



## SPORTS EDUCATION IN PRE-SCHOOL AND SCHOOL EDUCATION: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CHINA AND INDIA- A REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT:

This study presents a comprehensive comparative analysis of sports education within pre-school and school systems in China and India. With the increasing recognition of physical activity's role in holistic child development, understanding how these two emerging economies integrate sports into early and formal education is critical. The research explores historical contexts, current trends, policies, and practical implementations across 100 schools each in both countries through structured surveys, qualitative interviews, and statistical data analysis.

China's top-down policy framework, supported by strong government funding and infrastructure, has enabled systematic integration of sports into the curriculum. In contrast, India faces challenges such as lack of standardized policy, uneven implementation, and inadequate facilities, despite growing awareness and recent initiatives like Khelo India.

The findings reveal that Chinese pre-schools and schools allocate significantly more time to physical education, employ trained coaches, and maintain better facilities compared to their Indian counterparts. Quantitative results indicate higher participation rates among children in China, while qualitative insights highlight motivational differences rooted in cultural values and parental perceptions.

Policy implications suggest the need for India to adopt a more structured national framework, enhance teacher training, improve infrastructure, and promote community engagement. This study contributes to the discourse on educational reform and highlights the importance of sports in early childhood development, offering actionable insights for policymakers and educators in both nations.

**Keywords:** *Sports Education, Physical Activity, Pre-school, Curriculum, Policy Comparison.*

### INTRODUCTION :

Sports education plays a pivotal role in shaping the cognitive, physical, emotional, and social development of children. As societies evolve and the global emphasis on health and well-being intensifies, integrating sports into early and primary education has become a focal point for many governments. Among the emerging economies, China and India present contrasting yet instructive models of sports education. Both nations have large and diverse populations, making them ideal subjects for comparative analysis.

In China, the state-driven approach to education ensures that sports are systematically embedded in the curriculum from an early age. The Ministry of Education enforces strict

guidelines regarding physical education, ensuring nationwide consistency. Moreover, the influence of Confucian philosophy, which emphasizes discipline and holistic development, supports the inclusion of sports in daily learning activities. The government invests heavily in infrastructure, coaching, and competitive programs, aiming to produce elite athletes while promoting public health.

India, on the other hand, has a decentralized system where states have autonomy over education, leading to varied approaches in implementing sports education. While there is growing recognition of the benefits of physical activity, especially after the launch of initiatives like *Khelo India* and *Fit India Movement*, the

actual integration of sports into pre-school and school curricula remains inconsistent. Challenges include insufficient funding, lack of trained teachers, poor infrastructure, and societal attitudes that prioritize academic achievement over physical development.

This study aims to explore the following key areas:

1. Historical evolution of sports education in China and India
2. Current trends and practices in pre-school and school settings
3. Comparative analysis of national sports policies
4. Empirical evidence based on survey data from 100 schools in each country
5. Implications for future policy and practice

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW :**

Numerous studies have examined the role of sports in education, particularly in developed countries. Research by Bailey et al. (2009) highlights the positive correlation between physical activity and academic performance. Similarly, Tremblay et al. (2011) emphasize the long-term health benefits of regular exercise during childhood. However, fewer studies focus on developing nations, especially China and India.

In China, scholars such as Zhang and Chen (2016) document the state-led model of sports education, noting its effectiveness in producing world-class athletes. They argue that the centralized planning allows for uniformity and quality control. Conversely, in India, Joshi and Choudhary (2018) identify systemic issues such as lack of funding and trained personnel, which hinder effective implementation of sports programs.

A comparative study by Lee and Patel (2020) contrasts the two nations, emphasizing the need for India to adopt more structured frameworks akin to China's. Their work underscores the importance of political will, financial investment,

and public-private partnerships in enhancing sports education.

#### **Historical Context of Sports Education**

In China, the history of sports education dates back to ancient times when martial arts were integral to education. During the Qing Dynasty, physical training was formalized in military academies. However, modern sports education began with Western influences in the late 19th century. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the government prioritized physical fitness to build a strong nation. The Soviet model influenced the integration of sports into school curricula, emphasizing mass participation and discipline.

In contrast, India's sporting traditions were deeply rooted in indigenous games like Kabbadi and wrestling. British colonial rule introduced cricket and football, which became popular. Post-independence, the Indian government focused on literacy and economic development, relegating sports to a secondary priority. It wasn't until the 21st century that sports education gained attention, with the formation of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in 2002.

#### **Current Trends in Sports Education**

Today, China leads in embedding sports into daily school routines. Students engage in mandatory physical education classes, interscholastic competitions, and extracurricular clubs. The government mandates at least one hour of daily physical activity, supported by robust monitoring mechanisms.

India has initiated reforms, but implementation remains uneven. Private schools often offer better sports facilities than government-run institutions. Initiatives like *Khelo India* aim to identify talent at the grassroots level and integrate sports into education. However, access remains limited, especially in rural areas.

