CHAPTER-1

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The world of social sciences is in constant development due to changes in social conditions as an external factor and the change of science itself as an internal factor. As a part of this development new scientific questions and topics arise, which are initially dealt with by existing scientific disciplines. If these questions and topics represent an area which constantly gains importance, then new scientific disciplines are not basic sciences. They are interdisciplinary sciences reflecting the holistic multidimensional approach of the contemporary scientists. Sports sociology has emerged as one of such important interdisciplinary social sciences for research.

On more abstract level, sociology is to use the old but still serviceable phrase, the "Science of society," and society is a series of social institutions-law, family, sport and so on. These institutions do not exist in isolation from each other. For example in Universities and Colleges sports programme is an important part of the major extracurricular activities. The institution of sports thus mixes with the institution of education and so influences all of us whether we want to be influenced or not. The point is whether good or bad, we like it or not, sports is significantly affecting our society. That is what attracts the sociological attention.
At present sport is in a state of continuous succession of changes. Social change in sport is multidimensional which is touching everybody. The interrelation between sport and society shows more and more interesting and critical patterns: sports reflect culture and society; sports integrates groups and individuals. Sports reinforce social inequalities; and sport is a vehicle for resistance. Involvement in sports is more than making use of the body, using endurance and strength, to achieve objectives, of a game. More and more we are aware of the positive and negative consequences of the way sports are organised in society because of industrial development. We observe transition from performance and athletic oriented activities towards the impersonality of what is called "Corporate Sport." Sport is reaching nearly everybody and sport has become most influential part of an everyday mass culture.¹

Thus making it an important area of study in sociology. Sport mirrors society. More specifically sociology is the scientific study of structure and social process.² Many social processes and structures which exist in broader society are reflected in sports. Sports is a microcosm of society.


Think about the current events in our country like new economic policy, corruption, cheating, communalism, favouritism the list goes on and on. And because sports reflect society, we can read about these problems on the front page of the News paper or in the sports section. The most glaring example of the new liberal economic policy of the government was allowing shifting of Môhinda-Ford auto Plant from Maharashtra to Tamil Nadu and switching over of state affiliation from Maharashtra to Tamil Nadu by Rajiv Balkrishnan for higher prize money offered by Tamil Nadu Athletic Association. The response of Maharashtra Athletic Association was very synonymous to liberal economic policy, Maharashtra Association whole heartedly supported Balkrishnan to shift to Tamil Nadu.

As a whole, sport is a social phenomenon. Sports is sociological. All sports involve people interacting with each other in a structural way. Even marathon swimming, a lonely activity, takes place within a social setting. Swimming the English Channel is fairly common these days, but you can’t just dive in the surf at Dover and climb out on the beach of Calias. The swim requires sponsors, coaches, trainers, boats, pilots, official permission and official observers and all of that be called the sociological.

1 Times of India, "Rajiv Enlisted by Tamil Nadu," 3rd December, 1995
Sports sociology is the study of sports from sociological perspective. The sociology of sports is more than a casual attempt to understand those nontrivial and persisting social phenomena related to or part of sport, where sport is considered in a contest/physical prowess/enduring social context sense. Understanding proves a confirmed generalisation which either describes the social characteristics of sports or explains how certain of such phenomena come to be.

Sports sociology has emerged as one of the important inter disciplinary area for research in physical education. In U.S.A. and European countries, considerable research work has been done in sports sociology. Comparatively very limited studies have been completed in India. The studies in India in sports sociology are more in the area of socio-economic status of the Sportsman. The present researcher could not come across any study related with social mobility of the sportswomen.

