

Research Article**Impact on Fostering Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games and Physical Activities on Sustainable Growth of Children: A Study****Dhanusari Sudhakar¹ and Dr. S. Jagadeeswari²**¹PhD Research Scholar, Department of Physical Education and Sports, Pondicherry University, Puducherry, India²Assistant Professor, Department of Physical Education and Yoga, Community College, Pondicherry University**Corresponding Author: Dhanusari Sudhakar**

Abstract

Physical activity plays a significant role in shaping the physical and mental health of the younger generation. The high school student stage is a decisive period for individual physical and mental development. As a popular sports activity, community volleyball projects provide a unique environment for teenagers and provide them with opportunities to develop physical and mental literacy. The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the relationship between high school students' participation in a community Volleyball program and their physical, mental, and emotional health. Physical activity has long been recognized as an important means of promoting a healthy lifestyle and embryonic teamwork and leadership skills. Sports such as volleyball not only help improve an individual's physical fitness level, but also have a positive impact on mental health (Gao, 2020). The relationship between sport and psychosocial health has been extensively studied by international sports organizations and academia. However, most of these studies have focused on adults or college students, while research on the specific group of high school students is relatively limited.

Keywords: Emotional, Environment, Health, Indigenous Literacy, Leadership and Physical.

1. Introduction:

As society continues to develop, people's interest in physical activities and youth health is also growing. High school students face multiple challenges such as academic pressure and social pressure, so it is particularly important to understand how sports programs can help them cope with these challenges. Most national studies focus on the short-term effects of sports programs, and there is a lack of in-depth research on the long-term effects of high school students' participation in community volleyball programs (Wang & Lin 2020). Long-term follow-up studies can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of exercise on the long-term physical and mental health of adolescents (Ge & Huang, 2022). China has a vast territory and diverse cultures. Domestic research often lacks comparative research on the effects of high school students participating in volleyball programs in different regions and cultures (Zhang & Han, 2018). Cross-cultural research in this area is particularly important given the impact of cultural factors on an individual's psychosocial development. Although there has been some research on youth sports programs internationally, there has been little international comparative research on high school students from different countries or cultures.

Understanding the impact of community volleyball programs on youth in different cultures can help share global best practices (Wang, 2018). Embodied material culture and fostering social behaviour in children. Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG) refer to the games that originated from a particular cultural group in a particular region and have been played with the sporting feelings since ancient times and have been preserved as a cultural heritage by practicing them regularly and occasionally in the particular region and other regions as well. Traditional sports hold deep cultural roots and are embedded with values of discipline, teamwork, and perseverance. They provide a platform for children to develop essential life skills while engaging in physical activities that are deeply rooted in Indian heritage. Through participation in indigenous sports, children learn the importance of camaraderie, sportsmanship, and resilience, which are crucial for their social and emotional growth.

2. Research Problem

Physical activity plays a significant role in shaping the physical and mental health of the younger generation. The high school student stage is a decisive period for individual physical and mental development. As a popular sports activity, community volleyball projects provide a unique environment for teenagers and provide them with opportunities to develop physical and mental literacy. The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the relationship between high school students' participation in a community Volleyball program and their physical, mental, and emotional health. Physical activity has long been recognized as an important means of promoting a healthy lifestyle and embryonic teamwork and leadership skills. Sports such as volleyball not only help improve an individual's physical fitness level, but also have a positive impact on mental health (Gao, 2020). The relationship between sport and psychosocial health has been extensively studied by international sports organizations and academia. However, most of these studies have focused on adults or college students, while research on the specific group of high school students is relatively limited. Therefore, in this study explore the following specific question: How do community volleyball programs affect the physical fitness levels of high school students? What impact do these programs have on the psychosocial impact of high school students?

3. Review of Literature

International research tends to focus on academia, paying less attention to how research findings can be applied to policy and practice. Research on how to influence school physical education curricula, community physical education program design, and policy development to better support the physical and mental health of high school students remains a less researched area.