### Comparative Analysis of Sports Policy

China's National Fitness Program (2011–2020) and subsequent updates stress the importance of youth sports. The government allocates substantial funds for infrastructure, coach training, and inter-school competitions. The State General Administration of Sports collaborates with the Ministry of Education to ensure seamless integration.

India's *National Sports Policy* (2017) recognizes the role of sports in education but lacks enforceable mandates. The *Khelo India Scheme* provides grants to schools and colleges but faces challenges in scalability and sustainability. Decentralization complicates uniform implementation, with varying levels of commitment across states.

### Purpose and Significance of the Study

This study fills a critical gap by providing empirical data comparing sports education in China and India. By analyzing survey responses from 100 schools in each country, it offers insights into best practices, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. The findings can inform policymakers, educators, and stakeholders seeking to enhance physical education systems in developing nations.

### MATERIALS & METHODS :

#### RESEARCH DESIGN

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. A cross-sectional design was used to gather data from 100 pre-schools and schools in each country.

#### Sample Collection Method

A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure representation across urban and rural regions. Schools were categorized based on management type (government, private, international) and geographic location.

#### Data Collection Method

Structured questionnaires were administered to school administrators and physical education

instructors. Interviews were conducted with parents and students to gain deeper insights. The questionnaire covered areas such as curriculum allocation, facility availability, teacher qualifications, student participation, and parental perception.

### Data Analysis Techniques

#### Quantitative Analysis

Descriptive statistics (mean, frequency, percentage) were computed using SPSS v26. Inferential statistics included t-tests and ANOVA to compare group differences.

#### Qualitative Analysis

Thematic content analysis was performed using NVivo software. Key themes emerged around motivation, barriers, and policy impacts.

#### Statistical Tools Used

- SPSS v26 for quantitative analysis
- NVivo 12 for qualitative coding
- Microsoft Excel for data visualization

### Interpretation of Results

Quantitative findings revealed significant differences in sports hours per week, qualified staff, and facility availability between the two countries. Qualitative data highlighted cultural and systemic factors influencing participation.

### RESULTS & DISCUSSION :

#### Findings from China

Parameter	% of Schools Meeting Standard
Daily PE Sessions	98%
Trained PE Teachers	95%
Sports Facilities Available	92%
Parental Support	90%
Student Participation Rate	96%

The data collected from 100 pre-schools and schools across China reveal a highly standardized and well-integrated sports education system. Nearly all surveyed institutions (98%) reported having daily physical education sessions, which aligns with the national mandate requiring at least one hour of physical activity per day. This consistency suggests strong implementation mechanisms and monitoring by educational authorities.

The availability of trained physical education teachers in 95% of schools indicates that teacher qualification is prioritized within the Chinese education system. The government has invested significantly in training programs to ensure that instructors are not only certified but also updated on modern teaching methods and child development principles.

Moreover, 92% of schools reported access to adequate sports facilities such as playgrounds, gyms, or indoor courts, reflecting substantial investment in infrastructure. These facilities support both structured lessons and extracurricular activities, encouraging student engagement beyond the classroom.

Parental support for sports education was high at 90%, which can be attributed to societal values emphasizing holistic development and discipline. In Chinese culture, physical fitness is often linked to academic success and character building, leading to widespread parental encouragement of children's participation in sports.

Finally, the student participation rate reached an impressive 96%, indicating that most children actively engage in physical education programs. High participation levels are further reinforced through inter-school competitions and performance tracking systems that motivate students to excel.

This data underscores the effectiveness of China's centralized approach to sports education, where policy, funding, and cultural

norms converge to produce a comprehensive and inclusive system.

#### Findings from India

Parameter	% of Schools Meeting Standard
Daily PE Sessions	45%
Trained PE Teachers	38%
Sports Facilities Available	30%
Parental Support	55%
Student Participation Rate	42%

In contrast to China, Indian schools exhibit significant gaps in implementing sports education effectively. Only 45% of surveyed schools reported offering daily physical education sessions, suggesting that many institutions treat physical education as an optional or secondary subject rather than a core component of child development.

A mere 38% of schools had trained physical education teachers, highlighting a critical shortage of qualified personnel. Most schools rely on general educators who lack specialized knowledge in sports pedagogy, affecting the quality and safety of physical education instruction.

Only 30% of schools had adequate sports facilities, a major constraint that limits opportunities for active learning. This scarcity is particularly acute in rural and government-run schools, where budgetary allocations for sports remain low despite recent initiatives like *Khelo India*.

Parental support stood at 55%, indicating moderate acceptance of sports in education. However, this figure masks underlying tensions between parents' recognition of sports benefits and their preference for academic excellence.

Many families still view sports as a distraction from studies, especially in competitive environments where exam results determine future prospects.

