

## SPORTS, POVERTY AND EDUCATION- AN INTERRELATIONSHIP TO UNDERSTAND HUMAN PROGRESS

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### ABSTRACT

*Article 1 of the INTERNATIONAL CHARTER OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT (Adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twentieth session, Paris, 21 November 1978) says that physical education and sports is a fundamental right for all. It is evident that physical education and sport are simply not confined to physical well-being and health of a person, rather it contributes to the full and well balanced development of the human being. But enormous efforts need to be made to make physical education and sports, a reality for all. Whether the country is industrialized or in a developing mode, the onus on reducing the disparity which continues to exist between them in respect of free and universal access to physical education and sport is same for both.*

*The poverty of any developing nation poses a hindrance in the appropriate development of the sports facilities for its people. Thus there arises a stress on the importance for peace and friendship among peoples of cooperation between the international government and non- governmental organization in the promotion of physical education and sports. The International Charter proclaims that development of physical education and sports is a prerequisite for the human progress. For this the governments are urged along with competent NGOs, educators, families and individuals to be aptly guided and to disseminate it and put it into practice.*

*The present paper focuses on the significant role of national institutions in the development of physical education and sports. The findings of the paper emphasis on the part of the government that it intends to provide the best opportunities for every child to bring out its inner potential and thus thrive, learn and grow. Like in any other educational field, even physical education and sport undergo research and evaluation.*

**Key Words:** *Human development, National institutions, Opportunities, Poverty*

In the culture, custom and natural living of man, sports and related activities holds a significant place. Since primitive times, sports have co-existed with

education wherein man honed up his skills of hunting, handling of weapons, testing his strength, building up his courage with endurance and

firmness. Sports like football, badminton, handball, volleyball, cricket, tennis etc. have substantiated teaching and learning activities at all levels of education. Education, whether formal or informal, needs to be imparted in conformity with sports activities. A well-developed sports system acts like a boon for the country. It helps in producing medal winning sportspersons, but the grim situation is the fragmented organization, with weak coordination, and poorly funded that hampers in developing the youth talent, in identifying them, and thus creating a tensile force in the improvement of sports and education in any nation.

A study by Hannah Okediji on the relevance of sports in developing education in Nigeria since 1904 till date, revealed that sports which was formally introduced into educational curriculum in Nigeria as physical education in 1904 by the British administration, promotes not only physical health and fitness but also recreational activities, relaxation prestige, economic status. It identifies talents, abilities, impart skills, encourage socio-cultural relationship which enhances unity among the populace. Another study on the role of private sport schools in the Norwegian sport system in 2017 by K Sen and Houlihan revealed that in developing an elite youth sport system, the government has though made efforts to enable the strengthening of the sport system by allowing the sports schools to expand in its space yet multiple and overlapping problems have received, only partial policy solutions some of which, such as the growth of private sports schools, have emerged. While the public schools run by the government deal with education, it is the private schools that take up the role of developing the youth sport system.

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## SPORTS AND EDUCATION

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Both sports and education are interwoven with each other. One promotes the other. Sports form a significant component of the education system. It is the education that provides the forum through which different aspects of sports manifest its practices and activities. It has been seen through ages that man has used sports to satisfy his aesthetic needs, to relax from daily routine work and thus assist in living a healthy living. Sports earlier were simply confined to hunting practices only.

While sports help in the physical and mental fitness of the individual through sporting activities and rules and ethic building, the concept of education is an organized and systematic process of acquisition of knowledge, skills, abilities and information through formal and non-formal teaching and learning. Sociologists define education as *“the process of cultural transmission and renewal.”* When education is related to culture, it becomes all the more effective. In this way education combines all various aspects of life, may it be literate or non-literate, economic and agricultural levels. Sports translated into Physical and health education in the curriculum, forms part of the content for systematic process of teaching and learning which develops a child to adult and builds him or her up to become a responsible member of the society.

A complete definition of sports includes all those activities than promotes not only physical and mental development but also very specifically the spiritual, aesthetic, emotional and educational well-being in an individual so that he can contribute in the full-fledged development of the society of which he is an active part.