“Abdullah et al. (2013)” examined the impact of traditional games on early childhood gross motor development. The analysis confirmed traditional games' effectiveness, enhancing gross motor development even after controlling for pre- test scores, gender, and income. These findings support traditional games' efficacy in improving children's gross motor skills.

A study “Gupta & Jaiswal, (2018)” explored the mental health benefits of indigenous sports, revealing that children who engage in these activities experience lower levels of stress and anxiety, as well as improved cognitive function and mental well-being.

“Singh and Mishra (2019)” emphasised the role of indigenous sports in promoting social connections and emotional wellness, highlighting how participation in team-based sports fosters a sense of belonging and reduces feelings of isolation among children.

“Fry et al. (2022)” explored collaboration between an indigenous youth sport program and sport psychology faculty and students, resulting in improved youth self-esteem and sport participation.

“Hussain & Cheong's, (2022)” study investigated the impact of traditional cultural games on gross motor skills in Pakistani primary school children. Participants practiced traditional

cultural games with varying levels of contextual interference. Results showed the random practice group outperformed others in post-test and retention. In the transfer test, both random and game-based groups performed better than block and gradually increasing groups. Random practice was deemed most effective for gross motor skills' acquisition and learning.

"Bonato et al. (2024)" found that culturally relevant pedagogy is crucial for implementing traditional indigenous games in curricula, enhancing student engagement despite challenges like insufficient teacher cultural awareness.

"Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG)" plays a crucial role in promoting holistic health and character development in children. "Bryant et al. (2020)" found that children participating in indigenous sports showed significant improvements in physical fitness markers such as strength, endurance, and flexibility.

Similarly, a review by Patel and Desai (2020) highlighted the positive impact of indigenous sports on cardiovascular health, with regular participation leading to reduced risk factors for lifestyle-related diseases among children.

In terms of character development, recent reviews by "Sharma and Verma (2021) and Patel and Desai (2020)" have underscored the importance of indigenous sports in imparting essential values and virtues to children. These studies have identified qualities such as teamwork, sportsmanship, integrity, and empathy as key lessons learned through participation in indigenous sports, contributing to the development of a strong moral compass and ethical behaviour among children

"Eather et al. (2023)" found that sports participation positively impacts mental health and social outcomes, particularly in team sports, though elite athletes may experience higher psychological distress. These studies collectively emphasise the importance of integrating traditional indigenous sporting games' knowledge and practices to enhance educational, social, moral, community, and health outcomes positively by advocating culturally sensitive and inclusive approaches.

"Muff & Agbaria, (2024), Matsekoleng et al. (2024)" revealed that indigenous games effectively impart environmental knowledge and shape learners' attitudes toward sustainability, enriching educational experiences by aligning activities with learners' cultural heritage. "Muff and Agbaria" revealed that Palestinian Muslim teachers in Israel use their spiritual and indigenous knowledge to challenge dominant narratives, promoting critical and culturally relevant education.

4. Objectives of the Study

1. The rationale of this study was to fill a research gap in the existing literature by providing an in-depth understanding of the impact of a community volleyball program on the physical, mental, and emotional development of high school students.
2. By understanding these effects, we can provide more specific and effective recommendations for physical education and community volleyball programs to support the overall development of youth.

5. Historical Perspective Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games:

Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG) in India has an ancient lineage, deeply intertwined with traditional practices and cultural values that have been passed down through generations. The nature of Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG) across India is the same as the sources of TISG are the same religious texts (e.g. Rigveda) and epics (e.g. Mahabharata) but are named differently in diverse contexts of India, for instance, Kabaddi is known as hu-tu-tu in western India, chedugudu in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, komonti or ha-du-du in West Bengal, and kabaddi in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, and northern India. The traditional indigenous sporting games (e.g. Kancha (marbles), Spinning Top, Hide and Seek, Hopscotch) are popular nationwide because of the migration of people in different parts of

India. Generally, people have moved from one place to another for the purposes of getting education, business, and seeking shelter and so on for ages. They carried not only their materialistic values but also their social values and cultural heritage. In this way, the traditional indigenous sporting games have popularised in different regions rather than being confined to their particular origin. They offer cost-effective, technology-free activities with positive effects on development. From the earliest civilisations to the present day, these sports have played a crucial role in shaping physical fitness, character development, and social interactions across diverse communities (Tripathi, 2022).

