

The value of professional athletes versus the value of professional teachers term...

[Profession](#)



Often the news reports on the multi-million dollar salary packages, promotion deals, and signing bonuses for athletes in every sporting discipline. In many cases, the average citizens can only dream of these figures. The society sees athletes running around, passing a ball or kicking a ball, or merely moving from one point to the other on the field, yet they make money that the professional teacher will never earn honestly in his lifetime. The question many individuals ask is: why are professional athletes making so much more money than professional teachers? The answer is simple, yet it makes no sense. Clearly, the professional athlete is more valuable to the society than the professional teacher who molds the lives of the nation.

Professional teachers are readily available in the society, but professional athletes, like diamonds are a rare commodity. Teachers provide a valuable service to the society and its development, but the society treats athletes as though they are more valuable than teachers. No one idolizes the teacher who makes the athlete into the well-rounded and literate individual who can read and sign a contract. No one idolizes the teacher who molds the life of the budding scientist who will discover the cure for cancer. Nevertheless, everyone adores that sweaty, tired ball-passing athlete who works for a few hours and makes millions of dollars every time he moves a ball or breaks a world record.

As a fact, some individuals see sports as the ultimate value to the society and therefore the athletes enjoy the adoration of these individuals. In fact, these individuals believe that the society cannot function without professional athletes. Professional teachers, on the other hand, do not get

the respect of salary packages that these professional athletes received even though the classroom is the foundation to the future. In fact, many individuals place far less value on professional teachers and their work because they believe that teaching is an accepted profession that anyone can join. This belief shows the ignorance of the society to what is truly important in the world.

The fact is that just like water and diamonds, professional teachers and professional athletes have different values to the society. Diamonds are rare and expensive, but water is cheap and appears in abundance in the society. Diamonds are luxury items that only the affluent can afford, but water is essential to life and humans. Nonetheless, diamonds, like professional athletes are scarce, but professional teachers are present at every turn of the society. Whether this belief is right or wrong has no bearings on the way individuals treat both professions. The sad truth is that without professional teachers, there would be no professional athletes to accept these exorbitant salaries.

William Anderson writes “ Americans have their priorities wrong; if they truly valued education more than professional sports, teachers would be paid more than professional athletes,” (Anderson, par. 2). In addition, he argues that “ people recoil at the high salaries players receive, salaries that seem to be out of kilter with what the rest of us earn,” (Anderson, par. 2). Michael Jordan received thirty-six million dollars to play in his last season with the Chicago Bulls. In contrast, not even most medical doctors earn such exorbitant sums during their entire working careers. The fact that athletes get much better pay suggests that people in the United States do not

appreciate what is really important to the society. The fact is that the balance between the salaries of the professional athlete and the professional teacher is not a moral or ethical issue, but instead, it is a matter of supply and demand. When an item is not available readily, then the item becomes expensive.

A professional athlete who can draw millions of viewers to the game is a scarce commodity. Buyers appear in droves to acquire the rare commodity and will pay a fortune to keep an athlete who pulls top dollar for the company. Who does not want to keep making money? Every individual wants to live comfortably and enjoy the finer things in life. So, if it means acquiring the most talented athlete at the highest cost, then it does not matter. The fact is that such an athlete will bring more financial success to the company than the company pays to acquire the athlete. The harsh question is: what monetary gains can a professional teacher take to the table? The majority of the society cannot understand the financial benefits that a teacher can bring to a multi-million dollar corporation.

In fact, one can further liken the professional teacher to the abundance of water. While water is important, it is widely available in most inhabited regions. Therefore, the value becomes relatively inexpensive. If one passes on the gallon of water before one's eyes, another gallon is available at the next turn. The analogy is unfair to say the least, but it is frighteningly true. There will always be an abundance of professional teachers, but a gifted player comes once in a lifetime. Clearly, the more acceptable the product that is in demand is; the lower the value of the product.

Anderson further notes “ the gap between the average salaries for teachers

and professional athletes in the last two decades has grown considerably,” (Anderson, par. 3). While one may argue that the statistics show that the society places more value on the sport, there is also the indication that the explosive growth in the salary of the professional athlete suggests that “ individuals –including teachers – have become more prosperous,” (Anderson, par. 3). This argument questions the conventional view that professional athletes are more important than professional teachers as the “ macroeconomic statistics like the consumer price index allegedly tell us that real incomes have fallen for the past three decades,” (Anderson, par. 4). it is hard to form solid arguments against these numbers as the economy declines and many individuals cannot enjoy the benefits of luxury. Nevertheless, there are grounds for further debates as professional athletes continue to enjoy high salaries while the average government worker live under menial conditions because.

When one talks of the value of professional teachers against the value of the professional athlete, one must look at the limits to the choices in finding a professional athlete who can raise the financial status of the organization. The reality is that money changes the moral and ethical practices of individuals. There is no choice between a professional athlete and a professional teacher because the difference between the two rests in how much each employer values his employee. Arguably, teachers offer much to the unshaped minds they face on a daily basis, the professional teacher molds the minds of these children and make them valuable contributors to the society. But, this is where the importance of the professional teacher stops.

