

THE CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE RECENT INITIATIVES TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT TO BOOST SPORTS SECTOR IN INDIA

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Author's Background

The researcher is a final year college student and a recognized National Level Football player. She has earned many medals in the field and desires to contribute to the sports sector by writing this paper. This paper is the outcome of the high academic inclusion towards research that the author has and this paper is written with the aim of bringing awareness about the various schemes and arrangements that has been recently initiated by the government of India. The researcher is a blogger on social media through which she inspires the society towards "sports as a lifestyle". Being a female football player, the aim is to send a message to the society that gender is not a constraint for any sports and can be achieved with the supportive parenting and proper educational guidance. The paper is written under the guidance of my economics professor.

Abstract: - *The paper is written with the aim of critically evaluating the government initiatives that are recently taken to develop the sports sector in India. The paper brings out the SWOT analysis of the sports sector which impacts the social and economic structure. The paper evaluates the aim and objectives of making sports an integral part of the economy by structuring its curriculum from the grassroot level. The paper provides a tabular structure of ten recent policies which have been implemented in the recent past with their aims and objectives behind the policies. The background of the sports culture in India has shown a huge transition from a traditional mindset to a dynamic acceptance. The paper highlights not only the specific Olympic sports but also discusses the importance and awareness of non-Olympic sports. In the recent years India has attracted FDI investments for the sector which improvises the economic and retail market of the country. The report attempts to make use of primary data based on small survey by the questionnaire method and analyzing it through graphs, tables and pie charts. It also covers a range of secondary data collected through various academic and credible sources to authenticate the report. This paper surveys the development of sports sector in the recent years because of the government initiatives, budget allocation and schemes.*

Keywords: - *sports sector, government initiatives, drawbacks of policies*

Section 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Historical Background of Sports Sector in India:

The National Sport's Day is celebrated on 29th August in memory of legendary hockey player Major Dhyanchand. The Khel Ratna award will now be recognized under his name. Sports sector has always been developing in India since ages which can be seen in the ancient History or ancient India in the famous Indian epic Mahabharat, the Game of dice. In the ancient days India has witnessed the presence of sports like court men ship, archery, wrestling, boxing etc. Research reports published by Hieun Tsang a Chinese traveler about the popular sports activities in Nalanda and Takshila were swimming, running and ball games. The national sport of the country is hockey and the India hockey team has won 8 gold medals from 1928 to 1980. Cricket is one of the most liked and favored sports in the country and the cricketers play a huge role in shaping the youth mindset towards the sports sector participation. Some of the famous sports in which India has shown far excellence are boxing, hockey, golf, kabaddi, shooting, soccer and tennis. In these sports India has had huge success and prosperous careers for the young players and sports enthusiasts in the country. India is a country with the highest young population and the participation in sports is nothing huge for the country.

There has always been a culture towards the sports sector and that is the reason India has represented itself in Olympic games winning various levels of certifications and medals. However there has been a gap between the level of performance and the expectations of the medals. Not just the Olympic games but India has marked its achievement towards the non-Olympic games as well like cricket, chess, snooker and billiards. During the year of 1988 and 1992 India has hardly made a single position or a medal in the Olympics but in the further years of 1996, 2000, 2004 each year medals were won at the Olympics. In 2008 India witnessed three medals including the first Olympic gold medal in the same year. India has won the cricket world cup in 1983 and 2011. We are also the winners of world 2020 in 2007 and 2013 in the history of the sports sector. A very famous name of Vishwanathan Anand is referred to as he is the winner of the world chess championship a total of five times: 2007, 2008, 2010, 2012. Under the non-Olympic sport Anuja Thakur has won WLBSA (Ladies world billiard championship) in 2005.

1.2 Contemporary Sports Scenario:

In the current year 2021 India has won medals at Tokyo Olympics. Neeraj Chopra became second Indian individual Olympic champion in men's javelin throw there at 87.58 m to clinch the gold medal. PV Sindhu popularly known as the badminton queen is the first Indian woman to win medals in back-to-back Olympics (Venkat 2021) India has last won a gold in Indian hockey at 1980 Moscow Olympics. Almost after a wait of 41 years India won a bronze medal at the Tokyo Olympics 2021. Wrestling champion Bajrang Punia became the third India to win a bronze medal in the men's 65kg wrestling.



