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## **Women sports in India-Constraints, Challenges, complications, and its remedies**

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### **Abstract**

The status of women in modern India is a sort of irony the women have left the secured domain of their home and are now in the battlefield of life, fully armored with their enthusiasm, talent and quench for their status. They had proven themselves that they can walk shoulder to shoulder with men. But in India they are yet to get their dues. The sex ratio of India shows that the Indian generation is still discriminatory against women's to make their place in the work sector or in the field of sports. There are so many problems faced by Indian women in day today life as compared to the other women of European countries. These problems have become the part and parcel of life of Indian women and some of them have accepted them as their fortune. While in addition to these problems Kashmiri girls face another constraint i.e. religious constraint. But the time has changed and the Indian women are proving their worth and mark their name in the top list of world Scholars, Scientists, Doctors and Sports Champions.

Sport is a universal in nature. Earlier day's only men used to participate in most of the games, sports and women were not allowed to participate. Earlier women faced many constraints such as physiological, psychological, family, social, cultural; religious and so on but later they also started active participation in all events. Women sports participants face many constraints or hurdles during the sports career. Such constraints prevent them from either involving in sports or prevent them from training. The objective of the article was to highlight issues, challenges and remedies faced by women sports participants in Kashmir and in India. To study the constraints faced by women participant, a questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire with 30 open ended questions was finalized. The finalized open end questionnaire was administered to 70 experts, which included women players, coaches and officials. It includes physical constraints, physiological constraints, psychological constraints, sociological constraints, cultural constraints, religious constraints and economical constraints. Because of the above discussed constraints as barriers the present women face problems like stress, obesity, hypertension, diabetes; hormone dysfunction leads to inactivity, unable to accomplish the day-to-day activities and prone to injury such as the osteoporosis condition. Hence, they are the producer, maker and servers to the society, these constraints are to be eliminated for the betterment of women health. Campaign for all women sports participation should encouraged in schools, colleges and in universities. Government should conduct the awareness programme for women sports participation and should encourage them. The families should also support their girls to participate in sports.

**Keywords:** Physical, physiological, Psychological, Sociological, Economical, Women.

### **Introduction**

Sport is a universal in nature. It does not discriminate on colour, caste, creed, sex or race and so on. Participation in sports not only focuses on health but also the overall development. Earlier day's men used to participate in most of the games, sports and athletics, women faces many constraints such as physical, mental, family, social, cultural, religious and so on later they also started active participation in all events. The women witnessed different status during different ages which is given as below.

### **Women in Rig-Vedic Period**

It is generally recognized on the basis of the instances depicted in religious texts (e.g., Vedas, Upanishads, Smritis, epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata and other Dharmasastras) that in

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ancient India, especially in Rig-Vedic period, women enjoyed equal status with men. They had an honorable place in the society. They were not isolated from men and freely participated in public life. They attended great assemblies and state occasions. They studied the Vedas and composed hymns. They also distinguished themselves in science and learning at their times. They were considered intellectual companies of their husbands, as the friends and loving helpers in the journey of life of their partners, in their religious duties and the Centre of their domestic bliss. In Vedic times, women were not treated as inferior or subordinate but equal to men in all matters of life. They were given education and had a voice in the selection of their husband. In the religious field, women enjoyed all rights and regularly participated in religious ceremonies. In fact, the performance of religious ceremonies was considered invalid without wife joining her husband as she was regarded as Ardhagini (better-half).

### **Post-Vedic Period (Upanishads, Puranic and Smriti Periods)**

The position enjoyed by women in Vedic period deteriorated in post-Vedic period. It was gradually degraded in the Puranic and Smriti periods. The description of position before BC 300 shows that she enjoyed a fairly high status, though not to the extent that she enjoyed in Vedic period. It appears that several drastic changes that took place in the Indian society from about BC 300 to the beginning of the Christian era led to the restriction of freedom of women. Imposition of Brahminical rules and code of conduct, rigid restrictions imposed by caste system and joint family system were the main reasons for lowering of status in this period. A daughter began to be regarded as curse. They were denied the right of inheritance and ownership of property. Pre-puberty marriages came to be practiced. She was forbidden to offer sacrifices and prayers and undertake pilgrimages. The widow was asked to devote herself to an ascetic life at home and marriage became an irrevocable union as far as the wife was concerned.

