



Analysis of Sports Facilities Offered by Schools for Intellectually Challenged Children in Tamilnadu

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to analyze sports and facilities offered by schools for intellectually challenged children in Tamilnadu. The Intellectually Challenged Schools are taken from all over the State of Tamilnadu. Tamilnadu is structurally a part of Southern India. There are around 120 registered Intellectually Challenged Schools in Tamilnadu. The questionnaire comprises 50 statements about survey of sports and facilities available for the Intellectually Challenged Children in the Schools of Tamilnadu State. The research scholar received 108 responses from the heads of the various Intellectually Challenged Schools out of which 90 responses were complete. Only 58 out of 90 completely filled responses were received from the heads of various Intellectually Challenged Schools in Tamilnadu by mail. The remaining 32 was collected by the researcher himself personally. After receiving information/questionnaire from schools, the data comprising of scores for each school in each question of questionnaire were analyzed by converting raw scores into percentage. This percentage was then analyzed to obtain a clear understanding of sports facilities and their utilization in the schools of Intellectually Challenged. For the purpose of analyses and interpretation of the findings and descriptive statistics was used. Majority of the special schools reported that sports facilities such as athletics, badminton, basketball, bocce, bowling, community games, cricket, cycling, handball soccer, softball table tennis, volleyball and others games are available based on the student's requirements.

Keywords: Sports Facilities, Intellectually Challenged Children.

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Introduction

The remarkable age in which we live, created by science and technology is directly a product of the growth of man intellect while our mind individually and collectively has gained tremendous new knowledge. We are still physically speaking the same human beings we were thousand of year age. In spite of our advances in medicine, nutrition and confronts, there are certain natural physical outlets and needs for which we have found no technological substitute among these is the need, most of us have for a certain amount of physical activity. This is particularly true in the most industrialized nation where human beings do a decreasing amount of physical work. Infrastructure is required for social and economic growth and for promoting the quality of life both in urban and rural areas.

Those considered different from the physical, sensory or intellectual norm are considered abnormal and thus disabled in almost all societies. Being labelled as disabled has, at different times and in different cultures,

led to reverence, pity, mockery, torture or death. In ancient Greece there was no place for women, non-Greeks and the physically or intellectually inferior, rather there was an obsession with bodily perfection. Greeks and Romans from 500 BC to AD killed children that they considered to be disabled. The early Christians were compassionate to all but those with mental illness, who were considered as sinful and were often killed as a result. On the other hand, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries deaf people were deemed godly and superior to the hearing. It was not until the eighteenth century and the emergence of welfare and caring social policies, that disabled people were treated with more dignity. However, the ideology of caring in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries marginalised disabled people, as illustrated by the proliferation of segregated institutions such as special schools and asylums for the mentally ill and the 'handicapped' (Barnes, 1997).

Every disabled person should have the right to live in a world that does not see him or her as handicapped, but as a person with a unique set of abilities and life potentials. Regardless of this ideal, many people look at individual differences as problems, as opposed to professionally enlightening challenges. Many retarded individuals lack leisure skills and the functional ability to participate in a

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variety of leisure offerings (Hill, 1984; Michaels, 1980). To improve, correct, habilitate or rehabilitate the physical, social-emotional and intellectual functional abilities of mentally retarded individuals. Although not curative in itself, therapeutic recreation as a part of treatment can be a catalyst for substantial improvement in a person's overall functional capacities and abilities (Suhailock, 1984).

As far as Indian conditions are concerned the existing facilities of physical education and sports are not very encouraging, as investigated through earlier studies conducted by Prasad (1993) and Krishna (2001). Lack of facilities, poor organizational and administrative set-up of physical education and sports at different levels may be one of the causes of poor performance in the field of sports. Therefore, to know the existing sports facilities as well as organizational set-up is of utmost important. Keeping in the view the existing situation of physical education and sports facilities at various schools for intellectually challenged in Tamilnadu, the scholar has decided to take up the study.

Methodology

Intellectually Challenged Schools Demarcation

The Intellectually Challenged Schools are taken from all over the State of Tamilnadu. Tamilnadu is structurally a part of Southern India. It is bounded by Bay of Bengal, Indian Ocean, Kerala, Karnataka and Andhrapradesh. There are around 120 registered Intellectually Challenged Schools in Tamilnadu. Most of the Intellectually Challenged Schools in Tamilnadu state have not been showing any substantial performance when it comes to sports and physical education except a few schools. It was therefore thought convenient and worthwhile to carry out critical analysis of sports and facilities offered by schools for intellectually challenged children in Tamilnadu State in relation to sports infrastructure, sports personnel and budgetary provisions in the intellectually challenged schools of Tamilnadu and find out suggestions, ways and means to improve standard of sports and facilities in the over-all contents of the state and the nation.

