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Role of the educational institution with special reference to Nimpith Sri Ramkrishna Ashram promoting sports and sportspersons

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Abstract

The study aimed to find out the role of educational Institutions with special reference to Nimpith Sri Ramkrishna Ashram in promoting sports and sportspersons. For the present study, 196 participants comprising teachers and students were selected from high & higher secondary schools under Sri Ramakrishna Ashram. The group administration of the questionnaire, field observation and interactions with teachers and students were used as data collection techniques. A descriptive statistic such as percentage analysis was used for analysing the data. In addition, data collected from field observation and interactions were also used for analysis. The study found that Sri Ramakrishna Ashram embodies beliefs and ideas (ideologies) that promote sports and sportspersons. The Ashram's head, teachers and students have an appropriate attitude towards sports, and the Ashram exercises affirmative actions that help promote sports and sportspersons. It was also found that the Ashram has produced nearly 41 elite-level sportspersons with regional and national reputations. Given the congenial ideologies, affirmative actions, appropriate attitudes and motivation towards the development of sports and sportspersons, the Sri Ramakrishna Ashram Nimpith set itself as an example of how an educational institution, in its own capacity, can nurture rural talents and can produce elite athletes from rural India.

Keywords: Education institution, Sri Ramkrishna ashram, promotion of sportspersons

Introduction

Considering students' health and well-being benefits, the sport has become inevitable in educational settings. However, Educational institutions can also nurture sports talents and produce elite-level sportspersons. As educational institutions have good human resources and facilities for learners to increase physical activity, train elite athletes, and serve the community. The head of the educational institution has an important role in leading and organising sports activities and institutionalise extra-curricular activities, especially physical training and sports [1].

In several advanced countries, it has been indicated that sports funding directly affects sports participation and performance [2]. Similarly, Misener and Doherty (2013) found that for the better and smooth running of sports programs, it is required to make sure the availability of all the necessary resources, including finance for players in the sports arena [2]. In other words, it extends the understanding of the vital role of institutions or organisations in providing financial support for promoting sports and sportspersons. Moreover, in connection with sports promotion, according to Ancona and Caldwell, (1992), sports activities do have specific resources to achieve optimal results, such as staff, space, and equipment to apply and propagate [1].

However, development is also governed by other factors that influence the results of developmental efforts. For example, the motive that drives the social change and essential preconditions for that change or development to occur. The motive must be powerful enough to overcome obstructions that prevent that change [3]. As one of the sports sociologists, J. Coakley advocated that Ideologies or the webs of ideas and beliefs people use to make sense of their experiences are important aspects of culture because they embody the principles, perspectives and viewpoints that underlie our feelings, thoughts and actions [4]. Therefore, the ideologies or ideas and beliefs, the appropriate attitude and affirmative action seem to be preconditions for the development of any endeavour. It is no exception in the case of promoting sports and sports persons.

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Weber, the founding father of sociology, in his study on protestant ethics and the spirit of capitalism, through typification of the meaning given to work by the early Calvinists as the protestant work ethic, explains why protestants were at the forefront of the rise of capitalism (economic development) in the west. In other words, he tried to advocate how the shared idea or belief of a person, an organisation, a social institution and the community play a significant role in development. Weber indicated the meaning or the belief the Calvinists gave to their everyday work as the explanation not only for the relationship between religion and occupation but also for the rise of capitalism or development in Europe. Such ideology or the ideas and beliefs of the Protestants towards their everyday work provided the preconditions for appropriate work attitude and motivation, which resulted in the rise of economic capital [4]. Similar preconditions such as ideologies, appropriate attitudes and motivation and affirmative action are important for the rise of sportspersons and sports in India.

In this backdrop, the present study seeks to understand the preconditions such as ideologies or ideas and beliefs, affirmative action, appropriate attitudes and motivation Nimpith Sri Ramkrishna Ashram embodies in promoting sports and sportspersons. In other words, the study tries to find out the role of educational institutions with special reference to Sri Ramkrishna Ashram Nimpith in promoting sports and sportspersons.