Athlete	Medal	Event
Mirabai Chanu	Silver	Women's 49kg weightlifting
Lovlina Borgohain	Bronze	Women's welterweight boxing
PV Sindhu	Bronze	Women's singles badminton
Ravi Kumar Dahiya	Silver	Men's 57kg wrestling
Indian hockey team	Bronze	Men's hockey
Bajrang Punia	Bronze	Men's 65kg wrestling
Neeraj Chopra	Gold	Men's javelin throw

Figure 1

The sector has shown an overall transition from its culture to economic development. The traditional beliefs of Indian parents were more towards grades, academics and white-collar jobs compared to sports activity and athletics. However, with change in time and the educational curriculum from the very primary level the sector has engaged the youth and the job market creating a relevant significance in the territory. The investment in the sector has grown, to a very high extent, the media recognition of the name and fame of the sportsperson which has made the sports sector recognized as the mainstream part of the economy and education. In recent years a huge participation has come from all the states and the regions big or small making the sector more attractive amongst the youth and passionate individuals. India has come a long way in the development of the sports sector beating various odds in the past which resulted in a slower development of the sector.

1.3 Reasons for Slow Development of Sports Sector in India:

Although sports have been a revenue generating sector from the very beginning but multiple factors from its administration to the financial allocation there has been a huge gap which has resulted in the under development of the sector in the past years. According to () main factors responsible are:

- Corrupted sports administrators along with political friendships resulted in a scam of commonwealth 2010 which had damaged the reputation of the country under corruption charges.
- Economic backwardness along with social belief and customs has brought inequality with respect to caste, creed and gender even in the sports sector.
- Poor sports infrastructure resulted into low quality of sports training and development.
- Non-recognition of a separate ministry for the sports

sector was the biggest bottleneck for the development.

- insufficient financial allocation under the budget showed the real face of the central government on the sincerity towards the sector.

Overcoming all the above hurdles the sports economy has made its significant place with the help of present government's policy and fund allocations.

The main purpose of the paper is to study in a manner that the objectives of the research are met.

1.4 Report Layout:

The paper studies the sports sector development in detail focusing on the objective of the study which is given below:

Research objectives:

1. To understand the importance and role of sports in the country
2. Discuss the initiatives taken by the government to encourage the sports sector
3. To critically analyze the recent initiatives for the sports sector-
4. To recommend and suggest ways to make it a growing culture in the economy

In order to meet the research objective, the study will critically evaluate the below research questions and with the help of research objectives and research questions the paper will produce a meaningful conclusion.

1.5 Research questions:

1. To understand the importance of sports in the country
2. What are the various initiatives taken by the government, initiatives recent 1989 major successful recent fund allocation?
3. How much fund allocation is planned for the sector individually?
4. What are the drawbacks of the initiatives?
5. What is the recommendation for the overall sector?

The paper will further discuss a range of policies formulated by the government of India and its impact on the economy addressing the above research questions.

Section 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will review a range of academic authentic secondary sources of information to meet the research question mentioned in section one.

Sports being one of the most identified stimulator factors for both economy as well as society play a very important role in a developing country like India. As per United Nations sports can be defined as summation of all types of physical activities that encourages physical fitness, mental well-being and social interaction (Le Sports Au 2003)

According to “Sports Charter of Europe” sports in a comprehensive manner coordinates all the activities which leads to physical strength and mental wellbeing of the participants to achieve certain forms of sports ethics.

As defined by (Blumer H), sports are both competition and achievement which is a motivation for many other sports activities.

Understanding from the above definitions sports means different for different individuals, for some it is an activity, it can be a passion or it represents a way of a lifestyle but all of these stresses on the physical fitness along with mental fitness leading to disciplined social interaction. So, the purpose of the sports as a concept is associated with three main parameters fitness of the body, mind and society.

As sports deals with a very important aspect, it is necessary to study the importance of sports in every dimension.

2.1 SIGNIFICANCE OF SPORTS SECTOR:

SOCIETY LEVEL

Sports have a highly positive social impact as the country inclines towards many factors. improved health that increases the longevity of life. Focused youth which will not be distracted by unproductive activities that happen in the economy. Greater prestige and higher productivity. Opportunity to represent the country’s cultural sports. Educational curriculum includes sports to imbibe the sportsmanship spirit from the very grassroots level. Confident and self-reliant individuals will be serving as a boon factor for the society. Demand for better quality of life increases

ECONOMIC LEVEL

Sport is one of the most core sectors of the economy which boosts both public and private sector. The government of India uses this sector as a revenue generating tool and also focusing on social welfare at the same time. A proper development for sports infrastructure will lead to a multiplier effect in various ways and the income and employment in the economy will increase. Since sports have multiple benefits on the physical economy and social life it is used to bridge the gap between the rural and urban areas. It generates huge employment in the overall economy as it has a cumulative effect on the other sectors such as private business sectors. For any country tourism is one of the most important global representative factors which represents the economy as well as culture of a country. The growing demand of sports has increased the tourism revenue for the country. E.g., Hence the country enters into overall progress which is very important for a developing economy. Sports is closely linked to the private business sector, which is normally geared towards profit. In areas with potential and demand for sport, planning and monitoring can provide strong support for the sustainable development of communities based on sport and physical education.

