



Indian Sports: Role of Women

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Abstract

Sport has a worldwide appeal. It does not make distinctions based on gender, caste, or colour. Sports participation benefits total development in addition to health development. The majority of countries have almost completely disregarded the issue of women in sport, which explains why female participation in sport has decreased recently. If we look back in time, the majority of sports and games were dominated by men, and women were not permitted to participate. They are subject to numerous limitations, including social, psychological, and religious ones. Later, they began actively participating in all sporting events.

Sport for women is currently a rapidly expanding factor in every emerging nation. This issue was researched over a number of years. Rig-Vedic period, Post-Vedic period, medieval period, British period, and post-Independence period scenarios. The study's methodology was descriptive. Information was gathered from a variety of research articles, journals, and periodicals, research papers published in reputable journals, the internet, and various debates. Women from India demonstrated themselves at various levels in many sports and games despite several barriers, including physical, physiological, psychological, social, religious, and economic obstacles.

Keywords: Women, Sport, Physical, Social etc.

1. Introduction

Sport is ingrained in practically every country's culture. Sports have a long history of empowering girls and women and advancing gender parity. Sport is not widely regarded as an acceptable or desirable form of recreation for girls and women, hence it is disregarded. The majority of countries have virtually completely neglected the issue of women in sport, which accounts for the historically low rates of female engagement in sport. It has also been a relatively underdeveloped field of study. This neglect has been influenced by gender roles, stereotypes, male research bias, and the establishment of the world's rewards.

Sport has a worldwide appeal. It does not make distinctions based on gender, caste, or colour. Sports participation benefits total development in addition to health development. If we look back in time, the majority of sports and games were dominated by men, and women were not permitted to participate. They are subject to numerous limitations, including social, psychological, and religious ones. Later, they began actively participating in all sporting events.

Sport for women is currently a rapidly expanding factor in every emerging nation. In some nations, participation rates are still low despite promotional activities. Participation is impacted by several environmental and social factors. Some of the factors that have been recognized as having an impact on sports participation include gender, age, education level,

and financial situation. Women are still viewed as a burden in some parts of India. Women are tempted to act in accordance with the wishes of their parents and husbands and have no right to speak. Sporting activity among women can make a significant contribution to the social advancement of the society. Indian women have the ability to perform marvels in any discipline. Women today are challenging the social norms that have been established for them.

2. Objective of the Study

- To study the position of Indian women in sports.
- To study the barriers that prevents Indian women from participating in sports.

3. Methodology

An Analytical method has been used for this study. Data are collected from secondary sources like books, magazines, journals, internet etc.

4. Women In

Rig Vedic Period

According to religious literature (such as the Vedas, Upanishads, Smritis, epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata, and other Dharmasastras), women and men were treated equally in ancient India, particularly during the Rig-Vedic period. They held a respectable position in society. They actively engaged in public life and were not segregated from men. They went to important gatherings and official functions. They wrote hymns and studied the Vedas. Additionally, they stood out in the fields of science and education at the time. They were regarded as the centres of their happy homes, the intellectual companions of their husbands, and as friends and devoted aides in their spouses' own journeys through life. Women were regarded equally to men in all aspects of life during the Vedic era rather than as inferior or submissive. They received schooling and had a say in who their husband would be. Women had full rights and frequently took part in religious rites in the world of religion. In fact, because the woman was regarded as the husband's "better-half," religious ceremonies could not be performed without her presence.

Post Vedic Period

The post-Vedic period saw a decline in the status that women had in the Vedic age. Over the course of the Puranic and Smriti eras, it deteriorated gradually. The description of her position before to the year 300 BC reveals that she had a respectable rank, though not quite to the same degree that she had during the Vedic era. The limiting of women's freedom appears to have been caused by a number of significant developments that occurred in Indian culture from around BC 300 until the start of the Christian era. The main causes of lowering of status at this time were the imposition of Brahminical laws and codes of conduct, rigid limitations imposed by caste system, and joint family system. A daughter started to be seen as a curse. Both the right to inherit and property ownership were taken away from them. Prepubescent marriages started to become common. She was not allowed to make sacrifices, offer prayers, or go on pilgrimages. The wife was asked to dedicate herself to an ascetic lifestyle at home, and the marriage was made irrevocable in her eyes.

Medival Period

Due to the influence of Muslim culture, the status of women continued to deteriorate between the 11th and 18th centuries. Female infanticide, child marriage, the purdah system, sati, and slavery were the key social norms affecting women's status throughout this time. The birth of a female child was first perceived as a curse or bad omen. They were essentially limited to their front doors. The freedom of women in relation to topics such as schooling, choosing a partner, making public appearances, etc. was further restricted. Purdahsystem eventually became strictly adhered to. Education for women was virtually outlawed. Concerns among conservatives regarding women have grown. She not only maintained her poor status at home and elsewhere, but things really got worse for her throughout this time.