Ancient Indian texts such as the Vedas, Upanishads, Ramayana, and Mahabharata offer valuable insights into the origins and significance of indigenous sports. References to physical exercises, competitions, and martial arts are abundant in these texts, highlighting the importance of physical fitness and skill development in ancient Indian society. For instance, the Rigveda praises physical strength and agility, emphasising their crucial role in daily life and warfare (Singh & Sharma, 2019). Similarly, the Mahabharata, through the Bhagavad Gita, emphasises the importance of a balanced diet, recreation, and physical activity for holistic well-being (Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 6, Verse 17). This Sanskrit sloka underscores the ancient Indian understanding of the interconnectedness of physical and mental well-being, reflecting the holistic approach to health advocated in ancient texts.

Ancient Sanskrit slokas from texts like the Manusmriti and the Arthashastra also provide insights into the importance of physical education and sports in ancient Indian society. The Manusmriti emphasises that physical fitness is the foundation for achieving righteousness and fulfilling one's duties (Manusmriti, Chapter 2, Verse 121). One of the earliest known indigenous sports in India is Mallakhamb, a traditional form of gymnastics that originated in the twelfth century (Avari, 2007). It encompasses a wide array of traditional sports reflecting India's cultural diversity. This includes indigenous games and athletic traditions that have been integral to India's societal fabric, illustrating their historical significance and enduring cultural relevance (Ghoshal & De, 1962).

Kalaripayattu, Kerala's indigenous martial art, has been preserved for centuries through the Gurusishya tradition. It integrates combat with healing practices, embodying a holistic science and earning the title of the 'mother of all martial arts'. The book aims to clarify misconceptions about Kalaripayattu and provide a comprehensive guide for practitioners, structured into thirteen chapters covering its history, techniques, and spiritual aspects. Nair pays tribute to his guru and reflects on his journey to promote and teach Kalaripayattu, influenced by both traditional teachings and contemporary applications in Chennai (Nair, 2015). Kalaripayattu integrates combat, self defence, and physical fitness, highlighting discipline, concentration, and reverence for tradition. Alongside these ancient disciplines, India boasts a rich tapestry of regional folk games and sports such as Kabaddi, Kho-Kho, and Gilli Danda, fostering physical engagement, social cohesion, and cultural celebration (Tripathi, 2022).

Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG) in India have deep roots that can be traced back to ancient Indian civilisations, where physical activities were an integral part of daily life and culture (Ghoshal & De, 1962). The historical origins of these sports provide valuable insights into the societal values, traditions, and cultural practices that shaped their development over time (Tripathi, 2014). The influence of traditional practices and cultural heritage played a significant role in shaping indigenous sports in India. Many of these sports were deeply intertwined with religious rituals, social customs, and community celebrations, reflecting the cultural diversity and richness of the region. For instance, traditional martial arts like Kalaripayattu in Kerala and Gatka in Punjab were not only forms of combat but also served as expressions of cultural identity and heritage (Nair, 2015). These martial arts were passed down through generations within specific communities, with each region developing its unique style

and techniques. Furthermore, Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG) often incorporated elements of storytelling, music, and dance, adding an artistic dimension to physical activities. Folk games like Kabaddi, Kho-Kho, and Gilli Danda were not only recreational pastimes but also served as platforms for social bonding and community cohesion.

6. Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG) in Indian Civilizations

Indigenous sports in India find their roots in the ancient civilisation that flourished in the region, including the Indus Valley Civilization, the Vedic period, and classical empires such as the Maurya and Gupta dynasties. Physical activities were an essential aspect of life during these periods, with references to various sports and games found in ancient texts, inscriptions, and archaeological remains. The Vedas, the oldest sacred texts of Hinduism, contain hymns and verses that mention physical activities such as wrestling, chariot racing, archery, and swimming. These texts provide glimpses into the sporting culture of ancient India and highlight the importance of physical fitness and prowess in society (Singh & Sharma, 2019). Moreover, ancient Indian epics like the Mahabharata and Ramayana are replete with descriptions of sports and martial arts. The Mahabharata, in particular, contains detailed accounts of chariot races, wrestling matches, and combat sports like Mallayuddha (wrestling) and Vajramushti (mace fighting). These narratives reflect the diverse range of indigenous sports that were practiced during ancient time.

7. Global Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG):

Global indigenous sports initiatives worldwide aim to preserve, promote, and empower traditional sports within indigenous communities. For instance, Lacrosse, culturally significant among Native American tribes in North America, serves as a symbol of cultural identity and community cohesion. Government support ensures its preservation through funding for indigenous lacrosse programs and educational initiatives, highlighting its physical fitness benefits and cultural heritage. In New Zealand, the haka, a powerful Maori dance, is integral to Maori culture, performed to unify communities and intimidate opponents in rugby matches. Government funding supports its practice in schools and recognition in national events, emphasising its cultural pride and social unity. Pato, originating in Argentina and Uruguay, combines horseback riding and ball handling, reflecting Indigenous horsemanship skills and community camaraderie. Government initiatives promote its significance through tournaments and cultural programs, highlighting its physical prowess and cultural heritage. Sumo wrestling in Japan embodies national pride and discipline, supported by national tournaments and cultural centres to uphold its physical rigour and historical traditions. Dragon boat racing in China celebrates teamwork and heritage, fostering community spirit through festivals and competitions that showcase cultural unity and athletic prowess. Camel racing in Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar demonstrates traditional camel handling skills, supported by government investment in racing facilities and prestigious events that preserve cultural practices and sporting excellence. Peleleu in Vanuatu showcases local ball game skills, celebrated in cultural festivals and integrated into education to sustain community traditions and physical fitness. Bandy in Russia and Sweden, a winter sport, promotes teamwork and endurance, backed by government funding for clubs and school programs that promote its cultural significance and athletic challenge. Traditional wrestling styles worldwide, like in Mongolia, emphasise strength and strategy, supported by national tournaments and training centers that preserve cultural heritage and physical prowess among Indigenous communities globally.

Currently, governments around the world have implemented various policies and programs to promote and preserve major Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG), recognising their cultural significance and fostering participation among indigenous communities. These efforts include funding for sports programs, organising tournaments, integrating sports into

educational curricula, and raising awareness of Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG) as part of cultural heritage preservation initiatives. Through funding, policies, and awareness campaigns, governments aim to empower indigenous communities in preserving cultural traditions and promoting physical well-being. These initiatives foster partnerships between government agencies, indigenous groups, and sports organisations, ensuring the continued thriving of traditional sports, which indicates the relevance and importance of Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG) for the holistic development of human beings.