Construction of Questionnaire

For construction of the questionnaire the research scholar studied literature magazine, periodicals and completed research in the area of sports for Intellectually Challenged. Taking in to consideration maximum coverage of the area that was surveyed, great attention was paid to all relevant aspects of the study, so as to get maximum worthwhile and meaningful responses from the subjects. A sufficient numbers of questions were prepared in consultation with the guide and experts of special Olympics in the following areas:

1. General details of the Intellectually Challenged Schools in Tamilnadu.
2. Details of the facilities available in the special schools.
3. Details of the Sports facilities available in the Intellectually Challenged Schools.

4. Details of Staff available in the schools.

The construction and arrangement of the questions were made in such a way that the sequence and coherence in the response statements was readily available in an orderly manner, which helped in gathering maximum information's. Attempts were made to make the questions simple, clear and relevant leaving no space for vagueness or ambiguity. Special attention was given to touch all the necessary section while constructing and developing the questionnaire. The questionnaire thus contend various section like general information about performance of exiting staff facilities, equipment, funds, annual budgets, sports facilities etc., so as to gain maximum worthwhile detailed and meaningful information about the samples.

Administration of the Questionnaire

The copies of the questionnaire with a covering letter and self addressed stamped envelope were mailed to all the Intellectually Challenged Schools in Tamilnadu. A total of 120 letters were mailed to various schools and the research scholar received 108 responses from the heads of the various Intellectually Challenged Schools out of which 90 responses were complete. Only 58 out of 90 completely filled responses were received from the heads of various Intellectually Challenged Schools in Tamilnadu by mail. The remaining 32 was collected by the researcher himself personally. Follow up in the form of remainder was made after 6 weeks to return the questionnaire to the scholar.

Methods Used for Collection of the Data

The researcher made personal approach to the respondents of various schools and requested them to provide the desired information. Motivational measure promised to ensure better response. An assurance was given to keep all the received information confidential. The scholar, assured to all the respondents to supply a copy of the summary of the findings.

Method of Analyzing the Data

After receiving information/questionnaire from schools, the data comprising of scores for each school in each question of questionnaire were analyzed by converting raw scores into percentage. This percentage was then analyzed to obtain a clear understanding of sports facilities and their utilization in the schools of Intellectually Challenged. For the purpose of analyses and interpretation of the findings and descriptive statistics was used.

Results

The data collected from the various Schools for Intellectually Challenged in Tamilnadu state regarding the nature of the students, degree of disability and nature of staff is statistically analyzed and the results are presented in table-I.

