

Para Sports in Modern Life

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to briefly illustrate para sports in modern day life. The study highlights some of the challenges and realities of national and international Para sports. Para sports has a history of its own and the paper will give you glimpse of history too. The elite paramodel is still not widely known in the world of regular sports competitions/ mega events. The winning elite para athletes are restricted to a few countries, including the U.S., Canada, Germany, China, and Australia, with limited distribution of para sport opportunities in other countries. This tendency for the success of a developing country/ minority of countries reflects global problems of social vulnerability in accessibility (e.g., in dismantling the stigma of disability), political vulnerability (e.g., representative organizations of para sports do not fully practice the philosophy of "sport for all"), and economic vulnerability (e.g., lack of opportunities for training, assistive sports technology, and sponsorships). Para sport in India has come a long way and is work in progress. Over the years para sports which was considered completely exclusive is now in many ways considered inclusive in modern life. Surely with the passage of time some awareness has come in society. Further, infrastructure, facilities & acceptance of para sports & athletes has grown worldwide in last decade but still the battle is half won.

KEYWORDS: Par sports ; Paralympic Movement; Modern life

A Para sport has come a long way both nationally & internationally. Today what we see, para sports in our modern life is the result of continuous dedication, devotion, determination, hard work and struggle of our different abilities athletes, escorts associated with athletes, coaches, managers, officials, parents, volunteers, supporters, motivators & promoters. They had to go through a very tough time and fight with all kinds of stereotypes.

The presenter has been an International swimmer of her time and has been working in different capacities with regard to para sports, organization, management, and training of athletes / events at state, national & international level. She has done several research works on paraswimming/ swimmers/ athletes/ para sports. She has studied and kept pace with developments made globally with regard to para sports. Based on her previous research work, data collected & analyzed she would like share her findings and observations.

As we know earlier than 1992 there was no organized sporting event in India at national level, whatever the people/ Indian athletes in sports has achieved was personal endeavor. In 1992 M. Mahadeva and others started an organization at national level for the

promotion and development of sports for the physically challenged and named it the PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED SPORTS FEDERATION OF INDIA. It was registered in 1994 with the registrar of co-operative societies, Bangalore, Karnataka. The objectives of this organization were to promote sports for the disabled in India. Its aims included: identifying disabled athletes throughout India, imparting necessary training to them and preparing them to take part in State, National and International Sports competitions.

The organization affiliated itself to the International Paralympic Committee, as well as the International Wheelchair and Amputee Sports Federation; the FESPIC Federation, covering countries in the Far East and South Pacific regions; and the Asian Paralympic Committee.

The Paralympic Committee of India was given public authority status by the RTI Act of 2005.

On the hand Internationally, The first Paralympic Games were held in Rome, Italy in 1960 and featured 400 athletes from 23 countries.

Sport for athletes with an impairment has existed for more than hundred years, and the first sport clubs for the deaf were already in existence in 1888 in Berlin.

It was not until after World War II however, that it was widely introduced. The purpose of it at that time was to assist the large number of war veterans and civilians who had been injured during wartime.

In 1944, at the request of the British Government, Dr. Ludwig Guttmann opened a spinal injuries center at the Stoke Mandeville Hospital in Great Britain, and in time, rehabilitation sport evolved to recreational sport and then to competitive sport.

On 29 July 1948, the day of the Opening Ceremony of the London 1948 Olympic Games, Dr. Guttmann organised the first competition for wheelchair athletes which he named the Stoke Mandeville Games, a milestone in Paralympics history. They involved 16 injured servicemen and women who took part in archery. In 1952, Dutch ex-servicemen joined the Movement and the International Stoke Mandeville Games were founded.

These Games later became the Paralympic Games which first took place in Rome, Italy in 1960 featuring 400 athletes from 23 countries. Since then they have taken place every four years. Nowadays we see the participation of number of countries have increased and the athlete's taking part in sporting events has also gone up. The number of disciplines of sports has also increased nationally and internationally. It has given new dimensions to parasports and partial acceptance has come.

To make a beginning few stadia's/ sports facilities are built keeping in mind accessibility. The approach is inclusive so that both abled body athletes and sportspersons with different abilities can train together.

Still the level of excellence para sports model is still not widely known in the world of regular sports competitions/ mega events. The winning elite para athletes are restricted to mostly to a few countries, including the U.S., Canada, Germany, Russia, China, and Australia, with limited distribution of para sport opportunities in other countries. India

has also made its mark in last few years. This tendency for the success of a developing country/ minority of countries reflects global problems of social vulnerability in accessibility (e.g., in dismantling the stigma of disability), political vulnerability (e.g., representative organizations of para sports do not fully practice the philosophy of "sport for all"), and economic vulnerability (e.g., lack of opportunities for training, assistive sports technology, and sponsorships). Para sport in India has come a long way and is work in progress. Over the years para sports which was considered completely exclusive is now in many ways considered inclusive in modern life. Surely with the passage of time some awareness has come in society. Further, infrastructure, facilities & acceptance of para sports & athletes has grown worldwide in last decade but still the battle is half won.

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