British Period

Many organizations and initiatives continue to be patriarchal and do not advance gender equality in sports. There was significant progress made in eradicating gender disparities in education, employment, social rights, and property rights during the British reign. The British prohibited sati, parda, child marriage, slavery, and widow remarriage. Many people worked hard for the welfare of women in Indian society, including Raja Ram Mohan Rai, Dayanand Saraswati, Swami Vivekanand, Maharashi Karve, Justice Ranade, Mahatma Gandhi, and Mahatma Phule.

Modern India

Despite an increase in female sports involvement, there is still a significant gender gap in participation rates. Women were not allowed to participate in the 1896 modern-era Olympic Games, but since then, the number of women who have competed at the Olympics has climbed significantly. Women did recreational rather than sport-specific activities before 1870. They placed a greater emphasis on physical exercise than competition and were unstructured, informal, and non competitive. Before the 20th century, women's sports focused more on fitness than the competitive elements we now associate with all sports. Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the International Olympic Committee, called women's sports "impractical, uninteresting, anesthetic, and we are not afraid to add: incorrect."

In the official medal table, a woman's medal now has the same weight as a man's, according to the 6th IOC Congress in Paris in 1914. This gave each international sports federation the authority to decide whether to allow women to compete. The efforts of social reformers both before and after India's independence have produced the women of today. In every area, she is afforded the same opportunities and rights. One of them is sports. Women who participate in sports can significantly improve social interactions and cultural growth.

5. Restrictions for Women's Sports

Physical Restrictions:-

- Weight on the limbs
- Body heaviness
- Pelvic weight
- A bad posture and a flat foot

Physiological Restrictions:-

- Lower RBC level
- Lower haemoglobin concentration
- The heart's size or strength, and its circulation
- Weaker or smaller lungs, as well as its mechanics
- Dysfunction of endocrine system organs
- Greater percentage of body fat
- Absence of either aerobic or anaerobic power dominance
- Irregular periods

Psychological Restrictions:-

- Anxiety is more intense
- More aggressive than usual
- Self-confidence issues
- Insufficient drive for success
- A lower sense of self
- Without enthusiasm
- Due to media and cell phone use, a restless mind.
- During periods, be hesitant to participate.

Social Restrictions

- Today's society makes it dangerous for women to walk around freely due to rape, ragging, and traffic jams.
- Lack of risky forms of road travel because of increased motor vehicle activity.
- Engaging in an unwarranted love affair.
- Insufficient nurturing.
- A lack of parental harmony or a lack of family support and encouragement.

Religious Restrictions

Religious restrictions are present in fundamentalist communities with strict religious convictions that are particularly concerned with their religious views. They are concerned that if they step outside the bounds of their religion, society would condemn and blame them. This may be the reason why the majority of women are unable to showcase their talent.

Economical Restrictions

When a family is facing financial difficulty and must decide between the need for a son or a daughter, the primary person always favours the need for a son. Economic Barriers are said to be the main issue preventing women from participating in sports. Because there is no organization in India that sponsors women's teams, there are no coaches, no professional trainers, and insufficient facilities.

6. The Best Women Players in India

- **Saina Nehwal :-** An accomplished badminton player from India is Saina Nehwal. She was formerly ranked first in the world and has won 24 international championships, including ten Superseries crowns. She reached the world's second position in 2009, but it wasn't until 2015 that she was able to break through to the top spot, making history as the first Indian woman and second Indian overall, behind Prakash

Padukone. She has competed in the Olympics three times for India, earning a bronze medal on her second appearance in London in 2012.

- **Sania Mirza:** - Sania Mirza is a former competitive tennis player from India. She was formerly ranked first in the world in doubles and won six major championships, three in women's doubles and three in mixed doubles. She had the No. 1 singles ranking in India according to the Women's Tennis Association from 2003 till her retirement from singles in 2013. Mirza has made a name for herself as one of India's most well-known, well-paid, and prominent athletes throughout the course of her career.
- **Dutee Chand:** - Indian sprinter Dutee Chand is the current national champion in the women's 100-meter race. She is the first Indian to take home the gold in the 100-meter race at an international championship. She is the third Indian woman to ever make it to the Women's 100 meter final of an Olympic Summer Games. However, her 11.69 in the preliminary round of the 2016 Summer Olympics [unreliable source?] did not advance her to the next round. At the Asian Games in Jakarta in 2018, Chand won silver in the women's 100-meter event. India had not won a medal in this competition since 1998. She ran the 100 meter race in 11.32 seconds to become the first Indian sprinter to win gold at the Universidad in 2019.
- **Pusarla Venkata Sindhu :-** A badminton player from India is named Pusarla Venkata Sindhu. Sindhu, who is regarded as one of India's most accomplished athletes, has won medals at numerous competitions, including the Olympics and the BWF circuit, as well as gold at the 2019 World Championships. She is only the second individual athlete from India to win two straight medals at the Olympic Games and the first and only Indian to win the title of badminton world champion. In April 2017, she achieved a career-high global ranking of no. 2.
- **Hima Das :-** Hima Das, also known as Dhing Express, is an Assamese sprinter from India. With a time of 50.79 seconds, she set the current Indian record for the 400 meters at the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta, Indonesia. At the IAAF World U20 Championships, she became the first Indian athlete to take home a gold medal in a track competition. In accordance with the state's Integrated Sport Policy, she was appointed as a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) in the Assam Police.
- **Dipa Karmakar:** - Indian gymnast Dipa Karmakar is from the state of Tripura. She participated in the Olympics as India's first gymnast. In her first Summer Olympics, she finished fourth in the final.
- **Mary Kom :** - Chungneijang Mangte Mary Kom OLY is a former Rajya Sabha member, politician, and amateur boxer from India. The first female boxer to have won a medal in each of the first seven World Championships, the only boxer (male or female) to have won eight World Championship medals, and the only boxer to have won six World Amateur Boxing Championship titles. She was the first female boxer from India to make it to the Olympics in 2012, when she competed in the flyweight (51 kg) division and took home a bronze medal. The International Boxing Association (amateur) (AIBA) had also ranked her as the top female light-flyweight in the world. She won a gold medal at the Asian Games in 2014 in Incheon, South Korea, making history as the first Indian female boxer to do so. She also won a gold medal at the