Objectives of the study

The researcher focused on achieving the following objectives

- To find out the role of Nimpith Ramkrishna Ashram in promoting sports and sportspersons.
- To know the ideologies/ideas and beliefs Ashram embodies for promoting sports and sportspersons.
- To find out the attitude of the head of the institution towards sports and sportspersons.
- To know the varieties of sports the Nimpith Ramkrishna Ashram promotes.
- To know the participation and performance levels of student-athletes belonging to the Ashram.

Research Method

The subjects and locale of the study

For the present study 196 participants comprising the teachers and the students were selected from high & higher secondary schools of Sri Ramkrishna Ashram. The Ashram is located

at Nimpith in South 24 parganas district of West Bengal, India. Participants were selected from Nimpith Ramkrishna Vidyabhavan High & Higher Secondary School for boys and Nimpith Ramkrishna Ashram-Type High School under Sri Ramkrishna Ashram Nimpith.

Method of Collecting the Data

In this study, group administration of the questionnaire was used as the technique of data collection. The questionnaire was adopted from Khan *et al.* (2022) [6], who conducted a similar study elsewhere. Since the questionnaire was already used elsewhere for research in a similar context, its validity and objectivity were tested. After thorough discussions and consultation with other faculties, experts in physical education and other research scholars, the same questionnaire was adopted for the present study. The questionnaire consists of 16 variables or items that sufficiently cover the essential factors that aid in promoting sports and sportspersons of Educational Institutions. In addition to the questionnaire, field observation and interaction with teachers and student-athletes were also done for supplementary data collection. The present study, descriptive and explorative in nature, was conducted to understand the role of educational Institutions with special reference to Sri Ramkrishna Ashram Nimpith in promoting sports and sportspersons. Before conducting the research, permission was taken from the Secretary of Sri Ramkrishna Ashram, Nimpith, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India. Participants consent were also taken before collecting the data. The actual data collection was conducted in between February to March, 2023. Participants were reminded that their responses would be confidential. The participants were also informed that if at any point they wished not to respond they could.

Methods of statistical analysis

In the present study, descriptive statistic such as percentage analysis was used for analysing the data. Before the percentage analysis, the opinion-based five-point likert scale was reduced to three points: agreed, undecided and disagreed. In addition to percentage analysis, data collected from field observation and interaction with the stakeholders of the institution were also used for analysis and to address the objectives of the present study. Overall, a mixed-method approach was used for better understanding of the research problem.

Results of the study

Table 1: Table showing the Item-wise Frequencies & Percentages regarding the "Role of Educational Institution in Promotion of Sports"- (N=196).

	Statements	Agree %	Undecided %	Disagree %	Total-% N=196
1	Sports are essential for students as academics	188 96%	4 2%	4 2%	196 (100%)
2	Teachers allow students for sporting events	191 97.44%	2 1.02%	3 1.53%	196 (100%)
3	Students take an interest in sporting events	194 98.97%	2 1.02%	0%	196 (100%)
4	The head of the institution and teachers motivate students toward sporting events	175 89.28%	12 6.12%	9 4.59%	196 (100%)
5	All kinds of sports facilities are provided to students in the Institution	131 66.83%	17 8.67%	48 24.48%	196 (100%)
6	your institution considers sports as part of the curriculum	180 91.83%	6 3.06%	10 5.10%	196 (100%)
7	your institution having or offer sports activities as part of the curriculum	148 75.51%	13 6.63%	24 12.24%	196 (100%)
8	Sports programs are conducted on a regular basis.	158 80.61%	8 4.08%	30 15.30%	196 (100%)
9	The head of the institution motivates teachers as well as students toward sports	165 84.18%	21 10.71%	10 5.10%	196 (100%)
10	Students who participate in sports activities also have good academics	109 55.61%	61 31.12%	26 13.26%	196 (100%)
11	Participation in sporting events makes a student physically as well as academically strong	173 88.26%	11 5.61%	8 4.08%	196 (100%)
12	The head of the institution cooperates and motivates subordinates in connection to the involvement of students in sporting activities	159 81.12%	32 16.32%	5 2.55%	196 (100%)
13	sports are essential for the exposure of the Institution	177 90.30%	11 5.61%	7 3.57%	196 (100%)