In earlier days there were two best vehicles of mobility. They were education and financial solvency. But a third vehicle of mobility has emerged, that is excellence in sports. Sports is becoming a Vehicle for mobility in most of the countries. 'The rags to riches' myth occurs especially prominent place in the world of sports. For every major sport has its heroes who were from humble social origin and rose to unimagined heights of social success. Thus, we have the rags

*Ibid.* P. 22
to riches stories of such sport figures in America as Willie Mays (Smith, 1954) Micky Mantle (1967), Bill Russell (1966), Bob Coursey (1961), Johney Units (1965) and Althis Gibson (1958)

Such type of stories were not common in India till 90s. On the other hand the stories of deadly aftermath of sports life were very common in India and also in socialistic countries like Russia. The tragic case of wrestler Malwa’, a champion at Commonwealth and Asian games lived in a small hut in Delhi, sold "Allu Ki Tikki" on roadside, to maintain his large family and died as a pauper in July 1990. Similar cases were very common in Soviet Union also. Relay gold medalist Anrei Prokottieve was found hanged by his own hands in his flat in the industrial city Sverdliu when his life after sports became worse than intolerable. Similar tales of other sportsmen like Olga Korbet, a gymnast; Alexander Volynkin, National Trampolin champion; his wife Tatiana Shikinyeva-Olympic diver; Mikhail Bulgakiv top footballer; Valere Voronine, International Footballer: Alexal Vakhoun-Olympic weight lifting gold medalist and many others either drank themselves to death or became drug addicts or engaged in robbery and ended up in jails. At the end of sporting career most Soviet athletes

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2 The Times of India, "Champion Wrestler dies Unsung." 4th June 1990

3 Nagpur Times, "In Soviet Union, the deadly aftermath of Sports Life." 3rd May 1990
had no other leg to stand on. They had no experience or training for regular job. The only jobs open for them were unskilled and low paid. Recently, Russian diver Elena Mirochina, silver medalist Barcelona Olympics who was pregnant, was found dead on 26th December, 95 at the foot of her apartment. There was a possibility of suicide.°

The monetary rewards to Soviet athletes from sports did not amount too much, so few were able to accumulate any capital they could live on. Unlike in West, the former stars in communist economy, as well as in India, could not start their own business or profession training centres, nor social welfare system provided much help; until quite recently there was no such thing as pension for 8 athletes and there were not enough interim payment to help them to start a new career after sport. It was only in 1990 that pensions for international athletes was started in Soviet Union. In India also government had started the pension scheme for international athletes.

It was only in 90s that Indian sportmen were started being cared by Government agencies and business companies. In 1993 Shiney Wilson got Maruti car from her employer.° Food Co-operation of India' and again during "South Asian Federation Games" in December, 1995, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister gifted a Maruti Esteem car to Shiney on her supershow of winning three Gold Medals.°° But such social phenomenon of upward mobility amongst sportsmen in America came into picture much earlier that was 19th century. Most notable example in mid twentieth century was of Pennsylvania coal

° Hitwada, 'Russian Diver Found Dead' 27th Dec. 1995 2

°° Hitwada "Shiny Thrilled by Great Gesture" 26th December, 1995"
mines.

In 1948, when the minorities in sports were still pre-dominantly White, Geoce Saxon, a refugee intellectual working as coal loader, wrote of the significance of sports for young men of eastern and Southern European extraction in America's industrial areas. He saw Athletics as a way out for those on the bottom of the heap.\(^{11}\)

The impossibility of attaining human goals in real life, in production and social relations led to sublimation in the fanciful reflex world of sports. To the chosen few, athletics became a road to success. Individual ability could find expression in sporting event to an extent not discoverable: elsewhere in society. The workers no longer dreamed of being a capitalist; he wanted to be a football hero.\(^{12}\)

Such was the way for the bus driver's son who got his best football offer from the University of Miami. "I have broken a leg, my nose and my ass for this place, but at least I have gotten a degree. I won't have to drive a bus now."\(^{13}\)

The most dramatic example of successful mobility after football came from the coal steel belt. It was the case of 1963 University of Pittsburg football team, which had a 9-1 record against top opposition and was ranked third nationally in the


final polls. Ten years later this football squad had produced 3 physicians, 15 dentists, 5 attorneys, 7 educators, 2 ministers, and 28 in high positions in industry. Of this team, which significantly was all white. Randy Jesick, who studied them said "They were winners in the game of football, and now they were winners in the game of life".14

Such examples helped to validate the dream of an open society, free of racial and ethnic prejudice when talent and hard work found their reward. Sports have provided an avenue out of the depths of numbing poverty for many.

