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THE DECLINE OF UNIVERSITY SPORTS IN INDIA: CAUSES AND RETENTION MEASURES

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ABSTRACT

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Keywords Decline of sport in universities Ridit analysis Sport in Indian Universities Coaches and players Management of sports University sports in India Strategic planning Players of universities Sports strategic planning Management of sports in India. The objective of this study was to determine the causes of the decline of sports in the universities of India. A structured questionnaire was used to collect the data from India's hundred-year-old three central universities. The subjects for this study were the administrators, coaches, and players of the University Sports Boards. A multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for this study. At first, the three central universities, Aligarh Muslim University, Banaras Hindu University, and Jamia Millia Islamia, were selected purposively based on uniformity. Three hundred thirteen subjects, including 39 administrators, 29 coaches, and 245 players, were randomly selected from the three universities. RIDIT analysis followed by the Kruskal Wallis test was used to analyze the data and hypothesis. The study results unveiled that the effectiveness of sports in the universities of India has declined. There is no strategic planning with clear and attainable objectives for the management of sports in the universities of India. The study displayed the causes of its decline and suggested retention measures. Further research is needed to explore sports in the universities of India.

Contribution/Originality: The study reveals the causes of the decline of the effectiveness of sports in the universities of India. The study also suggests retention measures for the effectiveness of sports in the universities of India. The study stresses prompt action from the authorities for saving sports in the universities of India.

1. INTRODUCTION

Management is essential in any sports program since it must be adequately implemented to be effective and relevant. Bucher and Krotee (1993) assert that sports management entails collaboration between those who administer and participate in sporting processes. However, a quick look at universities in India reveals that those who participate in sports are just a selected few varsity athletes, that is, those who represent the university. As a result, this falls under interscholastic and intercollegiate sports. Most sports administrators, particularly at the university level, give this phase of sports greater attention and publicity than most other areas of the sports continuum. The reason is not far-fetched. Since this group has the most talented and skilled individuals, it is easier to obtain results, possibly justifying the large sums of money spent on sports. The only dependence on intercollegiate and interscholastic sports as a panacea for success has resulted in the following issues in university sports management.

- i. Sports at the university level have become for a chosen few because most students are restricted to spectator rather than active participation.
- ii. Most sports administrators become managerially lazy because they only deal with a few students. As a result, there are no expectations on their intelligence, initiative, or drive.

iii. Skills development is now limited to a few "elite" athletes. As a result, coaches have a smaller pool to train experienced players.

Sports are second only to oxygen in sustaining good health and leading to a happy existence for every human being. Sports play a vital role in addition to other extracurricular activities. Academic institutions serve as a nucleus whose significant influence on society's youth matters greatly. These organizations are in charge of emphasizing the value of sports in the community. Ample space is required for sporting activities, particularly in metropolitan locations. Academic institutions offer a solution to this problem because they have extensive areas under their jurisdiction to pursue such activities (Khan, Khan, Farhatullah, Ahmad, & Nasrullah, 2014).

Universities are regarded as centers of excellence in teaching, research, and community service in every country. The universities reputation for excellence has recently expanded to include sports. As a result, universities have grown into breeding grounds for future leaders and top performers in sports, teaching, and research. The university system benefits sports growth by distinguishing persons of education and talent, young men and women as students, and a disciplined environment.

Universities have taken the lead in sports development in various countries worldwide, particularly in the United States. The bulk of excellent athletes at the national and international levels in America are nurtured and produced by the American university system, as is widely known.

Sports in American universities have developed social and cultural significance, according to Bennett (1983) he also noted that the universities are responsible for providing uniforms, equipment, and coaching to the teams. A fulltime coach is also hired to oversee the athletes' training. Many schools and universities have stadiums, and they spend a lot of money on sports every year. These schools are noted for their athletic scholarships and flexible tutorial systems that accommodate students with a wide range of interests, including sports. Other aspects of the American university system that appear to have aided in the spread of sports include:

- i. A flexible examination system that permits athletes to complete their tests regardless of whether or not they are competing in sports.
- ii. A total commitment to sports promotion on the part of officials and lecturers.
- iii. The rise of professional sports in American society, which gives professional opportunities and outlets for excellent university athletes.
- iv. Well-organized intramural and extramural activities.
- v. Consistent and rigorous training, exposure to competition, a strong incentive system, and overall athlete care.

