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Reflective view on relevance of sports training and holistic development of students

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Abstract

As the saying in English goes, “All work and no Play make Jack a Dull boy”. It has been forgotten that academic learning and sports education complement each other. They resemble the two sides of the same coin. If sports education is carried out accompanied with the academic curriculum, the overall personality of the student is increased to quite an extent. The qualities of the leadership, sharing, team spirit and tolerance are learnt from sports. Sports training not only teach the students to maintain the physical stamina, but also the habit of obedience, discipline, the determination to win, willpower, etc. The power of reasoning, mental development, vocational specialisation comes from the academic education of the students. Therefore, sports education along with the academics result in the holistic development of the students. Now-a-days the system of education makes the students stress more on their mental development and completely rejects the physical activities. The overall outcome of this is that the developing groups of graduates and professionals have weak bodies and poor physique. The curriculum should include sports, games and physical health education for the all-round development of the students.

Keywords: Sport training, holistic development, physical stamina, academic curriculum

Introduction

Swami Vivekananda once said that we can reach heaven by playing football rather than by reading Holy Scriptures. It is a pity for a country like India that, being the *second most highly populated country in the world* we are lagging behind other countries in the Olympic Games. This is because *sports* have not been given the utmost importance in our education system. It is needless to say that if we want our Children with nerves of steel & muscles of iron, we have to add *sports* as a part of the school curriculum. Academic learning and Sports Education are, actually, the complementariness of each other. They are the two sides of the same coin. If total education makes full development of the over-all personality of a pupil possible, he gets the qualities of leadership, tolerance, sharing and team-spirit from sports.

The mental development, including the power of reasoning and vocational specialization, of course, comes from the academics. It, therefore, becomes imperative that education should result in the mental, moral and physical development of a student. But no one can deny that, unfortunately, the present-day system of education lays too much stress on mental development, pays only lip sympathy to moral enrichment and completely neglects physical well-being of a student. The over-all result is the coming up of hordes of graduates, postgraduates and diversified professionals with frail body and poor physique. For an all-round development of a child, the curriculum should include sports and games and health education. Sufficient amount of school time should be devoted to Sports and Physical Training. It is heartening to note that in order to rectify the past mistake, the C.B.S.E. and most other Boards of Education in many states have made the Sports Education a compulsory subject up to the + 2 level. But the irony is that the subject has yet to get due seriousness and importance in practice. Sports Education needs to be introduced with all earnestness, because mental and moral development is just not possible without physical development. We must remember that ‘a sound mind dwells only in a sound body’. A strong and healthy student will, in the long run, surpass the pale, sickly, scholar who is merely a bookworm. A healthy and strong body is not possible without sports. The development of body is very essential in life. All our physical enjoyments, and to some extent, even mental enjoyments, depend upon our body. All our degrees and achievements will be of no use without a good physique and healthy personality.

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Life is a struggle and the person with a healthy and strong body alone can face it successfully. Besides promoting health and strength, sports develop many good qualities of the head and the heart. They strengthen the power of endurance and promote discipline, fair play and team spirit. Young men and women are trained to face defeat with a smile and maintain humility even in victory. Games are the greatest and the healthiest means of refreshment and recreation. They fill one with joy, zeal, vitality and enthusiasm, which help a person a lot in facing the actual odds of life without yielding to gloom or pessimism. So sports are not only essential but also indispensable for an all-round development of the personality. The famous saying, "The battle of Waterloo was won on the play-grounds of Eton," correctly and aptly sums up the importance of sports in education.

Globally, a sport as an industry has a unifying appeal. The sports industry boasts of a dynamic appeal that many other, even bigger industries look at with envy. It has the power to define nations as a whole. Sports offer a perfect opportunity to explore scientific concepts such as force, motion, potential energy, velocity, and torque. For many students school-organised sports play an important role in their academic and social experiences. Every school has sports embedded in their curriculum as they understand the importance of physical health and activity. However, the importance given to sports ends there as this inclusion is just for the sake of a formality.

Khelo India scheme

Under the Khelo India scheme, the Government is supporting the development of sports at the grassroots levels through the initiative such as Khelo India School Games.

- This programme has been introduced to revive the sports culture in India at the grass-root levels by building a strong framework for all sports played in the country and with the aim to establish India as a great sporting country
- The twelve areas have been identified under this scheme, which will impact the entire sports ecosystem including sports infrastructure, talent identification, coaching for excellence, community sports, and competition structure and sports economy
- Schools and colleges are the environments where young people spend a significant amount of time
- During these formative years, along with quality education an emphasis on sports and physical education framework is equally important. Educational environments need to be supportive of students being physically active.
- The importance of adopting sports and education for the success of youth development has been recognised by the Indian Government as early as 1984 when the National Sports Policy recommended making sports and physical education an integral part of the school curriculum
- National Sports Policy, 2011 stresses on the point that sports and physical education play an important role in developing human capital, increase productivity and foster social harmony
- Typically School athletic activities provide enjoyable, supervised activities for youth. Student-athletes report healthier eating habits, higher levels of cardiovascular fitness, increased parental support and decreased anxiety and depression.

Furthermore, a *national study from 2014 showed a positive association between participating in school sports and lower rates of tobacco, drug, and alcohol use. The Youth who

participate in sports were also more likely to disapprove of their peers' substance abuse.

Shift in the mindset of parents

- One also notices an interesting shift in the mindset of parents; they are now aware and understand the importance of a physically fit body.
- The realisation of the negative impact that today's lifestyle brings on their children, has made parents become proactive in their search for options for their child's fitness, they now encourage their children to take up some form of sports or physical activity along with their studies.
- Way forward a change in the mindset of the community as a whole will play a major role to ensure success in this direction.

