



Engraining of Versatile Personality through Sports; Mandate of NEP 2020 for the Young Generation of our Nation

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Abstract

The integration of sports into education is increasingly recognized as a critical avenue for fostering personality development among young students. Personality traits such as confidence, resilience, leadership, teamwork, and emotional regulation are best nurtured through experiential learning, and sports provide a dynamic platform for this growth. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has marked a paradigm shift in Indian education by making physical education, games, and fitness essential components of the school curriculum rather than treating them as peripheral activities. To explore how NEP 2020 advances the role of sports in personality development by embedding holistic, activity-based, and student-centered approaches into education. The discussion highlights theoretical pathways linking sports participation to self-efficacy, social competence, leadership, and resilience, while also examining the policy's emphasis on inclusivity, indigenous games, and teacher training. Further, the study identifies opportunities created by NEP 2020 for broader curricular legitimacy, improved pedagogy, and student choice, alongside challenges such as infrastructure gaps, lack of trained personnel, and equity in participation. By positioning sports as a vehicle for character building and life skills, NEP 2020 supports the creation of confident, socially responsible, and future-ready citizens. The findings suggest that with effective implementation, NEP 2020 can transform India's educational framework into one that values not only intellectual achievement but also holistic personality development through sports.

Keywords: Personality, Sports, NEP2020, Young Generation Students.

1. Introduction

Personality development in children and adolescents is a holistic process that shapes their behavioural patterns, attitudes, values, and socio-emotional competencies. It encompasses dimensions such as confidence, resilience, self-discipline, leadership, and interpersonal skills, all of which are critical for success in academic, professional, and social life (Roberts & Wood, 2006). Among the various media of fostering personality traits, sports



and physical activities occupy a significant place, as they provide experiential learning opportunities that cannot be replicated in traditional classroom settings (Ghildiyal, 2015).

Sports cultivate teamwork, leadership, perseverance, and emotional regulation by placing young individuals in situations of competition, cooperation, and problem-solving. Participation in games and physical education enhances not only physical fitness but also cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions of growth, contributing directly to personality development (Bailey et al., 2013). In the Indian context, where education has traditionally been centred on academic achievement, integrating sports into mainstream schooling is vital for preparing students as well-rounded individuals capable of navigating modern challenges (Pathak, 2021).

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, introduced by the Government of India, emphasizes holistic and multidisciplinary education, giving a central role to physical education, sports, and wellness (Ministry of Education, 2020). Unlike earlier policies that treated physical activity as a co-curricular activity, NEP 2020 mandates its integration into the core curriculum. The policy highlights “fun-based, discovery-oriented” learning and ensures that every child engages with physical activity, yoga, and sports for health and personality enhancement (Ministry of Education, 2020). This paradigm shift reflects a recognition of the developmental benefits of sports in shaping not only the body but also psychological and social attributes essential for 21st-century citizenship.

1. NEP 2020: Key Provisions Relevant to Physical Education and Sports

NEP 2020 mandates a more holistic, multi-disciplinary school curriculum and specifies that curricula should include “games, sports and fitness” as core components—moving PE from a peripheral activity to an essential part of schooling. It calls for experiential, activity-based pedagogy and recommends trained teachers, flexibility in student choices, and the incorporation of extracurriculars—including sports—into assessment and learning pathways. These provisions provide the institutional legitimacy and structural pathways to harness sport for personality outcomes systematically.

2. Pathways Linking Sports and Personality Growth

- ❖ **Self-efficacy and confidence.** Mastery experiences in sports (skill acquisition, successes in training/competition) raise students’ beliefs in their capabilities, translating into greater classroom initiative and goal-setting behaviours.
- ❖ **Teamwork and social skills.** Team sports require communication, role-taking, and cooperation; these repeated social demands develop empathy, negotiation skills, and the ability to collaborate.
- ❖ **Leadership and responsibility.** Captaincy roles, peer-led drills, and situational decision-making give students practice in leadership and accountability.
- ❖ **Resilience and emotional regulation.** Sports expose children to failure, frustration, and pressure in a relatively safe arena; coping with these produces grit, improved stress management, and emotional stability.



