Development of Sports Culture in India: Prospects and Challenges

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1. Introduction

The sports culture is a positive attitude toward a person's participation in sports activity. It involves preserving and developing those versions, functions, and components that are related to the game. Sports culture refers to the positive attitude that people have toward participating in a game or social activity. It involves developing and preserving the various components and functions of the game. Sports activities are based on the concept of ideals, senses, norms, and examples of behavior, which are used to define the character and orientation of participants. The sports culture is the basis of a person's positive attitude to sports, which is interiorized by the standards and norms of the culture that are connected with it. Aside from being one of the biggest countries in the world, India also has a large number of people. It is also known for its indigenous games such as khokho and guilli-danda. There are also a few board games in the country that are believed to be related to chess. Contemporary games, however, have overtaken the Indian sports culture, with cricket being the most popular. Since 1951, India has been hosting various international sporting events, such as the Asian Games and the Cricket World Cup. It has also participated in the Olympic Games since 1900.

2. Historical Overview of India's Sports Culture

2.1 Ancient times

Sports in India have a long and illustrious history dating back to the Vedic era. Sports were concerned with or employed for the development of the physique and the defense at that period. It is well known that playing games can help maintain a healthy mind. During the ancient period, India was the most developed country in the world. It gave many games and sports to the world and also accepted the modernized or improved versions of them from the world. The archaeological excavations of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa, as well as Vedic literature and other epics, reveal a rich tradition of various sporting activities in India. According to Simon Jenkins, Sport is a type of leisure and work activity that involves both physical and competitive activities. Participants in competitive sports often compete against other individuals or teams.

Chariot racing and wrestling were among the famous sporting events during the Vedic period. Apart from this several games like- hide and seek, and swinging as played by both men and women. There were no disparities between men and women in athletics at the time because they were treated equally. During this era, various forms of spiritualism were started and acquired global prominence. The favorite recreations of the Vedic period were hunting, taming, elephants, dancing and music, and gambling. Gambling was so popular in ancient 4

Among the athletes who have won Olympic medals in India is Norma Pritchard. They went on a hiatus from the game for a few years before returning in1920andhave ever since been a participant in the biggest international sporting event. With such a heavy and vast sports culture comes a great deal of problems as well. Issues associated with the Indian sports sector range from, financial and funding crises, resource discrepancies, nepotism, high-performance pressure, government issues, etc.

2.2 Scope

The main aim of this study is to look into how sports culture in India has developed through time. It emphasizes the problems of the sports sector. The sports culture of India has to be understood in terms of India's past as one of the oldest civilizations in the world which endured a better part of the modern British colony. Therefore, the scope of this study is a concise overview of India's history of sports and a qualitative analysis of present-day sports culture and its challenges. Towards the end, the logical progression of our study delves into some suggestions for effective sports governance and culture in India.

India a gambling hall was attached to the palace of the king. As a result, the ancient Indian Scriptures reveal a highly developed understanding of games. Sports were also popular in India, which were shown in the epics of Ramayana and Mahabharat. Lord Ram was known for his mastery of various games, such as archery, swimming, and horse riding. Among the various sports that were made famous by the Mahabharata were gymnastics, wrestling, and dicing. Lifting weights, swimming and water sports, and comprehensive physical activities were played by the men and women during this period. The 100 Kauravas and 5 Pandavas played various kinds of games of strength, skill, and amusement. Chaturanga was very famous in this period and later it spread from there, now it is known as CHESS. Lord Krishna played Gullidanada at the bank of Yamuna. Arjun was the hero in the Archery and shooting. So, during this time people took much interest in sports.

During this period, the rise of Buddhism in India was very significant as it had a huge impact on the culture of sports in the country. One of the most prominent figures in this field was Gautama Buddha, who was a master at throwing and archery. In a classic written by Chalukya, Mallakhamb is referred to as a gymnastics event that involves performing

various poses and movements with a rope or a hanging pole. In this era, Buddhism was at its peak. social life and education. Non-violence was both preached and practiced in Buddhism and Jainism. Goutam Buddha, in truth, did not give up. By exercising, he kept himself healthy. Despite Buddha's continued teachings, conflict was carried on. However, during times of calm, individuals kept themselves occupied in wrestling training. Horseback riding, boxing, running, jumping, and spear throwing are just a few of the sports that were available in medieval India. Hieun Tsung, a well-known traveler, wrote of sports including fighting, wrestling, sprinting, archery, and ball games that were popular among Takshashila and Nalanda students. More than 5000 students were enrolled in Nalanda University in the 5th century A.D., and they were given special attention through daily pranayama and Surya namaskar practices.