2018 Commonwealth Games. In addition, she is the only fighter to have won the title of Asian Amateur Boxing Champion a record six times. President's Cup in Indonesia saw Mary Kom win the 51 kg gold medal.

- **P.T. Usha:** - Pilavullakandi Thekkeraparambil Usha is a former track and field athlete from India. Since 1979, she has been connected to Indian athletics. She has garnered 7 Silver and 4 Asian Gold medals. The "Queen of Indian track and field" is a title that she is frequently given.
- **Sakshi Malik :-** Sakshi Malik is a freestyle wrestler from India. She became the first Indian female wrestler to win a medal in the Olympics when she earned the bronze medal in the 58 kg division at the 2016 Summer Olympics.
- Malik had earlier won the bronze medal at the 2015 Asian Wrestling Championships in Doha and the silver medal at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.
- **Mithali Dorai Raj:** - Indian cricketer Mithali Dorai Raj served as captain of the country's women's national team from 2004 to 2022. One of the best female cricketers of all time, Mithali has scored the most runs in women's international cricket.
- **Karnam Malleswari :-** Indian weightlifter Karnam Malleswari is a former competitor. She is the first Indian woman to take home a medal at the 2000 Olympics. She was given the Arjuna Award in 1994, and in 1999 she was given the civilian Padma Shri Award and Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award, which is India's highest sporting honour.
- **Mirabai Chanu :-** Weightlifter Saikhom Mirabai Chanu is from India. The gold medalist in the CWG 2022, Mirabai Chanu, age 27, hoisted a total of 201 kg. At the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo, she took home the silver medal in the Women's 49 kg division. Mirabai Chanu has won many medals in the Commonwealth Games and the World Championships. She received the Padma Shri from the Indian government for her services to the game. Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna, a sporting honor, was given to her by the Indian government in 2018.
- **Manika Batra:-** Indian table tennis player Manika Batra. She is currently ranked first among female table tennis players in India and 44th overall as of November 22, 2020. In 2020, she received the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna.
- **Deepika Kumari:-** Indian archer Deepika Kumari competes professionally. She competes in the sport of archery and is presently rated No. 2 in the world. In the women's individual recurve competition at the 2010 Commonwealth Games, she took home a gold medal.
- **Geeta Phogat:-** Geeta Phogat, an Indian freestyle wrestler, captured the nation's first-ever wrestling gold medal at the 2010 Commonwealth Games. She is the first female wrestler from India to earn a spot in the Olympic Summer Games.
- **Jwala Gutta :-** Indian badminton player Jwala Gutta. She began representing India at international competitions in women's doubles and mixed doubles in the late 1990s. She reached at No. 6 in the world rankings and has a total of 316 match victories across both disciplines, the most of any Indian.
- **Tania Sachdev:-** Indian chess player Tania Sachdev is a FIDE International Master (IM) and a Woman Grandmaster (WGM). She has won the Indian Women's Chess

Championship twice (in 2006 and 2007), the Asian Women's Chess Championship once (in 2007), and the Commonwealth Women's Chess Championship three times (in 2016, 2018, and currently). She also presents and provides commentary on chess games.

7. Conclusion

Sports participation benefits women in many ways, including keeping them fit and healthy. It improves their cognitive capacity and endurance, allowing them to work continuously. It protects them away from stress, obesity, hypertension, diabetes, hormone malfunction, and being unable to perform day-to-day tasks that are prone to harm, such as osteoporosis. It also makes them the society's producers and servers. Sport involvement should be encouraged at schools, colleges, and universities. The government should organize as many sporting events as possible to encourage women to participate in sports. Every citizen has a responsibility to ensure that women may participate in sports and enjoy a better and healthier life.

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