INFRASTRUCTURE LEVEL

At the same time, from a cost point of view, the

(professional) performance sport often exceeds the amateur sport. From the economic activity point of view, professional sport offers for consumers and entertainment services, and the spectators obtain psychological satisfaction from the consumption of these services and, therefore, they are ready to pay for it. At the same time, the higher the quality of the services provided (which is expressed in the prestige of the competition), the higher the price. sport is an important economic enterprise that can bring benefits in other areas of society, based on competent management (Constantinescu, 2008). sport on the one hand aims at services, infrastructure, material goods and on the other hand, the commercialization of the phenomenon on three levels: the transformation of some sporting events, clubs and sportsmen, into value brands; increasing the importance of sport as a source of profit for the business environment through sponsorships, marketing rights, broadcasting rights; development of sports-related businesses - sports equipment, materials and sports facilities. Better investment in sports infrastructure both by government and private enterprises like clubs, stadiums, gyms and various center’s leads to increased employment in the locality, as more workers are hired to improve or build stadiums, quality of local residences, and other auxiliary structures for hosting a sporting event. This will bring profits to the nearby areas and small and large businesses. With the development and improvement of sports related infrastructure it significantly benefits tourism and consideration as mega sports events are organized and executed. This infrastructure setup is not just tourism related but it can be used by the budding sports and athletes for representing the country on international grounds. There is a direct relationship between sports and the economic activities of a country and also there is a positive relation between sports and the culture of the society. It is one of the most essential and effective elements for any economy to inculcate positive activities in the social sphere and widen the market for business, employment, income and profit in the economic sphere. Sports also impacts positively in the environmental benefits to an economy. Hence the policies of the Government should identify all these factors and change their attitude towards budget allocation towards the sports sector, bring a lot more subsidies for the sector and build new areas for sports research and development.

2.2 RECENT INITIATIVES TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT OF INDIA:

Government has a huge role for uplifting any sector IN the country as it has to plan the budget allocation for the desired sector. So as studied from various data before 2016 sports, although being an important element, were ignored by the past governments in the country under budget allocation. Recently from 2018 till date the present government of India has stimulated the sector with a high amount of budget allocation and various schemes.

Sports Minister	Year	Budget allocation in crores
Rajvardhan Singh Rathore	2018-19	2196
Kiran Rijju	2019-20	2776.92
Anurag Thakur	2020-21	2596.14

Table 1

As seen in the above table every year an allocation of 2000 plus crores were sanctioned for the sports sector which is from the past few years the highest allocation done under the Union budget. In 2018 there was a 13% increase to the budget under the ministry of youth affairs and sports (PRS India.org) It further increased in 2019 to 2216.92 and later revised to 2776.92 crore (Economic Times, 2019) However in 2021 with the ongoing pandemic hit throughout the world, the government of India reduced the existing budget by 230.78 crore and allocated 2596.14 crore (Business Standard, 2021) The ministry of youth affairs and sports have consumed the budget very effectively and efficiently by implementing various schemes and policies for the expansion of the sector throughout the country.

2.3 RECENT SPORTS SCHEMES:

The present Prime Minister of India Mr. Narendra Modi himself is a firm believer of health and sports as a lifestyle and on special occasions have urged people to adapt sports and games in their everyday life. Keeping fitness in mind the ministry of youth affairs and sports has launched number of schemes for promoting sports in India

The Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports plays a major role in promoting sports in India. SAI which is known as the sports authority of India and that works under the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports is responsible for the promotion of Sports and Games in the country. Authority formulates and implements a series of reforms and schemes to boost Sports development. The Government hopes and wants that people should involve sports and fitness-related activities in their daily routine for a better and healthier life. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi too, has on various occasions asked people to give priority to sports and games in their everyday life.

