation is thus important in producing desired

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outcomes for developing anticipation for obtaining outcomes as per standards. The sports participation is vital for effective execution of strategies that are significant for shaping students' attitudes towards desirability for progresses that inspires students to maintain their outcome behaviors in producing desired outcomes [4]. The students always show their readiness for participating in sports for attaining their outcomes that not only carries successive attitudinal responsiveness in their behaviors but also conveys the religious orientations [5].

The participation is sports inspires the students, teachers and coaches to attain desirability for encouragement and approachability for sustaining desired outcomes over successful application of desired standards [6]. These approaches are consequently significant toward the orientation of religious approaches that produces anticipation for realizing important tasks for developments [7]. The sustainable peace is considered as significant phenomenon that is the outcome of sports participation, social development and religious orientations in different situations and outcomes to realize the environment for developing positive leading outcome that are desired from different situational desired outcomes [8]. The sports participations and religious orientation are vital for producing the desired outcomes through effective and leading consequences required for desired developments and successes in different situations [9]. The students are required to sustain their behaviors towards the desired orientations that are significant for sustaining the environments as per desired outcomes to produce religious orientations for success [10]. The religious and social adjustments and developments for peace are vital for producing desired and leading outcomes for success thereby engaging in sports as a means of maintaining good health and stewardship of their physical appearance

The participation in religiously allied sports events or teams can strengthen social bonds within religious communities, promoting a sense of solidarity and belonging as required for determining the different outcomes [8]. In this connection, many religious traditions emphasize values such as fairness, teamwork, and others' respect that are integral towards sportsmanship as participation in sports provide opportunities for individuals to reinforce and internalize values, contributing to their moral and ethical development [11]. The participation in sports promote physical fitness and mental well-being, that are important aspects of all-inclusive health according to many religious teachings [12]. In this connection, many religious traditions emphasize the values such as fairness, teamwork, and respect that are integral to sportsmanship as participation in the sports provide opportunities for individuals to reinforce and internalize values, contributing to their moral and ethical development [13]. The religious organizations may use sports as a means of outreach and community rendezvous, welcoming individuals from the diverse backgrounds to participate in the sports activities regardless of their religious affiliation [14]. This inclusivity promotes social integration and interdenominational relations within communities towards desired sustainable cohesion [10].

# **Objective & Hypothesis**

- 1. To examine the association between sports participation, sustainable peace and religious orientation in particular context  $(H_1)$ .
- 2. To examine mediating role of religious orientation in linking the sports participation & sustainable peace in particular context  $(H_2)$ .

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

The sports participation plays significant role in determining the attitudes and behaviors of the individual towards the desired optimistic outcomes. The participation in sports is thus vital for realizing the diverse significant tasks and related outcomes that are imperative in attaining these desired consequences [2]. Sports participation leads to social adjustments and developments that are overwhelmed at sustainable peace along with the provision of desired and required provision for sustaining the conducive environments [7]. The sports participation is thus vital for obtaining the desirability and commitments that produces desired outcomes through active and effective executions of many sports strategies and tactics for peaceful environments [15], that are dynamic for predicting the various leading outcomes necessary for desired success. Thus, engaging in sports activities within religious societies inspires community well-being and resilience as by providing chances for physical activity, emotional support, social interaction, these activities give to overall resilience of communities, strengthening capacity to endure adversity and promote sustainable peace [16]. The linkages between the sports participation, sustainable peace, religious orientation highlight interconnectedness of these domains and potential for collaborative efforts to address complex challenges.

## **Sports Participation**

The sports participation is important for students in academic institutions as it provides them an opportunity for developing attitudes and behaviors in optimistic manners towards execution of successes outcomes based upon social and peaceful developments from the different dimensions [10]. The sports participation is further imperative for managing situation toward desirability and commitment to use diverse approaches that are critical to withstand the anticipated development and success [17]. The sports participation therefore brings positive change in minds and behaviors of students in higher education institutions for maintaining the desired outcomes for anticipated required in particular situations [7]. The sports and peace are significant predictors for the desired developments that requires additional and leading consequences. The sports participation plays the vital role in students' development, contributing to physical, emotional, social, and cognitive evolution in various ways that helps in determining the desired outcomes [18]. The engagement in sports inspires physical capability, helping students develop endurance, strength, coordination and flexibility as regular physical activity over the sports can reduce risk obesity, heart disease, and other health issues, arranging the foundation for a healthy lifestyle [19], overwhelmed at the desired outcomes.

