



# The Influence of Volleyball Team Sports in Growth and Development of Early Adolescent Volleyball Players in Secondary Schools of Benin

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**Abstract:** Team sports in secondary schools are hailed to be effective channel of developing positive characters in adolescents. However, some research indicates that sports is only a waste of extra-curricular time. This article aims to explore the influence of volleyball team sports in growth and development of early adolescent volleyball players in the secondary schools of Benin. Employing a quantitative descriptive approach, the study delves into the reasons why early adolescent students join team sports and develop their characters. Stratified random sampling was used to collect the data from 263 volleyball players in 24 volleyball teams displayed in 12 departments of Benin. For data analysis a descriptive statistical method was used. The study finds out that 35.7%, media 23.6% and family members 19% are the main reasons that stimulate early adolescents to join the team sports. The study further revealed that during participation in the team sports at schools, volleyball players importantly developed characters such as team work 18.6%, decision-making 14.4%, social interactions 14.1% and confidence 13.7%. Therefore, it is concluded that participation of adolescents in the volleyball team sports at schools motivated by friends, family members, media and help to build as well as nurturing positive character of the athletes which is among the missions of education. It is therefore recommended that sports trainers should teach adolescents the proper use of media and prevent them to use any substance abuse.

**Keywords:** Influence, volleyball team sports, early adolescents, character development, secondary schools

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## 1. Introduction

Volleyball is among the sports that are very popular in the world. It was invented in Massachusetts, United

States of America in 1895 by the William G. Morgan who was a sports trainer in the Young Men's Christian Association. The development of the game was made and currently volleyball is a team sport. On the court,

two teams are separated by the net and each team is made up of six players (Mbang et al., 2024). In 2017, volleyball was considered to be number five in the most popular sports worldwide where 800million people

played volleyball at least once a week (Rustam and Atamurodov, 2022).

The popularity of volleyball in Africa is not undermined because this game is currently the discipline spread almost in all African countries. From 260 million licensed players distributed in 220 national federations affiliated worldwide, Africa counts 53 affiliated national federations operating in African Volleyball Confederation. (Mbang et al, 2024).

In the Republic of Benin, Volleyball is a popular sport and the Fédération Béninoise de Volleyball (FBVB) ensures the promotion and development of the volleyball in the country. Currently 89 club amateurs and 28 professional clubs participated in the Beninese volleyball leagues in the season 2024-2025 (Mr. Medetongnon Franc Lokonon, National Technical Director). Important to realize, the ministry of education in Benin has incorporated volleyball sport in Physical Education and Sports in the secondary schools' programs where it is taught in fifth, fourth, first and final year (Agbodjogbe et al., 2019) and early adolescents form a big part of athlete, WHO and UNICEF (2023) clarify early adolescents as adolescents aged between 10-15 years old.

## 1.1 Statement of the problem

Everyone agrees that secondary school is one of the most important and critical phases of child's education. The majority of students in this secondary school are teenagers, and adolescence is a critical developmental stage characterized by quick changes in a person's physical, social, and psychological makeup. Secondary schools of Benin like other high schools that teach the Physical Education and Sports present volleyball as a vital element in comprehensive growth, fostering physical health, social connections and general wellness of students, and some of the schools create volleyball teams that play different competitions. Nevertheless, despite the acknowledged role of sports in secondary schools, there remains a remarkable gap in understanding the athletes' motives of joining volleyball team sports at schools. Equally important, secondary school sports are crucial for the growth and character development of students. Yet, little practical investigation has been carried out to examine what characters developed when a volleyball player joins and trains in a team sport at secondary schools. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to assess the influence of volleyball team sports in growing and developing the character of early adolescents' volleyball players in the secondary schools of Benin

## 1.2 Research questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the reasons which stimulate an early adolescent student to join a volleyball team sport at school?
2. What are the developed characters after joining a volleyball team sport at school?

## 2. Literature Review

This section reviewed the literature on volleyball teams sports in the secondary schools, the factors that influence new athletes to join these teams and the players characters development when participating in the school team sports activities.

