

IMPACT OF SPORTS AND GAMES ON MENTAL HEALTH

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Abstract

Mental Health is the state of personal mental well-being in which individuals feel basically satisfied with themselves, their role in life and their relationship with others. The value of games is now being increasingly recognized in India from personal, social, educational and national points of view. Games and sports are essential for the all-round development of a personality. It is by playing games and sports that we can develop and maintain our health. The impacts of indulging in sports activities on overall development will be done sparingly. This paper covered the social, emotional and general impact with key lessons for the betterment of Mental health with impact factors. The positive impact of participation in sport and active recreation on physical and mental health.

Keywords: *Impact, Sports, Games, Mental Health, India.*



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Introduction

What is mental health?

Since its inception, WHO has included mental well-being in the definition of health. WHO Famously Defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO, 2001b, p.1)”. Three ideas central to the improvement of health follow from this definition: mental health is an integral part of health, mental health is more than the absence of mental illness, and mental health is intimately connected with physical health and behaviour.

Mental Health is the state of personal mental well-being in which individuals feel basically satisfied with themselves, their role in life and their relationship with others. Improvements in quality of life and emotional well-being, due to physical activity, Sport is a broad and vague term that includes a wide range of activities.

The personal, social and environmental factors that determine mental health and mental illness may be clustered conceptually around three themes (HEA, 1997; Lahtinen et al., 1999; Lehtinen, Riikonen & Lahtinen, 1997):

- The development and maintenance of healthy communities
- each person's ability to deal with the social world through skills like participating, tolerating diversity and mutual responsibility .
- each person's ability to deal with thoughts and feelings, the management of life and emotional resilience

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Links between sport and mental well-being

Exercise and, by extension, sport have long been known to produce beneficial effects on mental health, enhance self-esteem, help to manage stress and anxiety, and alleviate depression. In patients with psychiatric disorders, physical exercise has been shown to diminish clinical symptoms, especially for depression. More recently, breakthrough research has shown that exercise may also improve brain functions such as memory and learning and reduce the risk of cognitive loss through Alzheimer's and small strokes.

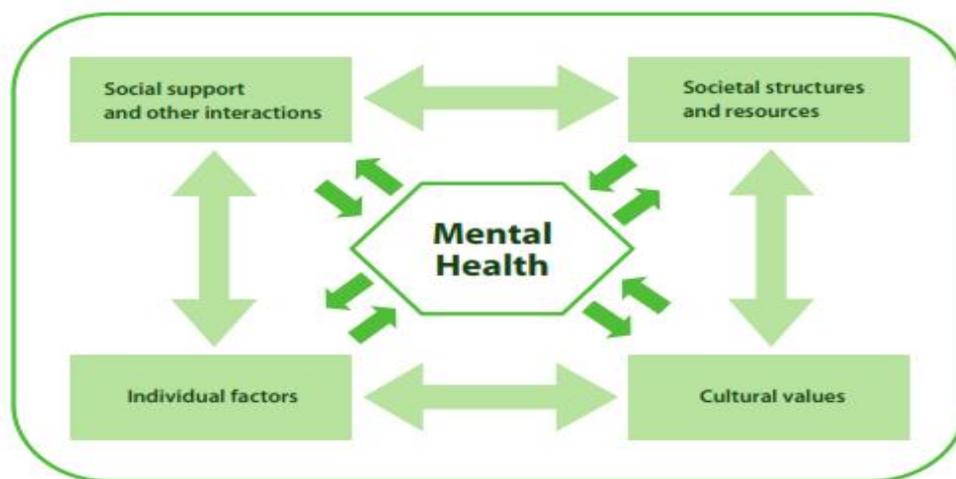
It is not surprising, given its clear benefits, that sport is also increasingly being used as a tool to reduce trauma in post-conflict and post-disaster settings. While there is not yet any scientific evidence on the impact of these efforts, qualitative examinations of current practices and results indicate that this is a fruitful new direction. Research is required to determine what impact sport can have and how best to achieve it. (This topic is addressed more fully with respect to children and youth in Chapter 3.) The following sections explore the mental health and cognitive benefits of sport and exercise in greater detail.

Importance of Sports and Games

If we see back for a while in the history or put some lights on the life of any successful person, we see that name, fame and money never come easily. It needs a dedication, continuity, patience and most importantly some physical activities means physical and mental health of a person for a healthy survival and success. Sports is the best way to get involved in the continuous physical activities. Success of any person depends on the mental and physical energy. History reveals that only supremacy have power to rule the nation or person.

Sports are nice way to get involved in the physical activities which benefits a lot. Sports are given much importance in many countries as they know it's real benefits and need in the personal and professional life of a person. Sports are physical activities of much importance for any athlete or a professional sportsperson. It means a lot for them and their life. Sports have nice scope for the sportspersons nationally as well as internationally. In some countries, sports and games activities are arranged in the celebration of some events or festivals, for example; Olympic Games are organized to pay honour to the Olympiads of the ancient Greece.