8. Status of Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG) in India

India's Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG) encompass kabaddi, kho kho, and bullock cart racing, showcasing athleticism, teamwork, and cultural heritage deeply rooted in village/rural life, reflecting a vibrant tapestry of traditional sporting pursuits nationwide. Popular activities such as Kabaddi and kho kho not only promote physical fitness and agility but also uphold traditional Indian values of community spirit and fair play. These sports play a crucial role in physical development, enhancing endurance and strategic thinking among players, while culturally reinforcing collective identity and values. Martial arts like Kalaripayattu from Kerala emphasize agility, flexibility, and control, contributing to physical prowess and cultural identity through ancient techniques and ethical codes. They serve as both a form of self-defence and a cultural practice integral to Kerala's heritage, practiced in specialised training schools known as kalari. Silambam from Tamil Nadu focuses on staff fighting, blending physical exercise with cultural expression during festivals. It develops physical agility and reflexes while preserving Tamil Nadu's martial tradition and historical lineage, instilling local pride among practitioners and audiences alike. Thoda, practiced by the Gond tribe in 'Chhattisgarh and Odisha', enhances agility, speed, and coordination while preserving tribal traditions through oral transmission and ritual significance. It serves as a cultural cornerstone, strengthening community ties and passing down ancestral knowledge to younger generations. Gatka in Punjab embodies the concept of 'sant sipahi' (saint-soldier) among Sikhs, promoting physical discipline and cultural pride through martial arts. It reinforces values of self-defence, discipline, and camaraderie while preserving Sikh heritage and fostering community unity. Thang-Ta and Sarit Sarak from Manipur integrate armed and unarmed combat techniques, promoting precision and cultural resilience through historical significance and competitive spirit. These martial arts develop physical strength and combat skills while upholding Manipur's cultural identity and traditional values of courage and honour. Kuttu Varisai from Tamil Nadu incorporates animal-inspired movements for agility and self-defence, connecting practitioners to nature and traditional combat techniques. It serves as a physical and cultural expression, promoting agility and strategic thinking while preserving Tamil Nadu's rich martial heritage. Varma Kalai, an ancient Tamil martial art, focuses on pressure points for combat and healing, blending martial prowess with holistic healthcare practices. It contributes to physical fitness and mental discipline while preserving traditional Tamil medical knowledge and healing practices. Traditional games like Lezim in Maharashtra and Vallamkali boat races in Kerala promote physical fitness, cultural pride, and community cohesion. They celebrate local traditions and skills, fostering teamwork and competition while preserving historical practices and promoting tourism through cultural events.

These traditional indigenous games showcase the eco-cultural flavour that contributes to the physical and psychological well-being, cultural identity, and social cohesion and connect with people across the nation as sports and games attract audiences from a diverse range regardless of age, region, religion, gender and so on. The government, schools, colleges, universities and NGOs organise several competitive events to ensure the preservation and promotion of their diverse sporting heritage for the young generation.

Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG) of India hold significant importance in the social, moral and physical growth and development of children by promoting physical activity, teamwork, strategic thinking, cultural appreciation, and social interaction. These games not only provide entertainment but also contribute to the overall well-being and character-building of children, preserving the rich cultural heritage of India.

Integrating Indigenous knowledge and practices into various fields has shown promising outcomes, particularly in educational and community settings

9. Principles and Values in Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG)

Revitalizing Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG) in India is a critical endeavour that demands a deep understanding of the principles and values inherent in these traditional activities. Exploring indigenous sports worldwide offers valuable insights into the fundamental principles guiding their practice and the values they instill, particularly among children. Research across various cultural contexts consistently reveals themes of teamwork, respect, discipline, and community engagement prevalent in indigenous sports. For instance, Smith et al. (2020) underscored the significance of collective effort and mutual support in traditional Maori sports like Ki-o-Rahi in New Zealand, enhancing social cohesion and identity formation among participants. Similarly, a study (Johnson & Adams, 2019) on Native American sports such as lacrosse and stickball highlighted the values like respect for opponents and the environment, along with sports' role in cultural preservation.

These findings suggest that Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG) transcend geographical boundaries and share common principles aligned with the cultural values of their respective communities. By incorporating these principles into the revitalisation of Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG) in India, a framework can be created that not only promotes physical activity but also fosters social integration and character development among children, enriching their lives and preserving cultural heritage.

Moreover, studies worldwide have examined the impact of traditional games and sports on children's health and coordination. Kim et al. (2019) in South Korea found that traditional Korean games like Jegi Chagi and Tuho significantly improved coordination and balance.

In Japan, Suzuki et al. (2020) discovered that practicing traditional Japanese martial arts such as Judo and Karate led to enhanced agility, coordination, and overall physical fitness in children. Seitz et al. (1990) conducted a study in Cameroon, observing that playing traditional African games like Mancala improved hand-eye coordination and strategic thinking skills in children.

