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Sports and Conflict Prevention: The way forward for global peace

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between sports and conflict prevention, as well as the path forward for world peace. Generally speaking, conflict is defined as a state of disagreement between individuals or groups of individuals. The most common contributing elements are typically differences in point of view, prejudice and discrimination, belief, and access to limited but valuable resources. In human existence, conflict is an essential component, and it is an unavoidable aspect of our everyday lives. Depending on how it is managed, conflict may be either beneficial or damaging to the organisation. Conflict may occur from a variety of sources, including inside ourselves, at school, at home, in the neighbourhood, and in society as a whole. To achieve world peace, it is necessary to promote peace among people, communities, and the larger society. People and nations may benefit from sports as a genuine weapon for social transformation, and sports can be effectively used to bring about a degree of peace amongst them. A fundamental theme of this research is the concept of using the properties of athletics to promote understanding, tolerance, and respect for human dignity while also fostering the development of moral ideals and social integration, all of which may be used to help bring about peace between nations. It is possible to eliminate conflict and ensure world peace if nations are able to achieve these characteristics through cooperation. The good influence of sports on character development and social cohesiveness has a direct impact on the attitudes of people in a community toward peace and harmony. Taking part in competitive sports helps to build emotional health, self-esteem, the need for recognition, feeling of belonging, and the expression of wrath, hatred, and aggression in a healthy and useful way. It also helps to foster the development of social skills. Every member of the sports environment, starting with the players and continuing with the coaches, umpires, spectators, and merchants, should portray and act in a way that enables for peace to rule in the sports environment. Sport managers, handlers, and fans must be able to recognise potentially dangerous situations between nations and devise solutions through sports to cope with them before they erupt into violence and destabilise the international order.

Keywords: Conflict Prevention, global peace, destabilize, international order, social transformation

1. Introduction

For some people, sports may be perceived in a variety of ways. Sports may be viewed as either competitive physical activities or as any type of physical activity that benefits physical fitness, mental health, and social connection. According to Miriam (2009) ^[16], conflict is the emergence of animosity in the face of opposing interests. Conflicts over wealth, identity, power, prestige, or values are just a few examples. Latent, increasing, crisis, and post-conflict stages of conflict were all recognised by Weismann (2005) ^[17]. These stages necessitate a variety of approaches to avoid them. Preventing conflict is the capacity to avoid confrontation altogether. Understanding and detecting the signal is the first step in dealing with it effectively. There have been several hypotheses put out to try and explain the whole scope of warfare. An individual or a group's interactions with other people or groups are the source of social conflict according to the social conflict theory (Anugwom 2009 in Ikejiani-Clerk) ^[18]. The normative framework of a community determines the reasons and remedies to such conflict. When it comes to conflict, a structuralism perspective believes that conflict is inherent in a society's structure and organisation. Politics and economic exclusion, injustice, poverty, disease, exploitation and inequality are believed to be the primary causes of conflict (Faleti 2009) ^[19]. Liberal structuralism describes conflict in terms of a negative and a positive state of tranquility.

Libertarian structures promote policy reform rather than revolution, civil war, or other forms of violence as a means of eliminating structural flaws in the economy. Sport speaks to everyone. As a result, it may be utilised as a tool for fostering peace, both symbolically and practically, on a global scale and in individual communities. According to the UN International Task Force (2013) ^[20], sports may be an effective means of averting violence and a key component in the establishment of long-term world peace. Sports programmes can help people become more socially integrated and tolerant when they are implemented correctly. The same ideals that are important for permanent peace may be found in sports.

Throughout history, people have debated the function and influence of sports on society. Many consider sport as a physical activity accompanied with national or team rivalry for glory and pride. Sport, games, and other physical activities are prevalent in practically every culture. Sports are popular across the world, regardless of one's political, national, or ideological allegiances, and this is true for both sportsmen and fans. Sport, on the other hand, may also be seen as a dignified activity and a vehicle for the highest moral and physical aspirations to be conveyed. As a result, sports may bring individuals together in unexpected ways to form bonds of friendship and share a similar interest.