2.3 Medieval India

Between the ancient times and the modern period, the Indian subcontinent experienced a long history of post-classical history, which is commonly referred to as Medieval India. It's believed that this period began when the Mughal Empire was established in 1526 and ended when the Gupta Empire broke up in the 6th century AD. Medieval India saw an influx of invasions and land capturing may it be within the continent or from outside invaders and with all the invasions happening, there was a huge influx of different cultures as well as new forms of living styles, food, or recreational activities, and sports. At the beginning of the 13th century, when the Rajput kingdom reclaimed its throne, they were devoted to physical training and military art for about two centuries. During this time, the Rajputs attempted to be the best in the use of arms and noble horsemanship. Throwing javelin for precision marksmanship was another popular equestrian sport, as it required tremendous skill in body balancing and control at the same time. Wrestling was the most popular sport among the people; wrestlers were referred to as "Jaitis" and the wrestling ring was referred to as "Akhara." Bow and arrow hunting, especially in the spring, was extremely popular. The ancient Indian games of Chess and Snakes and ladders were derived from the games chaturanga and Gyan chauper, which were then brought to foreign lands and modernized. A type of wrestling known as pehlwani was also established under the Mughal Empire. When Afghans and Persians invaded the Indian continent, they brought with them lavish infrastructure and cuisine and introduced their invaded land with both indoor as well as outdoor games that they enjoyed. Persians played Chaugan (Polo) from 226 until 641 A.D. At Bilaspur, Haripur, and Bidar, historic polo grounds can still be discovered. Akbar himself was a skilled Chaplain. Wrestling was given royal favor by Muslim emperors. Akbar watched wrestling matches almost every day. Swimming, boxing, hunting, animal fights, gladiatorial combats, and indoor games such as Chess, Chaupar, Chandel-Mondal, and Pachisi were all popular at that time. Chess began in North-WestIndia during the Huri dynasty's reign (A.D.455-543). Chaturanga/Army Game/Shatranj was the name of the game. In Jahangir's location, this game became extremely popular. Akbar devised Chaupar, Chandel Mondal, and Peachisi, which were his favorite pastime games and which he played avidly.

Mughal history also talks about many recreational and sports activities that the Mughal Emperors were fans of, such as hunting and wrestling. During Emperor Shah Jahan's reign, the Agra Fort and the Red Fort were renowned settings for wrestling matches.

Babar, the founder of the Mughal Empire, was the first to bring the game of cards to India. Certain changes were made to the game by Akbar. During the Mughal empire, the game of cards grew quite popular among both the rich and the poor. Except for Aurangzeb, the emperors continued to enjoy the game of cards. The card was used in a variety of games, both with and without stakes, by members of the upper and lower classes, as well as the general public.

The religious sensibilities of Hindus were harmed during the last reign of the Mughal Emperors. The Mughal Emperors were subjected to numerous attempts to assassinate them. During the reign of the Maratha Emperors, Chhatrapati Shivaji's teacher, Samarth Ramdas, constructed several Hanuman temples around Maharashtra to encourage youth to engage in physical activity. During the Maharaj of Chhatrapati Shivaji and the Peshwas, a movement to create talimkhanas, Vyauamshalas, and Akhadas was launched in every hamlet. Some existed earlier, but many patriotic people began them with the goal of national regeneration through physical exercise. People were trained in self-defense through exercises like lathi, benethi, sword and spear use, Malla-yudhha, dandbaithaks, and so on, while dand, baithaks, and folk dance were frequent elements of the curriculum. Some of the Vyayam shalas have survived to this day.

2.4 British Era

Even after the Britishers came to India, they ruled our country and destroyed the resources of the country, but the development of sports never stopped. One of the earliest games that were introduced in India was cricket. Cricket instantly became a Nation's favorite. British soldiers played a major role in introducing football to India during the nineteenth century. Matches were played between the teams of armed forces and clubs were established throughout the country. One of the oldest football clubs in the country was Mohun Bagan, which was established in 1889 AD in India. During that period, India became the hub of various sports and has been world champions in sports, including Cricket, Table Tennis, Hockey, Chess, Billiards, and Kabaddi. Norman Pritchard achieved two silver medals representing India at the 1900 Olympics. In 1936, India's hockey team played in the Berlin Olympics, where it defeated Germany in the finals. Since then, India has participated in every Summer Olympic Games and Winter Olympic Games. India earned its first gold medal in men's hockey inthe1928 Olympics. Games like chess, playing cards, snakes, and ladders originated in India and then these games were transmitted to other countries and got modernized. The origin of modern Polo took place in Manipur in India during the British era. Polo was also introduced to the British regiment in the country. Poloisalsoknown as 'Pulu'. In Silchar, Assam, the first Polo club was established inIndiain1834. During the 19th century, due to the British Empire, hockey became more prevalent in India. In 1928,