Academic, administrative, material, and human resource variables and student and training program variables all respond to the needs of high athletic standards as a result of the American university sports experience (Ojeme, 1985).

On the other hand, India's government and sports authorities recognize the importance of universities in the development of sports. The Indian university system has been tasked with developing much-needed high-performance athletes in India in various instances. In terms of sports growth, things do not look to be going well in India's university system. The Indian university system is widely regarded as failing to meet expectations.

India has the world's third-largest higher education system in terms of students, after China and the United States. India will become one of the world's largest educational centers in the future. India's Higher Education system has seen an enormous increase in the number of Universities/University level Institutions & Colleges since independence. The 'Right to Education Act,' which mandates free and compulsory education for all children aged 6 to 14, has brought about a shift in the country's educational system, with numbers indicating a massive increase in school enrollment. The presence of the commercial sector in higher education has resulted in substantial changes. The private sector now supports more than 60% of higher education institutions in India. This has accelerated the

establishment of colleges that have popped up in the past decade, providing India with the world's largest number of Higher Education institutions and the second-largest number of student enrolments (Sheikh, 2017).

Sports and contests have always been a prominent element of Indian universities, dating back to the country's independence or even before that. The institutions were known for their high academic standards and their players' outstanding performance in various games and sporting competitions. Since their founding, the universities have had a breeding ground for excellent athletes and players. The universities fervently maintained their interest and tradition. Universities have produced some of the top athletes in the country, both nationally and internationally. Ghouse Mohammad began to play tennis at Aligarh, and Wazir Ali, Lala Amarnath, C.S. Naidu, Jahangir Khan, Ali Hasan, Mohammad Salahuddin, and Mushtaq Ali learned to play cricket in Aligarh (Games Committee, 2022a).

Among Olympic hockey players, Abdul Qayyum, Asad Ali Kidwai, Aslam Sher Khan, Dorai Swamy, Akhtar Husain Hayat, Ali Saeed, Anwar Ahmad, B.P. Govinda, Inamur Rehman, Zafar Iqbal, Joginder Singh, and Masood Minhaj were Aligarh Muslim University graduates (Games Committee, 2022a).

The Asian Yachting Champion was Aligarian Syed Afsar Husain. Karim Shelly, Mahmood Khabbazi, Jamshed Nasiri, Majid Bashkar, Ahmad Sanjari, and Ali Khodai established themselves in football. Ranvir Singh, Mazhar Khan, Mohammad Ishtiaq, and Sirohi excelled in Athletics simultaneously (Games Committee, 2022a).

Virender Sehwag, Bharat Chikara, Devesh Singh Chuhan, Danish Mujtaba, Gagan Ajit Singh, Monica Joon, Prabhjot Singh, Firoz Gyas, Vivek Gupta, Nitin Kumar, Rameez Nemat, Ajitesh Roy, Prerna Bhambri, Mandeep Antil, Sarpreet Singh, and Tushkar Khandekar were the students of JMI (Games and Sports, 2022a). Divya Singh, a previous captain of the Indian National Women's Basketball Team, was a Banaras Hindu University student. There is a large number of players with international fame from universities.

University Sports Boards are in charge of organizing sports and games events in India's universities. Leading clubs and sub-clubs make up the University Sports Boards. The clubs include Athletic Club, Cricket Club, Basketball, Volleyball, Badminton, Riding Club, Football Club, Hockey Club, Tennis Club, Physical Culture Club (Weight Lifting, Power Lifting & Body Building), Gymnasium Club, Skating Club, Gymkhana Club, Volleyball Club, Badminton Club, Basketball Club, Table Tennis Club, Wrestling Club, Hiking & Mountaineering Club, Swimming Club, Athletic Club, Cricket Club, Basketball Club, and Volleyball Club.

