

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

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Abstract

Indian women are still trying to establish their own identity. Even today in 21st Century, females in our country are not able to take stand for themselves. A society, which does not allow a girl to do something simple as primary education, is unlikely to let her participate in sport without any hurdles. There are some problems faced daily by Indian girls like education (deprivation), sexual harassment, old fashioned customs, sponsorship problems, lack of good coaches, social morality etc. Regular participation in activities improves the wellness of women and a lot of other benefits. Our primary responsibility is to promote physical activity in girls especially in the Primary phase of schooling. We have provided better environment, involvement of parents, change attitude, better facilities, incentives and fair selection process to improve the participation of Indian women in physical activity. Motor activity does not develop the physical potency only but also mental and emotional capabilities of girls.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Physical Activities.

Introduction

Sports is one area where the disparity between the two sexes is gender- is strongly evident. Today we stand at the threshold of a new era it is lamentable and unfortunate that male and female are looked upon so differently, specially in games. Indian women are still trying to establish their own identity. Even today, Indian woman is not able to take a stand for themselves. Our society is in transitional phase there are improvements but the target is not yet achieved. Males have a dominant position in all areas of life. Gender inequality is firmly embedded in Indian psychic thoughts and behavior. In order to make amends in the current scenario, exorbitant decisions are yet to take.

A society, which does not allow a girl to do something simple as primary education, is unlikely to let her participate in sport without any hurdles. Even before taking part in 400meter hurdles the girl has to pass so many more social hurdles.

Being an athlete, especially a skilled athlete, can change the way a woman sees herself. It can make her feel physically stronger, more competent and more in control of her life as an independent individual. Sport participation also provides girls and women with opportunities to reconnect with the power of their own bodies.

Problems Facing Girls in Sports Participation

The nature and extent of physical play opportunities depend greatly on the set of beliefs and expectations held by the parents, and these beliefs are particularly significant in relation to gender. Involvement in physical activities is a product of a cultural belief system that values for one sex and not for the other. There are some problems listed below those are faced daily by Indian girls.

Old fashioned customs	Restrictions
Practices, tradition	Lack of encouragement
Low social status	Diet
Domestic issues (marriage etc.)	Security issues
Lack of good coaches	Social morality

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Women are considered weak	Education (deprivation)
Sexual harassment	Sponsorship problems
Poverty	Societal attitude
Duty bound permission	Lack of attention
Lack of Knowledge	Menstrual problems
Backward thinking	Lack of media coverage
Studies get neglected	Adjustment problem in Team
Faulty selection procedure	
Lack of parental support, coaches, associations (as compared to boys)	
Coaches don't do justice. They select on the face, looks and not on talent.	

Benefits of Physical Activities

Physical Health

Regular participation in such activities is associated with a longer and better quality of life, reduced risks of a variety of diseases and many psychological and emotional benefits. Physical activity may influence the physical health of girls in two ways. First, it can affect the causes of disease during childhood and youth. Second, physical activity could reduce the risk of chronic diseases in later life. A number of 'adult' conditions, such as cancer, diabetes and coronary heart disease, have their origins in childhood, and can be aided, in part, by regular physical activity in the early years. Also, regularly activity beginning in childhood helps to improve bone health, thus preventing osteoporosis, which predominantly affects females.

Obesity deserves special mention. Obesity in childhood is known to have significant impact on both physical and mental health, including hyperlipidemia, hypertension and abnormal glucose tolerance. Physical activity can be an important feature of a weight control program for girls.

Mental Health

In recent years, adolescent girls are helpless to anxiety and depressive in the as of 15 years. Girls are twice as likely as boys to commit suicide.

Research suggests two ways in which physical activities can contribute to mental health in girls. Firstly, there is fairly consistent evidence that regular activity can have a positive effect upon

girl's psychological well-being and strongly than boys in terms of short-term benefits. Secondly, research has indicated that physical activity can contribute to the reduction levels of anxiety and depression.

Educational and Intellectual Development

A range of evidence suggests that many girls those participate in sports and physical activity are positive relation of their academic aspirations and achievement. More recent studies have found improvements for many children in academic performance when time for physical activity is increased in their school day. A report of three longitudinal studies emphasizes that 'academic performance is enhanced by an increase the level of physical activity, despite a reduction in curriculum. There is considerable evidence of a positive relationship between girls' participation in sports and pro-educational values.

Reproductive Health

Adolescent pregnancy and sexual ill-health are major social problems across the globe. Although there is a shortage of research in this area, early studies conducted in the US have found that adolescent girls who participate in sports tend to become sexually active later in life and make greater use of contraception than non-sporting girls.

Social Inclusion

Combating social exclusion, from the normal exchanges, practices and rights of modern society, has become a focus of attention for governments and nongovernment organizations in recent years. Some writers have argued that sports not only reflect but can also contribute to girl's social exclusion in sports and wider society. Studies of women's experiences of sports participation have suggested that they can contribute to a more generalized feeling of empowerment. Physical activities may help them develop a sense of ownership of their bodies and access the types of activity traditionally enjoyed by boys.

Suggestion to Improve Girls Participation in Sports

Our primary responsibility is to promote physical activity in girls. Especially in the Primary phase of schooling, this has the advantages of relatively high engagement in physical activity. Some suggestions are given below for improving girl's participation in sports

Involvement of parents (support)	Public awareness campaigns
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Encouragement by senior player	Right environment
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Promotion of sport in local areas/at the primary level	Selection
Better facilities	Encouragement by senior player
Incentives	Better facilities
Importance of fitness should be made clear	Hostel
Safety, security	Encouragement in Villages
Female manager	Attitude change
Female coaches	Guidance, education
Special women's tournaments, championships	Change perception

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