In India also we have examples like Sunil Gavaskar, Kapil Dev, Sachin Tendulkar (Cricket), P.T. Usha and Shiny Willson (Athletics), who received mass publicity and developed economic solvency because of their high achievement in sports. Thus in India also sports has become an important vehicle for mobility.

In our Indian Society every individual has a right to get the opportunity for mobility whether it may be horizontal, that is moving from one job to another in the same social stratum or vertical, that is, one can move from lower to higher social stratum and also may reverse. This social mobility due to sports is receiving more attention of researchers in sports Sciences.

The social mobility is a most complex, multidimensional phenomenon. Conceptually, one can account for the sources of variation in social mobility in terms of seven basic dimensions.15

14 J.A. McKeen Sports in America New York: Fawcett (1977) P. 297
First, there is the dimension of direction. As Sorokin long ago (1927) pointed out, "There are two principal types of social mobility. Horizontal and Vertical mobility is the transition of an individual from one social position to another across one or more social strata, either upward or downward."

A second dimension of social mobility is that of 'distance'. Past research has tended to emphasize total mobility, and only recently has there been a deliberate stress on measuring the degree or distance of mobility."

A third dimension of social mobility is that of 'Time'. Attention can be centered on intergenerational mobility, or it can be focused on intergenerational mobility. In either case, one may ascertain the amount of time it takes an individual to move from one social position to another.

A forth dimension of social mobility concerns the specific kind of "Status Change." For instance one can be primarily concerned with occupational mobility, educational mobility, prestige mobility or some combination thereof. For both theoretical and empirical reason, most investigations of mobility patterns have emphasized occupational changes, but other status changes might be equally relevant in the sports situations.

Fifth dimension of social mobility is the "Unit of analysis." Does one, for example, study the mobility patterns of individuals, families, peer groups age cohorts or even larger social groupings.

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"Pbirim A. Sorokin, Social and Cultural Mobility, New York, Free Press (1960), P 133

"Kaae Svalastoga, Social Differentiation, New York, Mckay (1966) P123"
A sixth dimension of social mobility "Concerns the distinction between objective and subjective changes in status". A change in salary as measured by annual income is an example of the former, while an internally perceived change in psychic gratification as result of increased salary exemplifies the latter. Objective changes in status have typically received most research attention due to their relative ease of measurement.

Finally a seventh dimension of social mobility has to do with 'Social Mechanism underlying it. We, of course, are concerned here with sport involvement as a major mechanism of mobility. It is obvious however, that successful participation in athletics might facilitate upward mobility in a variety of ways. Therefore, analysis of the mobility patterns of sportsmen should attempt to isolate the predominant means of facilitation for given groups of individuals and if several ways are considered in combination, then some attempts should be made to assess the direct and indirect influences of each.

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The present researcher came across a number of newspaper reports on rewards in cash or kind to high achievers in sports. Such reports motivated the researcher to study the process of social mobility. Literature study indicated that negligible work had been done in India in this field. As a University player of Kho-Kho, Basketball and Badminton, the present researcher observed that Veteran University sportswomen had been well placed and moved in the middle and higher social strata. The observations encouraged the present researcher to undertake a study on "SOCIAL MOBILITY OF THE INTER-UNIVERSITY WOMEN PLAYERS".
2. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

According to researcher's knowledge, the present study was the first of its kind in the field of social mobility of women who achieved excellence in sports. This study would open a new vista for further research to bring into light how the sports could also contribute for the social mobility of the girls participating in sports and achieving high level of skills.

The finding of the present study may also attract more participation in sports with a hope that sports may assist them to improve their socio-economic status.

Present study would contribute to enrich the researches completed in physical education in general and in sports sociology in specific. Thus the findings would enlarge the scope of research studies in physical education.