### **Medieval Period**

The period between 11<sup>th</sup> century to 18<sup>th</sup> century witnessed further deterioration in the position of women due to the impact of Muslim culture. In this period, female infanticide, child marriage, purdah system, sati and slavery were the main social practices affecting the position of women. The birth of a female child began to be regarded as curse, a bad luck. They were almost confined to the doors of their homes. There was further curbing of freedom of women in matters of education, mate selection, public appearances, etc. Purdah system came to be rigorously followed. Women education was almost banned. More and more feeling of conservatism increased about women. She not only continued to hold low status in and outside home rather her position worsened in this period.

### **British Period**

During the period of British rule of about 200 years (early 18<sup>th</sup> century to the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century) some substantial progress was achieved in eliminating inequalities between men and women in matters of education, employment, social and property rights and so forth. Sati, purdah, female infanticide, child marriage, inheritance, slavery, prohibition of widow remarriage and the lack of women's rights in

different fields were some of the problems which attracted the attention of British Raj. Though the British rulers initially decided not to interfere with the traditional social fabric of Indian people (Hindus) and as such they took no steps to bring any change in the status of women in India. It is only in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that they took some steps to abolish or change some social customs through legislative measures. For such measures incentive was provided to them by some social reformers, such as Raja Ram Mohan Rai, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Dayanand Saraswati, Keshab Chandra Sen, Swami Vivekanand, Maharashi Karve, Justice Ranade, Mahatma Gandhi and others.

These following steps have paved the way in removing the obstacles in the progress of women. Not only this, it had helped in eliminating inequalities between men and women and giving proper respect to the other-half of the society.

1. Abolition of Sati Act, 1813.
2. The Hindu Widow Remarriage Act, 1856.
3. Civil Marriage Act, 1872.
4. Married Women's Property Act, 1874.
5. The Child Marriage Restraint Act (Sharda Act), 1929.
6. Hindu Law of Inheritance Act, 1929.
7. Hindu Women's Rights to Property Act, 1939.
8. Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Act, 1946.

### **After Independence**

In addition to the measures to uplift the status of women in India initiated by Britishers, many vigorous steps (legal, social, economic and political) have been taken by Government of India after independence by removing the hurdles put in their way by traditional past. The efforts of the social reformers and their movements launched in the pre-independence period also bore fruits. The Indian National Movement also led to the liberation of Indian women. The leaders of the national movement realized that the liberation of the country from the bondage of imperialism was impossible without the active participation of women who constituted half of the population of the country. Most of the social reformers and thinkers of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were influenced by the tenets of the liberal philosophy of the West, which emphasized the principle of contract rather than status, a rational outlook of life and problems, freedom of speech, criticism of authority, questioning of accepted dogmas and finally the recognition of the value of the individual and insistence on the rights of man as opposed to his duties. They also got push from Upanishads and other scriptures. The decades after independence have seen tremendous changes in the status and position of the women in Indian society. The Constitution of India has laid down as a fundamental right the equality of sexes.

As women were supposed to be gift by god and in some areas of India are still considered to be curse by some sections of society their birth was taken as a burden. Women In particular, women in sport leadership can shape personality towards women's capabilities as leaders, especially in traditional male domains. Women's involvement in sport can make a significant contribution to social life and tradition development. In all this procedure women do not have any say they have to do according to the wish of their husbands even if she does not want to abort she have any choice. With the help of these social reformers women of India slowly started recognizing her true potential.

## Modern Indian Woman Icons

Table 1

London 2012 Olympics: Indian Team Women Participants		
S. No.	Name	Sports/Game
01	M.C. Mary Kom	Boxing
02	Deepika Kumari	Archery
03	Chekrovolu Swuro	
04	Krishna Poonia	Athletics
05	Seema Antil	
06	Tintu Luka	
07	Mayookha Johny	
08	Sudha Singh	
09	Sahana Kumari	Judo
10	Garima Chaudhary	
11	Saina Nehwal	Badminton
12	Jwala Gutta,	
13	Valiyaveetil Diju	
14	Geeta Phogat	Wrestling
15	Rahi Sarmobat	Shooting
16	Heena Sidhu	
17	Annuraj Singh	
18	Shagun Chowdhury	
19	Saina Nehwal	Badminton
20	Jwala Gutta	
21	Valiyaveetil Diju	
22	Garima Chaudhary	Judo
23	Ankita Das	Table Tennis
24	Sania Mirza	Lawn Tennis
25	Rushmi chakrvarthi	
26	Ngangbam Soniya Chanu	Weightlifting

The above women had showed whole world that they are not inferior to men and they had proved their talent at international arena and bring laurels to the country.