The teacher does not work alone as many teachers help to shape the lives of each child. The children then take their knowledge and use it for good or bad. On the other hand, the professional basketball player, for example, scores an average of twenty or thirty points per game and single handedly takes his team to the winning the championship games. Of course, every basketball team will want the player and so every owner willingly bets his last dollar in the hope of getting this player to bring stardom to his team. The fact is that teachers are important to life, but the professional athlete is important to the financial success of the organization. Teachers are quite necessary for the building of the nation, but in a world that thinks in dollars and signs, the professional athlete takes precedence over the actual value of the teacher.

The harsh reality is teachers are excellent at their jobs. One may argue that even a mediocre teacher can add positive changes in the lives of the student; but, the truth is that teaching is a noble profession that does not provide the route to stardom. Aspiring athletes become superstars because of their rare talents and in a few cases because of their strong dedication to the sport. The top athlete pay high personal costs to get to the top, others try but cannot achieve the same stardom. Only a small percentage of the athletes in the world make it to stardom. The fact is that the world of athletics is competitive. A track and field athlete does not break the record when he gets up one morning.

One may argue that the athlete dedicates his entire life to training as he makes sacrifices that the professional teacher would not dream of making. This level of ability and dedication must be rewarded, but multi-million dollar

contracts for athletes who could only reach their “ immortal” states are not morally right. At some point in that professional athlete’s life, a professional teacher helped to hone the abilities and dreams of the athlete. Therefore, professional teachers should get salaries that show the appreciation for molding the lives of these professional athletes.

Arguably, not every professional athlete is a rare diamond, and is paid according to his value. Some athletes are silver, bronze, rubies or even coal, yet they receive salaries that make the professional teacher’s salary look like coins in a piggy bank. Similarly, professional teachers stand at different levels in the profession. Some are professors, public speakers, professional trainers, writers, or consultants but, they teach. Their pay depends on their perceived significance of the skillfulness each individual shows in relation to their skills. A professor with a notable reputation makes more money than the average teacher. Therefore, both professional teachers and professional athletes impact their respective fields. But, in the wider society, professional athletes bring in more revenue and achieve different levels of financial rewards.

Individuals who qualify as teachers make up a larger part of the working arena. In fact, the number is greater than the number of individuals who “ work” as professional athletes. The latter withstands the rigors of the professional discipline and operates in an arena that entertains large numbers of individuals at any given time. In addition, at the Super Bowl entertains a packed crowd and a television audience of over a billion people, while the average teachers engages at twenty-five or so students at a time. Can one really compare the ramifications of these salaries? The very idea of

trying to justify how a professional athlete gets more money than a professional teacher remains questionable. Every year over forty-thousand teachers receive their Doctorate in the United States alone. On the other hand, approximately thirty-five to forty players make it to the professional basketball leagues.

Interestingly, those who become professional players last for only a few years because of the game related injuries they receive. Professional teachers do not face much job-related hazards and so they can last at least forty years in the profession. These teachers automatically earn forty years salary and have the option of pension. What do professional athletes get after they can no longer play the game the truth is that most professional athletes only last for a while and after that there is no more exorbitant salaries to access once their time pass. With every decade comes a new “star” in the sporting arena. The world forgets about those who came before and if there is no proper investment, most professional athletes have nothing to rely on once they leave the sport. Therefore, one cannot compare the professional athlete’s salary to the professional teacher’s salary as the former lasts for the moment and the latter lasts for decades. In essence, the multi-millionaire athlete does not represent all professional athletes.

Arguably, the debate on the salary of a professional athlete against the professional teacher stems from the practice of priority. The society gives priority to sporting events therefore; the sporting arena makes professional athletes a priority. Individuals will spend their last dollar to see the super bowl or the Olympics, but will cry at the cost of education. When these organizations make the excess revenues, of course they will want to

continue to make these figures. Therefore, they choose to make their “money-machines” happy. The harsh reality is that large sums of money get poured into professional sports as individuals overspend on professional sporting events. Of course, instead of pouring this money into the sporting arena only, some could be given to professional teachers who help to mold the lives of these athletes.

Vilson writes “those that control these decisions know that most teachers really don't want to be anywhere else,” (Vilson, par. 8). In fact, “most teachers enter the profession wanting to help students achieve at their optimal levels, all while earning an appropriate salary that matches the perception of the work teachers do and the actual work they do,” (Vilson, par. 2). Arguably, being a teacher bears the same passion as being a professional athlete, and it carries the same amount of dedication.

Therefore, there is no reason for professional teachers to work all their lives and not be able to enjoy the luxuries of life.