14	The institution financially supports students in sports activities	103 52.55%	44 22.44%	52 26.53%	196 (100%)
15	Admission seats are reserved for sportsmen & women in Institution	31 15.81%	117 59.69%	48 24.48%	196 (100%)
16	Educational Institutions play a significant role in the development of sports	168 85.71%	21 10.71%	7 3.57%	196 (100%)

The analyses of frequencies & percentages of the statements related to the "Role of Educational Institutions in the Promotion of Sports, as shown in the above table-1, have been illustrated in the following paragraphs:

- As shown in the table-1, the study result indicated that most respondents (96%), both teachers and students, agreed with the statement - "Sports are essential for students as academics".
- Similarly, about the statement, "Teachers allow students for sporting events", the majority of the respondents (97.44%) agreed with the statement.
- The result also showed that students are interested in sporting events, as the majority (98.97%) of the respondents agreed with the statement – "Students take an interest in sporting events".
- It is also evident from the result shown in the above table that respondents (89.28%) believe that "the head of the institution and teachers motivate students toward sporting events".
- The result shows that most of the respondents (66.83%), both students and teachers, have expressed their opinion in favour of the statement – "all kinds of sports facilities are provided to the students in the institution".
- The result indicated that most respondents (91.83%) have expressed their opinion in favour of the statement – "Your institution considers sports as part of the curriculum."
- The result shows that most respondents (75.51%) have expressed their opinion in favour of the statement – "your institution offers sports activities as part of the curriculum".
- The result shows that most respondents (80.61%) agreed with the statement – "Sports programs are conducted on a regular basis".
- The result shows that most of the respondents (84.18%) have expressed their opinion in favour of the statement – "the head of the institution motivates teachers as well as students toward sports".
- The result shows that only (55.61%) of respondents agreed with the statement - "students who participate in sports activities also have good academics".

- The result shows that most of the respondents (88.26%) have expressed their opinion in favour of the statement – "Participation in sporting events makes a student physically as well academically strong".
- The result also shows that most of the respondents (81.12%), both students and teachers, agreed with the statement – "head of the institution cooperates and motivates subordinates in connection to the involvement of students in sporting activities".
- The result shows that most respondents (90.30%) agreed that "sports are essential for the exposure of institution".
- The result also shows that most respondents (52.55%) agreed that "the institution for sports activities financially supports students".
- With regard to the statement - "admission seats are reserved for sportsmen & women in the institution", the study's result shows that only a few respondents (15.81%) agreed with the statement. However, most respondents (59.69%) disagreed with the statement.
- The result shows that most respondents (85.71%) agreed with "Teachers allow students for sporting events".

Moreover, the additional data obtained during field visits and interaction with the stakeholders of the institution were also analysed to address the objectives of the present study. This additional information has been illustrated in the following table and graph:

Table 2: Levels of participation in different sports by the student-athletes of Sri Ramakrishna Ashram.