The structural model of mental health



Social Impacts of Sports

There is significant evidence of a number of social impacts from participation in sport and exercise. The highest quality evidence concerns health benefits, which prevent or reduce physical and mental health problems and save on health care costs.

Mental Health: - The evidence around the impacts of sport and exercise on mental health is substantially less than for physical health. However, the evidence base is growing and research suggests that sport and exercise can have positive preventative and therapeutic benefits for mental health and wellbeing (Walsh, 2011). There is evidence that sport and exercise may reduce the risk of developing mental health illnesses and be beneficial in treating certain mental illnesses (Street and James, 2007; Wynaden et al., 2012).

Primary Benefits:- Both cross-sectional and prospective cohort studies show that sport and exercise can reduce the risk of depression and suicide as well as neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's Disease (AD) and Parkinson's Disease (PD) (Walsh, 2011)

Secondary Benefits:- Sport and exercise can also create therapeutic benefits for depression, anxiety and tension, eating, addictive and body dysmorphic disorders, age-related cognitive decline, the severity of AD and some symptoms of schizophrenia (Street and James, 2007).

The following are considered to be essential features of developmental contexts that promote positive youth development:

- ✚ safe and health promoting facilities
- ✚ clear and consistent rules and expectations
- ✚ warm, supportive relationships
- ✚ opportunities for meaningful inclusion and belonging
- ✚ positive social norms
- ✚ support for self-efficacy and autonomy
- ✚ opportunities for skill building
- ✚ coordination among family, school and community efforts

(National Research Council's Committee on Community-level Programs for Youth, 2002).

Positive Impact of Sports

- ❖ Johnny is on the basketball team at his school. He attends practice every day and looks forward to his games. His participation and love of the game have positive effects that go far beyond improved basketball skills.
- ❖ Participation in sports has a positive influence on many areas of life. Some of these benefits are obvious, and others might surprise you. Participation in sports can make you healthier, improve social skills, and support positive mental health. In this lesson, we will look at some benefits of participating in sports, and see the influence it has in Johnny's life.

Physical Benefits

- ❖ The physical benefits of participating in a sport are probably the most obvious. Athletic training helps strengthen bodies, develops coordination, and promotes physical fitness. Through sports, youths learn physical fitness in a fun way that encourages healthy living habits. Once young athletes develop these habits, they are more likely to continue them throughout their lives. This is important since physical fitness helps combat major health issues such as obesity, heart disease, and diabetes.
- ❖ Even when it is not basketball season, Johnny runs to keep in shape. He knows that staying physically fit year-round helps him play better when basketball season arrives. Johnny has also learned what types of food provide him with the energy he needs to feel good. Playing basketball has provided Johnny with motivation to develop important habits of regular exercise and healthy eating.

Emotional Benefits

- The physical activity and socialization provided through participation in sports increases mental and emotional well-being. Participation in sports can boost self-confidence, trusting one's abilities or judgement, as new abilities are learned. This helps prevent feelings of depression and provides a physical outlet for stress. In addition, being an athlete is an acceptable reason to say no to using drugs or consuming alcohol. Youths who participate in sports are also less likely to drop out of school or get in trouble with the law.

General impact of sports an Games

- **Community Pride/Identity:-** Used in the case of references which discuss the role of sport at the broad level as a source of definition and identity for large groups of people.
- **Crime Prevention:-** Used in the case of references which investigate the association between sports participation and crime, from 'minor' offences such as vandalism to 'more serious' offences such as theft and criminal violence. Most such references in this bibliography focus on youth crime.
- **Development of Life Skills:--**Describes references which discuss the links between sports participation and the acquiring of skills which are of assistance to individuals in day-to-day life including social skills and self-efficacy. Also includes references which investigate the impact of sport in relation to the maintenance (rather than the development) of life skills, such as problem solving, particularly amongst the aged population.
- **Mood:-** Describes references which discuss the impact of sports participation on aspects of mental health, specifically those related to mood such as depression, anxiety and stress.
- **Personal Well-Being:-**Used in the case of references which discuss the benefits of sports participation on general 'quality of life'. In most such references, the primary focus is on aspects of physical health, and findings on social impacts are generally related back to physical health outcomes.
- **Self-Esteem:-**Describes references which discuss the impact of sports participation on self-image and self-confidence.
- **Social Behaviour:-**Used to describe references which discuss the role of sport in areas relating to social interaction, such as the development of social skills amongst

particular groups and the reduction of anti-social behaviour (except crime). Also includes references which focus on the role of sport in tobacco and alcohol consumption.

- **Social Cohesion:-**Describes studies that examine the impacts of participation at the society (rather than the individual) level, specifically on the association between sport and social integration. Includes references which portray sport as a 'social lubricant' which assists separate social groups to work together.

