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## A Qualitative Analysis of Disabled Female Athletes

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### ABSTRACT

The flow of resources to people is improved by social capital via official and informal networks and social support. Over the past two decades, social capital has been utilised at examining the processes that produces a favourable and safe society for nurturing distinct identities and behaviours. In India, the percentage of women who are handicapped is about 44%. This population experiences stigmatisation, low quality of life, and dysfunctional social and psychological functioning in addition to a lack of social and physical autonomy. Sport contributes to the development of a feeling of community and belonging, according to earlier research. The interaction of disability, gender, and sports in the creation and maintenance of social capital is the subject of our research, which focuses on a group of five female athletes with impairments. Through story and content analysis, a qualitative research based on primary and secondary data was carried out. According to the findings, sports may help people build their social capital and break down a few physical and mental obstacles. Finally, the research demonstrates the advantages of social capital's sociocultural components.

**Keywords:** People with disabilities, social capital, Paralympics, women with disabilities, sports.

### INTRODUCTION

Carol Thomson, a materialist social modelist, defined politicised disability and sought to address material needs through increased socio-political participation. Critical Disability Studies analyse Disability in Terms of Material Barriers to Work, Education, and Community Living Experiences in Everyday Life (3). A societal attitude known as "ableism" views disability as a disease or "abnormality" that must be treated, corrected, or eradicated. It implies that people with disabilities are placed lower on the scale of values and abilities than able-bodied people (4). In order to define disability from a social standpoint, feminist studies look for its relevance in the interactions of bodies with their social and physical environments. Instead of disease or inferiority, they see

disability as a "cultural interpretation of human variety." Disability as an exclusionary system stigmatises human differences and assigns bodies a lower status. Roman Ossowski claims that the following variables, in particular, have an impact on the status of people with disabilities: characteristics of the social environment, visibility, and the physical condition of the impaired (5).

The network of social links, which often represents individuals with comparatively better life opportunities and lifestyles, is what determines aspects such as accessibility, representation, and social status. The phrase "social capital," coined by Pierre Bourdieu in 1986, refers to the "aggregate of resources associated to mutual acquaintance and recognition, which supplies each member of the group with collectively held capital" (6). He contends that social capital promotes social mobility and may be used to achieve economic success.

The flow of resources to people through formal and informal networks and social support is improved by social capital. Consumption habits, political views, trust amongst people, and cooperative work increase social bonds within the in-group while retaining distinctions with the out-group, which serves as a barrier to inclusion (7). Therefore, socially cohesive exclusion serves as a resource for the privileged and has a negative impact on underprivileged populations, who often lack the opportunity to organise, share information, and resist. Social capital may be readily acquired by people who have easy access to the public realm and who can adhere to the normative expectations of society since it is based on social bonding, connecting, and bridging networks, which rely on individuals' participation in a social network. Bio-politics, which establishes the narrative of "normal" and "not-normal" bodies via political scrutiny of biological traits, is crucial in creating and maintaining social networks built on unwavering trust. As cultural connotations are attached to bodily attributes, "Femaleness is a natural type of physical and mental insufficiency." Since social capital is thought to benefit from having access to resources like emotional and material support and health information produced through social networks, marginalised people like women and the handicapped continue to experience conventional and ongoing deprivation (8, 9).

The discussion of social capital over the last ten years has changed how communities may function to become safer and more visible and more productive in environments where healthy identities and behaviours could develop. The goal for social regeneration and social inclusion is fundamentally based on the dispersed and disputed character of social capital, as Coalter (7) notes

(10). Since persons with emotional, physical, and mental impairments are stigmatised as defective, alienated from society, and subjected to the cultural judgement of inferiority, feminist disability studies closely examine this process. In order to comprehend marginalisation, identity, intersectionality, and embodiment are used. Despite the diversity of its members, modern society is heavily reliant on the reorganisation of inclusive organisations and institutions, such as sports, to foster social peace and togetherness. Among the many social components that make up a community, sport is generally acknowledged as a means of fostering social capital (1, 11). Sports have the ability to create an inclusive democratic involvement via fair and orderly means since

they improve the tendency for group interaction and the formation of voluntary associations. This potential has to be successfully harnessed for a beneficial social transformation.

