

Sports and conflict prevention; Developing self-esteem and role of sport for global peace: A mixed method study in context with Kashmir

Hilal Ahmad Rather

Research Scholar, Swami Vivekanand University, Sagar, Madhya Pradesh, India

Abstract

This paper discussed sports and conflict prevention by looking at the way forward for global peace. Generally conflict is defined as a state of disagreement between persons or group of persons or among the states. The major causes are usually differences in opinion, prejudice and discrimination, belief, and access to valued scarce resources or it can be any cause like freedom. As Kashmir conflict is concerned it has become the global issue people demanding the self-determination from India. Conflict is an important part of human existence and a natural part of our daily life. Conflict can either be positive or negative depending on how it is handled. Conflict can emanate from various sources, within us, school, home and community or the society at large. Achieving global peace means creating peace within individuals, communities and the society. Sports as a authentic tool for social transformation can be effectively utilized to achieve a certain level of peace among individuals and nations. This paper focused on the possibility of utilizing the values of sports in creating understanding, tolerance, and respect for human dignity, development of moral values and self-esteem and social integration as a means of transportation for creating peace among nations. If nations can achieve these qualities, then conflict can be minimized and global peace can be guaranteed. The influence of sports on character formation and social cohesion has direct bearing on peaceful attitudes. Self-esteem is the one of the most important qualities we can instill in youth. Without it they will most likely fail at anything they pursue. Finally, communities should work together to meet the needs that young people themselves identify their talent and utilize it in a proper way. They should focus on the strengths and assets of young people rather than the “problem” behaviors they may demonstrate. Parents, professionals, community representatives, coaches, and funding agencies should work with young people to develop life options and ensure their healthy transition to productive self-esteem into adulthood. As Kashmir is concerned sports revolutionized the thinking of youth and channelized them to proper direction which helped in peace building in Kashmir.

Keywords: Global Peace Kashmir Conflict Self-esteem, self determination

Introduction

Sports can be viewed in different dimensions by different people. Sports can be seen either as competitive physical activities or all forms of physical activity that contributes to physical fitness, mental wellbeing and social interaction. A conflict as defined by Miriam (2009) is the manifestation of hostility in face of conflicting interests between individuals, groups, or states. These conflicting interests can be over resources, identity, power, status or values. The social conflict theory refers to conflict as arising in the process of interaction between individuals or group, and as such conflicts occur within the context of a given socio-cultural milieu (Anugwom 2009 in Ikejiani-Clerk) ^[4]. The theory identifies such social problems like political and economic exclusion; injustice, poverty, disease, exploitation, inequality as sources of conflict (Faleti 2009) ^[1]. Sport is a universal language. It has the ability to bridge social and ethnic divides as a result it can be used as a tool for promoting peace, symbolically on the global level and practically within communities. As indicated by the UN International Task Force (2013) sport can be used as a powerful tool for preventing conflict as well as an element for building sustainable global peace. When used effectively, sports programme promotes social integration and foster tolerance. These sports values are the same as those

necessary for lasting peace.

Self-esteem is the feeling of self-worth that determines how valuable and competent we feel (Healthy Alberta). Through sport, we may enhance our self-esteem by having a positive image of our bodies and the physical skills that we develop. Many parents enroll their children in sports to build their child's character and self-esteem. The interactions kids have with teammates, coaches, and parents shape how kids feel about themselves. We feel positive self-worth through the recognition that we receive from family and friends and social relationships that we develop through involvement in sport and recreation. However, kids may be vulnerable to low self-esteem in sport and activity if they perceive their body to be inadequate or unfit. Critical times for boosting self-esteem occur at a child's young age. Coaches, parents and even older players, like I looked up to are all very important role models for young kids. Children's experiences in sports can affect their self-esteem. I believe coaches do have a key role in providing feedback, which will improve self-esteem. “In developing self-esteem, coaches who engage positive reinforcement, frequent encouragement and corrective feedback can improve on a youths self-esteem” (Smith, Smoll & Curtiss, 1979). The role and impact of sports in Kashmir has been a subject of debate from last few years but as far as

international research is concerned sport play a role in curbing the volatile situation in any state where young youth is being involved. In above context in Kashmir sports play a role in shaping the youth's behaviour towards positivity and build their self-esteem to see themselves in a mirror of progress. It enhanced their life style and helped in developing peace in the state.