Present is the age of competition and there is a struggle for high achievements in every field. Sports is not an exception. Earlier sports achievements were just for self satisfaction, but in today's society these achievements may also become contributory for social mobility. The present study would attempt to validate possible impact of sports in this social process of mobility. The study would also bring into light the present socio-economic status of the Veteran University Women Players.

3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:

The main purpose of the study was to examine the social mobility amongst the veteran women players who represented the University teams of Volleyball, Kho-Kho, Kabaddi, Table Tennis and Badminton during their college days.

The specific objectives of the study were as follows:

a) To study the differences in the economic, Social and Socio-Economic status of parents and their married daughters who represented University teams of Volleyball,
Kho-Kho, Kabaddi, Table-Tennis and Badminton during their college days.

b) To examine the differences in Economic, Social and Socio-Economic status of parents of the daughters (Veteran Women University players of different games.)

c) To study the Economic, Social and Socio-Economic status differences amongst the veteran university women players of different games, namely Volleyball, Kho-Kho, Kabaddi, Table-Tennis and Badminton.

d) To examine the role of sports achievements of the veteran women university players in settling their marriages and in getting employment.

4. HYPOTHESIS:

On the basis of the observations and experience of the present research worker, it was hypothesised that Upward Social Mobility might exist amongst the veteran university women players of Kho-Kho, Volleyball, Kabaddi, Table-Tennis and Badminton.

SUB-HYPOTHESES:

i) It was hypothesised that there would be Upward Social Mobility amongst the Veteran Women University Players of Volleyball, Kho-Kho and Kabaddi.

ii) It was hypothesised that there might not exist Upward, Social Mobility amongst Table-Tennis and Badminton players.

iii) It was hypothesised that present economic status of the veteran women university players of Table-Tennis and Badminton would be higher than that of Volleyball, Kho-Kho and Kabaddi veteran women university players.
5. DELIMITATIONS:

The scope of the present study was delimited to the following:

1) The subjects for the study were female players who had represented University team during their college days.

2) The age of the subjects was above 30 years.

3) The subjects were resident of Maharashtra.

4) The subjects were the veteran Inter-University players of Volleyball, Kho-Kho Kabaddi, Table-Tennis and Badminton.

5) The study was restricted to those Inter-University female players who represented their respective Universities between 1980 and 1990.

6. LIMITATIONS:

Following were the possible limitations of the study:

1) The lack of sufficient samples might cause to enlarge the span of years from which the subjects would be selected.

2) Non-availability of sufficient samples of particular game might cause to delete or replace the activity under study.

3) The authenticity of the information given by the respondents would depend upon their honesty.

4) The information provided by the respondents through questionnaire would also depend upon their understanding and interpretation of the question.

7. DEFINITIONS

a) Social Stratification: It is a system of institutionalised social inequality based on important material and symbolic differences in a society, such as differences in
wealth, religion, or family heritage. It is composed of various levels or social strata. (143)

b) Social Strata: It is a single stratum consists of individuals who share similar characteristics such as educational attainment, level of wealth.

c) Social mobility: It is a movement either upward or downward from one stratum to another. Evidences of such mobility may be found in changes in occupational pattern, promotion within an occupational pattern, accumulation of wealth, amassing of material possessions, and educational opportunities.

d) Horizontal Social mobility: It refers to movements by individuals or groups one position to another in a society which does not involve a shift into higher or lower stratum.

e) Vertical social mobility: Movement of individuals or groups into either a higher or lower stratum of society is called vertical social mobility.

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17 Ibid , P. 143
18 Ibid, p. 549
19 Peter L. ROSE, Myron Glazer and P. M. Glazer, Sociology, New York, St. Martin's Press, (2nd Edn.) P 273
20 Ibid, P. 153
21 Ibid
f) Veteran University Women Players: In the present study the term veteran University women players refers to those women who were actively involved in sports and achieved excellence during their college days by representing the University teams, but become inactive after that.

g) Inter-University Women Players: In the present investigation Inter-University women players means those female college players who represented University team.