Private-public partnerships, tax benefits (and expectations for CSR), and a decrease in social solidarity are important components of the new institutional structure of the "neoliberal state" (12). This transition from embedded liberalism to a neoliberal state means that community-level sport or development should function within the institutional frameworks and market circumstances inherent in neo-liberalism and globalism. This shift necessitates that athletics play two functions. First, as a result of government laws, policies, programmes, money, and sport administration, inside the conventional development framework for grassroots and/or elite sport activities (13). The use of sport as a forum to address societal problems and provide possibilities for socially disadvantaged people has taken on a second function. According to studies, amateur sports have the power to inspire, uplift, and foster a sense of community in the face of societal evils (1). Hutzler (1990) presented a concept of sports-based empowerment coupled with the viewpoint of empowerment in handicap sport. The goal of this concept is to guarantee that people have control over their own and their surroundings in order to develop skills that are often denied by disability (14, 15).

"Social controls are found in traditional and modern social structures, and participatory activities, such as sport, give people a sense of community identity and purpose and help prevent them from engaging in antisocial activities," the Australian Sports Commission reported (1) in a report on the effects of sport in the community (1, 11). According to Tonts, competitive sport permeates local, cultural, political, and economic interactions in a number of Australian towns and areas (11, 16, 17). Additionally, he asserts that sports clubs in particular are often seen as a vehicle for the creation of social capital because of the "associational" aspect of sports involvement. Sport has the power to break through social boundaries related to class, religion, and ethnicity and foster new friendships and social connections. This applies to participants as well as spectators and non-participants, and it may ultimately result in an expansion of the reciprocity and trust standards. In other words, sport facilitates links or passes between various groups and social networks (1). According to Atherley (18), social capital is crucial to daily living in rural communities. District athletic clubs, according to her, are a significant part of neighbourhood life. Social inclusion or exclusion from such organisations may have an impact on everyday activities, social networks, community integration, and the flow of information that fosters a feeling of belonging in residents (1).

India's handicapped population includes around 44% women (2) Women with disabilities (WWDs) suffer from stigma based on their gender, sex, and impairments, which lowers their quality of life

and causes social and psychological dysfunction. The cycle of marginalisation is made worse by a lack of social and physical autonomy. Contrary to "normal" persons, women with disabilities have a lower likelihood of receiving social, personal, and legal help (19), mostly because of physical, infrastructural, and attitude restrictions. Lack of knowledge, awareness, and enforcement of laws pertaining to the rights of WWDs (WDI Network), among other factors, these people into the social and psychological darkness, where they experience multifaceted dysfunction. According to Ferri (20), having a handicap and being a woman are socially and historically mediated characteristics. Many people with disabilities do not feel negatively about their situation, but instead are stigmatised, generalised, and exposed to stereotype; this is only made worse in the case of a woman. Physically disabled people are required to live sedentary lives and under house arrest, with fewer social connections and lower social involvement as a result of stigmatisation, which results in social isolation (21); (22).

Historically, ideas of athletics were associated with concepts of maleness and masculinity. The conventional ideas of what it means to be a woman were at odds with the traditional ideas of what it means to be an athlete (23). But with the feminist movement of the 1970s, women's involvement grew in many fields that had previously been dominated by males. A productive and subordinated body is only usable, in Foucault's view, since it is immediately implicated in a political capital where power relations have an immediate grip on it. Body is handled, formed, and educated to comply, react, become skilled, and grow its force as the object and goal of power (24). With the development of modern civilizations, bodies were used as a target for imposing responsibilities, prohibitions, and restrictions. The body's language, gestures, attitudes, and internal structure are all regulated and observed, "otherizing" bodies that do not conform to the "ideal body image." Feminist studies examines how these "otherized" bodies that are believed to be "incapable, unsuitable" are made to deal with the cultural judgement of inferiority. Through the exclusion of "unfit" bodies and gendered disparities within it, sports as an institution reflect on stratifying societal processes. The visibility of gendered attitudes in games together with the empowerment of the underprivileged via shared ownership would therefore be necessary for sports to be refashioned to be used as a social instrument of inclusion and unity.

Disability sport refers to organised sports in which people with physical disabilities take part, whether in settings that are integrated or tailored to people with disabilities. Sport and physical activity improve self-perception, self-efficacy, and self-confidence, as well as the quality of life, physical and mental health, as well as the integration of mind and body development, as well as academic accomplishment, social and cognitive growth, and well-being (29). Furthermore, a number of researchers have emphasised the importance of social competence, perceptions of

bodily competence (30), perceptions of the body for both able-bodied and disabled people (31, 32), and community integration through increased acceptance of the emotional and discriminatory effects of disability, which subsequently enables people to "come out" and ensures the development through sport (33). A platform for the lonely group of girls and women to face and exhibit their skills rather than their impairments may be offered via sport and fitness programmes for WWDs. In their research of 34 WWDs, Guthrie and Castelnuovo (34) found that physical exercise and athletics challenge preconceived notions about impairments and disabilities. Thus, this works in tandem with their personal development and evolution to substantially and positively contribute to their empowerment.