### 1.1. Volleyball teams in secondary schools

Physical education is one of the modules taught in secondary schools and it has been noted to be not only the sources of knowledge but also the sources of athletic skills, good health, and educational values (Yingying and Tasi, 2024). Sports education has been found to play a significant role in actively developing player's character as well as imparting important values for successful life. A well-organised sports activities like training timetables and rules of the matches enforce discipline of student players and help them to develop self-control in their daily activities and facilitate their decision-making resulting in developing the athletes characters personalities (Bisa, 2023)

Based on physical education, the schools may create team sports and among the team sports in the secondary schools, volleyball is one of the popular team sports applied in the physical education where some schools initiate the competitive volleyball team (Bilgin and Kurcan, 2024). This team sport is made up of six players and a successful match depends on individual skills combined with teamwork as well as good communication among the team members (Zhu and Song, 2023).

Important to realize, choosing to join a team sport, a person is mostly stimulated by social network where friends, family, colleagues at schools and work influence the recruitment of someone to join the sport team (Dalen and Seippel, 2021). Similarly, Bailey et al. (2013) accentuate that children's participation in sport derived not only from perception of competence but also from their friends and peer motivation, parents' encouragement and the way they get fun and enjoyment of that sport. Volleyball displays to be a cooperative team sport that provides the benefits of promoting leadership and social interactions (Nishanbayevich, 2024). In the same way, high school students who choose to join a team sport wish to play in the school team, and to continue as professionals based on the stars they watch in media like television (Signh, 2018).

Straton (2025) stresses that when young people want to choose careers, they primarily prioritize the salary and then opportunities for progression as well as creativity in their work.

On the other side, Dalen and Seippel (2021) emphasize that the influence of sport recruitment is linked to social network outside sports where a friend who is active in sports might lead other friends to look for a team sport. Also, media such as traditional and digital media encourage young people to participate in sports and significantly sports improve young people physical fitness (Deveci et al., 2023). Chengquan et al. (2025) highlight that the increase of participation of youth in sports is importantly driven by social media because social media gives adolescents easy access to favorable sports-related information that stimulates youth sports participation.

However, the overuse of media, particularly social media, plays a negative impact on students' athletes such as procrastination, loss of sleep depression, cyber-victimization (Brougham, 2021). Similarly, Lin et al. (2025) proves that social media addiction among the adolescents provokes negative emotions like anxiety and depression through interruption of sleep quality. Social media platforms engage the comparison of young athlete's body shapes which can increase dissatisfaction as well as negative feelings about one's physical appearance.

## **1.2. Growth and development of volleyball players in secondary schools**

Physical education plays an important role in the growth and development of a player such as physical fitness, motor skills and promotes positive health behaviors as well as human values through different sports activities. Also, physical education promotes communication, cooperation and respect among students (Brinkley et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2021). In the same way, Parveen et al., (2024) highlights that physical education/sport provides transformation of the character of young people during sport practice and teaching behavioral habits like confidence, motivation and persistence. Marini et al., (2021) emphasise that an athlete's character is developed during physical, sport and play activities.

Equally important, participation in secondary school sports is a good source of getting preferable character traits like fair play as well as sportsmanship that instill somehow the discipline in the athletes (Ong'ong'a *et al.*, 2010). Physical education goes beyond physical exertion, and it creates some other opportunities such as coordination, cooperation as well as camaraderie (Joshi, 2024).

In the same way, playing on a team is one way of improving in social interactions and interpersonal abilities (Joshi, 2024). Through team sports, students impressively develop skills in communication,

leadership and decision-making which are really beneficial in improving academic performance (Nishanbayevich, 2024). Again, team sport inculcates teamwork and competitive mentality as they do sports competitions (Joshi, 2024). Correspondingly, Sports competitions held in school evidently help to fulfil the mission of education that is nurturing positive character attribute like teamwork, respect, fair play as well as good citizenship (Kang al., 2024).

However, some people consider sport as a waste of time resulting in hindrance to academic performance due to the fact that student-athletes use extracurricular time to sport practice (Kibaki, 2015). On the other side, negative character may be developed in an athlete-student from peer pressure as well as lack of cooperation (Ani and Ukeje, 2024). On the negative side, during competition a student-athlete or a team sport of high school may use substance abuse like alcohol, cannabis, tobacco or others with the purpose of imparting confidence and exciting bravery during the match (Williams et al., 2020).

