

Enhancing Sports Facilities and Strengthening Physical Education Programs in Public Colleges

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ABSTRACT

Engagement in physical activity plays a crucial role in enhancing cognitive function, attention span, classroom behavior, and academic achievement. Regular participation in sports and exercise enhances concentration, academic performance, and overall well-being. Despite its importance, Nepal faces significant challenges in sports infrastructure and physical education, necessitating strategic investments and planning to improve facilities, trained personnel, and student engagement. This study evaluates the sports facilities and physical education programs in selected Public Colleges in Chitwan, Nepal. It assesses intra-mural and extra-mural sports programs, sports budgets, infrastructure, and factors limiting student participation, ultimately providing recommendations for improvement. The research employed a survey-based methodology, with data collected from 21 physical education personnel and 21 college players who participated in inter-college competitions. A validated questionnaire covering multiple aspects of sports programs was used, and responses were analyzed using percentages and chi-square tests. Key findings indicate that although sports equipment quality is generally satisfactory, coaching, incentives, and female participation require significant improvement. Many institutions lack adequate sports facilities, coaching are irregular and financial incentives for student-athletes are insufficient. Gender disparities in sports participation remain prominent, with female students facing greater barriers to engagement. Additionally, heavy academic workloads negatively impact sports participation. To address these challenges, the study recommends increasing intramural competitions, enhancing financial incentives, expanding sports facilities, improving coaching programs, and integrating physical education into the academic curriculum. Targeted strategies for increasing female participation and scheduling sports activities without academic conflicts were also proposed. By implementing these measures, Public Colleges can create a more inclusive and effective physical education system that promotes holistic student development and long-term sports engagement.

Keywords: Sports facilities, physical education, public colleges, sports infrastructure, intramural competitions

Introduction

Physical activity enhances attention span, classroom behavior, and academic achievement. Regular involvement in sports and exercise is associated with improved cognitive abilities, enhanced concentration, and superior academic performance. In contrast, physical inactivity poses a significant global health risk, contributing to various diseases and elevated mortality rates. With increasing awareness of the advantages of physical fitness, there has been a notable rise in public participation in sports and physical activities. The demand for non-school sports programs and fitness initiatives has expanded, reflecting a broader societal shift toward a healthier lifestyle.

Traditionally confined to schools, physical education has now expanded to include diverse segments of society. It promotes holistic personality development by integrating physical, mental, and social well-being, making it an essential education component. However, challenges persist in Nepal's sports infrastructure and physical education. Many institutions lack proper facilities and trained personnel, highlighting the need for strategic planning and investment in this sector. Planning sports facilities requires careful consideration to cater to high-performance athletes and general students. Factors such as community needs, cost-effectiveness, esthetics, safety, climate, and accessibility must be considered to ensure effective utilization and long-term sustainability.

Physical education programs should offer diverse activities that align with students' interests and backgrounds. These programs must emphasize lifelong sports participation, physical fitness, and mental well-being while incorporating intramural and extramural competitions to foster engagement. Historically, British influence has shaped the modern concept of physical education in Nepal. On an international scale, UNESCO's International

Charter of Physical Education and Sports (1978) acknowledges access to sports as a fundamental right and urges governments and institutions to provide adequate facilities for all.

This study focuses on evaluating sports facilities and physical education programs in selected Public Colleges. The objectives include assessing intra-mural and extra-mural sports programs, examining sports budgets and infrastructure, identifying factors that limit student participation, and providing recommendations for improvement. This study is limited to Public Colleges in Chitwan and includes students participating in inter-college competitions. Understanding the current status of sports infrastructure will help physical education professionals enhance their programs and help policymakers develop better strategies for sports development in Colleges.