Women's bodies undergo gender construction from an early age, and when it is practical, ideal representations elevate it. Poverty, starvation, a severe workload, and gender discrimination all contribute to the construction of the gendered bodies of the lowest castes and classes (35). The idea of "biology as destiny," according to feminist research, in which the natural material body was being treated as a biological entity so justifying inequality or disparities, was first put to the test. The female body has also been used as a symbol of the country and the society (36). The most successful cyborg athletes may be referred to as "supercrips" in Paralympic sport (37). Supercrips are those who "show that it can be done, that one can overcome the odds and achieve the unattainable" via their courageous, dedicated, and hard labour (12, 37). Thus, the supercrip is the victorious athlete.

And also receives some prominent media attention. Superscript athletes are not included in the framework of the Paralympics since they are often ostracised due to the severity or form of their handicap. The categorization procedure that athletes with disabilities must go through to decide if they are eligible to participate plays a role in this marginalisation (37). Classification is the process of designating bodies as eligible (or ineligible) for participation in sport for people with disabilities. Body culture (Howe's adaption of Brownell, 1995), which emphasises the relationship between the role played by organisations and society in the development of such constructs, may be used to explain this categorisation (38). To place the bodies of the individual athletes into the social context of the practise community, Bourdieu's (1977, 1990) idea of habitus—defined as a habitual, embodied activity that collectively creates a culture—is crucial. The methods used for the structuring of the sports activity, also known as categorization, are essential components of this specific habitus in the area of sport for the handicapped. In order to create an egalitarian environment where the successful athletes in each class will have an equal opportunity of building physical capital after competition, processes of categorization within impaired sport develop differences between the physical potential of athletes (39). Whether categorising based on weight,

gender, or the severity of a handicap, classification should provide an atmosphere where sport may be practised fairly (37, 38).

This essay aims to trace the contemporary discourse on the intersections of sports, gender, and disability in the creation and preservation of social capital. How people with disabilities increase their agency and social solidarity using sports as an inclusive medium of empowerment and social cohesion continues to be a primary topic of focus for the research. The marginalisation of gendered problems among impaired athletes in both competitive and leisure sports has resulted in societal imbalances that can only be changed by reducing marginalisation and increasing representation. The following the study's goal is to comprehend the sociocultural significance of social capital among female athletes who are physically challenged.

### **METHODOLOGY**

Five individuals were used in the study, and semi-structured interviews, a tried-and-true approach for deeper analysis, were used (28). Women with impairments between the ages of 18 and 25 who have participated in national sports for four years were selected as respondents. All of the respondents were raised in metropolitan areas with a household earning less than 8,000 rupees per month, had at least a 10th grade education, and at least 40% impairment (40).

This work's ethical approval was obtained from an organization-wide independent committee (No. DRS/2017/CWF001-2). With reference to the current literature and in accordance with our study target areas, 32 questions were developed. All of the participants were contacted before to data collection, and their assent was recorded in consent forms that included included information about the study's specifics.

An average of 70 minutes was allotted for the in-person interviews. They were taped, then transcribed, and then the responders were asked to confirm them once again. The participants were asked to explain how their experiences had changed in each aspect both before and after participating in sports as part of the data collection process. The information was acquired in Bengali, translated into English, and verified three times with the interviewee. The narrative analysis approach was used for the study of primary data.

### **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The concerns of self-concept and self-image are important to psychologists and sociologists, and as a result, there are many researches on this topic. The sex appeal and flex appeal of the physically active lady, according to Pricilla Choi's research (42). She claims, "The concept of femininity is

characterised by the pursuit of and obsession with 'beautiful. We learn this need for beauty from an early age, and it has an impact on why women participate in sport and physical activity. Our first responder, a State and national level athlete, described how being blind made her feel inferior in a society where making friends and accumulating wealth depend heavily on physical attractiveness. "When I was a kid and wasn't doing sports, I didn't have the confidence to talk to others. Due to my blindness, I had the uneasiness of being the subject of jokes and conversation. "Up to this point, my sole regret is that I don't have access to or the opportunity for proper formal instruction. I was no longer able to practise on the school grounds after my secondary examinations. Although others were complimentary of my athletic abilities, no one (apart from my family) truly assisted or encouraged me to keep doing sports. This 19-year-old woman described a number of situations when her inability to do things "naturally" and a lack of proper training as a result of socioeconomic limitations served as obstacles in her daily life.