Sports play an important role in the life of people no matter whom it is, be it athletes, sportspersons, students, youth or adults and is very necessary for the overall development. Considering the importance of sports, the Government has launched several schemes and initiatives in the field of sports and games. Have a look at some of the schemes:

Scheme	Year	Aim	Reference
Fit India Movement or Be Fit	29th August, 2019	To bring change in the behavior of the society and move towards a physically active lifestyle. To encourage indigenous sport at each level of the country.	Government of India
Khelo India	2016	There are twin aims of this scheme that is huge participation of youth and sports excellence promotion. The scheme was focused for both individual and community development	The Tribune
Sports Talent Search Portal	August 2017	It aims at innovation in sports where youth get a platform to showcase their achievements and later qualify in the schemes of SAI	AIR News

National Sports Talent Contest Scheme (NSTC) - for Sub-Junior level trainees:	1985	Aims to make sports a habit from the grassroot level as there are children from age group 8-14 years with both boys and girls registered under the scheme as a trainee.	SAI 2018 (Sports Authority of India)
Army Boys Sports Company Scheme (ABSC) - for Sub-Junior level trainees:	2006	The scheme is very effective as it is under the collaboration with Indian Army which aims to achieve sports excellence. Under this scheme the established infrastructure is used to train boys of age group 8-16 years as trainees. This scheme also aims at providing placements in the army.	Times Of India 2021
National Sports Awards Scheme	1956	It aims at boosting the morale of the sports person and their coaches by honoring them with various awards like Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna, Dronacharya Awards.	YAI 2015 (Yachting Association of India)
Sports & Games for Persons with Disabilities Scheme	2009-10	This scheme aims at bringing equality in sports by providing opportunities and platforms for differently abled sports persons. In this scheme competitions are conducted by them.	SAI 2018

Promotion of sports amongst School Students under the Samagra Shiksha Scheme	2018	This is a three-tier scheme which merges SSA, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan and Teachers Education and Teacher Education. The Scheme focuses at catering to the financial needs and fund allocation for all the government schools. It is a very important Scheme for the overall economic development and sports sector	Department of school education and literacy
Target Olympic Podium Scheme	2014	As the name suggests this scheme is built for the potential athletes who have par excellence to present the country in Olympic Games.	SAI 2019

Table 2

The above chart is the map of the multiple initiatives and schemes launched recently for meeting a desired objective towards the sports sector. Out of all the schemes the Fit India movement is the latest which significantly targets the idea of inculcating a healthy lifestyle pattern throughout the country. Along with this scheme Khelo India has achieved a huge acceptance and acknowledgement as the youth of the country is more inclined towards sports as a stream. Sports Authority of India in order to promote sports at both junior and senior level have started a wide range of schemes like the ones mentioned in the table. Other schemes by SAI are Special

Area Games Scheme which gathers talents from the tribal and coastal areas and further trains them to achieve excellence in sports. Another scheme is Come and Play Scheme which provides luxury sports facilities in Delhi and across to encourage enthusiastic sports personnel who strive to create the country's name worldwide. With these schemes the sports sector in India is catering to all the aspects of developing sports in the economy.

In order to administer the huge sector with respect to fund utilization and grievances the committees are formed for the smooth functioning of the sector. A high-level committee is made in 2017 to address the grievances of women sports persons and encourage a high potential participation by the women of the country. This committee aims at providing a safe and secure environment to the women sport's person. As per the recommendation of Olympic Task Force a committee is set up for developing a detailed action plan for the Olympic games of 2020, 2024 and 2028.

The above literature explains that there has been a tremendous improvement and investment under the sports sector. The economy will achieve desired outcome and development globally if more planning and administration is focused. Although the schemes are structurally planned and working towards sports excellence, there are still some lagging factors.

2.4 CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND LIMITATIONS:

As the sector is recently gaining attention and acknowledgement the various schemes are successfully implemented to a certain extent however there exists some loopholes and bottlenecks to its progress. Some of the problems that have been observed by the standing committee of HRD are (Jagranjosh 2017):

1. Limited coordination between the NSF and SAI which will result in hampering the aim of reaching to each level of state and district. Increased cooperation is required among the ministries to make sports development a success.
2. Role of non-sports persons should be minimized or eliminated from the administrative aspect as it is leading to mis governance and mal administration.
3. Another problem with these schemes is a platform to redress the grievances of NSF which is very concerning as the real problems will never be highlighted.
4. Although the sector has been stimulated, the quality of sports teachers training and the academic level of universities is still a matter of concern. A number of staff is not met as per the expansion of the sector. Shortage of coaches, shortage of staff, shortage of sports technology and management still persist.
5. Financial allotments to the required rural areas have not reached for the development of sports facilities in the backward areas.
6. The youth hostels are misused which is hampering the whole idea of the expansion.
7. Discrimination of sports participants from lower income groups and backward areas is one of a non-discussed big issue.