## **Religious Orientation**

The relationship amid sports participation, social development & religious orientation is complex and can vary depending on cultural contexts and religious traditions [11]. The participation in sports promote physical fitness and mental well-being, that are vital aspects of all-inclusive health according to many religious teachings. Religious institutions may inspire their team to engage in sports as a means of maintaining the good health and stewardship of their physical appearance [20]. However, when approached thoughtfully and inclusively, sports can serve as a powerful tool for promoting social cohesion, youth development, interfaith understanding, and holistic well-being within religious communities and beyond as sports participation, sustainable peace, and religious orientation intersect in many ways, offering opportunities for promoting peacebuilding diverse exertions [21]. Thus, engaging in the sports

activities within religious societies encourages community well-being and resilience as by providing chances for the physical activity, emotional support, and social interaction, these activities donate to resilience and health of communities, strengthening their capacity to endure the adversity and promote sustainable peace [22]. These are leading determinants that inspires the students to participate effectively in different games for different outcomes.

#### **Sustainable Peace**

The sustainable peace is significant for students in different situations and has been considered as significant outcome of various approaches and potential efforts required for comprehending the situations towards anticipated development and required success as required by students in different situation [23]. The students are required to show their commitment and motivation that are required for comprehending situational and contextual responsiveness required to realizing the different tasks for diverse outcome [24]. The sustainable developments and peace are vital for producing the desired outcomes that are required for comprehending the situational analysis as required in different situations for different outcomes required in different situations for diverse outcomes [25]. The sports involvement donates to sustainable peace by promoting reconciliation, understanding and cooperation among communities and individuals as sports bring the people together across divides like ethnicity, race, religion, socioeconomic status and nationality [26]. By participating in sports together, the individuals develop bonds based upon common experiences and interests, breaking down stereotypes and prejudices that can fuel conflict [27]. The sporting activities offer chances for interaction and dialogue among individuals with diverse background and perspectives [23].

## Sports participation, Religious Orientation & Sustainable Peace

The relationship between sports participation, religious orientation, and sustainable peace is the multifaceted and intricate, with each element playing role in promoting understanding, conflict resolution and harmony [10]. The religious orientation and sports participation serve as vehicles for bridge-building and dialogue among diverse communities as sports events and teams often bring together individual from diverse background, fostering interaction, mutual understanding [28]. Congruently, the interfaith initiatives and religious gatherings provide spaces for dialogue, reconciliation and cooperation [29]. By indorsing interaction and communication across cultural, religious, social divides, sports participation and religious orientation donate to building bridges of understanding and fostering sustainable peace [30]. The participation and religious orientation offer prospects for conflict resolution and reconciliation, affected by violence or division as sports-based peacebuilding programs use power of sports to bring together groups conflicting, promote teamwork [31]. Similarly, religious organizations and leaders play crucial role in peacebuilding efforts by promoting forgiveness, reconciliation and healing [28]. By engaging in sports activities and interfaith dialogue, communities work towards overcoming past grievances and building the shared vision for peace.

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current study is quantitative in nature and aims to examine certain relationship in chasing the hypotheses of studies to reach conclusion. This study used the positivism approach to chasing the relationships among research variables of study. The research approach specifies the manner through which data is collected from the respondents by accessing them to reach their responses about the variables of research in order to reach required conclusion through justification and explanation towards desired outcomes. The population of interest in research is students from higher education institutions of KP, Pakistan wherein 1890 students from departments of sports sciences and physical education from southern region wherein a sample is drawn from population (330), has been extracted by using the sampling formula widely used in the social research studies. Thus, 330 questionnaires were distributed among which 322 were recollected and used for the analysis in study.

Similarly, the simple random technique was used to access the population of study which comes under the non-probability technique to ensure the required data from the different dimensions. Similarly, both primary and secondary data were used to collect the data from the respondents and from the existing knowledge databased to analyze the data to reach the desired conclusion. The questionnaires were adopted from previous research studies. Similarly, 5-point Likert scale was used to record the responses of the respondents about research issues in particular context to access the respondents and attaining the desired outcomes. The mediation analysis was used to examine mediation role of religious orientations in linking sports participation and sustainable peace in order to produce new knowledge about the existing realities. The mediation is a process that is used to examine the role of any third variable in linking the independent and dependent variables of study.

## RESULTS OF STUDY

The results of study are presented in this section that are mainly the outcomes of the statistical procedures that are used to examine relationships among the research variables of study in order to extract the desired information and making the required decisions about relationships among research variables.