We have six people living in our home, and only my father makes any money, and even that is just a meagre 2000 rupees per month. I have no opportunity to practise my sport outside of official competitions. Even if I have enough of time, I feel deprived since there aren't enough resources or money, so the only thing left to do is run every day to maintain my body in shape. She thought that the only way she could transcend societal barriers and establish her own identity and agency was via sports. Sports allowed me to explore my identity and provide a social space for me; therefore I kept playing despite obstacles of both a physical and social nature. She went on to explain how she had developed her self-confidence by regular and persistent participation in sports, which had also given her mental fortitude and self-worth in an unbreakable manner. Her social circle has grown as a result of group involvement via sports, increasing her tendency for interaction and connection with others. Sports provided me tremendous mental power to overcome my anxiety and improve communication, which is crucial when one is outside the home and engaged in activities that call for mutual support, even if I still struggle with it as a national level athlete. Evidently, our responder felt confidence in asserting that via since of her active participation in athletics, she has gained a sense of equality and the ability to lead because she can train well. Since I have practised on my own for many years and don't get regular professional instruction. I now feel sufficiently prepared to be able to instruct inexperienced impaired people in the game after amassing multiple training experiences from various locations wherever I have gone to play.

What she could do, uninterrupted by her disabilities and with strong family support, is something that many other women like her can do as well. Despite severe relative poverty, her desire to keep playing sports has helped her not just psychologically and socially, but also financially. "Since I play competitively, I get scholarships, which help me pay for my further education. Additionally, it



gives me the chance to access city areas in Kolkata, India, as well as resources and to learn new things. Young girls like her may overcome the barriers posed by gendered handicap and become more fully integrated into society, feeling more independent and less "otherized" and dependent on others. Her life's concept, "The spirit of living is to live materially and always go ahead," was well captured in her narrative. Personal narratives like this one highlight the value of social capital for living a socially better life with reasonably improved prospects of success and how sports may be an easy and effective tool for both social and personal development.

The advantages of participating in sports for women are endless. These benefits were first acknowledged in the President's Council's historic study, "Physical activity and sport in the lives of girls," which took into account the opinions of several stakeholders (43). In that report, there is page after page of evidence supporting the health benefits of sport and physical activity, including decreased risks for obesity, heart disease, osteoporosis, and other chronic diseases, as well as psychological and academic advantages like improved grades, higher standardised test scores, and a decreased risk of dropping out. The best-selling book *Reviving Ophelia* (44), as well as the more current *Raising our sporty girls* (45), have made public appearances in recent years.

The advantages of sport and physical exercise for enhancing girls' wellbeing have been lauded, and parents have been advised to take whatever steps are necessary to get their daughters engaged (46). She often stressed the need of effective training programmes to elevate and involve the marginalized-disabled people in society while engaging with a national level impaired athlete. "I believe that as I sought play and learned to live with a tenacious battling spirit, I have grown to appreciate and feel fulfilled by me more and more. Even though I still struggle with shyness and depression due to my limitations, I can now deal with them more readily because I am confident in my talents, which have been actively developed via ongoing social engagement. Collective sports-based activities continue to be essential for fostering inclusive social change and promoting good self-exploration. Our young response is an example of how coordinated social involvement aids in the building of socio-economic capital, meeting the needs of individuals and society, despite considerable intersectional marginalisation of class, gender, and disability.

Childhood play experiences should be taken into consideration, together with other socializational agents (such family, classmates, and coaches), when forecasting a handicapped woman athlete's future engagement in sports. Our next responder, a 19-year-old national-level competitor in disability sport, explained how her early engagement in swimming and chess despite her vision handicap changed how she saw herself and life. "Since birth, I have been 75% blind in one eye. I come from a struggling household. I struggled to engage with strangers and was never quite confident in my abilities. "I used to watch people play chess, but I was unable to inquire about it. I

picked up how to play on my own via careful observation and two days of very brief formal instruction from a senior I knew. "After I began playing sports, I started travelling to other areas, which really aided in boosting my self-confidence and interacting with people outside of my family." She stated that she felt inferior because of her handicap, and because of her biological differences, there was social injustice. "Due to bad circumstances, I am unable to acquire proper instruction and have enough room to practise each day.

