

**Analysis to differentiate the level of awareness and concern for the development of sport in India between athletes and nonathletes**

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**Abstract**

Sport plays an integral part in the lives of many people whether someone is an avid sports person or simply just enjoys watching it on T.V. The sports scene in India is somewhat different from the rest of the world. India is on its path to becoming the world's most populated country, yet India is nowhere close to being as successful in sports as the US or China. There are a multitude of factors that contribute to this such as corruption, poor management, lack of resources and the lack of a sports culture in India. This research study aimed to evaluate the difference in the level of awareness and support regarding the development of sport in India between athletes and non athletes. This was done through extensive review of literature and an online survey using a mixed method approach. The survey was sent to a group of software engineers from varying backgrounds and to a group of sportspeople who are from the rural villages of India and have been through India's sports system or are currently in it. Among the different factors that were questioned it was evident that the level of support and concern was much higher from athletes compared to non athletes. This was due to a lack of awareness amongst non sports people as a result of the lack of a sporting culture in India.

**Keywords:** Sports, Culture, Awareness, Perception

**Introduction**

favourite sport cricket. Other sports are unable to develop in India due to all the attention being diverted to cricket. Due to other issues as India is a developing nation, Indians are not bothered to give the same amount of attention to other sports, this is why cricket gets all the jet funding and infrastructure (Ojha, 2019).

The facilities that are provided to sports persons other than Cricket players is not even a fraction of what is provided to foreign players (Ojha, 2019). India usually hosts 25 cricket tournaments a year, this doesn't even include major tournaments such as the IPL ( Dharamshi, n.d). However, India was unable to participate in the FIFA World Cup due to a lack of equipment (Ojha, 2019). Further, due to all the attention being diverted to cricket, India seems to have forgotten its national sport that first brought sporting glory to India in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Indian hockey players are often underestimated as to whether they can compete at an international level. Players often need to protest as they aren't allotted a proper diet or given the correct equipment, on the other hand all demands met by the Indian cricketers are met (Ojha, 2019). The gap between cricket and other sports is holding India back from excelling at sport on the international stage. Besides Cricket other factors such as politics, lack of an overall sporting culture and nurturing of players at the grassroot level are other vital factors that are holding India back.

The development of sport in India is also being held back due to corruption and lack of management at the level of sport governing bodies. The current model of governance for Indian sporting bodies lacks accountability. At the governance level corruption, lack of transparency and unclear demarcation of rights and responsibilities have created an environment of confusion and malpractice

The sports industry is a big business in India but it is mainly limited to India's (The gaps in India's sports administration and governance , 2021). There is a dire need for change in the structure of governing sport bodies. Majority of India's sports federations are structurally disintegrated which creates an environment conducive to wide scale corruption (The gaps in India's sports administration and governance, 2021). Many tournaments lose credibility due to there not being a specific mechanism in place to manage the large sums of money invested by stakeholders this further jeopardises the players careers and futures the most (The gaps in India's sports administration and governance, 2021).

A small yet important contributing factor is that the heads of majority of India's sporting federations are appointed dignitaries or politicians. This is not to say that all of them fail at their job, however these roles could be fulfilled to a much better level if the appointed personnel are former Indian athletes. It cannot be guaranteed but there are higher chances that sports personnel will be better leaders of committees and federations due to the struggle that they faced to be able to represent India. Having been through the system from the village ground to the academy and finally the national team, former players will be more aware of the needs of the athletes who are on the performance pathway to represent India. A good example of this is the Haryana sports minister who is former Indian hockey captain Sandeep singh. It is evident that his background has further aided the state's sporting achievements. The most athletes from one state for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic was Haryana.

There is an overall lack of sporting culture that is a prevalent issue in India. Majority of schools barely have a P.E lesson which makes kids unable to have access to

tournaments and training. Majority of India's raw talent in sport goes undetected and therefore athletes can never access their untapped potential. There is also limited and ineffective participation which arises from a lack of access to sports training. Boria Majumdar, a leading sports scholar says Indian athletes who have achieved success are exceptions rather than products of the Indian sports system. With education being the top priority in the average Indian household, children are often unable to practise the sport they are fascinated by (Chandran, 2016).