Vilson looks at the fact that a football player's does not earn his salary based on the average household salary. In addition, Vilson writes “even if fans are public stakeholders in the fortunes and failures of these professional teams, the salary is actually a reflection of the inflated industries behind their payment,” (Vilson, par. 5). The typical average NFL franchise is worth nearly a billion dollars. The Dallas Cowboys by itself is worth approximately \$1.5 billion. With such a fortune, how can one blame the NFL for paying the exorbitant sums? The fact is that individuals find additional motivation when their salaries are very good. The professional athletes deserve the monies they work as they make this money with their skills and ability to pull in huge

crowds.

On the other hand, school teachers struggle to survive in “ a system currently under attack from corporatists trying to outsource education to the private sector,” (Wilson, par. 6). In New York City for example, the school’s operational budget is over eighteen billion dollars. Despite numerous pressures from the teachers’ union, the average teacher earns a little less than fifty-thousand dollars for minimum salary and just over ninety-five thousand as the maximum. The average professional athlete gets that amount of money for merely promoting an advertisement. Nevertheless, teachers have papers to grade, examinations to construct, and lectures to administer, but they continue to live from paycheck to paycheck. The professional teacher continues to work even the salary is quite low.

The harsh reality is that the professional sporting industry is multi-billion dollar business that requires hard work and dedication. Therefore, one cannot begin to compare the salary of these professional athletes to that of professional teachers. The government runs the business of teaching. The government wants to maintain as much of the money as they can and so they are only willing to pay the teachers what they really have to pay and nothing else. Arguably, the government is unwilling to make teachers superstars in the education industry as they maintain a structure wage package for all teachers. The action is unfair, but it is clear that the society does not value the teaching profession as much the sporting arena values their players. Conversely, the society dictates the amount of money that both groups earn. As a result, one questions the values that individuals place on the necessities of life. Individuals spend on the things that they believe

are important to them at the moment. People are willing to pay exorbitant sums to watch professional sports, but they are unwilling to pay exorbitant taxes. As such, professional athletes will always get more money than the professional teacher.

The moral implications of the situation are that people place values on the “wrong” things in life. Arguably, the professional athlete runs around and makes exorbitant monies. These athletes have talents, and yes, their talents are remarkable. Yet, teachers have special skills. They have to control classes that are often disruptive and uncontrollable. Nevertheless, they teach children skills that they will use for the rest of their lives. Still, they are not rewarded in the way that allows them to enjoy the luxuries of life. A good teacher teaches children and continues to learn about line of profession. In addition, they encounter parents who can be difficult to deal without the help of press agents or managers. The fact is that a number of teachers will never see the salary of the professional athlete their entire career.

Of course, teachers are aware of the fact that the salary package for teachers is low long before they enter the profession. Yet, they continue to work amidst the negative media representation and the limited prestige. Still, it is not fair, but the harsh conditions will continue until Americans place value on education, then things will continue to be the same. The fact is that in the society today, sport’s world is one of the largest revenue in the industry in the world. Diverse sports generate different amounts of revenue, nevertheless the amounts each sport generate is exorbitant. Arguably, sporting events presents itself as a place for people to relax and have fun. Of course individuals will gravitate towards having fun. Nevertheless, the typical

family has difficulty in buying tickets, and still approximately seventy thousand fans go to professional sporting games.

The public pays these athletes' salary, and yet they complain about the fact that professional athletes get exorbitant salaries. The fact is athletes get paid based on the market value. Teachers get paid based on what the government or the market pays. When the crowd at sporting events decreases and advertising decreases, the professional athletes could not make even a half of the salary that they currently makes. Professional athletes only earn what they bring in from the games that they play.

Professional athletes have their jobs to do, and professional teachers have their jobs to do. Both jobs are important. Athletes are the best at the sports that they play. The owners of these franchises want the best for their businesses, and therefore they are willing to pay their athletes any amount of money so as to ensure the happiness of athletes.

In concluding, owners and coaches pay professional athletes millions of dollars per game as they are convinced that their athletes generate more profits and make the most profitable team at in their discipline. The truth is that not every sport pays millions to their athletes. The reality is that only a small portion of the professional athletic industry makes millions of dollars. Of course, they will pay their athletes accordingly. The government does not generate as much money, and therefore cannot pay their teachers as much money as the professional athlete. One can always argue that professional athletes do not deserve the money that they earn for their discipline, and that teachers deserve more money than they currently earn. The fact is that the society as a whole has their priorities set out in the wrong way. They are

willing to pay exorbitant sums to see these sporting events, but they are unwilling to pay exorbitant taxes to pay teachers the salary they need to enjoy a luxurious lifestyle. The reality is that professional teachers are just as good at their discipline as any professional athlete, and therefore, they should get salaries that match their worth.

Works Cited

Anderson, William L., (2000) “ In Praise of Athletes' High Salaries - The Explosive Growth of Athletes' Salaries Indicates That We Have Become More Prosperous” August 01, 2000,

Article, Filed Under: Scarcity, Education. Viewed at:

Accessed

November 26, 2014

Vilson, Joe (2011) “ An Overlooked Difference between Professional Athletes and Professional

difference-_b_803952. html> Accessed November 26, 2014