❖ **Cognitive and disciplinary benefits.** Regular physical activity enhances attention, executive functioning, and discipline—traits that shape conscientiousness and academic habits.

3. Holistic Development through the NEP 2020 in Sports

- NEP 2020 shifts focus from rote learning to real understanding and “learning how to learn.”
- Education aims at cognitive growth, character building, and holistic development.
- Emphasis on equipping students with 21st-century skills.
- Curriculum and pedagogy will be revamped across all stages of education.
- Specific skills and values will be integrated from pre-school to higher education.
- NCERT will identify and incorporate these skills in the National Curriculum Framework.
- Teaching–learning processes will be made more engaging and meaningful.

4. NEP 2020 focuses on the School Curriculum

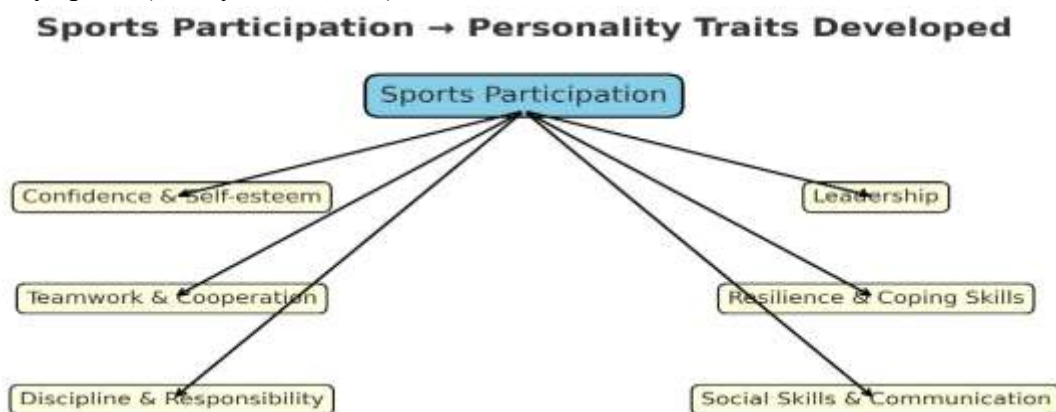
Aspect	Curricular Activities	Co-curricular Activities
Nature	Formal, academic, and subject-oriented.	Informal, activity-based, and complementary to academics.
Examples	Languages, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Computer Education, Environmental Studies.	Sports & Games, Music, Dance, Drama, Debates, Art & Craft, Social Service, Field Trips.
Objectives	Develop cognitive skills and subject knowledge. Prepare students for higher education and careers.	Develop personality, creativity, and leadership. - Foster teamwork, discipline, ethics, and social responsibility.
Assessment	Regular examinations, assignments, projects, and grading systems.	Participation, performance, observation, and sometimes competitions or awards.
Focus Area	Intellectual and academic growth.	Physical, emotional, social, and cultural growth.
Approach	Structured, compulsory, and time-bound.	Flexible, student-centered, and interest-based.
Contribution to Development	Sharpens reasoning, analytical ability, and academic competence.	Builds confidence, resilience, communication skills, and a holistic personality.

5. Sports as a Key Extra-curricular Domain

Sports, being one of the most popular and impactful ECAs, contribute not only to physical fitness but also to personality and character building. They instill resilience, self-confidence, goal-setting, and coping mechanisms for success and failure (Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2005). Under NEP 2020, extra-curricular activities, particularly sports, are no longer considered peripheral but core elements of education. By emphasizing physical fitness, teamwork, resilience, and cultural integration, the policy transforms sports into a crucial medium of holistic development, empowering students to become confident, balanced, and socially responsible individuals.

6. Sports Participation and Personality Development

Sports participation is widely recognized as a key factor in fostering the holistic development of personality among children, adolescents, and young adults. Beyond its contribution to physical fitness, sports serve as a platform for cultivating psychological resilience, social competence, and emotional maturity. The philosophy of education emphasizes that personality development is not confined to classroom learning alone, but is also shaped by experiences gained through extra-curricular and co-curricular activities, especially sports (Bailey et al., 2013).