The clubs' program attracts many students who join clubs based on a particular sport or activity, and these groups compete both within their rank and against other outside clubs. As a result, it encourages students and others to volunteer and contribute to the best of their abilities. Typically, sports clubs are run by students, with assistance from the sports and games departments in terms of resources, coaching and instruction personnel, etc. The organizational structure to run the USOs and its allied clubs is mostly a Secretary: who acts as the head of the USOs followed by the presidents of every club of the USOs. Generally, the portfolios of secretaries and presidents are given to the professors and the other dignified personalities of the different departments of the universities. In other words, the secretaries and presidents of the USOs are usually not experts in games and sports. They may belong to any different specialization, may it be from the profession of medicine, engineering, linguistics, literature, and whatnot (Games and Sports, 2022b; Games Committee, 2022b; University Sports Board, 2018). The USOs also have staff members, including the coaches, assistant coaches, directors, assistant directors, and the other office and ground staff.

The poor sports performance of Indian universities may point to some limitations or concerns. Identifying and measuring these concerns regarding their perceived influence on sports growth appears to be the next obvious step toward enhancing the standard. This research aims to identify and rank the issues influencing the growth of sports in Indian universities as observed by university athletes and make recommendations to improve university sports in India.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study area includes the central universities of India. Since the number of central universities in India is large,

the researcher purposively took three central residential universities with uniformity in time length of existence, same administrative setup, and similar organizational structure. The three universities were; Aligarh Muslim University, Banaras Hindu University, and Jamia Millia Islamia. All these universities are residential and are more than a hundred years old. The administrators, coaches, and players of the universities are considered the subjects for the study. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the subjects. At the onset, purposive sampling was used to select the mentioned universities, followed by simple random sampling to select administrators, coaches, and players. A sample size of 463 was collected through a structured questionnaire. The analysis was limited to 313 people (39 administrators, 29 coaches, and 245 players), with the rest being discarded due to missing data. The structured questionnaire was created based on a literature analysis and a pilot study conducted in the fourth quarter of 2020 to identify the factors influencing sports management in Indian universities. A five-point Likert scale was used to create the questionnaire, with *I* denoting strong disagreement and *5* denoting strong agreement with a certain issue. The scale reliability was determined to be 0.932, which is higher than the acceptable limit (Nunnaly, 1978). Then RIDIT analysis was applied to the collected data set to test their agreeing propensity from different stakeholders' points of view.

The following formula was used to test the hypothesis using Kruskal-Wallis statistics W:

$$\begin{cases} H_0: \forall i, \rho_i = 0.5\\ H_a: \exists i, \rho_i \neq 0.5 \end{cases}$$
$$W = 12 \sum_{i=1}^m \pi_i (\rho_i - 0.5)^2$$

"W follows a χ^2 distribution with (m-1) degree of freedom. If H₀ cannot be accepted, examine the relationships among confidence intervals of ρ_i . The general rules for interpreting the values of ρ_i are shown below (Beder & Heim, 1990; Bross, 1958; Craig & Faulkenberry, 1979; Donaldson, 1998; Pradhan, 2009; Sermeus & Delesie, 1996; Uwawunkonye & Anaene, 2013; Wu, 2007).

- 1. A scale item with its ρ_i value statistically deviating from 0.5 implies a significant difference in the response patterns between the reference data set and the comparison data set for the particular scale item. If the confidence interval of ρ_i contains 0.5, it is accepted that the ρ value does not significantly deviate from 0.5.
- 2. A low value of ρ_i is preferred over a high value of ρ_i because a low value of ρ_i indicates a low probability of being in a negative propensity.
- 3. The response patterns of scale items with overlapped confidence intervals of ρ_i are considered, among the respondents, to be statistically indifferent from each other.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section highlights the survey data (in 5 points Likert scale, Table 1) collected from administrators, coaches, and players of the three central universities regarding the causes of the decline of sports in India's universities and suggests retention measures. The following factors have been selected for the survey and assumed to influence the quality of sports performance in the universities of India. These are indicated below.

