

GET KIDS TO PLAY

STATUS OF SCHOOL SPORTS IN INDIA

A **SPORTZ** VILLAGE SURVEY

KNOWLEDGE
PARTNER



Sports and Society
Accelerator



Acknowledgment

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Disclaimer

The survey document is created by the Sportz Village team, who assume full responsibility for its contents. All information sourced from third-party references and proprietary research has been identified and referenced. Any industry references included do not imply endorsement of the report's conclusions or contents.

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About Sportz Village

Sportz Village is India's largest school sports organization on a mission to get 100 million children to play, and be champions in life. Established in 2003, our philosophy is pillared on improving the health and well-being of children by making sport an integral part of a child's education and development. We engage school children in sports with our pioneering structured sports and physical education (P.E.) program called EduSports being integrated into the school curriculum. EduSports curriculum has been developed based on NEP 2020, NCF 2023, and NASPE standards. We also design and execute grassroot sports programs, sports excellence programs, sports IPs and leagues as well as sport-focused brand activation and CSR programs.

Sportz Village is also on the panel of NSDC, CII, NITI Aayog, and several state governments as a strategic partner and advisor for sports education. Our programs have positively impacted 60L+ children and youth from 18K+ schools across 22 states in India.



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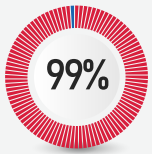


Introduction

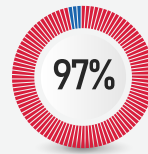
The current state of school sports in India is showing promising improvement, with a growing focus on promoting sports and physical education in children. This survey, conducted by Sportz Village, India's largest school sports organization, with 1800 parents and children aged between 6 to 14 years, aims to understand the current landscape of school sports in India.

It deciphers that by 1. making sports gender-inclusive, 2. improving standards of physical education in schools and 3. providing structured student-athlete pathways, school sports in India have the potential to thrive.

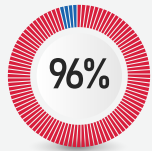
01 Kids love to play



Children enjoy playing sports, regardless of age, gender, or location



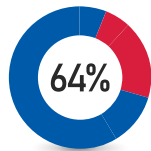
Kids enjoy P.E. class



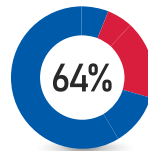
Kids want to be part of the school sports team

Reasons why kids engaging in sports

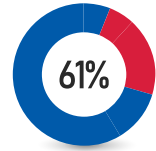
Fun is the primary reasons why children engage in sports



Fun



Pride in Performance



Relaxation

Girls seek imagination/creativity and time with friends from play; boys enjoy sports physically and take pride in mastering skills

Difference in Reasons to Play (Boys - Girls)



Note: This chart shows the difference in reasons to play between boys and girls across various sports. Positive values (blue bars) indicate a higher preference among boys, while negative values (orange bars) indicate a higher preference among girls.

02 Play preferences for kids

Cricket, Badminton, Football and Basketball are the most popular sports amongst children in India

Choice of sport - Top sports played



65%

Cricket



46%

Badminton



46%

Football



33%

Basketball

Beyond the top 4 sports, younger kids pick up Cycling and Chess; while older kids start picking up a variety of sports like Tennis, Kabaddi, Hockey and Athletics.