## Methodology

### Research Aim

This research aims to evaluate the difference in opinions of athletes and non-athletes about the factors that affect the sports infrastructure in India. Specifically, under the quantitative approach, an online survey asked respondents to rate the importance of influencing factors on a scale of 1-7, "1" being least important, and "7" being most important. (See questionnaire in Appendix A).

The relevant factors have been identified as follows, based on exhaustive review of literature:

#### **Ineffective political governance:**

Characterised by lack of competence, commitment, and support

#### **Lack of resources and amenities:**

Majority of the infrastructure provided is in good shape but rarely maintained or refurbished.

**Lack of accessibility to sport in rural communities:** Very limited resources and amenities available in the villages which house the raw talent that contributes to the majority of India's sporting achievements.

#### **Limited sports lessons in schools:**

Majority of schools provide very limited

time for P.E lessons and only focus on a few sports or other random activities.

**Public emphasis of importance of education over sports:** The overall atmosphere in India always emphasises education over sports. Sport is only seen as a hobby for many and not as a solid career path.

## Hypothesis

### Null hypothesis 1a:

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the knowledge and concern for the underdevelopment of sport between the two categories.

### Alternative Hypothesis 1b:

There is a significant difference between the mean ratings regarding the knowledge and concern for the underdevelopment of sport.

**Null Hypothesis 2a:** There is no significant difference in the awareness and concern of athletes and non-athletes.

**Alternative Hypothesis 2b:** The awareness and concern of athletes and non-athletes has changed.

## Data gathering

The online survey targeted an Indian audience and was distributed via WhatsApp and other social media platforms. There were 2 surveys and they were accompanied by a video explaining the importance of the development of sport as an attempt to raise awareness surrounding this issue. The survey also included an invitation stating the research aim and reassuring the respondents of their anonymity and data confidentiality (see Appendix B).

## Sample

The 2 groups of respondents were Athletes and non athletes. The athletes are both male and female who have been or are currently training in the Indian sports

system. All the athletes are based in Punjab, varying from 15 years to 40. The non sports people included regular people who don't have a connection with the Indian sports system and are university graduates working different corporate jobs ranging from the age of 25-40, also based in Punjab. There were 15 athlete respondents and 75 non athlete respondents.

## Results

In this section, the results from the statistical analyses, as outlined in the "Description of research study" section, are presented and examined in detail. The implication of the research outcomes pertaining to the respondents' decisions to support the development of sport in India based on different factors.

**Table 1:** This table presents the descriptive statistics of the information collected from non athletes before watching a video about the development of sport in India.

	Mean	Mode	Median	Standard deviation
Knowledge on the importance of a sports culture in India	3.6	3	3	1.72
Concern for the underdevelopment of sport in India	5.33	6	6	1.24

It is evident that the mean (M=3.6, SD=1.72) for knowledge of non athletes before watching the video is fairly low

## Data Analysis

For the analysis of the data, descriptive statistics were used to determine the mean differences between the responses from both data groups to gain distinctive insights about the different categories. Further, a test was conducted to evaluate the different views held by the respondents and how these factors contributed to the underdevelopment of sport in India

## Evaluation of the support for development of sport between athletes and non athletes

This section explores the level of support that people have expressed towards the development of sport in India.

compared to their concern(M=5.33, SD=1.24) regarding the development of sport in India.

**Table 2:** This table presents the descriptive statistics of the information collected from athletes before watching a video about the development of sport in India.

	Mean	Mode	Median	Standard deviation
Knowledge on the importance of a sports culture in India	6	6	6	0
Concern for the underdevelopment of sport in India	6.5	7	6.5	0.5

It is evident that the mean (M=6, SD=0) for knowledge of athletes before watching the video is similar to their concern

(M=6.5, SD=0.5) regarding the development of sport in India.

**Table 3:** After watching the video participants were asked a few more questions regarding their level of concern and other factors related to the development of sport in India. This table presents the descriptive statistics of the information collected from non athletes after watching the video.

	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard deviation
Awareness of underdevelopment of sports culture	5.6	6	6	1.04
Concern for underdevelopment of sport after the video	6.25	6	7	0.8
Concern for underdevelopment of sport in developing countries	6.4	7	7	0.75
Level of support for developing sport in India	6.45	7	7	0.70

Likelihood of taking action to help the development of sport	6.36	7	7	0.78
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It is evident that the mean for the level of concern (M=6.25, SD=0.8) and likelihood to help (M=6.36, SD=0.78) are similar

except the level of awareness (M=5.6, SD=1.04) which is significantly lower than the other factors questioned.