Studies (Kothiwala, Govindrajulu, Kirpal, Singh) have indicated that physical education lacks proper recognition, facilities, and trained personnel in Indian schools and Colleges. Multiple studies (Anand, Bhullar, Cokar, Mizuguchi) assessed the availability of infrastructure, equipment, and trained staff, revealing deficiencies in many institutions. Researchers (Dreidame, Rao, Sodhi, Singh, Minhas) highlighted organizational weaknesses, lack of funding, and insufficient incentives for students and teachers. Studies (Craig T. Bogar, Barghchi) have discussed the evolution of sports facilities worldwide, noting a construction boom and disparities in resource allocation. Various studies (Kang, Prashar, Bhukar, Kewal Krishan) have pointed out that Colleges with better funding and facilities achieve better sports participation and performance. Several researchers (Sundarajan, Sharma, Rani Daisy, Chaudhary) have suggested making physical education compulsory, improving training programmes and increasing financial support.

Methodology

- a. **Research Design:** A survey approach was used to evaluate sports facilities and physical education programs at public colleges.
- b. **Sampling Technique:** Convenient sampling was used. Two groups of subjects: the Physical Education and Sports Personnel (21 individuals, including directors, instructors, and coaches). Players (21 colleges players who participated in inter-colleges competitions).
- c. **Data Collection Tool - Questionnaire:** A modified version of Prasad's (1993) questionnaire was used and covered: Intramural competitions, Sports equipment, Selection procedures, coaching, incentives and beverages, student participation and gender inclusion, Cooperation from staff and authorities, Sports budget and funding, and Facilities. The questionnaire was validated by experts for clarity and relevance.
- d. **Pilot Study:** A test run was conducted to identify issues. Necessary modifications were made before finalizing the questionnaire.
- e. **Data collection:** The researchers distributed questionnaires to the colleges. Respondents were assured of confidentiality to encourage honest answers.
- f. **Statistical Treatment:** Responses were analyzed using percentages, tables, and figures. Chi-square analysis was performed to test significance in responses.

Findings

This table presents the analysis and interpretation of data collected from physical education personnel and players through a questionnaire. The data is analyzed using percentages and chi-square tests to determine statistical significance.

Table :1

Aspect	Findings	Chi-Square (X^2) Significance
Frequency of Intramural Competitions	Mixed responses; majority satisfied (33%) but some dissatisfaction present.	Not significant ($X^2 = 3.11$)
Prizes for Intramural Sports	Majority dissatisfied (44%); significant difference in responses.	Significant ($X^2 = 10.33$)
Intramural Competitions in Various Games	Common sports: Athletics, Basketball, Cricket, Football, Volleyball. Rare: Chess, Carom.	Not applicable
Quality of Equipment	Majority rated equipment as above average (57%) or superior (24%).	Significant ($X^2 = 23.05$)
Appointment of Team Selectors	Majority satisfied (62%); no dissatisfaction reported.	Significant ($X^2 = 27.33$)
Selection Procedure of Players	Majority satisfied (57%); no dissatisfaction reported.	Significant ($X^2 = 23.05$)

Coaching Camps	Summer camps poorly rated (67% fully dissatisfied), but pre-competition camps rated better.	Significant ($X^2 = 32.57, 11.62$)
Duration of Coaching	Many found it insufficient (43% dissatisfied, 5% fully dissatisfied).	Significant ($X^2 = 10.19$)
Regularity of Players in Camps	Most players attend regularly (57%); small percentage not regular (14%).	Significant ($X^2 = 6$)
Diet Money During Camps	Majority satisfied (52%); small dissatisfaction (10%).	Significant ($X^2 = 16.86$)
Diet Money During Competitions	High satisfaction (57% satisfied, 29% fully satisfied).	Significant ($X^2 = 24$)
Provision of Sports Kits	Game kits provided free (81%); track suits (71% free, 29% half-cost). Equipment mostly return-based.	Significant ($X^2 = 35.95, 28.71, 11.95$)
Incentives for Colleges Participation	Mixed satisfaction: Cash prizes, recognition acceptable; fee waivers, scholarships unsatisfactory.	Mostly significant
Hindrances to Participation	Major barriers: Lack of facilities, staff, academic load, health awareness, and student interest.	Significant
Participation of Boys vs. Girls	Boys' participation satisfactory (48% satisfied), but low for girls (43% dissatisfied).	Significant ($X^2 = 13.05, 10.19$)
Cooperation from Staff & Authorities	Fair to good cooperation from staff (57%), satisfactory support from higher authorities (48%).	Significant
Sports Budget	Mostly satisfactory (48% satisfied), but some dissatisfaction (14%).	Significant ($X^2 = 12.57$)
Training & Workshops	Considered highly useful (81% great extent).	Significant ($X^2 = 22.57$)
Availability of Sports Facilities	Common sports facilities are well-equipped; rare or expensive sports lacking facilities.	Not applicable