**Table 1 Reliability Statistics** 

Variables	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Sports Participation	10	0.882
Religious Orientation	10	0.794
Sustainable Peace	10	0.794
Overall Value	40	0.901

The reliability statistics revealed the important information in describing the internal consistency among the research instrument through different measures. The results through Cronbach Alpha revealed that all the values regarding the research variables likewise sports participation (0.882), religious orientation (0.794), and sustainable peace (0.794) as well as overall internal consistency (0.901) that are above the threshold values and thus having the sufficient internal consistency in research measures.

**H1:** There is positive and significant association amid sports participation, religious orientation and sustainable peace.

## **Table 2 Correlation Analysis (H1)**

Correlations			
		[1]	[2]
Sports Participation	Pearson Correlation	1	.423**
[1]	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	322	322
Religious Orientation	Pearson Correlation	.423**	1
[2]	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	322	322
Sustainable Peace [3]	Pearson Correlation	.666**	.450**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	322	322
**. Correlation is signifi	cant at the 0.01 level (2-	tailed).	·

The association was hypothesized through first hypothesis that was examined over correlation to confirm strength and direction in association among the research variables like predictor (sports participation), mediator (religious orientation) and the criterion variable (sustainable peace). The results revealed that there exists the significant association among research variable like sports performance and sustainable peace (R = .0666 & P = .000), the sports performance and religious orientation (R = .0423 & P = .000), and religious orientation and sustainable peace (R = .0450 & P = .000). results offer significant information in reaching conclusion and therefore hypothesis about association is accepted.

**H2:** The religious orientation significantly mediated the link between sports participation, and sustainable peace.

# **Mediation First Step (a)**

**Table 3 Model Summary** 

R	R Square	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.4235	.1793	.5700	85.7532	1.0000	320.0000	.0000

**Table 4 Coefficients of Regression** 

Model	Coefficient	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.7861	.1503	11.8828	.0000	1.4904	2.0819
Sports	.4533	.0490	9.2603	.0000	.3570	.5496
Participation						

Predictor: Sports Participation Criterion: Religious Orientation

## Mediation Second & Third Steps (b & ć)

## **Table 5 Model Summary**

R	R Square	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.6913	.4780	.1990	163.7025	2.0000	319.0000	.0000

## **Table 6 Coefficients of Regression**

Model	Coefficient	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.4040	.1206	11.6461	.0000	1.1668	1.6412
Religious	.1512	.0355	4.2537	.0000	.0812	.2211
Orientation						
Sports	.4589	.0350	13.1054	.0000	.3900	.5278
Participation						

Predictor: Sports Participation, Religious Orientation

Criterion: Sustainable Peace

# **Mediation Fourth Step (c)**

# **Table 7 Model Summary**

R	R Square	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.6661	.4437	.2114	283.4578	1.0000	320.0000	.0000

**Table 8 Coefficients of Regression** 

Model	Coefficient	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.6740	.1076	15.5544	.0000	1.4623	1.8858
Sports	.5274	.0313	16.8362	.0000	.4658	.5891
Participation						

Predictor: Sports Participation Criterion: Sustainable Peace

The mediating role of religious orientations in the relationship between sports participation and sustainable peace was hypothesized through fourth hypothesis. In this connection, all the four paths of mediation provide the significant information in reaching the mediation decision. The results revealed that first paths show prediction of religious orientation over sports participation wherein 17.93% variance occurred in religious orientations through sports participation with the significant impact ( $\beta$  = .4533 & P-value = .0000). The second and third path confirmed prediction of sustainable peace through the sports participation and religious orientations wherein 47.80% variance occurred in sustainable peace along with significant impact over sports participation ( $\beta$  = .4589 & P-value = .0000), and religious orientations ( $\beta$  = .1512 & P-value = .0000) that offer clued to fourth path.

The fourth path of mediation revealed the information about the direct relationship thereby the prediction of sustainable peace through sports participation wherein 44.37% variance was also occurred in sustainable peace through sports participation with the significant influence upon predictor on criterion variable ( $\beta$  = .5247 & P-value = .0000). The results revealed that religious orientations partially mediated connection between sports participation and sustainable peace due to decrease in the coefficient values from 0.5247 (direct relationship) toward 0.4589

(indirect relationship) while coefficient values remained the same. Thus, religious orientations partially mediated the relationship between sports participation and sustainable peace as per results from mediation procedure.