the country's men's hockey team won the gold medal at the Olympics. They defeated the Netherlands 3-0 and the star for team India was Dhyan Chand who scored 2 goals in the final. Badminton which originated in England was also played by the British officers in India during the 1860s. Earlier it was known as "battledore and shuttlecock", further the game evolved and developed as Badminton in India. Snooker was also developed in India in 1875. During this period, India had a lot of history in sports. Many Indian athletes made the country proud by winning medals at international competitions.

2.5 Post-Independent/Modern Era

The post-independence era saw a huge change in the sporting culture of the country. India gained independence in 1947, and the Indian government made several measures to remedy the country's deteriorating physical education situation. The formation of a committee known as the "Tara Chand Committee" was a crucial 22 step in this direction. In 1948, this committee was established. The Indian government has introduced various initiatives to provide training facilities to athletes in various sports. Special schemes were also launched to promote physical education and sports. The All India Council of Sports was founded in 1954. Other organizations that were associated with sports included the National Institute of Sports, which was renamed after it was established in 1957, and the National Sports Congress. People have been drawn to various sports in big numbers as a result of these government efforts. As the popularity of sport took charge, different national federations were also set up. The Indian government developed a number of organizations dedicated to providing training in a variety of physical activities.

2.6 Some of the top sports academies in India are as follows-

1) Usha School of Athletics, Kozhikode, Kerala
At the Usha School of Athletics, the athletes are only girls and train under the guidance of renowned former Indian athlete PT Usha. Their methods, special diets, exercise, and psychological counseling are all scientifically devised with the help of international expert players.

2) Inspire Institute of Sports, Bellary, Karnataka
The Inspire Institute of Sports was founded with the goal of breeding champions in the country and with an eye on podium finishes at the Olympics. They combine state-of-the-art facilities with sports science and technical excellence to foster a spirit of growth and maximize the potential to help athletes chase their Olympic dreams.

3) Ashwini Sports Foundation, Kodagu, Karnataka
Former Indian track and field athlete Ashwin Nachappa set up the Ashwini Sports Foundation in 2010. It is a non-profit organization that aims to groom talented athletes from a young age and tries to promote them in order to achieve international standards of excellence. The ASF Arena comprises the SAI-ASF Athletics Centre as well as residential facilities. In this academy little children also joined to start their sports careers.

4) Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology, Bhubaneshwar, Odisha
The Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology is a prominent college in Bhubaneswar that also offers world-class sporting facilities to its students. The 400-acre KIIT Stadium has a 400m track and also promotes field activities. Despite not being an exclusive sports institution, their ultramodern sports facility and training are at par with any national sports center. They have groomed several athletes who have participated in the Olympics, Asian Games, and Commonwealth Games. Sprinter and national Dutee Chand is an alumnus of KIIT.

5) GHG Khalsa College, Ludhiana, Punjab
The GHG Khalsa College in Ludhiana actively tries to promote the culture of sports and education among its students and is among the finest athletic centers in the country. This academy is the best academy for athletics.

6) Anju Bobby George Sports Foundation, Bengaluru, Karnataka
Inspired by their struggles, former Indian athletes Anju and BobbyGeorges up the Anju Bobby George Sports Foundation to make sure that promising athletes receive individual training as well as world-class facilities, amenities, and infrastructure in the academy. Both Anju and Bobby George came from rural villages in Kerala and had to struggle in order to secure financial aid to train abroad. Their foundation is focused on identifying talent from the grassroots stage, especially in rural India.

7) MAR Athanasius Sports Academy, Ernakulam, Kerala
The MAR Athanasius Sports Academy in Kerala works under the supervision of the MAR Athanasius College Association. They offer training to young players in various kinds of sports and they aim to create champions in different sporting events.

8) MP Academy, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
The MP Athletics Academy was established in July 2016 in Bhopal. The academy is equipped with sports infrastructure corresponding to international standards and state-of-the-art training facilities and tries to promote world-class training to its athletes. Internationally acclaimed coaches offer training at the academy.

9) SDAT Academy Tiruvannamalai and Madurai, Tamil Nadu
The Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu (SDAT) operates under the Tamil Nadu government. Their goal is to identify talent and promote them to achieve excellence at the National, State, and International Levels. They're also concerned with establishing a sporting culture in the state and developing the infrastructure at various levels. And there are all types of sports.