## **3. Methodology**

This section presents the research methodology that encompasses the research design, target population and population sampling, the method of data collection and techniques of data analysis, validity and reliability and ethical considerations.

### **3.1 Design**

This study employed a descriptive research design where it is structured approach used for gathering data from a sample of early adolescents playing volleyball in the secondary schools of Benin. The quantitative approach utilized a self-administered questionnaire where it gathered the information from the early adolescent's volleyball players. The questions administered were used to give a clear overview of the influence of volleyball team sport in growth and development of early adolescent volleyball players in secondary schools of Benin

### **3.2 Population and sampling**

According to Teddlie and Yu. (2007) sampling is a procedure that uses a small number of units from a given population as a basis for drawing conclusions about the whole population and the use of sample has shown not only a variety of profit but also drawbacks. Some of the interests of sampling are time as well as financial benefits. In this study the researcher has used a stratified sampling to collect the data, 263 respondents signifying two volleyball teams (female & male) in each of twelve departments of Benin was used as a sample.

### **3.3 Validity and Reliability**

The study used a face- to-face structured questionnaire, easy to understand and clear to respond. The researcher made sure that the study questions were put under

consideration so that the respondents could easily understand the questions for giving relevant information and to ensure the collection of valid data.

### 3.4 Ethical considerations

Before conducting this research, an informed consent was received from the entire group of respondents to confirm and ensure a willingness of perfect understanding as well as participation in the study. Permission to conduct the study was provided by the relevant authorities responsible for the respondents. The information was confidentially treated, and ethical aspects were considered during this study

### 3.5 Statistical treatment of data

Descriptive statistical method was used in the analysis of the data (Microsoft Office LTSC Professional Plus 2021). Tables and graphical representation visualized the disparities by showing the reasons why adolescents

join volleyball team sports at schools and the growth and development of characters after partaking in their teams.

## 4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, followed by the analysis and then discussions of the research questions.

### Socio-Demographics Characteristics

Data analysis starts with the presentation of respondents' demographics characteristics. Concerning gender, it is noted that 132 respondents represented by an average of 50.2 % were female while 131 represented by 49.8 % were male. Some participants were absent during data collection as the research considered two teams in every department and every team was composed of 12 volleyball players.

**Table 1:** Demographic Characteristics of Secondary School Volleyball Players

Characteristics	Frequencies	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	132	50.2
Male	131	49.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Age level of respondents</b>		
11 years old	9	3.4
12 years old	30	11.4
13 years old	85	32.3
14 years old	139	52.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Class level of respondents</b>		
6ème	44	16.7
5ème	92	35.0
4ème	75	28.5
3ème	45	17.1
2ème	7	2.7
1ère	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>100</b>

*Note:* Percentages are calculated based on the total (N = 263).

According to the age level of respondents, a high percentage is 52.9 per cent corresponding to 14 years old followed by 32.3 % and 11.4 % representing 13 and 12 years old respectively. Joining a volleyball team at school requires friends and colleagues at schools (Dalen and Seippel, 2021) and this age level is familiar with the school's system and have got many friends teammates at the school.

With regards to the class levels, a big number of students participating in volleyball sport team are found in the classes of 5ème equivalent to 35.0 % while 4ème and 3ème have got 28.5% and 17.1 % respectively. Normally, entering secondary schools' students participate to physical education modules and subsequent years they start to join sport teams due to their skills, their friends and peer motivation (Bailey et al. (2013).