**Table 4:** After watching the video participants were asked a few more questions regarding their level of concern and other factors related to the development of sport in India. This table presents the descriptive statistics of the information collected from athletes after watching the video.

	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard deviation
Awareness of underdevelopment of sports culture	7	7	7	0
Concern for underdevelopment of sport after the video	7	7	7	0
Concern for underdevelopment of sport in developing countries	6.5	6.5	7	0.5
Level of support for developing sport in India	6.5	6.5	7	0.5
Likelihood of taking action to help the development of sport	7	7	7	0

It is evident that the mean for the level of concern (M=6.5, SD=0.5) and likelihood to help (M=7, SD=0) are similar.

**Table 5:** Summary of independent T-test analysis between sport and non sports people on their support for the development of sport.

(N=30)

Source	non sports		sports		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
support for development of sport	6.06	0.4	7	0	2.14	0.001

Sports people (M= 7, SD=0) reported significantly higher levels of support for the development of sport than non sports respondents (M=6.06, SD= 0.4.),  $t(1)=$  ,  $p< 0.0005$

**Table 6:** Summary of independent T-test analysis between sports and non sports people about their concern for the development of sport after being made aware of the issue (N=30).

Source	non sports		sports		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
Concern for development of sport after awareness	6.2	.8	6.7	.40	2.14	0.10

Sports people (M= 6.7, SD= .40) were slightly more concerned than non sports people regarding the awareness of sport after watching the video (M=6.2, SD= .8),  $t(1)= <0.05$

**Table 7:** Results of paired t-test to see the change in awareness before and after watching the video for non athletes (N=30)

Source	Before video		After video		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
change in awareness after watching the video	5.4	1.6	5.8	1.08	2.14	0.36

No significant change can be observed in the level of awareness of respondents Before ((M=5.4, SD=1.6) watching the



video and after watching the video to ( $M=5.8, SD=1.08$ ),  $t(1)<0.18$ .

**Table 8:** Results of independent t-test to see the difference on the level of awareness and support from sports people and non sports people (N=30)

Source	non sports		sports		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
level of awareness and support for development of sport	35	6.42	53.6	1.58	2.14	<0.05

A significant difference can be depicted between the two groups as the mean for all the factors for non sports people is

( $M=35.0$ ,  $SD=6.42$ ) which is significantly lower than sports people ( $M=53.6$ ,  $SD=1.58$ )

## Discussion

A paired T-test was run to see the differences between the level of support from the groups, to establish a viewpoint regarding the development of sport. There is a significant difference in the results, as all sports people who took part showed their level of support as a 7. Whereas for non sports people, some people voted 6 but nothing lower, hence no significant difference can be observed between sports people and non sports people. It is reasonable that the level of support from sports people is higher than non-sports people as they are currently in the system and are aware of exactly what changes need to take place. It is encouraging that none of the non sports people voted less than 6, it is indicative of passion towards the development of sport even though they may not completely understand what needs to be done for further development.

After the pre survey questions, participants were directed to a video which discussed the different factors related to the development of sport in India. Table 6 shows the difference in the level of

concern regarding the development of sport for athletes ( $M=6.7$ ,  $SD=.40$ ) and non athletes ( $M=6.2$ ,  $SD=.8$ ). As a result of the intervention there is not much of a difference between sports and non sports people regarding the concern for development after being made aware of the issue. It is promising to see that non sports people have a similar concern to athletes regarding the development of sport in India.

Table 7 shows the difference in awareness for non athletes before and ( $M= 5.4$  ,  $SD=1.6$ ) and after ( $M=5.8$ ,  $SD= 1.08$ ) watching the video. There is not a significant difference in the change in knowledge after watching the video, this indicates that people were mostly aware about the different factors that were hindering the development of sport in India.

It is evident from the results of table 8 that the overall awareness of athletes ( $M=53.6$  ,  $SD=1.58$ ) is significantly higher than non athletes ( $M=35$ ,  $SD=6.42$ ), even though on a smaller scale the results seem to be similar.

It is interesting to note that the mean is above 6 regarding all factors for sports and non sports people except the section regarding the awareness of underdevelopment of sport for non athletes before watching the video. The similarity in mean suggests that there is not a huge difference between athletes and non athletes regarding the development of sport in India.