10) Army Sports Institute, Pune, Maharashtra
The Army Sports Institute aims to identify and promote the talents of soldiers and other members of the armed forces who can compete at the State, National, and international levels. It was established on July 1, 2001, under the Mission Olympics Program. The institute is a multi-disciplinary

facility that provides training in various sports such as fencing, boxing, and weight lifting. The Army Sports Institute has various facilities to suit the needs of those training in athletics including a 400minternational standard synthetic track as well as a 2km warm-up track. They also have international coaches for several events and trained masseurs for rehab.

Bachelor's and master's degrees in games and sports can be earned at these colleges and institutions. The government in India realized that individuals did not lack innate abilities, but they did not have adequate opportunities to demonstrate them. As a result, the Government of India launched the Sports Talent Search Scholarship program. In 1982, India hosted the IX Asian Games. It also co-hosted several international athletic events, such as the Cricket World Cup, the Afro-Asian Games, and the Hockey World Cup. Some of the most prominent events that are held in India each year are the Indian Masters, the Delhi Half Marathon, and the Chennai Open.

In 1996, India co-hosted the Cricket World Cup. In 2011, the country also hosted the Indian Grand Prix.

Society's Impact on Sports
Societies, cultures, and communities play a huge role in how well a particular field does on charts. Indian society, as we have discussed earlier, has had an undeniable interest in sports and physical activities for decades but still, a country of about 1.4 billion people has not yet shown remarkable rankings in international sports, and the participation and likelihood of taking sports as a career option is very limited. Society sure loves to support their favorite cricket team or applaud loudly and post congratulatory posts for sportspersons who win medals at the Olympics but people still hesitate to join sports as a full-time career option. Parents feel like sports being a highly fluctuating job will not be a very secure and promotions-filled field choice for their kids. While some parents cannot even afford the training fees for sporting institutions. How much you make, your academics, and how well you did in this or that exam are all important factors in Indian society. Indians have a herd mentality, and no one here really encourages you to do new things. Extracurricular activities are not popular among all people not among school-going elementary students.

In this globalized society, sports professions are still considered as having" no scope." Sports are viewed as a leisure activity even at the basic level, and excessive participation in sports "harms" your academics. One thing to note is that aside from cricket and a few other sports, the state of sports in India is really poor. Consider this: you must have played cricket at some point in your life, but did badminton or tennis hold the same fascination for you? This is due to the over-glorification of cricket in today's society. Even if we don't play cricket, how many of us watch the Olympics or any other sport in comparison to cricket? Also, from a parent's perspective, they want their children to be able to support themselves, to earn enough money, because no parent wants to see his or her child struggle. As a result of the lack of infrastructure, they do not encourage any sports. Women on the other have a whole different set of social and cultural obstacles that hinder them from taking part in sports events.

3. Problems and Prospects

Sports are among the most esteemed activities in India. Almost everyone in the country makes themselves indulge in some form of sports rather it be cricket, football, or badminton. The competitive edge of the nation has been brought about by the various opportunities that are available to everyone. Today, parents encourage their kids to participate in various sports to become famous and also to earn their name. With the increasing demand for all sports, the need for an athletic body has been prioritized.

It is necessary to comprehend the factors that influence sports in India, as well as the government's efforts to address the issues.

There are many reasons for the non-development of sports in India:
- The corruption and maladministration in sports authorities- The corruption of sports authorities in India has become a common issue for sports administrators. Most of sports authorities have been targeted for corruption.
- Economic and social inequalities- Politicians' involvement in the functioning of sports bodies have affected the image of the administrators in the country. Various factors such as social and economic inequality have also affected the development of sports in the country. These issues limit the people who can participate in sports and the infrastructure needed to support them.
- Lack of infrastructure- The lack of proper infrastructure is one of the main factors that have affected the participation of sportspersons in India. This issue has also affected the quality of games that are being organized in the country.
- Policy implementation- The implementation of a policy is a continuous process, and the lack of proper resources and expertise in the country has hindered the development of sports. The lack of a separate ministry for sports has been a concern for various organizations.
- Inadequate allocation of resources- In terms of financial resources, India is not as developed as other countries. In the Union Budget for the fiscal year 2017-18, the government allocated only Rs1943 crore for sports. This is lower than the UK's annual expenditure of around Rs9,000 crore.