## SPORT AS A VEHICLE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

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It is no new fact that sports helps to promote peace and development. An historic example of this is the Olympics which are meant to bring in both humanitarian and development programming. An increasing understanding has evolved that sports can actually become a means for addressing other priorities of development scenario. The United Nations Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace affirmed this notion, concluding in its 2003 report that *“sport offers a cost-effective tool to meet many development and peace challenges, and help achieve the MDGs [the UN’s Millennium Development Goals].”*

## ISSUE OF POVERTY IN SPORTS AND EDUCATION

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Education is one of the greatest drivers to eradicate poverty and the concentration of poverty in areas of multiple deprivations. Sport can play a major role in education if the political will is there to unlock the potential of the social toolbox that is sport. Further investment is necessary but the educational potential of sport should not be decided on grounds of cost but on its effectiveness and ability to transform lives. In 2015 UNESCO issued a call to action for international policy makers to invest further in sport and physical education on the grounds that it was integral to greater educational attainment. We should rise to that challenge. There are few spheres of our national life that can compete with the combined power of sport and education to make a real difference. Sport can be a resource of hope; it can assist with advancing educational achievement. Great leaders understand this. *“Sport has the power to change the world .....and create hope where once there was despair.”*

## MAJOR ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED

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In an educational system, physical education and sports are considered to be essential component that must be carried through as it helps to meet individual and social needs. The basic requirement is to develop it adequately with proper facilities and

necessary equipment. It must be remembered that even physical education and sports also undergo research and evaluation. This needs to be seriously dealt with as they are indispensable in the overall development and progress of the individual as well as the nation. It must also be added that in the healthy development of the individuals, the ethical and moral values of physical education and sports also must be taken into concern. When moral values are inculcated in the imparting of physical education, a fair and clean sport then becomes a moral responsibility.

## ROLE OF INSTITUTIONS

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Whether the country is industrialized or in a developing mode, the onus on reducing the disparity which continues to exist between them in respect of free and universal access to physical education and sport is same for both.

The poverty of any developing nation poses a hindrance in the appropriate development of the sports facilities for its people. Thus there arises an emphasis on the importance for peace and friendship among people of cooperation between the international government and non-governmental organization in the promotion of physical education and sports. The International Charter proclaims that development of physical education and sports is a prerequisite for the human progress. For this, the governments are urged along with competent NGOs, educators, families and individuals to be aptly guided and to disseminate it and put it into practice.

National institutions play a significant role in the keen development of physical education and sports. The government of every nation should consider its prime responsibility to nurture the latent sporting talents of each child and this can be made possible by providing best opportunities to let them learn and grow. It is not merely sports that are benefitted through government’s participation but with it the positive self-esteem, the overall health development (cardiovascular and skeletal health)

and the skill development in the individual also gets a platform.

With the basic facility being provided by the government, sporting behavior gets a platform to get nurtured in the childhood itself and thus enables the individual to lead a healthy lifestyle. An environment needs to be created to keep the children physically active and this is possible only in schools as they spend the maximum amount of their time in schools. Sport events and physical education as a subject must be given due importance so that the child understands its scope and becomes interested in choosing it as their life career.

## SOME SUGGESTED MEASURES

Workshops and seminars need to be organized and global information should be updated to these institutions to make way for a healthy sporting environment. Adequate training to the teachers, coaches, and training personnel should be imparted to chisel their weak areas which can go a long way in the development of the sports and physical education. The element of corruption which eats away all that is initiated by the government need to be strictly dealt with. Funds which are considered to be poor in the allocation to sports and its development need to be given major emphasis. ***A country is poor so it cannot afford to spend on sports and physical education but in doing so, it fails the economy to grow in these areas and ultimately the economy is again drenched into the pool of poverty. It thus becomes a dire need to facilitate the sports***

Necessary workshops and seminar to supply and update global information on sports and Physical and Health Education were either not made provision for, pegged down, placed embargo-on or inadequate. In some cases because of corruption which has eaten deep into the fabrics of the system, funds meant for training were diverted or slashed down.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommended as way forward for sporting activities and Physical and Health Education in a developing country:

1. Adequate qualified personnel should be employed to teach the subject in the schools and to serve as coaches, sport administrators, referees, supervisors, facilitators etc.
2. Enough funds should be allocated and released as when needed to secure instructional materials and sports facilities;
3. Adequate medical facilities and care should be provided for those who sustain injuries, wounds and those on rigorous training sessions;
4. Appropriate law should be enacted and enforced to curb excesses, corruption and mismanagement of funds at the managerial levels;

There should be improved remuneration for all sports personnel at institutional, local, club, association, national, international levels; Athletes pupils and students participating in sporting activities should be reinforced by giving them adequate and worthwhile prizes, laurels, medals and other incentives like money and other useful materials;

## SPORT HAS THE CAPACITY TO TRANSFORM THE LIVES OF INDIVIDUALS

It reinforces physical, psychological, emotional, and social well-being and thus helps in overall development. Moreover, sport plays a significant role in building cultures and maintaining communities throughout the world. These are enough reasons for making investments in sports programming. As these sports programs become important vehicles for gaining broader goals and objectives, these have been better understood by nations and they go forward in advancing development and promoting peace too.

## THE TRANSFORMATIONAL POWER OF SPORT

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Different researches and anecdotal evidences have established that there are innumerable benefits of sports participation for individuals. Some significant benefits are improvement in physical health wherein weight is made to control, and stamina is built upon, flexibility is enhanced and coordination is made with better motor skills, improvement in cardio-vascular health is observed and pain is significantly reduced. It is very well seen that physically active persons are prone to live a healthier life style with healthy food habits. Besides physical health, sports have an everlasting impact on the psychological and emotional healing and well-being of the person. It acts as a healer to stress and agitated temperament. One in aggression can give a vent to it through sports. Sports participation helps not only in agitation or aggression but also in state of depression. It boosts up self-confidence and builds up a positive self-image. Evidences have proved that sports help to improve one's concentration and mental functioning. There is also evidence that participation in sport improves concentration and mental functioning.

Beyond what it contributes to physical, psychological and emotional well-being, sport also plays a significant role in healthy social development and interaction. Sport helps people learn how to set and achieve goals through discipline and hard work. It nurtures the development of decision-making and leadership abilities, while teaching people to manage both success and failure. People who participate in sport have the opportunity to improve their communication skills and gain valuable experience in collaboration and teamwork. Sport brings people together who might not otherwise have a chance to meet and allows them an opportunity to share their experiences and work together toward a common goal. These social skills and experiences are readily transferable to other aspects of life and may improve a person's ability to succeed as a student, employee, community member, or advocate for a particular cause. Sport also provides an alternative

to risky or anti-social behavior, creating sufficient structure, discipline, and incentive to keep some people away from drugs, violence, or criminal activity.

## WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE BY THE NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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- More targeted free provision.
- Building education through sport outreach programmes around safe and sustainable University spaces in local communities.
- Better supervision of parks and play areas.
- Daily quality physical education.

## CONCLUSION

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While the tangible benefits of education to individuals and communities are widely accepted, the contribution of sport to both formal and informal education is not well understood today. As we strive to widen access to our further education institutions and Universities, we need to make a strong case for using sports to improve educational attainment from an early age. Education through sport is popular and sustainable and is a critical tool in tackling social and economic disadvantage. The most recent comprehensive systematic UK study of poverty and access to sport for young people identifies nine factors affecting sports' participation among which the most important are free access to sports' provision; strong and healthy communities, the need to attract young people to sport before they leave school. There is a direct correlation between poverty and lack of sports' participation amongst certain groups and yet sport also helps people escape from poverty and access education. Sport matters not just for its own sake but because of what it can contribute to other areas of public life and provision. Education through sport initiatives are proven to boost educational capability, confidence, mental health and other learning skills that help not just education levels but working and social lives. The role of the community is important. Sport can

facilitate crucial partnerships to deliver education through sport in different communities.

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