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An assessment study of physical education and sports facilities in rural and urban schools of western Uttar Pradesh

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study was to evaluate the status of physical education facilities in the rural and urban district schools of Western Uttar Pradesh. The sample comprised of 30 government schools from Western Uttar Pradesh (Rural) and 30 schools from Meerut (Urban) districts were randomly selected and this gave a sample size of 60 schools. A questionnaire developed by the researcher for physical education teachers; personal interviews and inspection methods were used for data collection. The present study emphasized the status of physical education and sports facilities in rural and urban schools of Western Uttar Pradesh. The data was analyzed by calculating simple percentages. The result of the study revealed that 80% schools of Meerut district organize school sports meet whereas only 30% schools of Western Uttar Pradesh district organize these competitions. The result results suggested that in most of the schools of Western Uttar Pradesh district physical education facilities were in vulnerable condition and need to be improved.

Keywords: Facilities, rural and urban, western Uttar Pradesh, Meerut, physical education facilities

Introduction

Sports play an integral role in the development of a well-rounded personality. Respecting one's opponent, thinking as a team, leadership, learning the spirit of the game are just some of the skills that one learns at the sport ground. Under our Sports for Development program, we focus on children between the ages of 6 to 17. We encourage them to come and play tough sports like basketball and football and leverage this chance to also engage them in activities which would provide mental and emotional stimuli thus resulting in their overall development. Through various sports activities, we target general awareness, understanding about nutrition, basic arithmetic, and communication skills.

Physical education is a science of human movement dates far back to the origin of mankind. Such physical education activities from time immemorial, and until today from an important element of life, (McHenry, 1993) [6]. Sport participation offers children a viable means to acquire the recommended level of physical activity. Increasing physical activity among school-age children requires school leaders to take a comprehensive and coordinated approach, ideally informed by evidence-based strategies, Cox *et al.* (2010) [10]. International studies have highlighted the role of sport in the development of the social fabric and cultures in many countries (Krotee & Waters 1998; Nauright, 1997; Olivova 1985) [14].

According to Ross (1990) [15] physical activity in its various forms, has been used to preserve indigenous cultures and traditions, which have been passed on from one generation to another. Physical education in schools is receiving national attention but because of competing academic priorities and other reasons, physical education has been compromised in many schools and numerous policy gaps and environmental barriers to the quantity and quality of physical education exist, Lounsbury & McKenzie. (2010) [8]. Adolescents who live in rural areas may be less likely to have access to supportive environments that promote physical activity than youth in more urban communities. Edwards, Bocarro & Kanters (2010) [13]. The study aims at bringing into account brief description of the importance of the physical education, teachers, playgrounds and sports equipments in the schools. Both students and teachers need facilities such as libraries, science resources sports equipments and teaching aids.

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Rural sports in India

Rural sports are games developed in the traditional times. Practiced since ages it can be seen taking place among people involved in rural areas. The games were involved in their daily lives, some them were based on daily hunting techniques such as running, throwing, jumping.

7 Nowadays, most of the rural sport seems extinct. Thus the development of sports in India has become a necessity. The government needs to come forward as the rural sportspersons need proper sports kit, nourishment through specific diet.

Unless the requirements are fulfilled there is no possibility to develop India into a superpower that is expected to win major tournaments like Olympics, Commonwealth games, and other Asian level games. It is important to know the games that are recognized on the National level.

Nowadays, People are more involved in cricket, football, tennis, and hockey. However, there are a majority of games that are played on national and international levels. They are Athletics, Kabaddi, KhoKho, Wrestling, Tug of War, Archery, Weightlifting and Volleyball to name a few.

Sports, a transformative tool cuts culture, gender and class barriers. It helps us in the overall growth of an individual.

Also used as a form of entertainment and refreshments, activities relating to sports and physical education are essential components in our daily lives. It is a key to healthy living and has inspired communities.

It prevents stress and helps us keep a good mental health.

