
An Article On Human Rights And Domestic Violence In Sports: A Critical Analysis Of The Indian Context

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Abstract

Domestic violence and human rights violations in sports represent critical social issues that undermine the fundamental principles of equity and dignity. This article delves into the intersection of human rights and domestic violence within the Indian sports context, highlighting the challenges faced by athletes, especially women, who often encounter abuse both within and beyond their professional environments. It examines the socio-cultural, legal, and institutional frameworks addressing these issues, critiquing their effectiveness and limitations. The article emphasizes the urgent need for systemic reforms and advocacy to foster a safe, inclusive, and equitable environment for all athletes.

Keywords- Human Rights, Domestic Violence, Sports, Indian Context, Gender Equality, Athlete Rights, Legal Framework, Abuse in Sports, Social Justice, Policy Reform.

Introduction

Human rights encompass the basic rights and freedoms inherent to all individuals, irrespective of their background. Within the sphere of sports, human rights violations often manifest through exploitation, discrimination, and, alarmingly, domestic violence. In India, the issue remains deeply rooted in cultural norms, gender biases, and inadequate institutional safeguards.

Domestic Violence and Sports in India- Athletes, particularly women, are vulnerable to domestic violence, with cases often linked to familial, societal, or professional pressures. Studies suggest that domestic violence extends into the professional lives of athletes, affecting their mental and physical well-being, and consequently, their performance. Traditional patriarchal norms further exacerbate the challenges, creating an environment of silence and stigma around reporting abuse.

Human rights Violation in Sports- Human rights in sports include equality, freedom from discrimination, and the right to a safe environment. Indian sports have witnessed numerous instances where these rights are compromised, such as unequal pay, harassment, and lack of safety protocols for women. For example, cases of sexual harassment by coaches and administrative officials often highlight systemic flaws in the governance of sports bodies.

Legal and Institutional Framework- India has introduced laws like the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 and provisions under the Indian Penal Code to address domestic violence. However, their application within the sports sector remains limited due to a lack of awareness and enforcement. Moreover, the absence of dedicated policies to address abuse in sports underscores the need for sector-specific interventions.

Challenges in Addressing the Issues-

1. Cultural Barriers: Deep-seated patriarchal norms discourage athletes from speaking out.

2. Institutional Inadequacies: Sports bodies often lack mechanisms for complaint redressal.
3. Legal Loopholes: Existing laws fail to address the unique dynamics of domestic violence within sports.
4. Mental Health Stigma: Victims of abuse often refrain from seeking psychological support due to stigma.

Recommendation for Policy and Reform-

1. Strengthening Legal Frameworks: Introduce sports-specific legislation addressing human rights violations and abuse.
2. Awareness and Training: Conduct regular sensitization programs for athletes, coaches, and officials.
3. Support Systems: Establish counseling and legal aid for affected athletes.
4. Independent Oversight Bodies: Create independent committees to handle complaints of domestic violence and harassment.
5. Cultural Reforms: Promote gender equality and inclusivity in sports at all levels.

Conclusion- The intersection of human rights and domestic violence in Indian sports highlights critical gaps in policy, governance, and societal attitudes. Addressing these issues requires a holistic approach involving legal reforms, institutional accountability, and cultural change. By fostering a culture of respect and equality, India can not only protect its athletes but also set a global example in promoting human rights in sports.

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