CHAPTER V

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In this chapter the findings of the present investigation resulting from the statistical analysis in chapter IV are discussed and studied in the background of the earlier findings.

POPULARITY OF SPORTS

Every one of the society have some kind of interest or the other in the field of sports, be he a man of sixty or a lad of sixteen. But the kind of sports and their choice varies according to the varied tastes and temperaments of the people.

The review of literature indicated that (Strout 1967) Soccer is by no means the only sport which is now a days played and watched all the world over (1967). Other sports such as Athletics, Tennis, Boxing and Golf also have a world wide following. Others still, such as Cricket and Hockey are limited to a smaller number of countries but are also widely watched and played. And, of course, sports are not restricted simply to watch between teams and individuals within particular countries. They are played internationally too, and have come to represent today one of the most frequent sources of regular contact between people from different countries.

The present investigation agreed with the comments of Strout that Soccer is the only sport which is nowadays played and watched all the world over. Further he stated that, Tennis, Cricket and Hockey were also widely watched and played. The
finding of the present investigation was also almost similar with the comments of Streut. However none of the common people neither preferred nor wanted to play the game of Golf in the north eastern State of India. It might be due to the lack of facilities and lack of propaganda in the region.

Luchen (1971) had reported a test of the "unbureaucratisation Thesis" is applied to the field of sports. His findings are probably typical in most respects for Britain and other highly industrialised countries. He carried out a survey of active sports club members between the ages of fifteen and twenty five and found that playing sport as a leisure occupation is primarily an activity of upper and middle classes and act as a 'reference group'. His data also indicated that there is a distinct "status hierarchy" of sport in west Germany. Higher status people tend to go in for newer sports, those which are most competitive and those which are highly organised. Thus, Tennis, Hockey, and Skiling are the sports most favoured by the middle and upper classes; Whereas Handball, Wrestling, Boxing and Association football are most favoured by the working classes.

The finding of Luchen agreed with the findings of the present study as Tennis and Hockey were favoured by the upper and middle classes whereas Wrestling was most favoured by the working class. However in case of Association Football the finding of the present investigation quite disagreed. This game was favoured by the working class in West Germany whereas it was found to be popular amongs upper class in North region of India. The sports and games favoured by the working class required less
expenditure than those which are favoured by the middle and upper
classes in foreign countries. But this may not be true in north
east region of the country.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF SPORTS

In the Western countries certain sport sociologists
attempted to explore the existence of relationship between socio-
economic status and participation in the sports (Crawford, 1977;
Collins, 1972; Pavia, 1973; and Luschen, 1969). Similar attempt
was also made in the present investigation to find out the
relationship between Socio-economic status and participation in
the sport. It was found that participation in different sports
was influenced by the socio-economic status. It was found that
the participants in the sports like Cricket, Tennis, Badminton
and Football were from the upper Socio-economic strata whereas
participants of Table Tennis, Hockey and Basketball were found
from middle socio-economic background. Further it was also found
that in volleyball, Wrestling and Kabaddi, the participants were
from lower Socio economic strata (Table 14 P). This finding agree
with the statement that stratification system may be operating
north eastern region of India that facilitates or inhibits
access to specific sports and to realization of elite status.

However, the stratification system within any given
country may differed. Crawford (1977), found that those in Canoeing,
Equestrian, Weight lifting, Wrestling and Yachting were fit for
white Collar/nonmanual-labor category whereas the sportsman in
track and field, Boxing and Cycling were from blue collar/manual
labor category. This finding may not fully agree with the present research because the types of sports popular in the country may differ from country to country. Similarly the relationship of participation and socio-economic status may also be different. Yet the finding of the present study indicated that participation in wrestling was more common among lower socio-economic strata than white collar/non manual labor category (middle class) thus the finding differ from the statement of Crawford.

Studies of elite athletes in Australia, Great Britain, and New Zealand also suggested that professional and high status families are over represented in athletics for example, on the basis of the study of British male athletes at the Mexico Olympic Games, Collins (1972) derived the following four categories of Sport: egalitarian (e.g. Swimming, Cycling, Canoeing), independent (e.g. gymnastics and the modern pentathlon, which are not so firmly established in the British culture to have become class-based), working class (e.g. boxing, weight-lifting, and wrestling) and middle class (track and field, rowing, fencing, field hockey equestrian). In the present investigation also hockey was found to be the sport of middle strata so the conclusions of Collins agree with the finding of the present research.