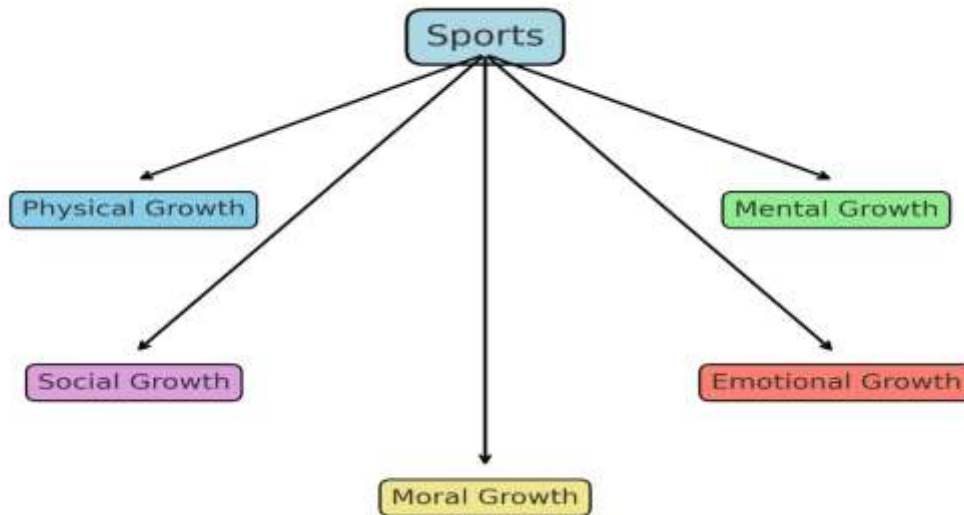


8. National Sports Policy on the Educational Value of Sports:

The **National Sports Policy (NSP) 2025**, also known as *Khelo Bharat Niti 2025*, underscores the importance of nurturing **young school-going players** as the foundation for India's long-term sporting excellence. It aligns closely with the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, integrating sports and physical education within the school curriculum to foster holistic development and lifelong fitness habits. The policy emphasizes **early talent identification** at the school and district levels, ensuring that promising athletes receive structured training, access to quality infrastructure, and professional coaching support. Furthermore, NSP 2025 introduces initiatives to train and upskill physical education teachers, promote **mass**

participation through inter-school competitions, and develop community sports hubs to make sports accessible to all children. Through these efforts, the policy envisions transforming schools into the nurseries of future champions and embedding a culture of sports across the education system (Government of India, 2025; PMO India, 2025).

Sports as Wholesome Skillful Education



9. NEP 2020’s Potential Impact on Personality Development and Opportunities

- ❖ **Curricular legitimacy and scaling:** By making sports part of the core curriculum, NEP 2020 creates opportunities to reach a broader population of students—especially those who would otherwise lack access to structured physical activities.
- ❖ **Teacher training and pedagogy:** NEP’s emphasis on trained, multidisciplinary teachers allows PE to be delivered through developmental pedagogy (play-based, competency-focused), which is more effective for socio-emotional learning.
- ❖ **Flexibility and student choice:** Allowing students to pursue diverse interests—sports included—supports identity formation and intrinsic motivation, both crucial to healthy personality development.
- ❖ **Policy-aligned state initiatives:** States are developing PE resources and textbooks (e.g., recent state-level “Khel Yatra” style textbooks and programs) that operationalise NEP recommendations into classroom activities and teacher supports. Such implementations bridge policy to practice.

10. Conclusions

1. New Education Policy is aiming to bring the positive impact on the life of the young generation of our nation by exposing them to situations which will help in becoming a productive citizen of the society.
2. New Education Policy highlights the role of sports in critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving attitude among its practitioners.



3. The amalgamation of the new education policy and the National sports policy is the right combination for grooming young India and achieving the target of Vikist Bharat@2047.
4. Life skills like communication, teamwork, and adaptability are better learned in the sports ground than in any classroom or lab.
5. It's time to move from Padhega India to Badhega India Khelega India to Jeetega India.

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