8. The tools and equipment availability in all the regions of the country is a hurdle specially for the backward regions.
9. Still in some parts of the country girls are locked inside the doors despite having immense talent in them. This demotivates the rest of the female fraternity and this is the reason the participation of girls and women is still much lower than the boys.
10. The mindset of the community bars the LGBTQ people from participating in any of the sports which are a very unhealthy culture.
11. Political instability that is change in the central government may again bring fluctuations in the sports policy and development.

Section 3: Research Method and Data Analysis:

The aim of the section is to discuss the method of research and analyze the available data in order to answer the Research Question mentioned in section 1.

Concept of data collection Data collection is a process of gathering and measuring information in an established fashion so as to answer the research questions as well as evaluate the outcome. It is common to all fields of study from social science to business to sports. The goal of data collection is to have quality information which would help us in a good data analysis. Accurate and authentic data is very essential for maintaining the integrity of the study. It is also the most important part of the research and needs a lot of planning, hard work and patience. The methods used in this research are primary and secondary methods of data collection (Sayed Kabir, 2016)

3.1 Primary Data collection:

Data that has been collected from firsthand experience is known as primary data. It is not published and is more reliable and authentic. The data is also not altered or changed by anyone as per their convenience. It is very important to have primary data collection in a research as only secondary data might be misleading and biased. In this study a questionnaire has been used to survey. It is one of the most common methods and can be conducted via telephone, mail, fax and other mediums. A close ended questionnaire was designed due to time constraint as well as covid-19 restrictions. The online email method of interviews is used. A total of five integrated questions and a sample size of 10 participants is collected which is analyzed using a range of graphs, table and pie charts.

3.2 Data Analysis

The aim is to analyze the collected data through the interview method and reach a concrete conclusion of the study.

Section 1 Personal profile

This section is a brief of the respondent's profile. In order to maintain the privacy of the participants the number coding for each is used from 1 to 10. Out of the 10 candidates 4 are females and 6 are males. The Sports involvement associated with each is mentioned in the table

Code of the respondent	Sports	Age	Gender
1	Football	19	Female
2	Swimming	22	Female
3	Football	19	Male
4	Hockey	20	Male
5	Cricket	23	Male
6	Cricket	18	Female
7	Swimming	17	Male
8	Football	18	Male
9	Badminton	20	Male
10	Tennis	21	Female

Table 3

Section B Data responses of the questionnaire:

1

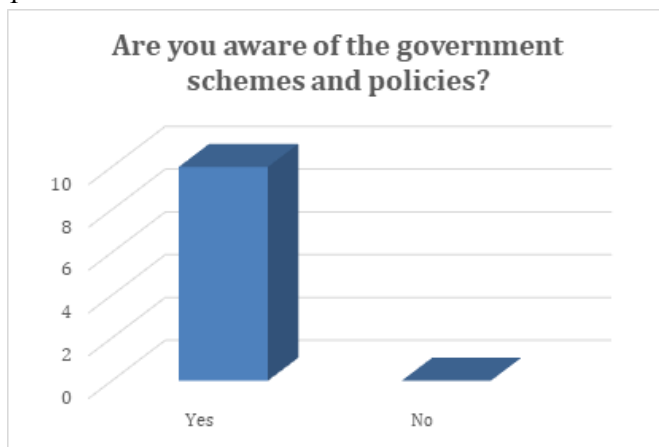


Figure 2

All the participants are aware of the various schemes that the recent government of India has implemented. The chart shows 100% yes which is a good sign for the sports sector as the youth recognizes all the schemes and will be able to take a better-informed decision for the future.



2

Figure 3

This is one of the famous movements which started on 29th August, 2019 by the Prime Minister of India. As per the analysis out of the total sample size 80% of the athletes have participated and only 20% could not be a part of the movement as one of them was very much camera conscious and the other one was on on any kind of social media

accounts but however, they support the idea behind the movement. The researcher herself has participated in this movement for the only reason that is the encouragement to sports at every level.