SP1. Do the University Sports Boards formulate strategic plans with a clear understanding of action?

SP2. Extend your level of satisfaction with the present organizational structure of the University Sports Boards.

SP3. Do you think that some changes in the organizational structure of the University Sports Boards can increase its efficiency and effectiveness?

SP4. Does the university administration appoint personnel who have expertise in games and sports to the different administrative positions of the University Sports Board?

SP5. Does the nonexpert personnel appointed by the university administration for the different positions of the University Sports Board hamper the performance of the University Sports Board?

The 5-point Likert scale was adopted for gathering expert comments. On a 5-point scale, respondents were asked to rate each criteria statement. Identifying a reference date set to calculate the ridits is the first step in RIDIT analysis. The entire survey data set was chosen as the study's reference data set. The responses' frequencies are listed in Table 1. The ridits of the reference data set for each ordered category are shown in the last row of Table 1.

4. ANALYSIS OF HYPOTHESIS

 H_{\circ} : There is no statistically significant difference in the responses of administrators, coaches, and players regarding the scale items in Indian Universities.

Reference Data Set						
Item	HS/A (5)	S/F (4)	PS/ST (3)	SDS/S (2)	HDS/N(1)	πi
SP1	78	116	77	27	15	313
SP2	49	115	95	36	18	313
SP3	123	113	58	11	8	313
SP4	72	106	94	15	26	313
SP5	96	95	80	21	21	313
fi	418	545	404	110	88	1565
$(1/2)*f_i$	209	272.5	202	55	44	
Fj	209	690.5	1165	1422	1521	
Ri	0.134	0.442	0.745	0.909	0.972	

Table 1. RIDITs calculation for the data set.

Note: HS: Highly Satisfied, S: Satisfied, PS: Partially Satisfied, DS: Dissatisfied, HDS: Highly Dissatisfied. A: Always, F: Frequently, ST: Sometimes, S: Seldom, N: Never. HS/A = 5, S/F = 4, PS/ST = 3, DS/S = 2, HDS/N = 1.

* = multiplied by.

Table 1 shows the reference data set. The frequencies of the responses are shown. The table's last row (R_j) shows the ridits of the reference data set for each ordered category.

Item	5	4	3	2	1	Pi	Rank	LB	UB	W-calculated	Sig./Not sig.
SP1	0.03	0.16	0.18	0.08	0.05	0.50	3	0.47	0.53	0.007	No significant difference.
SP2	0.02	0.16	0.22	0.10	0.06	0.57	5	0.54	0.60	1.505	There is significant difference.
SP3	0.05	0.15	0.14	0.03	0.02	0.41	1	0.37	0.43	2.737	There is significant difference.
SP4	0.03	0.14	0.22	0.04	0.08	0.53	4	0.49	0.56	0.244	No significant difference.
SP5	0.04	0.13	0.19	0.06	0.07	0.49	2	0.46	0.52	0.023	No significant difference

Table 2. Ridits for the comparison data set.

Note: HS: Highly Satisfied, S: Satisfied, PS: Partially Satisfied, DS: Dissatisfied, HDS: Highly Dissatisfied.

A: Always, F: Frequently, ST: Sometimes, S: Seldon, N: Never. HS/A = 5, S/F = 4, PS/ST = 3, DS/S = 2, HDS/N = 1.

Ho: Rejected

Table 2 shows the various ridits, the mean RIDIT (P_i) , lower bound (LB), and upper bound (UB) of the 95% confidence interval of mean RIDIT (Pi). The table also shows the item-wise W calculated. Since the Kruskal-Wallis W (54.22) is significantly greater than X^2 (5-1) = 9.48, it can be inferred that the responses about the scale items among the respondents are significantly different somehow. From the confidence intervals shown in Table 2, it can be seen that the subject's responses to the items "SP2" and "SP3" are significantly different from each other. Compared to the reference data set, the respondents have less probability of dissatisfaction with "SP3".