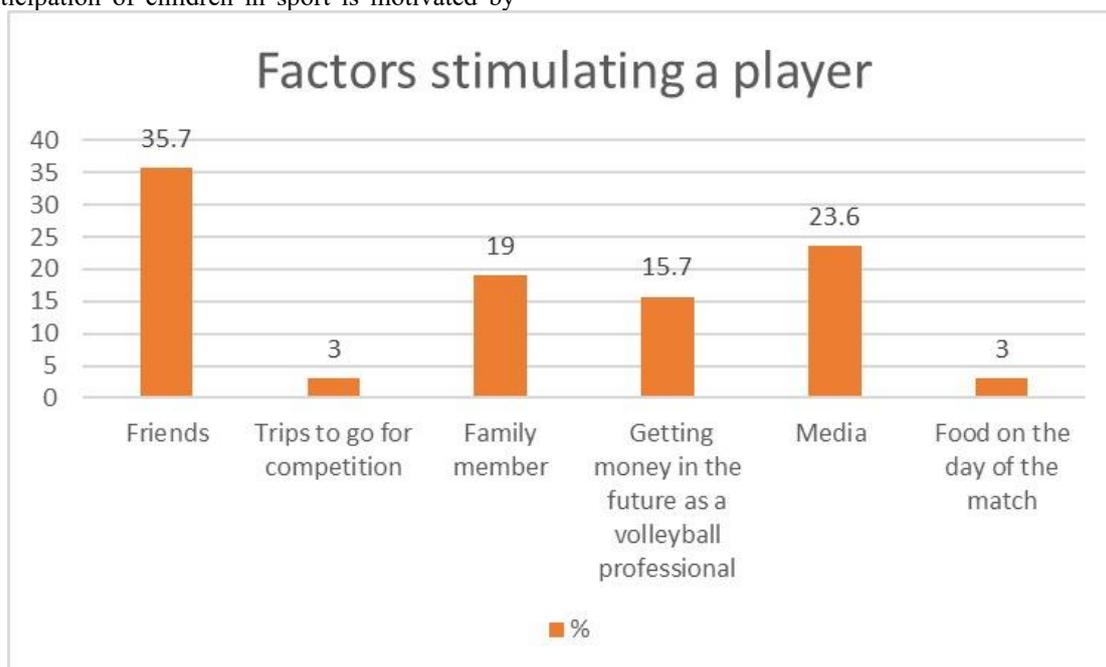
Question1. What motivates students to join the volleyball team sport at school?

Figure 1 provides insights of what motivates students at schools to join a volleyball team sport. There are a lot of reasons that stimulate students to become a part of a sport team at the secondary schools, in this research four reasons are very significant.

In the first place, friends at school and family members at home reported 35.7 % and 19 % respectively to be the key factors that stimulate the adolescents to join a team sport at schools. Respondents highlight that friends and family members have encouraged them to participate in volleyball activities. These findings are in the line with those of Dalen and Seippel (2021) who affirms that the friendship outside the sports is very imperative in team sport recruitment because one friend bring his/her friends to the sport team and familiarize them. Also, the recruitment to sports relies not only on

friends and colleagues at school but also on the family who influence an adolescent to partake in a team sport. Equally important, Bailey et al. (2013) emphasizes that the participation of children in sport is motivated by

perception of competence, parents, their friends and peer encouragement and the way they get fun as well as enjoyment during practice of that sport.



**Figure1: Factors that stimulate a player to join a volleyball team sport**

Again, media like radios, televisions, internet and newspapers motivate new volleyball players to join the team in the secondary schools and this was confirmed by 23.6 % of respondents. Chengquan et al. (2025), (Deveci et al., 2023) accentuate that it is important to largely imphasise the rise in youth participation in sports which is influenced by social media, as it provides young people with easy access to positive sports-related information that encourages their involvement in sports. Nevertheless, too much use of social media adversely affects the student athletes in terms of anxiety, depression, cyber-victimization (Brougham,2021)