Objective

1. To explore the role of sports for global peace in context with Kashmir
2. To explore the life experiences in the sport context of socially vulnerable youth that can lead to development in self-esteem.

Methods

The data for the present study was gathered from different areas of Kashmir valley and 200 subjects were given a questionnaire and interviewed for the research purpose. The subjects were youth who participated in different sports and cultural activities

The Concept of Global Peace

The concept of global peace is not the absence of global conflict, but rather the resolution of conflicts through non-violent processes to eradicate war. The free Wikipedia (2014) explains that global peace system relies upon a multi-strand approach to conflict resolution incorporating broad social and political solutions. The term global peace grew from the work of Robert (1978) on political theorist, which stated that, the prevention of wars required the creation of a peace system. This led to the creating of the term global peace system by Johansen (2003). We are living in a very crucial age, where confrontational determination to counter force should be replaced by a policy of non-violent dialogue. Fry (2013) ^[2] noted that the creation of global peace system involves synergistic elements such as transformative vision that a peace-based global system is possible, the understanding of interdependence and cooperation, an added level of social identity including all human beings, the creation of effective and democratic procedures of international adjudication, and peace-supporting symbols and values.

Diamond and McDonald (1996) introduced the Multi-Track Diplomacy as a system approach to peace. They advocated for 9 tracts of conceptual and practical frame work that assist and work in the peace building sector, they identified these tracts to include: Government, Non-governmental/ professional or peace making through conflict resolution, business or peace making through commerce, private citizens, peacemaking through personal involvement, research training, and education or peace making through learning; Activism or peace making through advocacy, religion or peace making through faith in Action, Funding or peace making through providing resources and Communication and media, or peace making through information. Interestingly, sport is conspicuously missing in this list. All the nine tracts identified can conveniently find a root in sports. Because sport is an international language, it has the ability to bridge ethnic divides. It is therefore a very powerful tool for promoting peace.

Sports and Conflict Prevention

Conflict prevention is a term used interchangeably with peace building. To prevent conflict means to maintain a state of calmness. The greatest quality of peace is justice. Where justice prevails peace will reign. In most situations, sports apart from its health benefit possess unique qualities that facilitate peace and conflict resolution. The benefits of sports are directly and indirectly linked to peace building and conflict prevention. These characteristics start with the individual and go beyond this to the communities, the nation and the world at large. The ingredients that can be used in sports to prevent conflict are: equity and justice, fair play, human resources development, social, economic and political empowerment. Justice and fair play are ingredients that can be used in sports to prevent conflict. This can be done by addressing the sources of conflict in sporting programmes. Conflict prevention at a global level through sports can be achieved through imbibing the spirit of the Olympic ideal.

The second level where justice can be displayed is in the officiating. When umpires officiate by the rules; tranquility will be achieved and the game may end up successfully. The officiating of a game has direct implication for peaceful ending because of the control of sports fans. As indicated by Wann, Peterson, Cothran and Dykes (2006) some fans are psychologically connected to a team, and such fans are more likely to be aggressive to the outcome of a competition. For the highly identified fans, the outcomes of a competition involving their team have relevance for their feelings of self-worth. Any misjudgment by the umpire can lead to violence by such individuals. Globally, it has been reported by experts (Clements, Alkire, Anthony, Barakat, Mesa, Grono and Stepanova 2014) that the most peaceful countries shared high levels of transparency of government and low corruption.

The UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sports for Development and Peace (2014) equally recognized the importance of the skills learned through sports. It states that the skills help empower individuals and enhance psychological well-being, such as increased resiliency, self-esteem and connection with others. In defining development, the UN document sees it as a process of enlarging people's choices and increasing the opportunities available to all members of society. The emphasis is on increasing opportunities for the current and future generation. The basic human capabilities necessary for this are to live long and healthy life. They therefore recognized that sports can help build these capabilities.

Sports bring people together in a fun and participatory way and help create social relationships; it builds connection and improves communication between individuals and groups which helps to strengthen the social fabric (UNDP 2002). Because of its wide social interaction, sports programmes when properly organized can be a powerful means to tackle social exclusion, and integrate marginalized groups into their community. Sport is one of the medium through which gender inequality can be addressed. Kaidal (2014) stated that sport is a powerful tool for women empowerment. It helps women develop leadership and communications skills and provide social interaction for girls beyond the home. These skills give women the opportunity to participate in decision making in the home and the society. Sports can be an instrument for integrating persons with disability into society. It provides

them opportunities for positive social interaction, reducing isolation and breaking down prejudice.