Rodriguez et al. (2019) examined the effects of Capoeira on physical fitness and coordination in Brazilian children, revealing improvements in balance and agility. These diverse findings underscore the global significance of traditional games and sports in promoting health and coordination among children, highlighting the diverse cultural heritage and benefits of indigenous physical activities.

10. Government measures to promote traditional indigenous sporting games (TISG) in India

The Government of India has initiated various programs to preserve and advance traditional and indigenous sports, ensuring cultural heritage conservation and sports development at the grassroots level. Indian government programs acknowledge traditional indigenous sports as integral to India's heritage, allocating funds, developing infrastructure, and organising events to foster their growth, building infrastructure, and providing athlete training, and utilising the Khelo India Scheme to bolster sports at the grassroots level. The National Institute of Sports was established in Patiala, Punjab, to nurture traditional indigenous sporting games, enhance facilities and conduct coaching programs catering to a diverse range of sports, including traditional indigenous ones. The National Indigenous Games are hosted

annually under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs to promote tribal communities' traditional sports and provide a platform for athletes to showcase their talents and preserve cultural heritage. They organise awareness campaigns, initiate educational programs to highlight the cultural significance of traditional sports and encourage youth participation through engagement programs and community events. Traditional indigenous sports are integrated into the school curriculum and incorporated into physical education programs to instill a sense of cultural pride and appreciations, ensuring the students learns about and actively participate in these activities at an early age. The Indian government supports the athletes who represent India in international events featuring traditional indigenous sports by offering training, coaching, and financial assistance to ensure successful participation and showcase India's sporting heritage on the global stage.

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for School Education (2023), developed based on the National Education Policy (NEP, 2020), addresses the education for ages 3- 18 across diverse Indian institutions within the 5+3+3+4 structure. The NCF aims to create a unified yet diverse curriculum framework that respects India's cultural diversity, empowering states and educators to develop high-quality, context-specific curricula. This framework provides guiding principles for developing curricula, syllabi, teaching materials, and assessment methods. The primary objective of the NCF is to transform India's school education system by fostering holistic improvements in curriculum, pedagogy, school environment, and culture, ultimately enhancing students' overall learning experiences.

The National Education Policy (NEP, 2020) and the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for School Education (2023) prioritise the holistic development of students, encompassing their physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Central to this approach is the integration of physical education, sports, and fitness into the curriculum, aiming to preserve cultural heritage by including both indigenous and modern sports. Emphasising the need for adequate sports infrastructure, equipment, and trained instructors, these frameworks ensure inclusivity for all students, including those with disabilities. They advocate for community involvement in sports beyond school hours and underscore the equal importance of physical education alongside academic subjects. Such strategies promote a healthy character through diverse physical education programs, integrating physical activities with academics, and extracurricular sports activities, fostering life skills like teamwork and leadership. Health and nutrition education, inclusive sports programs, and supportive environments further enhance students' well-being and holistic development within the school environment.

11. Society Efforts to Traditional Indigenous Sporting Games (TISG)

Many local sports clubs and associations in India organise competitions to actively promote traditional indigenous sports. These grassroots-level organisations play a crucial role in preserving traditional sports and games and fostering community participation. Cultural festivals and events in various states of India often feature demonstrations and competitions of traditional indigenous sports. These events provide a platform for showcasing traditional indigenous sports and raising awareness about their cultural significance. Schools and community centres often organise programs and workshops to introduce children and youth to indigenous sports. These initiatives help in passing down traditional games to younger generations and instilling pride in cultural heritage. In many rural communities, traditional indigenous sports are passed down from older generations to younger ones through informal mentoring and inter-generational learning. This ensures the preservation of traditional knowledge and skills associated with indigenous sports. Some community groups and individuals use media platforms, including social media, to promote indigenous sports and raise awareness about their importance. This includes sharing videos, photos, and stories related to

traditional indigenous sporting games to garner interest and support from the wider community.