The analysis of different categories such as the participation, sports activities, and facilities in the selected colleges provided different types of responses. Thirty-three percent of respondents reported being satisfied (22 percent fully satisfied), although an equal number (33 percent) expressed dissatisfaction or neutrality. Only 28% were satisfied with prizes for participation in intramural sports 44% were somewhat dissatisfied, and 17% were completely dissatisfied. The sub-competitions within these games were varied as well; athletics, basketball, cricket, football and volleyball across all the colleges, but it was devoid of games like kabaddi and kho-kho.

Very much favorable feedback has been received regarding the equipment quality as 57% of the customers rated it above average and 24% rated it as excellent without any report of below-average quality. Team selectors' appointments received a good rating, wherein 62% were satisfied by it and 24% were fully satisfied, while the selection procedure for college players had 57% satisfied and 24% fully satisfied, where 19% remained neutral. Coaching, however, had mixed responses since 67% were totally dissatisfied, while 24% were satisfied. The length of pre-competition coaching had 43% dissatisfied; 28% were satisfied.

Regularity of coaching was much about 57% being regular, 29% most regular, and 14% not regular. Diet money provision for players did show a good satisfaction level with 52% satisfied and 24% fully satisfied for inter-college camps; 57% satisfied and 29% fully satisfied during competitions. Sports kits and equipment were supplied considerably with game kits free for 81% and paid at half for 14%. Track suits were free for 71% of the participants, 29% at half cost, and necessary equipment was only available with returns for 52%. Incentives for

college participation showed high satisfaction levels with cash prizes, institute recognition, and attendance benefits along with low satisfaction related to fee concessions and scholarships. 67% mentioned lack of the required sports facilities while 81% mentioned lack of qualified staff to provide coaching; 62% think that students do not show interest in games. Incentives for college participation showed high satisfaction with cash prizes, institute recognition, and attendance benefits, but low satisfaction with fee concessions and scholarships. Hindrances to student participation included inadequate facilities (67%), lack of qualified staff (81%), lack of student interest (62%), and academic load (52%). Gender-based participation differences showed that 48% of boys were satisfied and 24% fully satisfied, while 43% of girls were dissatisfied and 19% fully dissatisfied.

Different satisfied genders reflect different participation levels with boys being 48 % satisfied and 24 % fully satisfied, whereas 43 % girls were not satisfied and 19 % would not be satisfied. There was a mixture of ratings in rating cooperation with staff and authority—57% rated cooperation with the rest of the staff fair while 29% rated it as good. Whereas, higher authority support rated into 48% in satisfied and 14% satisfied. Budgets for sports were at average satisfaction (48% satisfied; 19% fully satisfied and 14% dissatisfied). Training was deemed extremely beneficial by 81%. Sports facilities were equally well equipped with basic common sports, athletics, basketball, and football.

Discussion

Players reported apathy and mentioned that they wanted more competitions to satisfy their expectations. These findings suggest a gap between the perceived success of such competitions and the players' desire for more participation. Most respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the intramural participation prizes, indicating that the current type of reward does not appropriately acknowledge their efforts. Thus, a lack of proper incentives might hinder the motivation of the participants, which in turn would decrease participation in future events. Matches were held among all colleges, and major sports do refer to volleyball, cricket, basketball, football, and table tennis. Kabaddi, swimming, and Kho -Kho, the less popular sports, were excluded from such organizational activities, thus emphasizing organizing events that encompass a wider range of sports to cater to mixed interests. Sporting equipment quality seemed good on the whole with satisfaction from the majority of respondents, thus indicating a good commitment to sports resources, which promotes a better playing experience. The team selection was fair, and the exercise was well-taken care of by competent selectors; however, whereas coaching camps were quickly organized before the competition itself, none were held in summer. The long and short of it is that while the players showed up to training camps regularly and were dedicated to any preparative endeavor, their commitment was also amply reflected in the turnout to short coaching camps.