In a similar study, Pavia (1973) analyzed the social class background of 174 male and female members of the 1972 Australian Olympic team and derived five sport categories,
although 60 percent of these athletes belonged to the upper three social classes. His findings were found to be not supporting Collins (1972).

Further more, in a more detailed study of Australian athletes in a variety of other sports, Pavia and Jaques (1976) noted that as a group, they are over represented in the upper class and that a great number of females are of upper-class origin. This later findings agree with Laschen (1869) and Gruneau (1975) and suggest that there may be greater social obstacles for lower-class females than for lower-class males. The present investigator realised that the status of the athletes were not similar from one country to another according to the different culture, temperament and economic condition of the people.

Yiannakis (1975) suggest that the social status of sport is influenced by four factors: the structure of sport (i.e. individuals team sport), The cost of participation—the publicity it receives, and the amount of physical contact. He argues that higher status sports are related to (1) a greater degree of autonomy in one's occupation (that is the professions) as reflected by greater participation in individual sport; (2) The cost of participation (the upper classes can afford to participate in higher - status sports); (3) The exposure or publicity a sport receives (higher-status sport remain the privilege of the elite because the masses either don't see or hear about them and (4) an absence of a combative element or bodily contact (the upper class uses "brains", while the lower classes emphasize physical toughness).
The present investigator was favoured by the suggestion of Yiannakis because most of the findings in the present study were favoured by his suggestion. The status hierarchy of sports groups were based on the preference of the father, socio-economic status of the participant, organisational status of the sports and newspaper publicity.

There are cross national differences in the prestige ranking of some sports. For example, gymnastics is low in Belgium (Renson, 1976) at the middle in Germany (Loschen, 1988) and at the upper-middle in the United States (Loy, 1972). To explain these differences an understanding of the historical development of the specific sport and of sport in general within each country is necessary. (Form 1975) found that wrestling was one of the earliest sports and marked by the aristocratic stratification of European society. It became a common sport not a knightly game in the twelfth century. Of course, there are many exceptions. Henry VIII was a skilled wrestler but, by and large, wrestling has been a lower status sport in western civilization for eight hundred years.

In the present investigation also wrestling was found to be the lowest in rank and it was preferred by people of lower status group. So the findings of the earlier study agreed with the finding of the present study.

Most of the common people living in north eastern India preferred the games of Tennis, Cricket and Football specially but due to the lack of facilities i.e. play ground, coach, financial
shortage they could not participate. They liked to make their children also proficient in these particular sports (table 6).
The reason was that such games had a very good reputation in the society as well as a scope for future prospect. This finding agree to great extends with the proposition of Luschen (1969) that the "newer a sport, the higher its social positions". Tennis and Cricket are comparatively newer sport in the north eastern region of India. Historically these sports may have old base but they are still new to the people of north eastern region due to greater exposure to these sports through Television, Magazine and Newspaper. Thus these sports are still new to the common people of north eastern region and therefore might have achieved higher social position.

Renson (1976) analyzed of social stratification in Belgium and noted that the higher class sports such as Skiing, Golf, Field Hockey, Tennis and Fencing were all characterised by the use of "status sticks": the upper-middle class sports of Rowing, Canoeing, Horse riding, Climbing, Skating, Hunting, and Scuba diving are all "nature" Sports; The lower-middle class sports such as basketball, Volleyball, Badminton and Table Tennis require, "the use of balls, nets and targets"; while the lower-class sport of Gymnastics, Calisthenics, Track and Field, Boxing, Soccer, and Fishing are either of an "individual nature or involve close bodily contact".

The present researcher had pursued the status of different sports (Table no.16 ) It was seen from the table that
Tennis, Cricket and Football were the higher status sports, however when it was compared with the finding of Renson's (1976) the picture was quite different. Renson found that Soccer is the lower class sport whereas the present investigator found that it was the higher class sport. Thus the findings of Renson's study may not agree with the present findings.

Luschen (1969) analysed the social class background of young sportsmen in the German Federal Republic. His first proposition, states that the "newer a sport, the higher its social positions". In support of his propositions, Pavia (1973) also stated that Basketball in the German Federal Republic and Australia, has a high social status because it is a recent import. The present investigation did not accept that Basketball has a high social status though it is new to north eastern region of India. In north eastern region of India Basketball was found to be a sport of the middle social strata (Table 17).