### Constraints in women sports

#### Physical Constraints

Physical constraints refer to the morphological feature adaptations to particular sports. Basically, it refers to the qualities of the sports person such as the physical fitness parameters. If there is failure in any of these required parameters results in the reduction of sports performance.

- ❖ Heavy musculature of limbs
- ❖ Heavy abdomen musculature
- ❖ Heavy pelvic musculature
- ❖ Obsessive structure
- ❖ Improper posture/ postural deformity
- ❖ Flat foot

#### Physiological Constraints

Physiological constraints refer to the organ functions ultimately resulted in the system coordination. If there is any dysfunction of the organs resulted in reduction of sports performance.

- ❖ Lower level of RBC
- ❖ Lower percentage of Hemoglobin
- ❖ Smaller or weaker heart and it circulation
- ❖ Smaller or weaker lungs and it mechanism
- ❖ Dysfunction of organs of endocrine system
- ❖ Greater body fat percentage
- ❖ Dominance of neither of aerobic power or anaerobic power
- ❖ Menstrual disorders

### Psychological Constraints

Psychological constraints comprise the behavioural process. It is in which the body and mind coordinates produces the desirous behavioural, failure alternately resulted in the reduction of sports performance.

- ❖ Higher level of anxiety
- ❖ Higher level of aggression
- ❖ Lack of self confidence
- ❖ Lack of achievement motivation
- ❖ Lower self-esteem
- ❖ Lack of interest
- ❖ Full of restless mind because of media and cell phone
- ❖ Hesitate to participate during menstrual periods

### Social Constraints

Social constraints refer to the behavior in the sports society. During training and competition the relationship with coaches, arena persons, training-mates, co-participants, opponents and officials during competition. If there is any undue relationship or misbehaving during in this period especially love affair results in reduction in sports performance or ultimately termination from sports participation.

- ❖ Present days are unsafe for women's free movement such as ragging, traffic lug & raping
- ❖ Because of robbery of chain snatch and other costly ornaments
- ❖ Lack unsafe mode of road transport due to more vehicle motor movement
- ❖ indulging in undue love affair
- ❖ Lack of good nurturing
- ❖ Lack of parental peace i.e., lack of support and encouragement from the family

### Religious Constraints

Religious constraints avail in those societies who are fundamentalist and have hard religious beliefs they are very concern about their religious beliefs. They are afraid as society may blame and curse them for going beyond the boundaries of their religion. This might be the cause that most of the women are not able to show their talent.

### Economic Constraints

Economic constraints are considered most important factor that hinder the women participation in sports. Considering the above said all the constraints either any failure or insufficient economic status or no sponsors resulted in the termination from the sports participation. Secondly constraints represent the triangular or pyramidal factors. It is in which the non-availability of expert trainers, no sufficient infrastructure and non-availability of sports constraints and gadgets.

In considering infrastructure facilities it refers to the non-availability of area for training halls, indoor stadiums or constructed play environment to undergo training. Lack of non-availability of qualified coaches results not to produce better performance and they only become the cause of sports injuries. The sportsman should wear the sports costumes and certain sports gadgets to prevent injury. Besides that women should be provided the kits in order to boost their moral.

### Method

Data were collected from different research articles, journals, magazines, research works published in reputed journals.

Besides these sources the data was also collected from internet (Google) and from different discussions and debates.

### Discussion

The Indian Constitution has conferred equal rights to all women. Indian women can master anything and everything which she can dream off. But still due to the above mentioned constraints we are not able to produce more good quality sports women. As some of Indian women like M.C. Mary Kom, Sania Mirza, Sania Nehwal etc. had marked examples before us and are role models for the present & coming generations we should inculcate such talent in our women so that we can have such women in every corner of India. Physical Education can help to increase self-confidence by gaining women opportunities to play new skills, engage in positive relationships, acquire achievements, and engage in volunteer service and can serve the nation in a better way.

### Conclusions

Participation in sports helps women in many diverse aspects and keeps them fit and healthy besides it enhances their cognitive abilities, their endurance which will help them to keep working all day long. Because of the above discussed constraints as barriers the women face present day non communicable diseases such as stress, obesity, hypertension, diabetes; hormone dysfunction leads to inactivity, unable to accomplish the day-to-day activities prone to injury such as the osteoporosis condition. Hence, they are the producer, maker and servers to the society, these constraints should be eliminated for the betterment of women health. Campaign for all women sports participation should encouraged in school, colleges and in universities. Government should conduct the awareness programme for women sports participation and for their encouragement. And in those states where religion is becoming a constraint should come up with some alternatives so that their women can also participate in sports and live a better and healthy life.

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