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SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN ATHLETES AND NON-ATHLETES

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ABSTRACT
The socioeconomic status of retired sportspersons who have achieved at higher level in sports need to be given attention. Studying the socioeconomic status of sportspersons is important to understand their quality of life. Sportspersons participate in sports at an early age and spend considerable period of time in practice and competitions. The socioeconomic status of sportspersons in India varies from sports to sports. Also, the socioeconomic status of athletes participating in sports and games other than cricket is difficult to imagine. Majority of them struggle for their livelihood during and after their sports career. The sport is an excellent means for socialization. The sport is important for overall development of an individual. For this purpose, selected forty-one male Retired sportspersons and forty-three male non-sportspersons. The socio-economic status of retired sportspersons is assessed through modified Kuppuswmany Socio-economic scale (2018). The results of the study were there is significant difference in 'socio-economic status' between retired sportsmen and non-sportsmen.

KEYWORDS: *Retirement, Sportspersons, Socio-Economic Status.*

INTRODUCTION

Physical activity during youth is associated with a variety of positive outcomes, including a reduced risk of obesity, improved cardiometabolic health, enhanced mental well-being, and better academic performance (Dale et al., 2019; Santana et al., 2017). However, these benefits often intersect with broader social determinants, particularly **socioeconomic status (SES)**—a measure of an individual's or group's position within a hierarchical social structure, determined by factors such as income, education, occupation, wealth, and place of residence.

In any society, individuals do not belong to a uniform socioeconomic class. SES significantly influences access to resources, opportunities, and overall quality of life. For **retired sportspersons**, particularly those who achieved recognition at higher levels, understanding their SES is essential, as it reflects their post-career living conditions and stability. It also serves as a motivational insight for aspiring athletes.

Athletes typically begin training and competing from a young age, dedicating a significant portion of their developmental years to sports. This intense focus often comes at the cost of academic pursuits or alternative career development, potentially limiting post-retirement livelihood options. In the Indian context, this challenge is further magnified, as financial support and recognition for sportspersons—especially in disciplines other than cricket—are often lacking. Many athletes struggle with economic hardship during and after their careers, despite their dedication and contributions to national pride.

Sport, while being a powerful tool for socialization and holistic development, places disproportionate emphasis on competitive success rather than the athlete's long-term welfare. The **systemic oversight** of post-career support structures underscores the importance of assessing and addressing the socioeconomic realities faced by sportspersons.

Numerous psychological and environmental factors influence sports participation and performance—among them, SES plays a pivotal role. It affects motivation, access to training resources, opportunities to compete, and even long-term success in sport. The **home environment**, shaped by SES, can also impact a young athlete's drive to succeed and their psychological well-being (Sharma, 2015).

SES is not only a determinant of sports performance but also a key predictor of health outcomes. It encompasses multiple dimensions—income, education, occupation, property ownership, social status, community involvement, and even political and physical influence. These factors collectively determine an individual's or family's capacity to manage emergencies, sustain livelihood, and lead a comfortable life.

To assess SES, several standardized scales have been developed, tailored to both urban and rural settings. These include:

- Rahudkar Scale (1960)
- Jalota Scale (1970)
- Udai Pareekh Scale (1964)
- Kuppuswamy Scale (1976)
- Shrivastava Scale (1978)
- Kulshrestha Scale (1972)
- Bharadwaj Scale (2001)

These tools provide a structured approach to categorizing families or individuals based on various socioeconomic indicators.

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The **socioeconomic status of sportspersons**—especially those post-retirement—deserves focused attention. It not only determines their quality of life but also reflects the societal value placed on their contributions. A deeper understanding of SES can aid in policy formulation and the development of welfare programs for current and former athletes, thereby ensuring that their dedication to sport does not result in long-term personal disadvantage.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study comprised of the following objectives.

- The purpose of the study was to find out the socio-economic status of retired sportspersons who have previously represented Karnataka state in various sports and games and age matched male subjects with no sports background
- The study was to compare the socio-economic status between male retired sportspersons and age matched subjects with no sports background.

METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve the purpose of the study forty-one (N=43) male retired sportspersons who have previously represented Karnataka state in various sports and games and forty-three (N=43) age matched male subjects with no sports background category were selected. Their age range between 18 to 45 years. The raw data of retired sportspersons and age matched subjects with no sports background on socio-economic status was subjected to descriptive statistics and the results of men section.

The socio-economic status of retired sportspersons is assessed through modified Kuppuswmany Socio-economic scale (2018). Kuppuswamy socioeconomic scale was initial projected within the year 1976 by Kuppuswamy (1981). The dimensions take under consideration a composite score of the education of the pinnacle of the family, occupation of the pinnacle of the family together with total monthly financial gain of the family. This scale has been endlessly revised over the number of years. The overall evaluation ranges from 3-29 and categorizes families into upper, upper middle, lower middle, upper lower and lower socioeconomic status.

The questionnaire was administered to the selected subjects at their residence or workplace. The objectives of the questionnaire were made clear and honest responses were sought by the researcher. Descriptive statistics including Mean and Standard Deviation were employed for the present investigation. 'T' test was employed to compare the Socio-economic status of selected.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Mean and standard deviation were calculated for socio-economic scores of both male retired sportspersons and non-sportspersons. The results are given in table 2.

Table 2. Results on Mean and Standard Deviation of Socio-economic status of retired male and female sportspersons

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Socio-economic status	Sportsmen	41	15.46	3.81
	Non-sportsmen	43	17.05	2.71

From table 1 it is clear that the scores on socio-economic status of sportsmen is 15.46±3.81 and non-sportsmen is 17.05±2.71.

The raw data of retired sportspersons and age matched subjects with no sports background on selected socio-economic status was subjected to descriptive statistics and 't' test. The results of men section is provided in table 3.

Table 3 Summary of comparison between retired sportsmen and age matched subjects with no sports background in socio-economic status

	Groups	Mean±SD	't' score	Sig.
Socio Economic Status	Sportsmen (N=41)	15.46±3.81	-2.204	**.030**
	Non-Sportsmen (N=43)	17.05±2.71		

From table 3 it is clear that there is significant difference in '*socio-economic status*' between retired sportsmen (15.46±3.81) and non-sportsmen (17.05±2.71).

DISCUSSION

The present status of retired sportspersons was compared with their age matched counterparts to understand the repercussions in terms of their socio-economic status. There is significant difference in '*socio-economic status*' between retired sportsmen (15.46±3.81) and non-sportsmen (17.05±2.71). Non sportspersons seemed to have better socio-economic conditions as compared to their age matched counterparts. This is alarming and needs attention. Even in spite of performing at National and International levels their Socio-economic status is not satisfactory. In such a condition, they cannot set an example and motivate the younger sportspersons. Debois, Ledon and Wylleman (2015) explored how elite male athletes having had a long duration as well as successful sport career perceived the transitional challenges occurring during as well as after their sport career. Further, they identified the factors that facilitated or

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constrained their development at different domains of development. This study highlighted the importance to adopt a developmental (i.e., from the beginning of the career to the post-career stage) as well as holistic (i.e., athletic, psychological, psychosocial, academic-vocational) perspective when considering the development of talented athletes. It suggested that understanding how elite athletes may experience as well as cope with ups and downs punctuating their athletic career is indivisible from other concurrent domains of life development.

CONCLUSION

Non sportspersons have better socio-economic conditions as compared to sportsmen.

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