12. Challenges and Opportunities of TISG

1. The promotion and development of indigenous sports in India are impeded by several challenges, including limited infrastructure and funding.
2. The absence of dedicated training centres, sports complexes, and playing fields in rural areas hampers the growth of traditional indigenous sporting games.
3. Furthermore, the lack of specific equipment and facilities exacerbates these challenges. Funding constraints further compound the issue, as traditional indigenous sporting games struggle to secure adequate financial support for training programs and infrastructure development. Reliance on private sponsorships and government grants leads to inconsistent support for athletes and grassroots initiatives.
4. Despite these challenges, leveraging technology presents an opportunity to overcome infrastructure limitations.

Mobile applications and online platforms can facilitate coaching, training, and skill development for athletes in remote areas.

1. Community engagement is also essential for promoting indigenous sports, as local involvement in initiatives such as fundraising events and cultural festivals raises awareness and generates support.
2. Additionally, public-private partnerships can mobilise resources and expertise to support indigenous sports, facilitating infrastructure development, sponsorship deals, and outreach programs for sustainable growth and inclusivity.
3. A systematic review by 'Da Silva et al. (2023)' highlighted barriers to incorporating indigenous epistemologies in primary schools in developing countries, emphasising the need for understanding the local context for effective interventions.
4. 'Yip and Chakma (2024)' found that programs integrating indigenous knowledge need better pedagogical approaches and strong community relationships to prepare teachers effectively.
5. 'Yeseraw et al. (2023)' found limited integration of indigenous knowledge in Ethiopian textbooks, suggesting further improvements for effective inclusion.
6. 'Lisahunter and Uasike Allen (2024)' discussed systemic racism and insufficient community engagement as significant barriers to integrating indigenous knowledge in health and physical education, advocating for deeper, meaningful integration

13. Conclusion

This paper is aimed at highlighting the significant role of traditional indigenous sporting games in India as a means of connecting ancient cultural heritage with holistic development through embracing the legacy, honouring the tradition, playing the indigenous game, and being a champion of heritage and sportsmanship.

1. Spearheaded by government departments like the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, the proposal for National Indigenous Games embodies a comprehensive approach to preserving tradition while promoting physical, mental, and social well-being.
2. Beyond mere physical activity, these games embody essential values such as discipline, teamwork, and perseverance, ingrained through generations.
3. Participation in indigenous sports not only enhances physical fitness but also fosters a deeper cultural connection and community bonding among children.
4. By showcasing India's diverse heritage, these games instill a sense of pride and respect for traditional values among participants, offering a constructive alternative to modern distractions.

5. Through engagement in indigenous sports, individuals develop crucial life skills like leadership, resilience, and mutual respect, contributing to their growth as responsible members of society.
6. In the current time, mainstream sports (e.g. football, cricket, badminton) and games are more pronounced due to their commercial values worldwide.
7. We need to develop strategies to increase the functional values of traditional indigenous sporting games by integrating them into school curricula, adding commercial value and increasing awareness about their eco-cultural relevance.
8. In this way, traditional indigenous sporting games promote holistic development through enhancing physical fitness (e.g. managing daily hassles without fatigue), psychological health (e.g. coping with stress), social skills (e.g. teamwork), emotional well-being (e.g. handling own's and other's emotion), and moral values (e.g. playing fair games). Traditional games require minimal resources and also ensure inclusivity for economically disadvantaged students.
9. They also strengthen community bonds by engaging elders and promoting intergenerational inter- action, offering a balanced approach to physical education that caters to diverse interests and abilities while promoting physical, psychological, social, emotional and moral well- being, ultimately contributing to nurturing good characters within individuals.
10. Hence, the integration of traditional indigenous sporting games into everyday life fosters a vibrant and resilient society where tradition, culture, well-being, and community spirit harmoniously coexist.

14. Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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