Sport preferences by age



Younger children favor



Cycling



Chess



Older children diversify into



Tennis



Kabaddi



Athletics

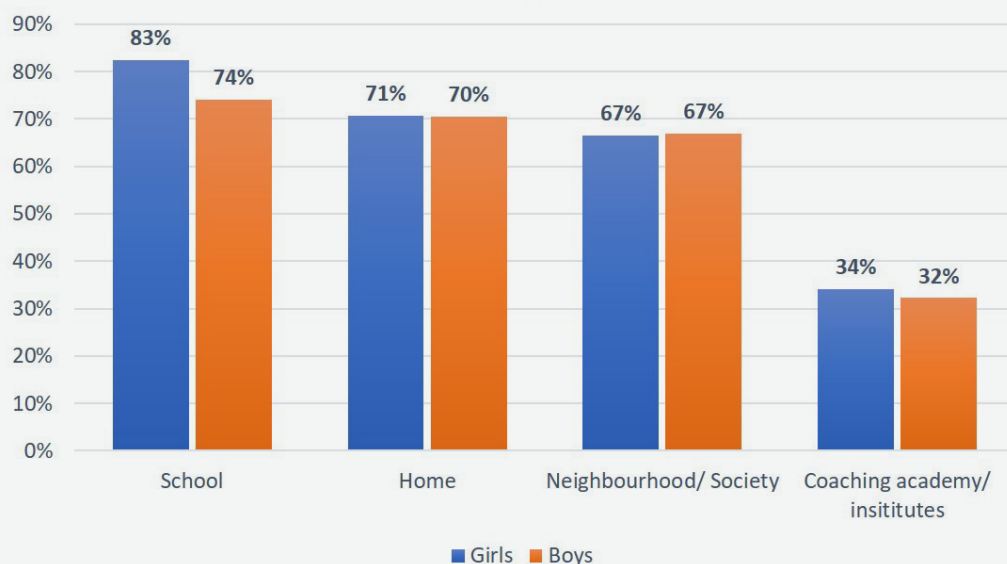


Hockey

03 State of school sports

Schools are primary spaces for children's play especially girls. But physical education, as a subject, and P.E. teachers often receive lesser recognition

Where do you Play?



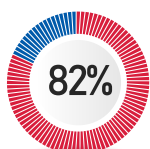
According to ASER Report, 68.9% schools in India have a playground. But almost 8% of India's schools have only one teacher who multiplexes to teach multiple subjects

1 in 4 P.E. teachers feel that the attitude of students towards them is less positive than towards other academic teachers

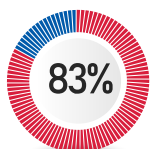
28% or more than 1 in every 4 P.E. classes get substituted in schools in India

Parents satisfied with the sports infrastructure and training in schools, but children expect more!

What parents think

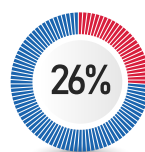


Parents satisfied with sports skill training quality in schools



Parents satisfied with sports infrastructure in schools

What kids think

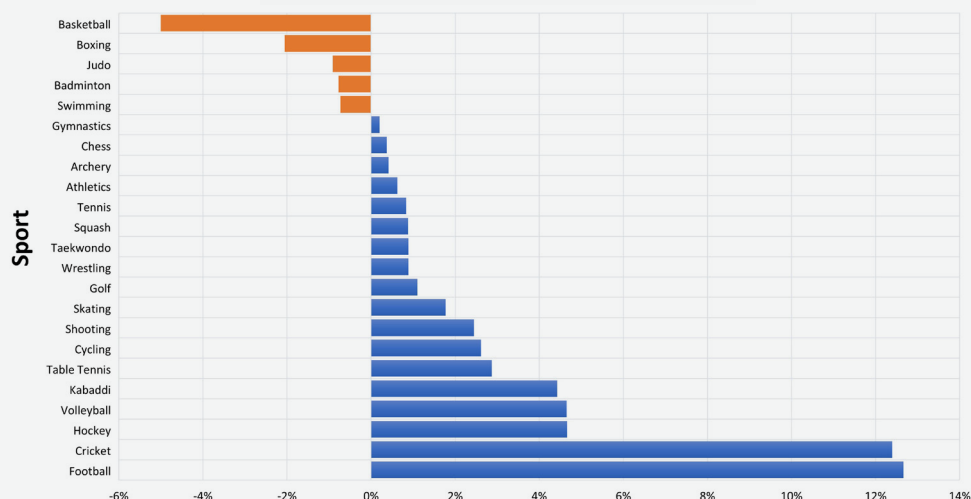


Kids feel that their school does not have the ground/ infrastructure for the sport that they want to play

04 Gender & sports

Cricket and Football still boys' Turf, but girls take the lead in Basketball!

Difference in participation percentage (boys - girls)

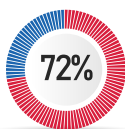


Gender parity more acute in team sports than individual sports

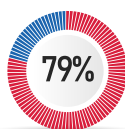
Note: This chart shows the difference in participation percentage between boys and girls across various sports. Positive values (blue bars) indicate higher participation among boys, while negative values (orange bars) indicate higher participation among girls.