Although most Indians are crazy about cricket, and hockey is officially the country's national sport, several towns and villages across rural India continue to play and compete in traditional sports – a glimpse of the country's mind-boggling diversity and complex history. Far off the beaten path, discerning travellers and sports enthusiasts can witness Punjab's eclectic version of the Olympics at the Kila Raipur Sports Festival, as well as Kerala's graceful Kalariyapattu – an ancient martial art that focuses on perfect coordination between the body and mind.

Further afield, in India's deep north-east, country sports steeped in archaic traditions are believed to be precursors of many modern international sports. In the state of Manipur, Yubi Lakpi – akin to playing rugby with a coconut – and in Central India, Mallakhamb – an extreme form of gymnastics – are perhaps the earliest rendition of popular sports.

Avid travellers can immerse themselves in India's offbeat and often quirky world of rural sports during regional cultural festivals, which showcase these traditional sports with much revelry. It is also possible to learn some of these sports by enrolling in a specialised training centre, or by simply befriending the players.

Kila Raipur sports festival: India's rural "Olympics"

Inspired by the Olympics in ancient Greece, an obscure town called Kila Raipur, in the northern Indian state of Punjab, curated its own version of the event in the early 1900s – christened Kila Raipur Sports Festival, and aptly nicknamed India's rural Olympics. In a mind-blowing and sometimes gut-wrenching display of strength, farmers gather at the rural Olympics to compete in pulling heavy farm vehicles solely by their hair, lifting entire bicycles with their teeth and performing incredibly challenging stunts on their motorbikes. As with any event in Punjab, the energy levels are soaring, the traditional bhangra dance is electric, and the competition is fierce! This three-day event in February is perhaps the closest you can get to experiencing the unrelenting spirit of Punjab – though a strong constitution is certainly a pre-requisite for any

traveller.

Yubi Lakpi: Rugby with a coconut

Who could have guessed that modern-day rugby might have originated in India's remote north-eastern region, where players once jostled to showcase their mettle in a future battlefield? Yubi Lakpi – literally meaning "coconut snatching" in the Meitei language (the language of the largest ethnic group in the state of Manipur) – is a sport dating back several centuries, with uncanny similarities to rugby. Two teams of seven compete to carry a slippery, oil-drenched coconut to the opposite side of the field, battling players who've slathered their bodies with oil along the way! When it first began, the game enabled the tribal chief to test the capabilities of individual players and unearth battle-hardy soldiers. These days, Yubi Lakpi is mostly played in the month of November, during the annual Sangai Festival in Imphal, the capital of Manipur – and it offers curious travellers a chance to determine if the sport is truly a precursor to rugby!

Kalariyapattu: One of the world's oldest and most graceful martial arts

While most martial arts around the world focus on striking and self-defence, Kalariyapattu – Kerala's revered indigenous martial art – lays great emphasis on grace and mind-body co-ordination. Deeply rooted in science, this multifaceted sport involves the use of spears, swords and daggers, features somersaulting and kicking, and is known for feats of bodily strength and agility. Since its inception, Kalariyapattu has been taught and practiced at a Kalari – a traditional training space, which literally means "battlefield" in the local language – and to this day, Kalariyapattu performances can be witnessed at Kalaris in Kochi and Munnar in Kerala. Those keen to try their hand at this world-revered martial art can also enrol in an intensive training course under a guru (teacher) at a Kalari – a rare but fulfilling way to partake in southern India's unique heritage.

Thoda: Archery meets paintball

In the northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh, archery is practiced with a twist – players shoot arrows not at a specific target, but at the opposing team, much like paintball! The arrows are blunted with a round piece of wood (called thoda, after which the sport is named) and players are only allowed to shoot below the knees, lowering the probability of serious wounds. Thoda is rooted in one of India's most famous epics – the Mahabharata – in which serious battles were fought with bow and arrow; a test of archery skills as much as an ode to Indian mythology. Culture and sports enthusiasts can view this traditional sport with the backdrop of the mighty Himalayas in several parts of Himachal Pradesh – including Shimla, Narkanda and Solan – during the harvest festival of Baisakhi, typically celebrated in April.