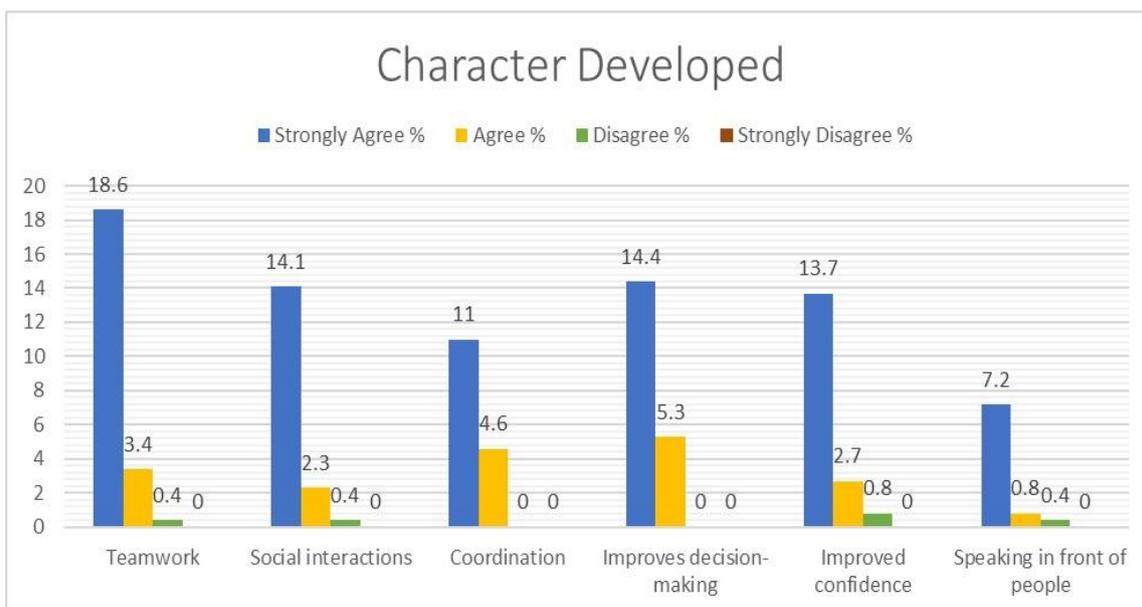
Then, 15.7 % reported to participate in volleyball team sport with the intention of being professional players and getting money in their future. Straton (2025) emphasizes that when young individuals are selecting their careers, their main focus is on the salary, followed by chances for advancement and the level of creativity in their jobs. Particularly, high school students refer to the professional stars that they watch in media (Signh, 2018).

Research question 2: What are the characters development after joining a volleyball team sport at school?

The results of personal development of early adolescent volleyball players after joining a school team sport

were presented in figure 2. The results show three important interests. Firstly, from 263 respondents a total of 18.6 per cent strongly agreed that since they joined volleyball team sport activities like practices, playing games, they developed character of teamwork than before as they worked as team. Joshi (2024) accentuates that team sport plays an important role in character development, it inculcates teamwork and as they do sports competition, players develop competitive mentality. Zhu and Song (2023) concluded that during the volleyball games, successful matches are mostly associated with advanced level of team work and effective communication between the team members and the lack of these components resulting in mach failure.

Secondly, the results present 14.4 percent of respondents strongly agreed that their participation in volleyball team sport has developed their character in terms of decision-making. One of the significant values acquired in sports is being responsible. Bisa (2023) stressed that sports instill students to be responsible for their correct decisions in various situations they pass through like they do during sports training as well as competitions. Particularly, volleyball is a dynamic sport where collaboration is very key to the synchronized movement and shared decision-making (Nishabayevich, 2024).



**Figure 2: Player Agreement on Character Development from Volleyball Team Sport**

Thirdly, Volleyball team sport developed the social interactions in early adolescent volleyball players, and this was confirmed by 14.1 per cent. The process of growth and development is done not only during physical and sports activities but also during competition activities. Participation in a team sports, students develop their social and their abilities to communicate, doing interactions and network effectively with other friends. They become socially connected and get healthier lives in the future (Joshi, 2024).

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study concludes that there exist many reasons why athletes join volleyball teams at secondary schools but friends, media and family members are the main triggers that push the early adolescents to join volleyball team sports during team practice as well as during competitions at their schools or away from the schools. In team sports at schools, student athletes predominantly develop some essential characteristics, notably teamwork, decision-making, confidence and social interactions as they train and compete, meet others during team training as well as competitions. When all of these above are positively applied, it contributes to support the behaviors and values of athletes that in return lubricate the mission of education to be achieved. Therefore, there is a need to educate the early adolescents about the proper use of media and forbid them to use any substance abuse as these are detrimental to their health.

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