In recent years, the Government has taken various steps. Some of them are-
- National Sports Talent Search System- In 2015, the National Sports Talent Search System was launched to provide financial assistance to states to identify and nurture promising athletes between the ages of eight and twelve.
- The government approved the revamp of the Khelo-India program in 2017, which aims to transform the sports landscape in the country by mainstreaming it as a tool for development. The goal of the program is to integrate sport into the development of communities and national

development. The new version of the program will have a huge impact on the entire sports ecosystem.

- In 2017, 12 international sports stars were appointed as National Observers of India to oversee the development of various national sports. They are tasked with assessing the facilities and equipment of the various coaching camps and recommending areas for improvement.
- Under the government's "Assistance to National Sports Federation" scheme, National Sports Federations are being supported to provide financial assistance to encourage women's participation in sports.

In preparation for the 2020 Summer Olympics, the hiring of international support staff and experts was approved by the government.

- In 2016, the government approved a new program for the development of sports called Khelo India. It replaced various existing programs such as Urban sports infrastructure and the National sports talent search system.
- Odisha announced a sports Infra project of around Rs.695 crores. 89 multipurpose indoor stadiums will be built under this project. These facilities will be used for various sports, such as table tennis, weightlifting, and badminton. They will also be used for local sports that are popular in their areas.
- The government has planned a number of sports infrastructure projects. Synthetic athletic track, synthetic hockey field, FIFA standard turf football ground, swimming pool, stadium complex development at district headquarters, sports academies, and training centers are among the other initiatives, of the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS), which began in 2014 and provides financial aid to potential Olympic medalists. This funding system takes into account Indian athletes' performance over the previous three years. They are reimbursed for personal coaches and other staff fees, as well as the cost of travel to contests and the purchase of equipment. India finished 48th in the total medal tally at the Tokyo Olympics, demonstrating the success of this method.
- Sports in India have gotten a boost from private funding made through corporations. Before the 2016 Olympics, the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) received corporate donations, which were eventually converted into training investments or larger sponsorships.
- The Sports Authority of India (SAI) is developing programs such as the National Sports Development Fund, which assists athletes in training with international coaches and provides technical, scientific, and psychological support in order to promote a sports culture at all levels. It also provides exposure to worldwide competitions in terms of technical, scientific, and psychological assistance. In addition, the Fund provides financial incentives for the development of infrastructural and other sports-related activities.

To bring a better sporting environment India can even take inspiration from other countries' sporting methods and practices to improve its own sports performance, particularly in terms of investments in the players' fitness and training. The country may adopt Europe's 'Health Stadia Concept,' which uses sports stadiums as a place where people can go

to enjoy a happy, healthy experience while playing or watching sports.

To bring change on the grassroots level it's very important to bring exposure and attention to the general public towards sports like figure skating, fencing, skiing, etc which are yet to get the country's recognition. Introducing sports in school should be made mandatory from a very young age and kids should be encouraged to take part in all the sporting activities at the school level. Also, parents should be encouraged to not think of sports as a lost career option. It is also extremely essential to recognize talents from the far-flung rural areas of the county.

Efforts should be made to bring out such talents and even set up some government policies or scholarships or NGOs that can help these budding talents if they are in need of some financial support. Sporting authorities should also adopt unbiased and impartial methods of the selection process for every sporting event or organization. Setting up task forces that can look up and deal with any biasedness, bullying, taking bribes, or other such problems that may give the Indian sporting culture a bad name is also extremely important. Providing the best training to not only the athletes but also the coaches so that they are well-prepared to tackle any classes that may occur in the team and also guide and boost their players both professionally and mentally. Psychological assessments of both the player and the coach should also be arranged so as to build a good player-coach relationship and help them with any kind of stress or anxiety they may be dealing with. Lastly, getting rid of gender, caste, and status stereotypes and biases so that people of all genders irrespective of where they come from and what social status they hold should be kept aside while looking for sportspersons.

4. Conclusion

The development of sports culture in India presents both promising prospects and significant challenges. On the positive side, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of sports in fostering physical well-being, national pride, and talent development. Initiatives such as the Khelo India program have aimed at nurturing young athletes and providing them with the necessary resources. Additionally, the success of Indian athletes on the global stage, particularly in cricket and recently in other sports, has ignited enthusiasm and increased participation. while India has made strides in developing its sports culture, there is still much work to be done. Addressing challenges such as infrastructure, grassroots development, and financial support will be crucial for creating a thriving sports culture that encompasses a wide range of disciplines and provides equal opportunities for all. With concerted efforts from the government, sports organizations, and the public, India can unlock its immense sporting potential and further elevate its standing on the global sports stage.

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