Name of the Sport	Level of Participation			
	District	State	National	Total
Swimming	0	4	6	10
Water Polo	1	2	0	3
Football	7	0	2	9
Kho-kho	7	0	0	7
Track & Field	7	1	0	8
Gymnastics	0	1	1	2
Volleyball	1	0	0	1
Karate	0	0	1	1
Total	23	8	10	41

Source: Field survey

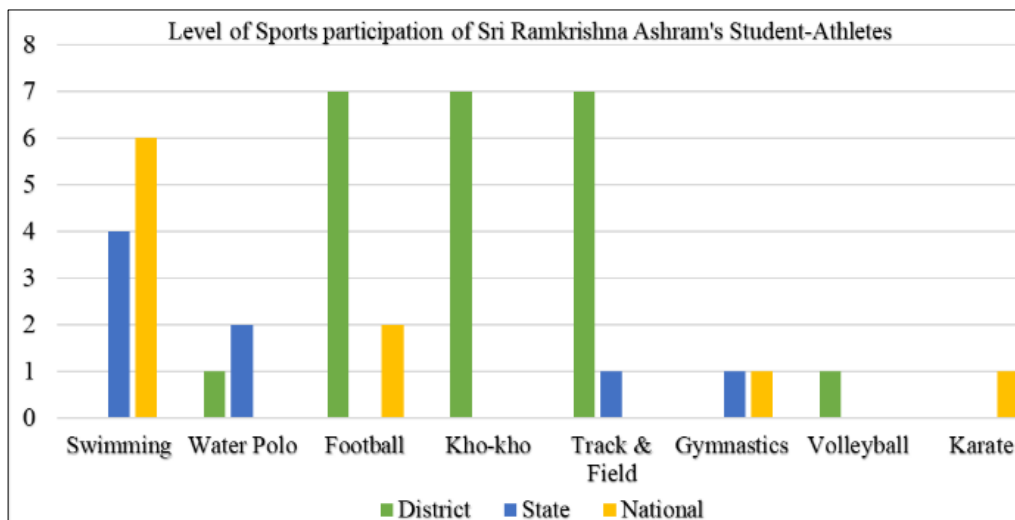


Fig 1: Graphical presentation of the levels of participation of Ashram's Athletes.

In addition to the participants' responses shown in table-1, the data shown in table-2 and fig-1 revealed that the Sri Ramakrishna Ashram and their athletes have been performing well in sports such as Swimming, Water Polo, Football, Kho-Kho, Track & Field, Gymnastics, Volleyball and Karate. Moreover, it was observed that the Ashram is producing athletes or sportspersons of regional and national reputation, particularly in Swimming, Football, Track & Field and Kho-Kho.

Discussions of the findings

One of the key areas of research in the sociology of sports is the relationship between sports and cultural ideologies [4]. Ideologies, the webs of ideas and beliefs that people use to give meaning to the world and make sense of their experiences, are important aspects of culture because they embody the principles, perspectives and viewpoints that underlie our feelings, thoughts and actions [4]. Ideologies, appropriate attitudes and motivation and affirmative action together are the Precondition for development in a real sense. This is also true in the case of Sri Ramakrishna Ashram Nimpith, promoting sports and sportspersons. The result shown in table-2 and Fig-1 illustrates that Sri Ramakrishna Ashram is producing a good number of athletes with regional and national reputations, and nearly 41 sportspersons have elite-level participation. These athletes have performed well in sports such as Swimming, Water Polo, Football, Kho-Kho, Track & Field, Gymnastics, Volleyball and Karate. At the elite level competitions, Ashram found performing well in sports particularly Swimming, Football, Track & Field and Kho-Kho. These elite-level performance of the athletes of Sri Ramakrishna Ashram proved that the Ashram being an educational institution, is also doing its best in its service of nurturing and thereby producing elite-level athletes in different sports. The production of such a vast number of elite athletes in different sports disciplines from the school (Ashram) located in the remote area of West Bengal may be due to the ideologies, appropriate attitudes and affirmative actions the Ashram embodies in promoting sports and sportspersons.

Furthermore, the participant's responses, as shown in the table-1 of the result section, were further discussed in light of ideas and beliefs (ideologies), appropriate attitudes and affirmative action that promote sports and sportspersons.