Benefits of Sports and Physical Activities

- ✓ Physical Health
- ✓ Mental Health
- ✓ Educational and Intellectual Development
- ✓ Reproductive Health
- ✓ Social Inclusion

The impact of physical activity on health

Being physically active plays an essential role in ensuring health and well-being, and there is a large body of research investigating the benefits of exercise.

i Physical activity benefits many parts of the body – the heart, skeletal muscles, bones, blood (for example, cholesterol levels), the immune system and the nervous system and can reduce many of the risk factors for NCDs. These risk factors include:

- reducing blood pressure;
- improving blood cholesterol levels;
- lowering body mass index (BMI).
- physical inactivity is the fourth-leading risk factor for global mortality
- physical inactivity is responsible for 6% of deaths globally.

Modelling the impact of mental health on social capital		
	Consequences	
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ level of well being ➤ Physical health ➤ Reciprocity ➤ Knowledge and skills ➤ Quality of relationship ➤ Sexual satisfaction ➤ Uses of services ➤ Productivity ➤ Trust ➤ Social cohesion 	Social capital

Key lessons from health promotion relevant to mental health

- ✚ Combine individual and structural strategies with advocacy.
- ✚ Work with an array of public and private sectors, not just the health sector.
- ✚ Emphasize positive mental health as well as prevention and treatment.
- ✚ Use professional tools for programme planning, implementation and evaluation.
- ✚ Strive to increase people's control over their own mental health.
- ✚ Avoid over-dependence on "expert-driven" approaches.
- ✚ Adopt a capacity building approach with individuals and communities.

Education of Teachers in Health and Physical Education

Health, physical education and yoga constitute an important part of the core curriculum at the primary, secondary and senior secondary school levels. The area needs to be considered in the framework of the overall development of the child and the adolescent – physical, social, emotional and mental. The aim of health and physical education is not just to attain physical health but also sound psycho-social development. The subject covers personal health, physical and psycho-social development, movement concepts and motor skills, relationships with significant others and healthy communities and environments. The interdisciplinary nature of the area requires integration and cross-curriculum planning with other subjects and curricular areas. The major components of the school health programme – medical care, hygienic school environment, school lunch, health and physical education and emotional health – must be an integral part of health and physical education. In view of the crucial significance of this curricular area in the overall development of the child, it is very essential that teachers are adequately prepared. The preparation of teachers in this area has to be considered keeping in view the holistic definition of health and overall development of the individual. Currently, teacher education programmes in this area are offered at different levels – diploma courses (D.P.Ed.), degree (B.P.Ed.) and post degree (M.P.Ed.) programmes offered in colleges and institutes of physical education and universities. There is a need to review the curriculum, syllabus and pedagogy of these programmes within the conceptual framework and objectives of health and physical education outlined above. Also, all teacher education courses must provide health, physical education and yoga as 18 compulsory inputs. Issues involved in designing teacher education programmes in the said area merit separate consideration.

Recommendations for sports and games to mental health

- ✚ There is a need to conduct international comparative surveys on the physical activity of children and youth in both organized settings such as schools, clubs and community centres as well as leisure time (less structured) settings.
- ✚ National commissions should be established to construct projects and policies for the improvement of conditions for the physically active children's life and develop national campaigns directed at children and youth. Such commissions should involve parents, politicians, teachers, physicians, architects, city planners, sport organizers, social workers, religious organizations as well as youths themselves.
- ✚ The importance of the parental role in facilitating children's physical activity should be given more attention in research and public health promotion.
- ✚ Physical activity in children and youth should be given more attention in the paediatric and adolescent medicine curriculum.
- ✚ Physical activity and inclusive organized sports should be given more attention in the physical education curriculum.
- ✚ Space and facilities for physical activity, games and sports at the village, community, neighbourhood and city level should be a priority.
- ✚ Communities should set aside safe places for walking and active excursions for the family.
- ✚ Games and play festivals for the family should be developed for communities and cities. Networks of activity-oriented projects for children and youth could be developed that involve kindergartens, schools, clubs, religious organizations, recreation centres, medical facilities etc.
- ✚ The efforts of sport, youth organizations, schools and community agencies should be coordinated with a focus on youth.
- ✚ Extra-scholar competitive and non-competitive sport programs in sport clubs, in recreational programs and other out-of school settings should be promoted, according to age groups and ability levels.
- ✚ Develop national or city programs that define age oriented fitness activities and fitness tests with awards and incentives for achievement.
- ✚ Develop integrated media programs aimed at youth that utilize stories, comics, games and sports events aimed at different age groups.

Conclusions on Sport and Health

Healthy communities are communities in which people have the physical and mental health and wellbeing needed to conduct their daily lives. The purpose of this paper is to review the available evidence of a range of sports and recreation programs in relation to their effects on supporting and building healthy communities. There is a strong evidence base on the mainly positive relationship between engagement in sport and physical exercise and health. Other factors such as the organisational setting, whether the activity is indoors or outdoors in natural surroundings, and the role project facilitators play may be important in influencing mental health benefits.

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