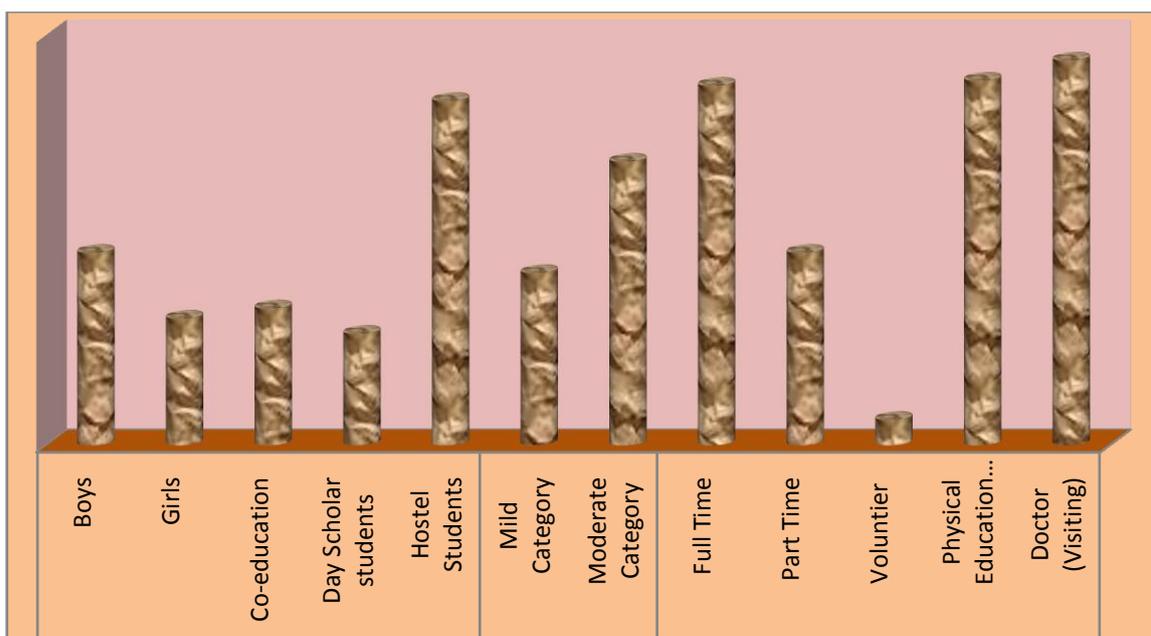
Table I. Profile of the Special Schools

S. No.	Nature of Students	Numbers of Schools	Percentage
1	Boys school	38	42.22
2	Girls school	25	27.77
3	Co-education	27	30.00
4	Day Scholar students	22	24.44
5	Hostel Students	68	75.55
DEGREE OF DISABILITY			
6	Mild Category	34	37.77
7	Moderate Category	56	62.22
NATURE OF STAFF			
8	Full Time	71	78.88
9	Part Time	38	42.22
10	Volunteer	5	5.55
11	Physical Education Teacher	72	80.00
12	Doctor (Visiting)	76	84.44

The profile of the special school have been assessed on the parameters nature of students, degree of disability and nature of staff as shown in table-I. Among the 90 responses received from the Schools for Intellectually Challenged 38 schools are boys schools (42.22%), 25 schools are girls schools (27.77%), 27 schools are Co-education schools (30%), 24.44% students are day scholars, 75.55% are hostel students. Analysis by disability type demonstrates that there is

variation in the degree of disabilities. Those with mild disability category had an average of 37.77%, whilst those with a moderate disability category had an average of 62.22% respectively. Also clearly demonstrated in table 4.1 regarding the nature of the staff appointed is that, 78.88% are full time staffs, 42.22% are part time staffs, 5.55% are volunteer, 80.00% are physical education teachers and 84.44% visiting doctors respectively.

Figure I. Diagram Shows the Percentage on Nature of Students, Degree of Disability and Nature of Staff of the Special Schools



Analysis of the Sports Facilities

The data collected regarding the sports facilities available in the school for Intellectually Challenged in

Tamilnadu state is statistically analyzed and presented in table-II.