Moreover, campaigns focused on sports and education integration can cut across the diversity of our country making people more cognizant of the benefits of sports in education. According to Price water house Coopers (PWC) survey conducted on 2017, close to 60 percent of the respondents strongly agree that more emphasis is given to education than to sports in India. The education sector should play a crucial role in promoting sports in India. Sports education not only builds physical stamina but also in stills qualities such as obedience, determination, willpower, and discipline.

Why competitive sport is important in education?

It is inarguably accepted that a bit of healthy competition in any field is known to enhance motivation and generate increased effort from those competing. The sporting field is no exception to this rule. Whilst there will always be varying levels of sporting talent and interest across any group of people, the benefits that competitive sport provides are still accessible to all. There is a role for both competitive and non-competitive sporting pursuits. Casual sports are a great way to get some exercise whilst enjoying time with friends, but there are a number of other advantages to sport that can only be found in competition.

Here are 5 reasons why competitive sport is important in education:

1. Encourages higher standards of achievement

It's only natural to apply more effort when the stakes are higher and less effort when the outcome is of less importance. With greater effort in sport comes greater improvement in a variety of different areas like skills, fitness, teamwork and potentially awards.

2. Encourages physical activity

It is obviously possible to participate in physical activity in a non-competitive environment and many people do so on a regular basis. However, in a competitive environment, students will often push themselves harder in training and in matches. This extra effort results in improved fitness levels as well as extending an individual's boundaries about their perception of what they are physically capable of.

3. Builds discipline

Competitive sport requires dedicated training and practice. Taking part in such training and seeing improvement helps students to understand that with hard work, often comes results. When they experience these improvements, their self-esteem grows and they broaden their limitations of what they

can achieve. Goal setting is also an important part of competitive sports. At the start of a season, a coach will often guide students in setting team and individual goals to work towards. Good goal setting techniques are highly transferable skills that can be applied across all areas of schooling and life.

4. Teaches how to lose well/deal with disappointment

Losing well is a skill best learnt early and learnt well. Competitive sport is the perfect place to develop this skill as many students are at an age where they are maturing and deciding what type of person they want to be. Engraining good sportsmanship early can ensure students carry these good practices across every aspect of their lives and into their adulthood. Equally as important is teaching students to win gracefully. Competitive sport, especially when the stakes are high and emotions invested, provides ample opportunity for these lessons to be taught, learnt and practiced.

5. Builds camaraderie and teamwork

Team sports are one of the best examples to showcase the need for teamwork to achieve success. Regular training and competition provides regular community and bonding. Working together towards a common goal is one of the most effective ways to grow camaraderie and friendship. It's this shared experience and emotion that builds loyalty and trust within a team. And it's not just team sports that require team work. Athletes in individual sports also require support from their coach, friends and family, whom all share in the journey through the sporting season.

6. Sportsmanship

Playing *Sports* teach us sportsmanship about how to be strong still even when defeat is on our side. Learning how to be humble, for when they grow older they will be able to accept failures and mistakes.

Doing necessary improvements and adjustments in life will help them become strong & persistent so that they would learn not to repeat the same mistakes again which they have made in the past.

7. Determination

Children learn how to get determined in their game while playing with other children. Sports improve the perseverance of kids. In order to win, a player should do hard work and keep patience while practicing that will help him to achieve success in life.

8. Competitiveness (Sense of Competition)

Playing games & *sports* increases a sense of competitiveness among the students. They learn how to compete with each other in order to win. Striving hard to win in every field of life can be surely built with the competitiveness of sports. Willingness to give each & every effort, showing grace under pressure and an ability to accept defeat when losing to a better team or a player are good indications of true competitive nature that a child can gain from playing sports.

9. Preparation for later life

To win in a game, careful planning with intense training is essential. Every child is not good at studies but sports can give them a new way to show their talent. In the same way, it is very helpful for students who play sports as it increases chances in job opportunities in their later life. Sports also result in improvement of confidence, self-esteem for some students who are not strong in academics. It helps to

strengthen their belief system that may result in improved academic performance.

In brief:

- Children are introduced to the benefits of a healthy lifestyle early in their lives by instilling the habit and culture of taking up outdoor activities
- Introduction of sports curriculum at an early stage can act as building blocks for future sportspersons
- It can develop a strong ecosystem, along with other stakeholders such as authorities, federations, sports clubs, etc.
- It will generate employment opportunities for people such as coaches, physical trainers, and sports facility operators
- It will provide educational opportunities through scholarships for underprivileged talent.

Conclusion

Schools in India are gradually beginning to realise the importance of sports in the overall development of children, and how vital it is to encourage them to take up sports. Slowly, educationalists and government departments also have realised the importance of sports' and are planning for inclusions in the curriculum which is an essential part of the present-day school education. The growing awareness of how sports contribute to the growth of children in terms of life skills, has led parents and school authorities to encourage children to take up sports, whereas previously the focus was entirely on academics. The realisation that sports help in the development of team work, trust, sharing responsibilities and working together towards a common goal has led to a spurt in the sports activities in schools. If the government and educationalist initiatives are properly laid down, one can see a different face of the students in the future. Therefore, taking all these positive points into consideration, the schools should include sports environment with proper facilities, dedicated & well-trained instructors who encourage students in pursuing sports. So, sports should be made a compulsory part of the school's curriculum and an integral part of a child's development.

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