On the other hand, respondents have a higher probability of dissatisfaction with "SP2". Furthermore, respondents are in more agreeing propensity with "SP3" ($P_i = 0.41$) than "SP2" ($P_i = 0.57$). Finally, respondents' responses about the items; SP1, SP4, and SP5 are not significantly different.

From aforesaid ridit analysis, a direct sorting of mean ridits in terms of the probability of being in satisfying and agreeing with propensity gives the following Rank Table 3.

propensity of the scale items.					
Item	Rank				
SP3	1				
SP5	2				
SP1	3				
SP4	4				
SP2	5				

Table 3. Shows the Rank-wise agreeing and satisfying

As evident from Table 2, no significant differences exist in the responses of administrators, coaches, and players on "SP1. Do the University Sports Boards formulate strategic plans with a clear understanding of action?" because the upper bound (UB) of the item is greater than the threshold (0.53 > 0.5) and the obtained rank of the item is 3. the findings suggest that the University Sports Boards do not formulate strategic planning with clear understandings of action.

Additionally, table 2 reveals a significant difference in the responses of administrators, coaches, and players on "SP2. Extend your level of satisfaction with the present organizational structure of the University Sports Boards" because the lower bound (LB) and upper bound (UB) of the item is greater than the threshold (0.54, 0.60 > 0.5) and the obtained rank of the item is 5. the results suggest that the present organizational structure of the university Sports Boards is dissatisfying.

Furthermore, Table 2 highlights a significant difference in the responses of administrators, coaches, and players on "SP3. Do you think that some changes in the organizational structure of the University Sports Boards can increase its efficiency and effectiveness?" because the upper bound (UB) of the item is lesser than the threshold (0.43 < 0.5) and the obtained rank of the item is *I*. the results point out that a change in the organizational structure of the University Sports Boards can increase its efficiency and effectiveness.

Another pertinent point Table 2 displays is that there is no significant difference in the responses of administrators, coaches, and players on "SP4. Does the university administration appoint personnel who have expertise in games and sports for the different administrative positions of the University Sports Board?" because the upper bound (UB) of the item is greater than the threshold (0.56 > 0.5). The obtained rank of the item is 3. according to the results, the university's administration does not appoint personnel based on expertise from games and sports for the various administrative positions of the University Sports Boards.

Finally, Table 2 unveils no significant difference in the responses of administrators, coaches, and players on "SP5. Does the nonexpert personnel appointed by the university administration on the different positions of the University Sports Board hamper the performance of the University Sports Board?" because the upper bound (UB) of the item is greater than the threshold (0.52 > 0.5). The obtained rank of the item is 2. the results suggest that the nonexpert personnel appointed for the different administrative positions do not hamper the performance of the University Sports Board. The response could be due to the differences in the job roles of the respondents. While considering the item's rank from table 3, the item is ranked 2. The respondents view that the nonexpert personnel on the different administrative positions of the University Sports Boards hamper its performance.

5. CONCLUSION

Sports in Indian universities are on the decline. This study revealed the causes of its decline and suggested some retention measures. According to the study results, the University Sports Boards do not formulate strategic planning with clear and attainable objectives. Since failure to plan is planning to fail, the administrators of the University Sports Boards in India do not plan strategically, leading to failure to achieve the goals and finally hampers the performance of the University Sports Boards.

From the study results, it is concluded that due to the appointment of nonexpert personnel on the different administrative positions of the University Sports Boards, the sports in Indian universities have declined because their administrative skills do not fit for the management of sports in the universities. They do not formulate strategic planning with clear and attainable objectives for the management of sports. Also, the plan and policies formulated by these administrators lack a vision for the future upliftment of Intervarsity sports. All this has led to dissatisfaction with the existing model of the organizational structure of the University Sports Boards among the administrators, coaches, and players. So, the Indian universities must retain their lost effectiveness and achievements in sports. This can be achieved by replacing the nonexpert with expert personnel from sports for the different administrative positions of the University Sports Boards. Strategic planning with clear and attainable objectives has to be formulated for the future upliftment of sports in the universities of India. Every university administration has to be more vigilant about the contemporary and the essential management functions of their University Sports Boards.

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