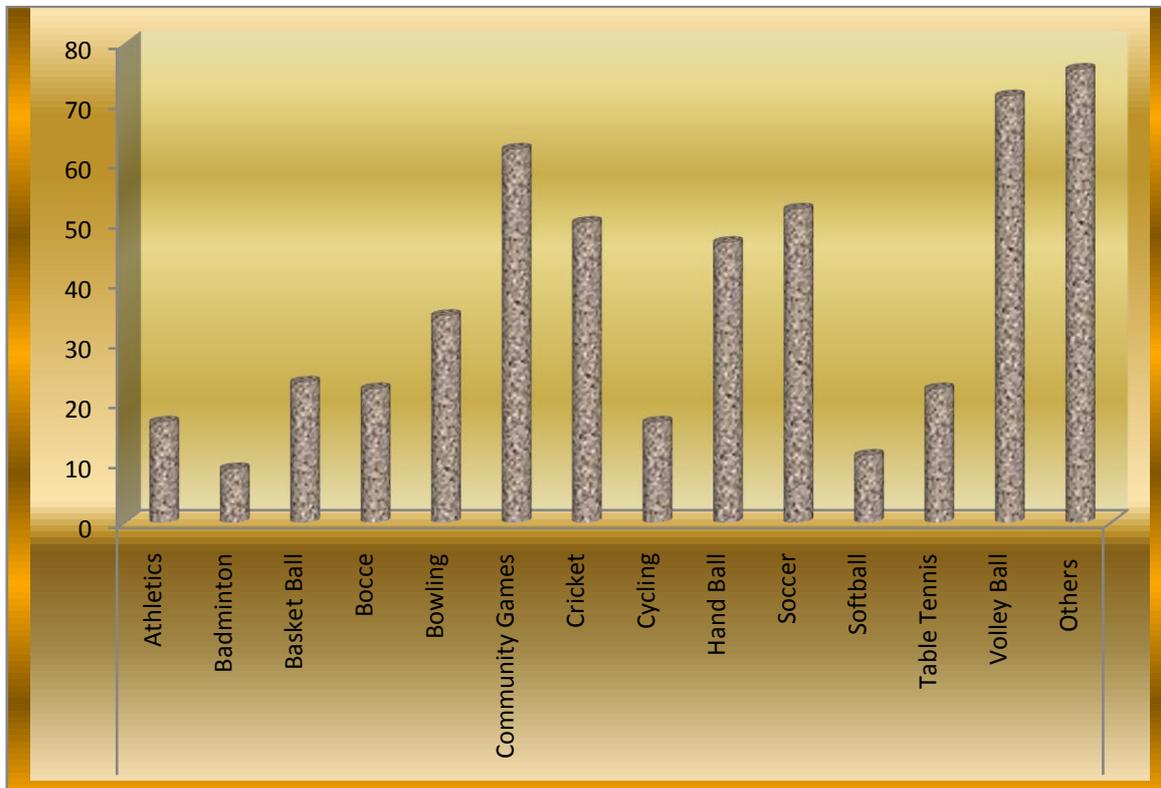
Table II. Sports Facilities

S. No.	Field /Court	Number of Schools	Percentage
1	Athletics	15	16.66
2	Badminton	8	8.88
3	Basket Ball	21	23.33
4	Bocce	20	22.22
5	Bowling	31	34.44
6	Community Games	56	62.22
7	Cricket	45	50.00
8	Cycling	15	16.66
9	Hand Ball	42	46.66
10	Soccer	47	52.22
11	Softball	10	11.11
12	Table Tennis	20	22.22
13	Volley Ball	64	71.11
14	Others	68	75.55

Table-II presents the sports facilities of the special schools. There are noticeable differences in the various play field facilities available in the special schools. Even though athletics is the most common sport undertaken in school lessons, only 16.66% of schools are only having track and field facilities. The top five sports facilities available in the special schools are, other than the facilities not listed in the table (75.55%), Volleyball court

(71.11%), Community games (62.22%), Soccer (52.22) and Cricket (50.00) respectively. The remaining play field facilities available in special schools are Badminton (8.88%), Basketball (23.33%), Bocce (22.22%), Bowling (34.44%), Cycling (16.66%), Handball (46.66%), Softball (11.11%) and Table Tennis (22.22%) respectively.

Figure II. Diagram Shows the Percentage on Sports Facilities of the Special Schools



Discussion

The results indicated that most of the school management were of the opinion that existing sports facilities were up to mark in most of the schools for intellectually challenged children in Tamilnadu. This up to the response involves profile of the sports school, infrastructure facilities and sports facilities. Findings from the study revealed that the scope of physical education programme must be made to cover all aspects. But with findings in the previous study where the concentration is on academic activities, it affirms to the fact that the learners are denied opportunity to explore other sporting activities. Odejide (2004) have opined that it is the only way of providing an ample opportunity for all learners in the school develop skills and cultivate interest in sports. The status of sports facilities indicates only limited schools are rated high status, while in the other schools facilities listed were found to be lacking. Bucher and Krotee (2002) stated that sports facilities as major determinants of physical education curriculum success. This also means that facilities are quite indispensable in an effective physical education programme (Ananomo, 2005). Consequently, schools for intellectually challenged children must be providing the basic training needs and sports facilities in order to improve their health, fitness and wellness even at the school level. Finally, the status of sports personnel revealed that most of the schools rated high status. An indication that sports personnel to teach and manage sports at this level is lacking in some schools. In the findings of Ojeme (2009) failure or success in sports-related matters is in direct proportion to availability of sports personnel.

All these responses show that some schools are badly in need of sports and facilities especially the library, indoor facility and play fields. The non availability of these facilities is perhaps focusing towards the scarcity of the funds required for construction of these facilities. Actually, most of the institutions do not want to spend major share of their sports budget on construction and maintenance of gymnasium and play fields. Similar results have been found by Vernakar (2000) conducted a survey of physical education program in North Goa. The result indicates that none of the state universities has up to mark standard swimming pool facility. As only two universities out of six, has swimming pool, in their campus but that also not up to the mark whereas, other four universities did not have swimming pool facility. The non availability may be due to lack of sports budget. As this type of facility consumes major part of sports fund. This facility needs regular maintenance and regular staff to look after its

management. Majorities of the schools in the state are badly starving the facilities in their campus that lead to the poor performance at district, state, national and special Olympic competitions. The performance in sports needs good facility as the similar study conducted by Jefferies (1984) that adequate sports facilities developed the ability of sports talent.

Conclusion

1. There are noticeable differences in the various play field facilities available in the special schools. Only 16.66% of schools are only having track and field facilities. The top five sports facilities available in the special schools are, other than the facilities not listed in the table (75.55%), Volleyball court (71.11%), Community games (62.22%), Soccer (52.22) and Cricket (50.00) respectively.
2. The remaining play field facilities available in special schools are Badminton (8.88%), Basketball (23.33%), Bocce (22.22%), Bowling (34.44%), Cycling (16.66%), Handball (46.66%), Softball (11.11%) and Table Tennis (22.22%) respectively.
3. Majority of the special schools reported that sports facilities such as athletics, badminton, basketball, bocce, bowling, community games, cricket, cycling, handball soccer, softball table tennis, volleyball and others games are available based on the student's requirements.

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