3

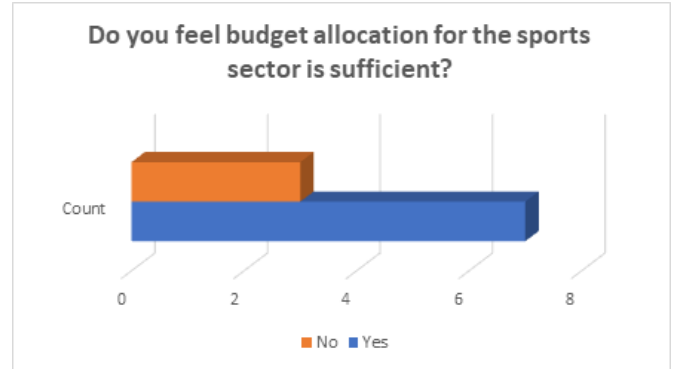


Figure 4

Budget allocation is the most important part of the sector which every sports person is interested in. Seven participants were satisfied with the amount of the budget allocated over a period of time however 3 participants have different views and feels that the allocation is less than required and also in the time of covid the reduction in the budget was very demotivating. All the participants expect after the performance in Tokyo 2021 a new budget allocation which is more than before.

4



Figure 5

The data analysis from this question is an eye opening to the theoretical framework that states gender equality in the sports sector as only one participant is of a view that there is no gender gap when it comes to participation. However, the rest nine participants agree that there is a gender gap of male is to female in the sports sector. No individual department or body is responsible for the gap it exists due to various reasons, that is from culture to mindset to security and overall acceptability. The one participant coded 1 feels the opposite and believes in women empowerment in sports. The researcher herself being an active national level football player supports the code 1 participant as many opportunities have created its way throughout.

5

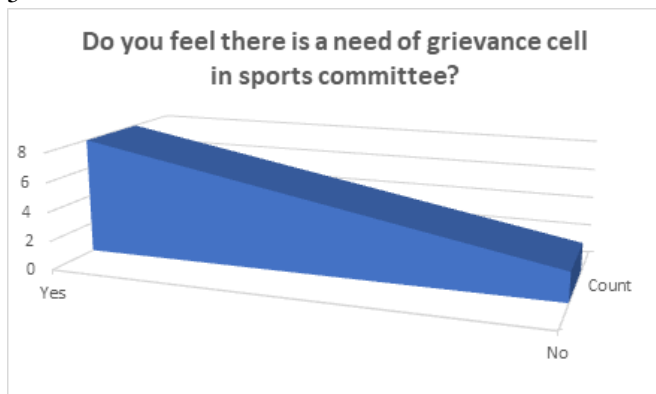


Figure 6

This is one of the important parameters under the sports sector; however now there is a committee as per the literature review but it does not address all the requisite of a grievance committee. 80% of the participants are of the view that there is a need for a strong grievance committee to address small to larger issues. Code number 8 feels that the grievance committee should focus on remedial measures rather than severe punishments and penalties. Code number 6 fears the misuse of the grievance cell both politically and administratively. Sports culture is all about being a sportsman and ethically strong which will not lead to any wrong situations so a grievance cell is not required.

This short survey with a limited number of participants although stands as a research gap but it has given an extremely profound experience to the researcher and further in future the researcher shall take this in a detailed study manner.

3.3 Secondary method:

Data which has already been published in any form is called secondary data. The literature review is based on the secondary data collected. It is essential as sometimes it is impossible to conduct new research and gather the data from the past. There are many sources for secondary data like books, newspapers, records, published articles and papers etc. The data in this research was collected from authentic sources and it is not biased. Some sites from which the data was gathered was fit India, khelo India, army sports institute etc. These being government associated are not just authentic but also a reliable source of information.

The range of resources used for this paper includes the government of India's website and a limited number of journal articles available on the internet. The newspaper published articles is majorly used for this research paper.

Section 4: CONCLUSION

This is to conclude this paper is written with a lot of zeal and enthusiasm as the researcher herself comes from a sports background and was keen to contribute to it academically. The title of research paper was carefully thought on and recently the government of India has introduced many schemes and policies to uplift the sector. With the help of this paper the aim is to bring more awareness amongst the

youth about the popularity of the sector and how we can contribute to the economic development of the country. The limitations of this paper are the sample size and the available research paper were the main constraints while writing the paper. However, the other reliable sources are used widely to evaluate the initiatives taken by the government of India. The paper does a limited amount of primary research and data analysis to discuss the main issues and limitations of the policies. This paper will interest all the stakeholders in the sports sector.

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