The lack of same-gender peers to play with is a key barrier limiting girls' participation in sports

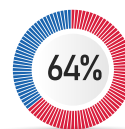
Barriers to play for girls



Girls are often made fun of for their lack of strength or skill



Girls often choose individual or smaller team sports where they don't need to count on many other girls playing



Girls don't engage in cricket due to the absence of their friends

05 Career in sports

Parents value physical activity and are open to professional sports, but see limited opportunities for young athletes to excel

86%

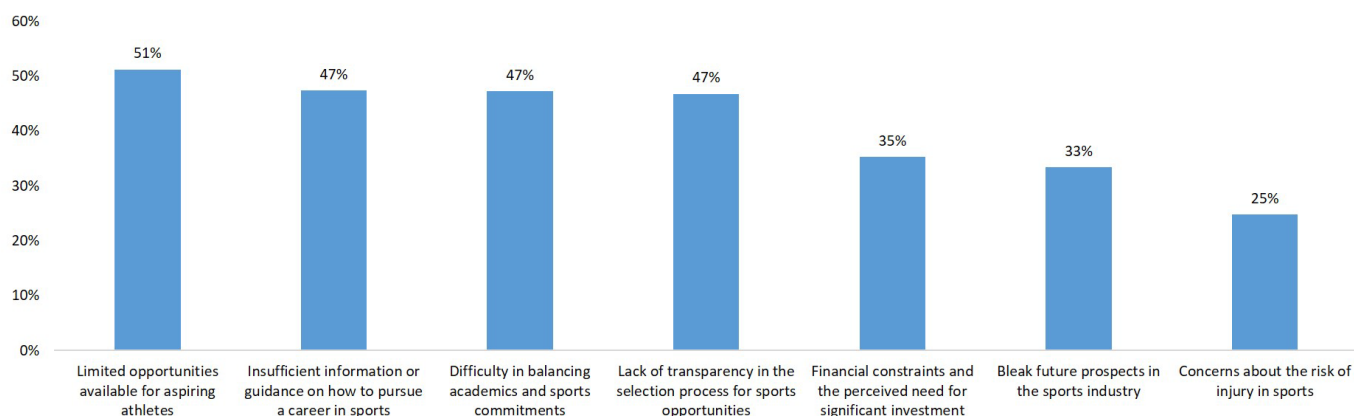
Parents are open to their children pursuing sports professionally

87%

Parents believe that India's performance in the recent mega sports events has positively impacted their child's motivation and commitment to sports

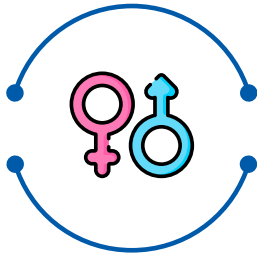
However, 51% of parents have cited limited opportunities, 47% have cited information gaps, 47% of parents have observed academic-sports balance and 47% have observed a lack of transparency in selection processes as significant barriers

Potential barriers perceived in child's pursuit of sports excellence



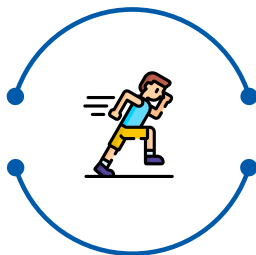
Conclusion

The study underscores a strong affinity for sports among Indian children and a positive attitude towards sports among Indian parents. However, the following challenges need to be addressed:



Gender inclusivity

Girls are drawn to sports that foster creativity and imagination. Unfortunately, most team sports remain less inclusive for them. Basketball shows promise as a gender-positive sport, but the lack of same-gender peers is a significant barrier to broader participation. To support girls in exploring a wider variety of sports aligned with their interests, it's essential to create opportunities for individual and team play. Initiatives like forming girls-only teams and organizing more girls-only competitions, especially at the intra-school level, can further enhance their engagement in sports.



Attitude towards P.E in schools

While students genuinely enjoy P.E. classes and aspire to join school teams, a prevailing indifference toward P.E. poses a challenge. Parents are generally satisfied with the sports facilities and training available, yet P.E. often takes back seat, with one in four classes cancelled for other priorities. Additionally, P.E. teachers report feeling less respected compared to their counterparts in other subjects.

To truly engage students, they need a broader variety of sports in P.E. and stronger peer participation. Achieving this will require both schools and parents to prioritize P.E., raising standards to ensure that physical education receives the support and respect it deserves within the school environment.



Pathway from grassroots to elite

Parents recognize the importance of physical activity and are supportive of professional sports careers.

However, significant barriers remain: 51% of parents point to limited opportunities for young athletes, while nearly half cite information gaps, challenges in balancing academics with sports, and a lack of transparency in selection processes. Addressing these challenges will be crucial to enabling young athletes to excel and to fully leverage the inspiring impact of national sports achievements.

JOIN THE

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Holistic Education through Sports

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