

# The Complex Linkages between Sports Organizations and the Promotion of Education in Kashmir

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**Abstract – The purpose of the research is to understand the role that Sports has played in the promotion of the education in Kashmir since the outbreak of militancy in 1989. The study focuses on the role played by the J&K State Sports council came into existence in 1959 and the Department of Youth Services & Sports came into being in the year 1973, prior to the beginning of the militancy in Kashmir.**

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## INTRODUCTION

The state of Jammu & Kashmir has witnessed a bloody insurgency for about two and a half decades now. The twenty four years of the gory conflict, that included an intensive gorilla fighting for about 12-15 years devastated the state's infrastructure and its ability to rebuild from the scratches left by the conflict. The most serious casualty was education. The conflict directly led to the devastation of educational infrastructure that included permanent settlements of armed forces in college, school or administrative buildings and the gutting down of a lot of schools that were suspected of harbouring militant groups. The turmoil led to a steep decrease in school enrolments as most parents were unwilling and unprepared to risk their children's lives outside their vicinities. Higher education was particularly affected as a majority of the youth either joined the militant groups or disappeared across the border to train in Pakistan and many refused to join the college or universities in the fear of losing their lives.

There has been a significant shift in the political attitude in Kashmir for the last half a decade. There is a general resentment for militancy and violence. The peaceful demonstrations of mass scales for the last couple of years have shown the Kashmiri aspirations to solve the crisis in a democratic and peaceful manner. With the overt militarisation of the state and the grim record of Human Rights abuses by Indian security forces contributing to Kashmiri alienation, however, New Delhi is far away from taking an advantage of this changed view.

Subject to curfews, security checks, arbitrary arrests, torture, rape and extra-judicial killings, heavy-handed counter-insurgency operations, it is feared by many

analysts that the frustrated youth may again resort to militant tactics for resolution of the conflict.

One of the important challenges of the state government and the central government has been to divert student's attention into more constructive activities. This would involve a double barrelled use of sports and sports events in Kashmir. There is no denying for the use of sports. Academic learning and Sports Education are, actually, the complementarity of each other. They are the two sides of the same coin. If total education makes full development of the over-all personality of a pupil possible, he gets the qualities of leadership, tolerance, sharing and team spirit from sports.

The mental development, including the power of reasoning and vocational specialization, of course, comes from the academics. It, therefore, becomes imperative that education should result in the mental, moral and physical development of a student.

Keeping these entire corollaries in policy agenda, the government has been pushing actively various schools, colleges and universities to organise sports events, and inculcate a strong liking for sports in the students. The government has spent a massive part of its budget on such activities in the valley by involving a lot of stakeholders in this quintessential task. The armed forces including the Jammu and Kashmir police has been at the helm of such events. However, the most important role has been played by The J&K State Sports Council and Department of Youth Services and Sports under the Government of Jammu & Kashmir.

The Department has been a cornerstone of all the sports activities in J&K and has particularly focussed on increasing the educational standards, school enrolments by offering incentives and curbing the diversion of youth into extremist thinking by diverting their precious energies toward the sporting achievements.

## RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION

The research design for the study was Non-Experimental, Descriptive and qualitative (including an archival survey of the documents of two prime Sports organisations).

The necessary data related to the study was collected for the field work done in the Kashmir valley. To make the study more researchable the study was limited to a few districts of Kashmir valley and involved a thorough investigation of the documents, files and policy papers of J&K State Sports council and the Department of Youth Services & Sports. The research also involved a collection of editorials, reports and features written on the subject in major newspapers and magazines published from Jammu & Kashmir. Interviews were conducted with the policy makers, state bureaucrats, and officials of the two institutions, academics and physical education teachers. Interviews were conducted with a selected group of aspiring sports personnel from the Kashmir valley to understand their perspectives on the issue. The interviews were semi-structured. Interviews would also be conducted with Sportspersons who have represented the State at the national level, the administrative officials of the selected schools specifically the principal. The schools' infrastructure, sports activities conducted in schools and the school administration's attitude towards sports form the part of the research parameters. All the data was then analysed and interpreted to obtain the final results of the research.

The research focussed on the detailed analysis of the reports and documents of J&K State Sports Council and J&K Youth Services and Sports to analyse their role in the promotion of education enrolment in the State.

## THE ORGANIZATIONS

The J&K State Sports council (JKSSC) came into existence in 1959 with strength of 22 as founder members. The Organisation is headed by Chief Minister of the state & the Sports Minister acts as its Vice-President. The members of the Sports Council are nominated by the Govt after every four years. The Secretary, Joint Secretaries & Treasurer are elected amongst nominated members for a period of four years term. The Sports Council has its administrative set-up functioning at State, Divisional & District level with sanctioned staff strength of 430

posts. The main objectives of State Sports Council are to promote sports activities in the State among the student & non-student youth, to provide sports infrastructure in various parts of the State, to regulate activities of recognised State sports associations and to provide financial assistance to them for carrying out sports activities at various levels and to provide specialized coaching to promising sportspersons of the State. The council is also responsible for advising the Government in matters relating to promotion of sports & sportspersons in the State. This makes it the elite body of sports management in Kashmir. It not only provides funds and infrastructure but is also responsible for devising policies at the state level that are then enacted by the different government bodies including the Department of Youth services and sports.

The Department of Youth Services & Sports (DYSS) came into being in the year 1973, prior to the beginning of the militancy in Kashmir. The Department has over a period of time brought under its cover a wide spectrum of activities like organizing Domestic & National level competitions in various games and sports for school children, conducting Physical Education activities like Mass Physical Display in various schools, promoting adventure sports, promoting talented school children in extracurricular activities like dance & drama, organizing Youth and Cultural Festivals across the State and outside, promoting Scouts & Guides activities besides providing opportunities to school children for participation and excellence in various sports activities. The Department caters to the personality development aspect of school children through Physical Education Teachers and Masters lecturers posted in different schools which are being supervised by District Officers at District Level, Deputy Directors at provisional levels and recently created Zonal officers at Zonal level, besides encouraging the youth in various social activities at the State and National level. The Department also administratively controls the functioning of the only Government College of Physical Education at Ganderbal, Kashmir which is affiliated to Kashmir University and runs graduation and post graduation course in Physical Education.

The Department is headed by the Director assisted by one Joint Director and two Deputy Directors besides two Deputy Directors at provisional level. At the District level there are Youth Services & Sports Officers (YSS officers) in each District and Zonal Physical education officers (ZPEO) in each Education Zone, Physical Education Lecturers in Higher Secondary Schools, Masters and Teachers in various schools. The department is responsible for the Physical Education and allied activities of about 15 lakh school children throughout the State. These numbers reflect the enormous organizational task carried out by the department.

Taken together, these two institutions form the warp and woof of the sports management in J&K. Their work has been targeted at youth of the state and organise various events that has helped the promotion of education enormously. The concentration on sports promotion has directly led to an enormous increase in the enrolment and perpetuation of high rolls in schools and colleges.

## CONCLUSION

The result of the present study may provide a comprehensive report on the achievements of physical education in Kashmir and help to establish the relationship between sports and education promotion.

The results of the study may help the policy makers of different states, including J&K, to address the lacuna in their planning and induce more changes in the physical education policy. The funds allotted for such purposes need to be more than adequate as they directly affect the education output of the society.

The study is essential to look at the affects of sports facilities and events on the rural education and more importantly, women education in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

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