Mallakhamb: India's extreme gymnastics

The agile gymnasts in the Olympics may have wowed you, but Mallakhamb – a rudimentary yet extreme version of gymnastics practiced in the central Indian states of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh – is a spectacle that elevates the term 'sport' to a whole different level. Believed to have originated in the 11th century and literally meaning "wrestler pole", Mallakhamb typically features extraordinary acrobatic feats atop a thin rosewood pole. The seemingly impossible bodily contortions require equal amounts of

physical prowess and mental concentration, making the sport a combination of gymnastics, aerial yoga and martial art. The most convenient place to observe this incredible sport is the Shree Samartha Vyayam Mandir in Shivaji Park, Mumbai, but be warned, it's certainly not a spectacle for the faint-hearted.

Naga wrestling: Wrestling to resolve conflicts

In the tribal kingdom of what is now the north-eastern state of Nagaland, wrestling began as a way to resolve disputes over water, land or women among the warrior Naga tribes. The winner walked away with the possession at stake, but also with a sense of purification – and the battle for the latter continues in the annual Naga Wrestling Championships in Kohima (the capital of Nagaland) every March. During the competition, a coloured cloth is tied to each player's waist and the goal is to hold the waist knot and topple your opponent to the ground; the last man standing wins.

Unlike conventional wrestling though, Naga Wrestling, despite being a competition of brute strength, has historically been rooted in brotherhood; the title conferred on the opponent is not that of "enemy" but of "beloved friend". Centuries ago, when the tradition began, the loser was expected to accept defeat as much as the friendship of the opponent – a practice that could have potentially elevated the outcomes of battles fought around the world!

Rural sports for development

Sport is exceptionally transformative. It cuts across culture, class, gender and inspires communities. It's also key to healthy living rubbing off its positive affect on mental health, stress level and moods. Using sports as a tool for development and demonstrate the impact that sport can have on human life is what we want achieve through this initiative.

By way of conducting sporting competitions and events its our earnest endeavor to provide a veritable platform and an activity for overall development in the rural areas. We began conducting it from the past five years starting with volleyball. Volleyball as a sport seemed a perfect fit as it was played in the village and the nearby villages.

The competitions will pave the way for other development activities like education, health, commerce, organic farming etc. the way it has been done for the last 5 years.

We strongly believe that if this is done professionally & supported by individuals, corporate & govt. at large we should be able to make this a huge sustainable model. In the future editions our effort is to increase the disciplines and widen the geographical participation.

Methodology

The present study aims to evaluate the status of physical education and sports facilities in rural and urban schools of Western Uttar Pradesh. Urban which is situated in cities and towns and rural which is pertaining to the villages. For the purpose of the study sixty (60) government schools of Western Uttar Pradesh (Rural) and Meerut (Urban) districts were randomly selected (n=30 Western Uttar Pradesh (Rural)) and (n=30, Meerut Urban Districts). The data was collected from Physical Education Teachers/Principals with the help of self-developed questionnaire by conducting personal interviews and inspection methods. The data was computed manually through simple percentile methods and after investigating the data into content analysis, specific information was summarized in tables into percentages.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Facilities and programs in rural and urban district schools of western Uttar Pradesh facilities

District	Playground	Indoor	Outdoor	P.E.T.	Equipments	Intramurals	Ratio of participation
Western Uttar Pradesh (Rural)	20%	0%	50%	10%	20%	30%	47%
Meerut district (Urban)	50%	40%	73%	60%	72%	80%	70%

The above table and figures showed that there existed no world class gymnasium facility in any of the schools of Western Uttar Pradesh (Rural) and Meerut (Urban) districts. Respondents felt their resources were inadequate with schools stating that their indoor games facilities were inadequate. In the schools of Meerut Urban District 40% schools had indoor games facilities whereas it is pathetic to note that none of the schools of Western Uttar Pradesh Rural districts were found

to have indoor facilities in their schools. The results also indicated that the outdoor facilities in the Meerut were found 72% and Western Uttar Pradesh rural districts have 50% respectively. Results show that the schools of Western Uttar Pradesh Rural districts had 58.87 rupees over 258 students per school whereas in Meerut Urban district it was found 19.07 rupees.