#### DISCUSSION

The participation is sports inspires the coaches, students, and teachers to attain the desirability for praise and approachability for sustaining desired outcomes over successful implementation of desired standards [6]. sports participation is vital for nurturing attitudes of students towards the social and religious developing orientations that are significant for promoting desired outcome for accomplishment and success [10]. The sports help in promoting students' skills and knowledge that helps in determining desirability and required assurance for attaining the desired outcome for anticipated success [32]. The sports bring people from diverse ethnic, cultural, socio-economic domain together on shared platform toward desired outcome [17]. By harnessing power of sports, societies can work towards building a more inclusive and peaceful world for future generations [11]. The relationship amid the sports participation, social development, and religious orientation is complex, vary depending on cultural contexts and religious traditions [14]. Sports participation leads to social adjustments and developments that are overwhelmed at sustainable peace along with the provision of desired and required provision for sustaining conducive environments [7]. Both sports and religious organizations have potential to influence norms and promote positive social change [32].

Thus, participation in sports transcends differences in ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, age, and gender, providing individuals from the diverse families with opportunities to come together, collaborate and celebrate shared attainments [33]. The linkages among sports participation, social development, sustainable peace, and religious orientation highlight interconnectedness of these domains and potential for collaborative efforts to address complex challenges [34]. The teamwork and partnership amid sports organizations, governments, and groups are key to advancing social development through sports [20]. It involves providing resources, and support they need to make the informed decisions, exercise rights, and actively participate in economic, social, and political lives [35]. Sports involvement promotes inclusion by bringing individuals from diverse experience, cultures and experiences [36]. The integrating sports programs into higher education institutions can be the powerful way to promote sustainable peace amid students that subsidize toward societal broader peace-building efforts [30]. The religious teachings emphasize often the standing of ethical honesty, conduct, and integrity in all aspects of lives, including sports towards desired leading developments.

By mixing religious orientation into sports in inclusive and thoughtful ways, coaches can help students develop not their physical assistances but their moral and spiritual character, nurturing holistic approach toward personal growth [37]. So, religious organizations organize often sports leagues, and recreational activities as a way to bring the people together, build associations, and encourage fellowship among students [38]. The religious orientation alignment with the religious beliefs, particular religion, values and practices towards different tasks [39]. Through meditation, prayer, worship, and other spiritual follows the individual seeks to nurture their soul, find internal peace, and experience the sense of connection and transcendence with something greater than themselves [40]. Sports involvement and religious

orientation include often chances for outreach and service to others [20]. The chaplains and spiritual advisors provide guidance on integrating faith into athletic pursuits and fostering a sense of balance and well-being [18]. Thus, many higher institutions student-led cater to individuals with specific religious orientations. These clubs may organize sports teams, that offer opportunities for students to engage in sports activities within religiously caring environment [36]. In this connection, these shared experiences break down the barriers, among individuals from diverse families, ultimately contributing towards desired social development and cohesion.

## **CONCLUSION**

The present research investigates multifaceted relationship amid sports participation, sustainable peace, and religious orientation. It delves into how engaging in the sports activities can serve as a dynamic tool for fostering and sustaining peace and positive societal changes within communities. The study explores mediating role of religious orientation, considering how individuals' religious practices and beliefs influence their engagement in sports and, then, contribute to broader peace-building efforts and social cohesion. Through the empirical analysis and theoretical frameworks, research sheds light on complex interplay between these factors, offering insights into strategies for leveraging sports as a catalyst for social development and sustainable peace, while considering the influence of religious perspectives in shaping these dynamic phenomena. The exploration of sports participation as a dynamic tool for the social development and sustainable peace, with the mediating role of religious orientation, highlights intricate relationship between these variables. The study provides significant information in reaching conclusion and thereby suggesting some valuable recommendations.

#### Recommendation

- There is a need to develop and implement sports programs that are open and inclusive
  of individuals from diverse religious backgrounds, ensure that sports facilities and
  activities are accommodating and welcoming to all participants, regardless of their
  religious beliefs or practices.
- 2. There is a need to incorporate religious values and teachings into sports programming, emphasizing themes of cooperation, compassion, and respect, provide opportunities for participants for deeper understanding of how religious orientation effects their behaviors and attitudes.
- 3. There is a need to organize interfaith sports initiatives and events that bring together individuals from different religious communities to participate in collaborative activities and promote mutual understanding and respect and fostering dialogue on shared goals and values.
- 4. There is a need to engage religious leaders as partners in promoting sports for sustainable peace and social development, provide resources to empower religious leaders to leverage their influence to promote positive role of sports in their communities and advocate for peacebuilding efforts.
- 5. There is a dire need to invest in grassroots sports initiatives that empower communities to address social challenges and promote peacebuilding at the grassroots level, it

provides funding, technical help, and capacity-building support to develop and implement sports-based interventions.

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