The overall results of the post video for non sports people are shown in table 4. A high mean of 6 or 7 regarding the likelihood to take action to help implies that people would not mind taking part in different trials or surveys to help further the development of sport in India.

It is evident through the results of the different surveys conducted that there is a need for intervention to gain more support from the general public regarding the development of sport in India. To do this multiple different steps could be taken by the government and different Indian sporting bodies. The introduction of awareness campaigns through different media platforms will help to boost people's support and further encourage people to try out different sports. Stage 2 of the awareness program should include an increase in access to different sporting facilities and training regimen to the general public to increase people's interest in specific sports.

An increase in recognition for different campaigns that have already been launched such as the Roundglass foundation. The round glass foundation is an NGO that has been set up to develop sport from the grassroot level. Their team has set up different sporting facilities in villages to recruit raw sporting talent. They have hired international level coaches to aid the development of athletes once they have been selected for Round Glasses development pathway. This initiative

supports the fact that people have a great concern for the development of sport and that they are willing to act on it. If such initiative were to receive more recognition, there would be a spark in the level of interest people are showing towards sports.

Finally an attempt should be made to popularise the different local sporting leagues that are present in India. For e.g the indian super league, which is India's football league has been present for many years, yet not many people take interest in it compared to other sports. Different advertising techniques and sponsorships would increase the popularity of the sport which could help it excel. The same should be done for other sporting leagues that do not have as much recognition.

### **Limitations**

The only drawback of this study is the sample size, if more people were to take part there could have been more accurate representations of the view of non athletes responses about the different factors assessed in the study.

### **Conclusion**

This research study aimed to evaluate the level of support and knowledge that athletes and non athletes have regarding the development of sport in India. Based on the results, null hypothesis 2a is rejected. There was an increase in awareness and concern for both athletes and non athletes. This is promising and indicates that people are willing to support the development of sport in India as well as a sporting culture.

Across all different factors the results of athletes were consistent for all the different questions that were asked in the pre and post video survey as majority of the athletes have been through a similar

system therefore their views are similar due to their experiences. Whereas for non athletes there was a variation in the results regarding awareness as well as the overall level of support, this is because people who haven't been in the Indian sports system have very different views regarding the development of sport depending on different factors in their daily lifestyle.

Overall, the study indicated that people have an awareness regarding the underdevelopment of sport in India and are willing to help increase awareness. The study also indicates that measures need to be put in place to further garner interest in sport and to increase further awareness. The development of vibrant sporting culture in India will only be possible if some form of intervention is introduced.

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## Appendix A

### Questionnaire for survey

#### Pre video questionnaire

1. On a scale of 1-7, how would you rate knowledge on the importance of the underdevelopment of a sports culture in India? ("1" being "Not Important At All" and "7" being "Highly Important")

2. On a scale of 1-7, how would you rate your concern for the underdevelopment of sports in developing countries? (“1” being “Not Concerned At All” and “7” being “Highly Concerned”)

### **Post video questionnaire**

1. On a scale of 1-7, how would you rate your awareness of the underdevelopment of a sports culture in India now?(“1” being “Not Important At All” and “7” being “Highly Important”)
2. On a scale of 1-7, how likely would you do the following actions to promote the development of sports in India?  

the government authorities	-Write to
views on this issue on the social media	-Share the video with others Air your
of sport (media)	-Promotion
glass organised sports activities and programs	-Support private initiatives like round
3. On a scale of 1-7, how would you rate your level of support for developing sports in India? (1 being Not Important At All and 7 Highly Important)
4. On a scale of 1-7, how would you rate your level of support for developing sports in India? (1 being Not Important At All and 7 Highly Important)

## **Appendix B**

### **Participation Invitation Letter**

Dear Invitee,

My name is Annika Dhariwal and I am a high school student in Cheltenham. I am kindly requesting your participation in a research study that I am conducting on the effect of the underdevelopment of sport in India. The intention of this study is to assess how the underdevelopment of sports such as hockey and swimming is affecting the youth and to further analyse how much the population cares about this issue.

The study is completely anonymous and does not require you to provide your name or any other identifying information. Your participation in the research will be very valuable in exploring the attitudes of Indians towards the development of sport.

Thank you for your time and participation.

Regards,

Annika