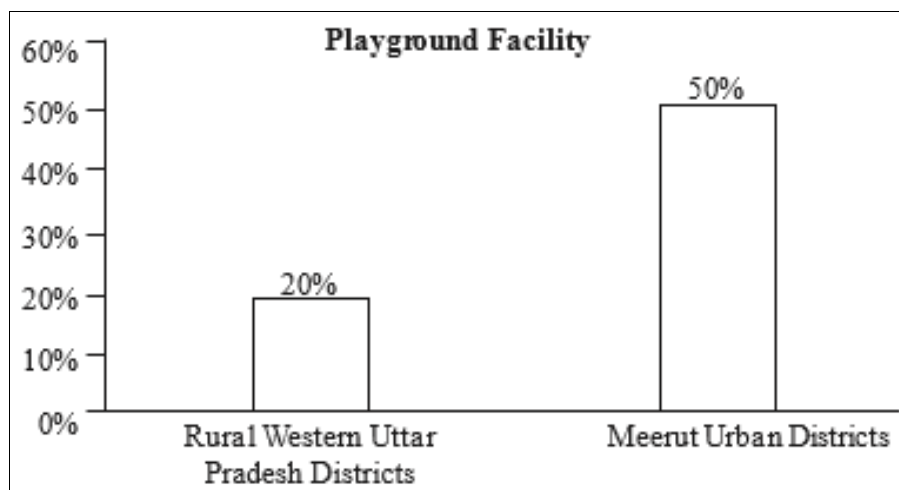


Fig 1: Showing the playground facilities in the schools of Meerut urban districts and western Uttar Pradesh rural districts

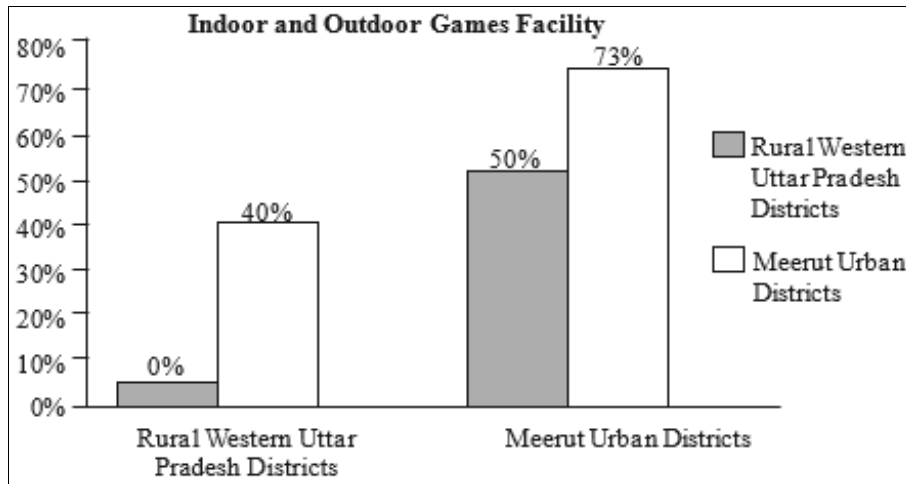


Fig 2: Showing indoor and outdoor games facilities in the schools of Meerut urban districts and western Uttar Pradesh rural districts

Physical education teacher and equipments

Facility in the schools of Meerut urban districts and western rural Uttar Pradesh districts