The players expressed satisfaction regarding the diet money given during inter-collegiate camps and competitions so that maximum nutrition was assured for their performance. Fair enough, game kits and tracksuits were given free of cost, whereas costly sports equipment was lent out on the basis of returns, thereby ensuring accesses and sustainability of resources. Cash prizes, institutional recognition, and attendance were the different sorts of incentives for participation. However, there was a lack of key motivating factors such as fee waiver, scholarships, free accommodation, and mess facilities. Overcoming these gaps will significantly promote participation in sports. Different barriers being enforced against the participations were unavailability of proper playgrounds and equipment, lack of qualified personnel, low awareness about the health and fitness benefits, and undue academic load. All these delimit participation by students in sports and uncover areas that need to be bettered for increased participation. A conspicuous gender imbalance was witnessed: sufficient participation from boy racers while that of girl racers was quite low. Closing this gap should strategically engage both genders by creating opportunities and addressing gender-specific hurdles. Staff cooperation in most cases toward sports is fair, while the higher echelons have a pro-sports attitude and unwavering support for physical education programs; this type of support is a bulwark for the sustenance and expansion of any sports program within colleges. There was ardent support for sports hostels that would enhance training opportunities and better structure the life of the athlete. The budget allocation for sports was rated adequate, though improvements were strongly suggested. Properly strategized budget increases will further inject capacity into sports infrastructure and programs.

Resumer training courses and training opportunities were highly recognized, whereas most had favored such options for professional enhancement. In view of improving the quality of coaching and effectiveness of programs, investing in the continuous learning of personnel is important. Access to sports facilities remained uniform, as candidly accepted; the common sports of athletics, badminton, and football had appreciable infrastructure. Facilities such as swimming pools, tracks for cycling, and multipurpose halls, have proven to be sorely lacking at some colleges so that there is an urgent need for development in order to accommodate other sports.

Conclusion

Most colleges offer good sports facilities and conduct unbiased selections of their student athletes. Despite all this, there are some areas in the sports ecosystem where there are major differences, coach camps, and incentive

programs. Furthermore, female participation was at a very low level to warrant targeted initiatives promoting inclusion and equality in sports. Another major limitation is the lack of infrastructure to cater to niche or less popular sports. Because there are not specialized sports facilities, the possibility for a student to be engaged in various activities shrinks, reducing the potential of the college to develop a full-character sports culture. Investments in these areas can do much to enhance both variation and accessibility to sports programmes. Other than these, another obstacle which stops students from taking part in sports is a massive academic workload. An excessive burden of coursework and term exams usually reduces participation in sports among students, eventually leading to lower fitness levels. Colleges need to evolve a balanced approach of integrating sports into academic life to ensure maximum participation and wellness among students.

Recommendations

There should be more intramural competitions to attract students to participate in sports. Regular competitions will encourage participation from the public, which will allow all students to engage in some physical activity, thus promoting sports skills and team work culture. Increased intramural competitions will also help in mapping and creating potential talented students in the college. Special arrangements will also be required to promote women participation in sports, such as different facilities, women coaches and separate programs. An encouraging climate will help exclude penis imbalance in sports and women will motivate students to actively involve. This will greatly promote the cause of inclusion and diversity in sports programs presented in the college. Student athletes receive some financial assistance in the form of scholarship and duty concessions, in fact it will help improve their participation and interest. Such an incentive will help reduce financial stress and actually encourage competent students to engage in sports and pursue their education. Through recognition and financial support, the college can also enhance its reputation in intercollegiate competition. Longer, more structured training camps, including summer sessions, allow athletes to maintain skills and stay healthy year-round. Well-organized training camps by expert coaches help improve individual and team performance and prepare students for regional, national and international competitions. Regular refresher courses and training programs for physical education teachers are important to ensure the effectiveness and timeliness of sports programs. This improvement in coaching staff helps improve sports training.

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