

A Case Study :

Scene and support : Indian women sports

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ABSTRACT

Women's physical education and sports depend largely on the status of women in any society and the importance of physical education and health of women in the society. In India, women are traditionally not encouraged to indulge in sports, with centuries the women has been rated as less important than men in almost all parts of the India. In fact, in some ways women's responsibilities are to look after household and children. This paper deals the specific difficulties facing the development of women sports from the period of Medieval India and, then focused on the effort made for the support and encouragement of Indian women sports.

Key words : Chaugan, Shikar, Hindola, Jauhar, Purdah

Medieval Indian women:

Medieval India was not women's age. It is supposed to be the 'dark age' for them. When foreign conquerors like Muslims invaded India they brought with them their own culture. For them woman was the sole property of her father, brother or husband and she does not have any will of her own. One more reason for the decline in women's status and freedom was that original Indians wanted to shield their women folk from the barbarous Muslim invaders. Some of the outdoor games enjoyed only by the ladies of the upper and the ruling class were *Chaugan*, *Shikar* or hunting, animal fight, *Hindola*, *Jalakrida*, *Chor-machichani*, *Ankh-michayat*, etc. As polygamy was a norm for these invaders, they picked up any woman they wanted and kept her in their "harems". In order to protect them, Indian women started using 'Purdah', (a veil), which covers body. Due to this reason, their freedom also became affected. All these gave rise to some new evils such as child marriage, Sati, Jauhar, restriction on widow marriage, Purdah system and restriction on girl education.

Modern Indian women :

The status of women in modern India is a sort of a paradox. In on one hand she is at the peak of ladder of success, on the other hand she is mutely suffering the violence afflicted on her by her own family members. As compared with past women in modern times have achieved a lot but in reality they have to still travel a long way. Their path is full of roadblocks. The sex ratio of India shows that the Indian society is still prejudiced against female. There are 933 females per thousand males in

India according to the census of 2001, which is much below the world average of 990 females. There are many problems which women in India have to go through daily. These problems have become the part and parcel of life of Indian women and some of them have accepted them as their fate. Like malnutrition, poor health, maternal mortality, lack of education, mistreatment, overworked, lack of power, marriage, dowry, female infanticide foeticide and recreational activities.

Indian women in sports :

The main problem lies with the lack of sports culture in the country. In our educational curricula, more emphasis is on academics and sports remain the most neglected area. Parents also do not like to encourage their children to take up sports seriously as it does not offer any career opportunities.

News channels, newspapers and advertisements depict our societal attitude and it clearly shows that sports are still considered to be a male domain. As even today, while buying toys for children, parents automatically go for buying dolls, indoor games and kitchen playing sets for their daughters, but cricket bats and footballs for their sons. Girls are encouraged to learn virtues of a good homemaker since their childhood, whereas boys are encouraged to play outdoor sports. We hardly even see a girls' sports team or uni-sex sports team in co-educational schools. The upbringing of boys is such that they are not able to digest girls as opponents or team members. On top of it, glitters over gold are Indian movies and the Indian Premier League matches, which have reduced status of girls in the sports to mere cheer leaders and spectators,