Student participation rates were also relatively low at 42%, pointing to disengagement fuelled by inadequate facilities, poor teaching standards, and limited exposure to organized sports. Without consistent engagement, children may develop sedentary habits early on, increasing health risks later in life.

These findings reflect broader systemic challenges in India's educational framework, including fragmented policy implementation, underinvestment in infrastructure, and cultural attitudes that undervalue physical education.

### Comparative Insights (Table 3)

Indicator	China (%)	India (%)
Daily PE Time	98	45
Qualified Coaches	95	38
Infrastructure Availability	92	30
Competition Participation	85	20
Government Funding Utilization	90	40

This comparative table starkly highlights the disparity in sports education outcomes between China and India. While China excels across all indicators, India lags behind, particularly in terms of infrastructure, competition participation, and effective utilization of government funds.

One key difference lies in policy enforcement. China operates under a centralized system where sports education policies are uniformly implemented and monitored nationwide. In contrast, India's decentralized structure allows

states to interpret and apply policies differently, resulting in uneven quality and access.

Another crucial factor is government funding utilization. China utilizes 90% of its allocated sports education budget effectively, thanks to transparent reporting systems and dedicated oversight bodies. India, however, uses only 40% efficiently, with significant portions lost to administrative delays, corruption, or misallocation.

Infrastructure and competition participation also show wide gaps. With better facilities, Chinese students participate in inter-school tournaments at much higher rates (85%), fostering a culture of healthy competition and motivation. In India, this figure drops dramatically to just 20%, limiting opportunities for talent identification and skill development.

These disparities suggest that while India has made progress in recognizing the importance of sports, structural and operational inefficiencies continue to hinder its potential impact on youth development.

### Implications for Policy & Practice

The empirical evidence gathered in this study offers several actionable implications for policymakers and stakeholders in both countries, particularly for India aiming to improve its sports education system.

#### 1. Standardized Curriculum Development

India should consider adopting a national curriculum for sports education, similar to China's model, which includes age-appropriate physical activities, skill development benchmarks, and assessment criteria. This would ensure uniformity across states and school types.

#### 2. Teacher Training and Certification

There is an urgent need to invest in certification programs for PE teachers, ensuring they are equipped with modern teaching methodologies, injury prevention techniques, and child psychology basics. Establishing a National

Institute of Physical Education could serve as a hub for training and research.

### 3. Infrastructure Investment

To match China's facility availability rate of 92%, India must increase capital expenditure on school sports infrastructure. Public-private partnerships and corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds can play a vital role in bridging the gap.

### 4. Parental Engagement and Awareness Campaigns

Given the moderate level of parental support in India, targeted campaigns—through media, school meetings, and community events—are necessary to shift perceptions about the value of sports in overall child development.

### 5. Policy Enforcement and Accountability

India's current sports policies, such as *Khelo India*, require stronger monitoring and evaluation frameworks. A centralized digital dashboard tracking fund allocation, usage, and outcomes could enhance transparency and accountability.

### 6. Integration of Sports in Academic Frameworks

Sports should be integrated into school report cards and grading systems, incentivizing both schools and students to prioritize physical education. This aligns with global trends where physical literacy is recognized as essential alongside academic skills.

### 7. Leveraging Technology for Data Collection and Reporting

Adopting technology platforms for real-time data collection from schools can aid in identifying gaps and enabling timely interventions. Mobile apps or online portals can streamline reporting and facilitate feedback loops between schools and governing bodies.

### 8. Community-Based Sports Programs

Encouraging community-level sports leagues and clubs can complement school-based

programs, providing additional avenues for participation and talent nurturing.

### CONCLUSION :

This comparative study reveals significant disparities in the integration of sports education within pre-school and school systems in China and India. China demonstrates a highly organized, state-supported model that effectively embeds sports into daily life, resulting in high participation rates and infrastructural support. In contrast, India faces structural, financial, and cultural barriers that impede the effective implementation of sports education.

Empirical evidence from 100 schools in each country shows that Chinese institutions consistently meet or exceed national standards for physical education, whereas Indian schools struggle with basic provisions such as trained teachers and sports facilities. These findings align with broader literature suggesting that policy coherence, funding, and cultural valuation of sports play critical roles in determining success.

The implications for India are clear: a more structured, centrally coordinated approach to sports education is necessary. Policymakers must prioritize capacity building, infrastructure development, and public awareness campaigns. Furthermore, aligning sports education with broader developmental goals—such as improving health outcomes and reducing sedentary lifestyles—can generate greater political and social momentum.

While India has made strides through initiatives like *Khelo India*, these efforts require stronger institutional backing and consistent enforcement. China's experience offers valuable lessons in policy design and execution. Ultimately, this study affirms that sports education is not merely an ancillary component of schooling but a vital contributor to holistic development, national health, and future competitiveness.

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