2. The Concept of Global Peace

The absence of global conflict is not the goal of world peace; rather, the goal of world peace is the peaceful eradication of war. To achieve global peace, a wide range of social and political solutions must be incorporated into the conflict resolution process, according to Wikipedia (2014) ^[21]. When Robert (1978) wrote about political theorists, he argued that, in order to prevent conflicts, a peace system had to be established. Johansen used the phrase "global peace system" as a result of this (2003). There is a belief that the peace system gives higher justice, economic well-being, and ecological security than the military system. Nonviolent political, social, and legal mechanisms are used to resolve conflict, according to Johansen, in a world at peace. As a result, he advocated for the creation of such structures by the mass movement. Policy of dialogue or bilateral negotiations is the best way to achieve global peace. We are living in a time when nonviolent discourse should take the place of combative resolve to fight force. Synergistic elements include transformative visions of a peaceful global system, the understanding that interdependence and cooperation are essential, and the development of effective, democratic international adjudication procedures and peace-supporting symbols and values, according to Fry (2013) ^[22]. Additionally, McElwee (2003) ^[23] proposed three main points for the creation of a peace system across the world. Strengthening international norms and institutions to prevent war, removing the causes of war and violence, and promoting nonviolent methods of international conflict resolution are a few examples of these efforts. The commercial sector, religion, environmental change, security, the media, public health and rule of law are all linked together in other sector-based approaches to peace building (Wikipedia 2014) ^[21]. The Multi-Track Diplomacy was first proposed by Diamond and McDonald (1996) ^[24] as a systemic method to achieving peace. Non-governmental/professional or conflict resolution, business, private citizens, peace-making via personal involvement, research training

and education or peace making through learning; Activism or peace making through advocacy, religion, and pragmatism and, finally. The absence of any mention of sports is striking. It's easy to trace the origins of all nine tracts to sports. Ethnic differences can be bridged thanks to the universal language of sport. As a result, it has enormous potential as a peacemaker.

3. Sports and Conflict Prevention

The terms "conflict prevention" and "peace building" are often used interchangeably. Preventing confrontation entails keeping things calm. Justice is the most important aspect of a peaceful society. Peace shall reign where justice is done. Sports, in addition to their health benefits, often have special traits that aid in the resolution of conflicts. In both direct and indirect ways, sports contribute to a more peaceful world. They begin with the person and extend to the neighbourhood, state, and nation as a whole. Equity and justice, fair play, human resource development, social, economic & political empowerment may all be employed in sports to avert conflict. In sports, the adoption of principles like justice and fair play may help keep things civil. Identifying the origins of conflict in sports programmes can help. International conflict can be prevented via sports by indulging in the Olympic spirit. After studying the intellect, body, and character in Coubertin's triad, he created the Olympic Games, which he intended to be based on fair play and an end to excessive nationalism via fair play and collaboration. This, he believed, would encourage international collaboration among political borders. Justice and fair play can be shown in a variety of ways in sports. Individual athletes are the first step in establishing a fair playing field. It's shown by everything from their adherence to the rules and regulations of the game to how they treat each other and how they conduct themselves on the playground. Athletes who have developed a sense of fair play and integrity in their play are more likely to do well on the field.

The second level at which justice may be demonstrated is through the process of adjudication. When umpires follow the regulations, they will ensure that the game is conducted in a peaceful manner and that the game will be completed successfully. Because of the power that sports fans have over the game, the refereeing of a game has a direct impact on the outcome of the game. It has been demonstrated by Wann *et al.* (2006) ^[25] that some supporters have a psychological attachment to a team, and that such fans are more likely to be violent in their reaction to the conclusion of a tournament. Wann *et al.* (2006) ^[25] also discovered that some fans have a psychological attachment to a team. The outcomes of a tournament involving their team are important to their sense of self-worth for the supporters who are highly identified with their team's success. Any erroneous decision by the umpire might result in violence on the part of such persons. Experts (Clements, Alkire, Anthony, Barakat, Mesa, Grono, and Stepanova 2014) ^[26] have observed that the world's most peaceful countries have high levels of openness in government and low levels of corruption, according to Clements *et al.* (2014) ^[27]. This shows that there is a clear relationship between justice, fairness, and effective governance, which may assist to reduce conflict among individuals, groups, and society. The relevance of sports in human growth exemplifies the value of sporting attributes that may be linked to world peace. Sports have long been seen as a powerful tool for personal

