

Sports as a Social Institution

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Abstract – The purpose of this study is to look at sports as a social institution. A society is a group of people who are bound together by particular relationships or behaviours that distinguish them from those who do not engage in those relationships or who behave differently. Institutions are the building blocks of societies. Social institutions are established systems for the satisfaction of fulfilment of some basic human needs. Sport is an essential component of any social institution. The authorities organise sporting events in every institution in order to create a favourable learning atmosphere. Sport is one of the most effective means of connection and socialisation. Sport, as a social institution, has close and intense relationships with other social institutions in this sense (primarily with family, economics, mass media, politics, healthcare, law, religion).

Keywords – Sport, Society, Social Institution

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1. INTRODUCTION

Man is a social creature. There is a natural desire in him to live his life by being involved with society. The foundation of human existence is society. For survival and development, the human child is dependent on his family and other members of society. Only in a civilized society can a child's inherent strengths, abilities, and talents be developed. The ultimate goal of society is to promote healthy, happy, and fulfilling lives for its members. By assigning varied jobs to individuals, society generates conditions and chances for all-round personality development. Despite individual differences and their periodic disputes and tensions, society maintains tolerance, social peace, and collaboration. If society assists individuals in their development journey, qualified citizens contribute to society with their wisdom and experience. As a result, society and the individual are linked by an intimate and harmonious tie, and both strive for long-term harmony in the face of temporary problems and disputes (1).

2. SOCIETY

Society is global and omnipresent, with no clearly defined boundaries or bounds. A society is a group of people who are bound together by particular relationships or behaviours that distinguish them from those who do not engage in those relationships or who behave differently. As a result, we can conclude that society is the entire complex of social behaviour and social interaction network (2). Each individual in society seeks and contributes something. Within a dominant, huge society, a society might also comprise of likeminded people

ruled by their own standards and ideals; A society can be represented as an economic, social, or industrial infrastructure made up of a diverse group of people. Finally, we can say that Human societies are defined by patterns of relationships (social relations) among individuals who share a common culture and institutions; a given society can be defined as the sum of such relationships among its constituent members (3).

3. SPORT

International Council for Sport and Physical Education (ICSPE) define the sport in following way "Any form of physical activity that establishes the characteristics of play and which involves some form of struggle with oneself or involves competition with others is called sport (4)." Michener, (1977) has also defined sport according to the characteristics of the play – "Athletic activity of competitive nature which requires physical ability or skill is called sport (5)."

In many parts of the world, sport plays a significant role in the formation of society. It has an impact on the lives of those around us, as well as those who live within us. However, we are unable to fully appreciate the distinct impact of athletic and non-sporting socialization experiences on an individual's and society's general standard of living, on the character of a culture and the nature of interpersonal connections. Sport does not, by itself, make significant changes in a person's nature, attitudes, or behavior. Within a larger context of socialization processes, it always functions in

conjunction with the effects of the particular of a given social and cultural situation (6).

Sport is a unique arena for studying and understanding the intricacies of social life because of its predictable behaviors, social structures, and interinstitutional linkages. Sport is an activity that attracts a high level of main or secondary participation that is unmatched in other institutionalized settings (7).

4. SOCIAL INSTITUTION

When a person is born, there are some basic tendencies and impulses in him. Society and social institutions make him human and make man a social animal. His whole life is given by the society. It is the social institutions that motivate the child to behave in a society-friendly manner while adjusting it with the society, modifying his/her behaviour. Due to the relation of the individual with the society, he controls his behaviour (8). Some of the important definitions of social institutions are given by sociologists in the following way: "Social institutions are established systems for the satisfaction of fulfilment of some basic human needs" (Ogburn and Nimkoff); "A social institution is such a structure of society which has to meet the needs of the people mainly through well-established systems." (Bogardus); "Social institutions are those rules expressing certain cultural characteristics, which have considerable permanence and whose function is to fulfil social specifications." (Gillen and Gillen); "Social institutions are a set of organized human relations accepted by common desires." (Ross) (9,10)

5. SPORTS AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION

A social institution is a set of organized beliefs and rules that each society develops for the fulfilment of its basic needs. The basic social institutions discussed in sociology are family, religion, education, economy and politics. At present, means of communication, sports, science and technology, medicine and the army are also considered as social institutions.

Sport is an essential component of any social institution. The authorities organise sporting events in every institution in order to create a favourable learning atmosphere. Sport is one of the most effective means of connection and socialisation (11).

The pragmatists argue that every social institution is designed to meet specific needs, for example, the family, which is, among other things, responsible for the replacement of the members of the society and the cultural requirements of the next generation, similarly the government is responsible for maintaining and protecting the social order. Conflict's theories hold that social institutions maintain the status quo so it is not beneficial without socioeconomic or political power. The interpersonal

perspective subtly emphasizes that human behaviour is derived from the roles and position held by the individual.

Edwards (1973) has described the 'sport as a secular, quasi-religious institution (12).' Sports as a secular institution plays a functional and non-religious role to uphold the core values and norms found in the culture. In general, sociologists emphasize how the social system functions in terms of the characteristics, rules, roles and structures that bind the social system, and play provides an excellent social system as a social institution for analysis by sociologists (13, 14). It has features such as regulation, formalization, ideological justification and transmission of culture, etc. Sport as a social institution exhibits all the common characteristics of other social institutions. Brief review of the four main characteristics of sport as a social institution is as follows-

- A. **Hierarchical System** - A hierarchical system exists within all institutions, groups and societies. This hierarchy is based on some values. stratification is based on certain values. In business activities, there is value to seniority order and situation, such as a manager is more important than a clerk in a government organization. Hierarchy depends on the position of the playing skill, the key player in the team and to some extent seniority in sports.
- B. **Roles and Status** - Each player's role in sports is determined by his or her position in the hierarchy. Key players on the team are expected to deliver their best performance at all times, while this level of expectation from other players on the team is lower than the key players in the hierarchy. A person's position in the hierarchy reflects his social status such as Head Coach, Team Manager, Conditioning Coach, Trainer, Athlete, Water Boy etc.
- C. **Social Control – Rewards/Punishment / Sanctions** - social control system designed to maintain behaviour in accordance with customs and principles. Sport provides direction to human actions so that they can meet predetermined expectations, for example a coach may make it a rule for all players on a team that the player who arrives late in a practice session is not allowed to play in the next match. The game is governed according to the rules, these rules are applicable both during the game and outside the game, when the rules are violated during the game, then the decisive violation is punished through various sanctions.

D. **Norms and Expectation of Behaviour** - Sports require social control because of the large number of rules in sports. All organizations have formal or written rules as well as informal rules. Examples of informal rules can be seen in the restrictions imposed on athletes by the World Anti-Doping Agency on illegal coercion and drug abuse. Teams in all sports also have informal standards such as imposing monetary penalty on athlete or suspending him for a few matches by the coach for indecent behaviour against fellow team mates (15).

6. CONCLUSION

Sport is one of the world's oldest and most important social institutions. Sport is a complex, dynamic, and intelligent institution. It arose from societal necessities, much like all other social institutions. Sport will continue to exist as a social institution as long as these requirements exist and can be met. The relationship between social institutions is close and intensive. In a chain reaction, a change or innovation in one of the institutions affects the others (16). Sport, as a social institution, has close and intense relationships with other social institutions in this sense (primarily with family, economics, mass media, politics, healthcare, law, religion) (17). The significance of sport "derives from the fact that the relationship it has formed with other essential institutions has gotten stronger, and that the outcomes of this will have a mutual impact on our entire social life. (18)"

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