Institutional ideas and beliefs (ideologies)

Based on the result, the institution's (Ashram's) ideologies or ideas and beliefs were found to have a significant role in promoting sports and sportspersons as both the teachers and the student-athletes strongly agreed that the Sri Ramakrishna Ashram viewed sports as essential as academics and considers sports as part of the curriculum. Most of the teachers and student-athletes of this Ashram believe that participation in sports makes students physically and academically strong. In this Ashram, the students who participate in sports activities also have good academics. Moreover, the teachers and the student-athletes of this Ashram also believe that sports are very important for the exposure of Institutions, and educational Institutions play a significant role in sports development.

According to Coakley (2009), people create and organize sports around their ideas and beliefs about the attributes and characteristics of the social world that they define as important [4]. The same was found true with the present study's findings, as the ideas and beliefs of Nimpith Ramakrishna Ashram consider sports and as important as other

attributes and characteristics of the social world. Therefore, the ideas and beliefs of people play a significant role in organizing sports to promote sports and sports persons.

Attitudes and Affirmative Actions of the Institution towards sports and sports persons

In the present study, the attitude of the head of this Institution (Ashram) was found to be motivating and supportive, as the head of the institution not only motivates students toward sports participation but also cooperates and motivates office subordinates in connection to the involvement of students in sports activities. The teachers of this institution also have supportive attitudes towards students as they allow students to participate in sports. Not only do this institution's head and teachers have a positive attitude towards sports, but the students are also interested in participating in sports. In other words, this Ashram's head, teachers and students have an appropriate attitude towards sports.

A similar study conducted by Khan & *et al.* [7] on the importance of sports and the role of the institution head in promoting sports also suggests that the head of the academic institutions has a vital role in leading and organising sports in his/her affiliated institutions. The study further suggests that the concerns and the interests of the head of the institutions are very important to institutionalise extra-curricular activities, especially sports.

Furthermore, the study found that the institution exercises affirmative actions that help promote sports and sports persons, as the institution provides all kinds of sports facilities to the students. It offers sports activities as part of the curriculum. Sports programs are conducted on a regular basis. The institution financially supports students in sports activities. Admission seats are reserved for sportspersons.

In their study on educational institutions as social institution play a prominent role in the promotion of sports, Khan & *et al.* [7] found that the teachers, the head of department and the institution were interested in sports activities and also consider its importance for students but they also found that for the purpose to produce elite level athletes the current facilities were insufficient and need improvement. The findings of the present study is also in tuned with what Khan & *et al.* [7] found in their study.

Conclusion

Nimpith Sri Ramakrishna Ashram considers sport and sportspersons as important as other attributes and characteristics of the social world. The Ashram embodies strong beliefs and ideas (ideologies) promoting sports and sportspersons, as the Ashram view sports as essential as academics and considers sports as part of the curriculum. The teachers and student-athletes of the Ashram believe that participation in sport makes a student physically and academically strong and that the students who participate in sports activities are good in academics too. They also believe that sports are essential for the exposure of Institutions, and educational Institutions play a significant role in sports development.

To promote sports and sportspersons, the Institution (Ashram) exercises affirmative actions; for example, the Ashram provides all kinds of sports facilities to the students, offers sports activities as part of the curriculum, conducts sports regularly, and supports students financially for sports activities. Admission seats are also reserved for sportspersons in the Ashram. Overall, the head, the teachers and the students of this Ashram embody appropriate attitudes towards sports.

In other words, Sri Ramkrishna Ashram was found as an important centre for nurturing rural sports talents, as Ashram has produced nearly 41 elite-level sportspersons with regional and national reputations. The production of such a vast number of elite athletes in different sports disciplines from the Ashram located in a remote area of West Bengal, India, may be due to the ideologies, attitudes and affirmative actions the Ashram embodies in promoting sports and sportspersons of rural Bengal.

Given the congenial ideologies, appropriate attitudes and affirmative actions towards sports and sportspersons, the Sri Ramkrishna Ashram set itself as an example of how an educational institution, in its own capacity, can nurture rural talents and can produce elite athletes from rural India.

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