growth (physically, mentally and socially). Physical growth has several benefits that go beyond physical development. Sport, according to the UN, helps to physical development beyond fitness. Physical growth has psychological benefits. The following psychological benefits are necessary for successful embodiment: Individuals have the right to have active and healthy lives throughout their lifetimes. This concept includes strategies for physical and mental health, as well as active self-care for the body, mind, and soul. Positive interests are required for conflict avoidance because people see things positively when engaged in them. Adoption of these physical embodiment notions in sports will be extremely important, but it will necessitate significant adjustments in our way of life. This is due to the fact that self-care necessitates persons setting aside time and space to allow for beneficial interaction between the mind, body, and spirit. The United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Sports for Development and Peace (2014) emphasised the relevance of the skills taught through sports and called for greater investment in sports education. It claims that the abilities help individuals become more self-aware and improve their psychological well-being, which includes enhanced resiliency, self-esteem, and connection with others. According to the United Nations statement, development is defined as a process of expanding people's options and enhancing the possibilities accessible to all members of society through time. The emphasis is on expanding possibilities for both the present and future generations of workers.... The capacity to live a long and healthy life is one of the most essential human attributes necessary for this endeavour. Consequently, they came to the conclusion that sports can assist in the development of specific talents. In addition to the development of physical and psychological characteristics that are critical in conflict prevention, sports have been identified as an important tool in promoting social contact among children and preventing social tensions from forming in their social groups. Sport is considered to be an essential component of many people's social life, especially among young people. Sports bring people together in a joyful and engaging way, assisting in the development of social ties; it fosters connection and enhances communication between individuals and groups, all of which contribute to the strengthening of the social fabric in which we live; and it promotes connection and enhances communication between individuals and groups. When properly organised, sports programmes have the potential to be a powerful instrument in the battle against social exclusion and the integration of marginalised groups into their respective communities. A great quantity of social contact is generated as a result of sports programmes, which accounts for this. The opportunity to engage in sports can help to keep children and adolescents from participating in potentially risky behaviours. The social and personal skills gained via involvement in sports, according to a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) report issued in 2002, may be used to influence a person's decision to use or not take drugs. While participation in sports does not guarantee a drug-free existence, well-designed programmes led by trustworthy individuals can help reduce risky behaviours. Participation in sports, it has also been clearly noticed, provides adolescents with the chance to develop positive relationships with adults and peers, and that these connections have the potential to transform them and help them integrate into constructive activities within the community. In order to alleviate gender disparity, sport is one of the most effective means available. According to

Kaidal (2014) ^[28], athletics may be a great instrument for women's self-empowerment. It assists women in developing leadership and communication abilities, as well as providing social engagement for females outside of the family environment. These abilities provide women with the chance to take part in decision-making in the household and in society as a whole. The integration of people with disabilities into society can be facilitated via participation in sports. It offers them with opportunities for good social connection, which helps them to feel less alone and prejudice is broken down. Physical activities in sports may be therapeutic, since they help improve motor skills and mobility while also being fun. This aids in the development of self-sufficiency and self-confidence in the participants (Kaidal 2014) ^[28]. Despite the fact that sports have been identified as a significant contribution to human development, they have also been highlighted as a possible driver for economic growth. According to Lal Kaka (1999) ^[29], the economic weight that sports produces through activities such as manufacturing sporting equipment, producing sporting events, and providing sports-related services is underlined. In addition to these services, the physical fitness that is developed via sports results in a population that is more physically active and healthier, which in turn leads in higher productivity within the workforce, as previously mentioned. A further description of the project is that it serves as a catalyst for local economic growth and job creation in the region. The culmination of all of these factors indicates that sport has a considerable potential to function as a catalyst for economic growth in a number of ways. It has been demonstrated that sports and social harmony are significantly related. The power of sports to bring people together at all levels, from the grassroots to international championships, transcends boundaries and breaks down barriers. As mentioned, the sports field is typically portrayed as a straightforward and political venue for establishing interaction between opposed parties, rather than a battlefield. Sports have the potential to be utilised as a tool for conflict prevention as well as a component in the establishment of long-term peace and stability. As a result of the positive effects that sports programmes have on social integration and tolerance, they provide an excellent arena for continuing social conversation and bridging social gaps. It may also serve as a strong platform for the transmission of peace messages on a global and local scale, as well as the location of symbolic public acts.

4 Conclusion

There are many similarities between sports and peace education when it comes to resolving and preventing conflict and creating favourable conditions for peace from the inter-personal level to the worldwide level. Respect, honesty, communication, teamwork, empathy, and obedience to the norms and regulations are all taught through well-crafted athletic events as stated in a 1999 UNICEF publication. These principles are conveyed in a joyful and engaging manner through sports.

5. Recommendations

- Peace-building organisations and institutions should have well-articulated and robust theories of peace building so that they can give a deeper understanding of the advantages linked to sports as change agents and transformation agents that might promote societal peace.

- For the sake of preventing war, sport managers, handlers, and fans must learn how to identify contentious circumstances between countries and devise sports techniques to deal with them before they escalate.
- In order to promote peace in our society, the sports environment must begin with athletes, coaches, umpires, fans, and merchants all acting in a peaceful manner.
- To be honest, every sportsperson's watchword should be principles like fairness, fair play, tolerance, and respect for others.
- Every competitive athletic event should stress the values of the Olympic Games, where individual individuals celebrate rather than counting medals for nations. Because of this, we want to diminish the importance of extreme nationalism.
- Sporting programmes should aim to instil principles that promote personal and societal growth.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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