In Kashmir sports bring change in the behaviour and thinking of many youths who played sport and proved their potential.

Result

Sports changed their behavior and gave them a healthy life style. Besides they use their idle time in a proper way which makes them realize their potentialities in a proper direction which ultimately leads to peace progress.

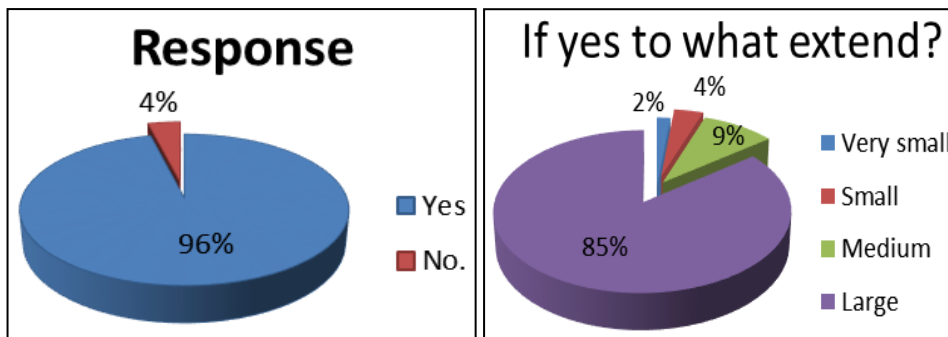


Fig 1: Do you think participation in these games make positive change in your behaviour?

The above figure shows that 96% of respondent feels positive change in their behaviour. While as 4% respondent does not. Further it reveals that 85% of the respondents feel positive change to a large extend while as 9% Respondents feels

Intermediary, whereas, 4% of the respondents feels positive change to small extend while as 2% of Respondents feels positive change to a very small extend.

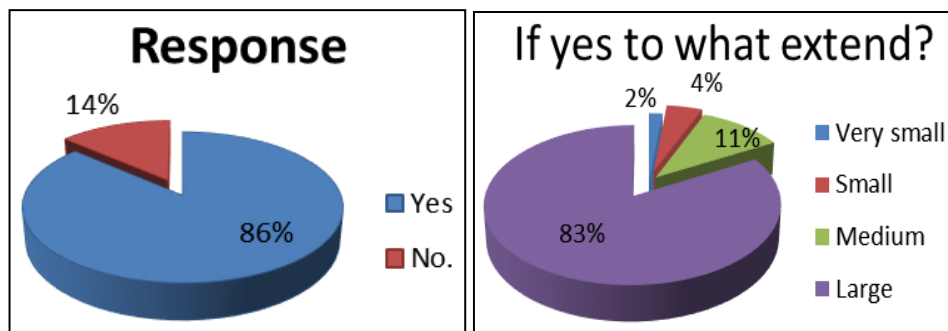


Fig 2: Shows the development of self-esteem among youth after participating in sport activities

The above figure shows that 86% of respondent feels positive development in self-esteem. While as 14% respondent does not. Further it reveals that 83% of the respondents feel positive development in self-esteem to a large extend while as 11% Respondents feels Intermediary, whereas, 4% of the respondents feels development in self-esteem to small extend while as 2% of Respondents feels positive development in self-esteem to a very small extend.

multidimensional activities like art, culture. Drama, sports and many more exercises so that their potential can be utilized in a proper direction. In Kashmir sports did the same thing. Many organizations, Associations, N.G.O. and others organized different programs to inculcate the sports activities culture among them which ultimately brought fruits to them and helped in curbing the volatile situation in Kashmir. All of these would clearly recognize the role of youth in

Conclusion

It is important to state that, skills and values learnt in sports are similar to those values taught in peace education to resolve and prevent conflict and create conducive conditions for peace from the inter-personal to international. If youth were provided with privileges, they would be more likely to be active participants in community development efforts. The obstacle of youth lacking recognition was also negatively related to community involvement. To overcome this obstacle, active and routine efforts could be made to promote and recognize the contributions of youth. The researcher comes with conclusion that youth should be involved in

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