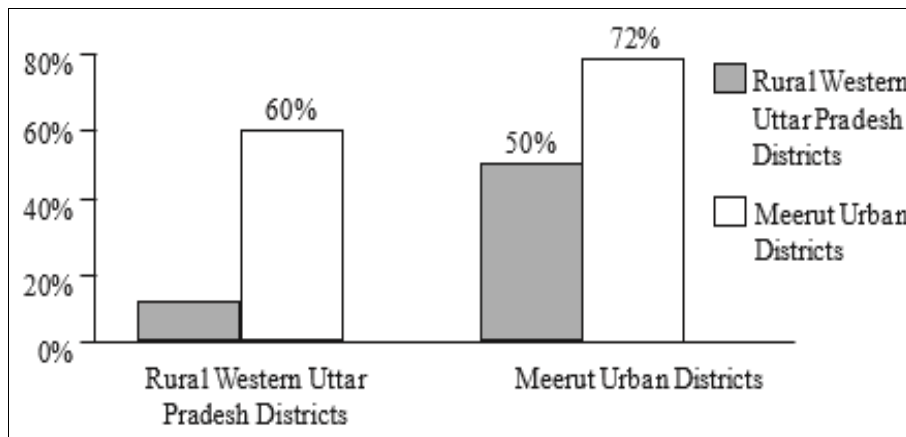


Fig 3: Showing physical education and equipments facilities in the schools of Meerut urban districts and western Uttar Pradesh rural districts

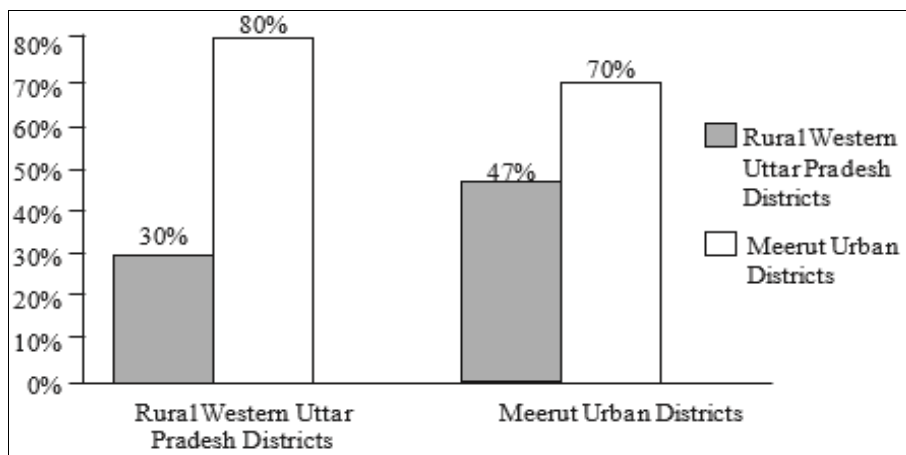


Fig 4: Showing the intramural and ratio of participation in games and sports in the schools of Meerut urban districts and western Uttar Pradesh rural districts

Per student over 443 students per school. Meerut district have 60% physical education teacher appointed in their schools whereas in the schools of Western Uttar Pradesh Rural districts only 10% have physical education teachers appointed in their schools. That the results has also shown that 80% schools of Meerut Urban districts were found to have organized school sports meet whereas only 30% schools were found in Western Uttar Pradesh Rural districts where these

competitions were organized.

Conclusion

The findings of the study indicated a serious level of inadequacy of physical education facilities in the schools of Meerut Urban and Western Uttar Pradesh Rural districts. From the findings it can be concluded that there is a lack of physical education and sports facilities in rural district schools

with comparison to urban district schools. It may be because of lack of awareness in the society for Physical Education activities and programs. The physical education is perceived as a subsidiary subject in the schools or “just activities” that students need for recreation and not as an academic discipline. The cumulative effect of poor facilities is poor motivation and low morale of teachers, which result in low quality work output. The results have suggested that the schools of Meerut Urban Districts were found much better on physical education facilities and programmes when compared to Western Uttar Pradesh Rural districts.

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