Similarly, Luschen (1968) indicated that the recent decrease in the Social status of Soccer and Gymnastics in the German Federal Republic may be a reflection of the length of time that these sport have been part of the German Sport culture. However, this proposition may not hold for Soccer in north easter region of India. Soccer is one of the most popular game in the north eastern states of India since the last so many years. Yet majority of the people opted this sport either for participation or for witnessing the matches. It has maintained it's higher social status.
In Vidarbha, Duniya (1981) investigated the socio-economic status of the players of certain selected team games. He found that the students of the upper socio-economic strata preferred Cricket and Table Tennis, whereas Kabaddi and Football were more preferred by the students from lower socio-economic strata. His findings did not fully agree fully with the present investigation. Football and Table Tennis were found to be the sports of upper and middle socio-economic strata respectively. This difference in findings might be due to cultural, environmental, and temperament difference amongst the people living in different states. Duniya (1981) conducted the study in Vidarbha whereas the present investigation was carried out in the north eastern State of India.

Further Sharma (1997) found that Inter University Cricket players mostly belonged to upper and upper middle socio-economic group, whereas hockey players mostly belonged to the upper middle and lower-lower socio-economic strata. This finding agreed with the findings of the present investigation.

The above findings very well agreed with the theory that sport were being stratified on the basis of socio-economic status of the players, Social Treatment given to different sport and the status of the sport in the news media.
ROLE OF MEDIA IN SPORT

Newspapers have been involved in the presentation of sports longer than any other media, perhaps because individuals want to read about sport for knowledge and information. At the local level, newspapers, radio, and television have become indirectly responsible for the promotion of sport.

The review of literature indicated that Prabhakara (1986) conducted a study on the analysis of the sport coverage news in daily newspaper. His finding was a fact that all the newspapers covered under the study gave top priority to Cricket, followed by Football, Hockey, Racing, and Tennis. The finding of the present investigator was also similar with the findings of Prabhakara. The finding of the present investigator differ only in relation to Tennis which occupied more space than Hockey in the newspaper of north eastern region of India (Table No.15).

Again, Prabhakara concluded that newspaper also played an important role to stratify the status of different games and sports. The interest of the people and popularity of particular game often influenced by the space covered for sports events in the newspaper. His comment was very much similar to the conclusions of the present investigation, that newspaper took an effective role to promote the sports and educating public opinion.

As sports gained prominence in the country, the audio-visual media also allotted more time to it. This has become a variable industry in terms of production, advertisement sale as well as sponsored programmes and serials.
Further, it might be rewarding to look at how the electronic media treat sport in other countries, contrary to popular belief, it is not the BBC, but channel Nine in Australia, that gives the best sporting coverage, specially to Cricket. But even games like Tennis, Football and highly popular local sports like sailing and horse racing get a lot of coverage both in volume and in sheer class of technical work and broadcasting. On the other hand, the promotion of the so called minor sporting events has not found much favour with the people who matter: advertisers a potential sponsors.

The comments of Keshoree Bhimani in the Times of India (Newspaper) regarding the sports coverage in the newspaper agreed with the findings of the present investigation. Table-15 shows the clear picture of the space allotted to the regional newspaper for different sports. In the findings of the present study Cricket occupied the maximum space and it was followed by Tennis and Football. The other sports like Wrestling, Kabaddi were found to be of very less space coverage in the newspaper. The reason was that the newspaper readers and viewers were interested more in the sports like Cricket, Tennis and Football compared to other sports.

Further, Jayaram (1988) conducted a study about the sports news coverage in the newspaper. He found that maximum space was covered for Cricket, Tennis, Football, and Hockey whereas minimum space was covered for the other sports. His
finding very well agreed with the finding of the present investigation as Cricket, Tennis, and Football were found to be covering more space in Assam Tribune (Newspaper) of North Eastern Region. But in case of Hockey the findings were in disagreement slightly.

In the north eastern States of India among the common people the players of Football, Tennis and Cricket were more popular than the players of other sports. Majority of the people preferred and wanted their sons to master the game of Tennis, Football and Cricket in comparison with the other sports, whereas Tennis, Badminton and Table Tennis, were preferred more for daughters (table 8).

The reasons for choosing such sports by the parents were to make their children professional players in the first priority, possibility of employment was the second priority and improvement of physical fitness was the third priority (table 10)

In the north eastern States of India, players of Tennis, Cricket, Football, Badminton and Table Tennis were readily getting job opportunities as well as financial support from different departments namely education department, Fishery department, Agriculture department, Police department and Forest department. So the people wanted to go for the above mentioned sports. Table No. 8 shows a clear picture of the preferential priority of different sports among the commoners.