The financial situation of our family "Being a woman with impairments, it becomes quite difficult in communities to be able to gain resources that would enable me to continue both with schooling and sports." Despite being aware of the situation, she lacked the courage to speak out since she had limited access to social networks. "I feel the impulse to talk less among a gathering of 'regular people' because I'm afraid of being misunderstood or unfairly judged," Swimming and chess competitions, as well as the subsequent praise received after the competition, have lessened my tendency to withdraw from the social circle of the majority of the "normal" people, leading to greater travel. "Overall, my dread of the social realm has been diminished via interaction with other groups and individuals." Our reply, who clearly declares, "I feel extremely embarrassed at the social gaze and quickly my self-esteem decreases substantially," explains how the stigma of handicap produces anxiety inside these people. But being engaged in communal life has strengthened and fed her abilities, drive, and self-assurance to be a social creature. Even though I sometimes feel uncomfortable and backward in social situations, I attempt to get over my nervousness by striking up discussions and taking the wise advice of my elders.

When speaking about girls, there is a feeling of the Other, according to Vrinda Nabar in "Caste as Woman" (47). The rights and benefits of a daughter/girl and a son/boy clearly differ from one another. The female child in India is an alien from conception, a truth that is subsequently confirmed by countless sad cases of poverty and prejudice. Therefore, it is clear that women in family settings have had a worse success rate negotiating the time and finances required to sustain athletic involvement than their male counterparts. A married woman with impairments who desires to play and schedules practises can run across opposition from her family members. However, there are some outliers, such as one of our interviewees who have been playing kabaddi at the national and international levels for more than fifteen years despite an injury and a subsequent marriage. "Back in school, I used to play I hurt my leg playing kabaddi with other kids, which is how I got it. Despite the fact that the occurrence altered my life, I continued to play and became active in sports. The interaction and interview with this female athlete have unmistakably shown the double oppressive exploitation that results from the junction of gender and handicap, which has disastrous effects on the development of self, personhood, and agency. When I am unable to

interact normally with "general" folks, it pains me. "Scope of obtaining help wasn't open to me since my mother was the only provider for our family, which included myself and my three other sisters and my father, who died when I was very young. Because of this, my family was unable to support me both financially and socially. "I had no worries when I played Kabaddi as a 'able-bodied' person since I was entirely confident in my skills and talents." Due to socioeconomic restrictions, she was unable to access training resources and began her own self-training at an early age. She has been married to a normal person who has supported her sports profession the whole time. "After being married, I was able to pursue formal training because of the assistance of my spouse and in-laws." "I feel like I'm the greatest at what I do today," By talking with her, I was able to see how, despite having a highly successful profession, she still feels inferior to and in front of her husband because of the stigma attached to having a disability. Even when I am properly clothed, I can sense people's uneasy glances at my husband and I when we are at any social function. People feel sorry for him since his spouse is handicapped. However, after playing in my international matches, I strive to ignore stares and discomfort. Her sports career has allowed her to explore many people and locations, which has taught her to accept any circumstances with grace and concentrate on positive aspects.

The demands of homemaking and childrearing are often a burden for women in middle-class and lower-income households. These women do not have access to chances to play sports because they lack the funds to cover childcare, household assistance, and sport participation costs. They don't have enough free time, access—such as a vehicle to drive them to the sports venues—or access to local gyms and grounds for practising sports. Furthermore, Informal sports are often group gatherings of friends. A woman will have even fewer options and less incentive to become involved if she lacks the finances, social networks, and connections that enable them to do so (14). This is true for both men and women, of course, but women from middle- and lower-class households are more likely than their male counterparts to lack the social network that fosters an interest in and participation in sports. Women from households with higher incomes could experience different circumstances. They have social networks made up of other women who have the means to continue participating in sports at least to a greater extent.

(31) During one of our interview sessions, a responder explained how, despite being a national athlete, a lack of recognition and opportunities hindered the advancement of both her and her profession. Due to a lack of resources and sufficient social connections to make arrangements, it was very difficult for me to attend matches as a woman with disabilities from a lower class home. Despite these obstacles, she was able to attend the second invitational international kabaddi match using money she had saved up. "Sports helped me greatly strengthen my resolve and mental

fortitude. I've become more eager to battle and never feel like giving up. My social circle has grown as a result, and I feel more appreciated today. This sparked our respondent's tenacity and resolve, and now that she has control over her social life, she feels in a sturdier and more secure position. She expressed emphatically how doing sports has helped her overcome stress, pessimism, and a lack of confidence while boosting her self-esteem.

Women have long complained that the media doesn't devote enough focus to sports. The growth of sport in general has been severely hampered as a result. When discussing gender stereotypes in televised sports coverage, Nathalie Koivula notes that "sports fans often encounter sports via various mass media" (48). It is vital to evaluate the possible impact that mass media may have in order to further our knowledge of the cultural values contained in sports and to examine existing values and power structures towards men and women.

influencing perceptions of gendered sports behaviour (48). It seems that the way in which televised sports are covered continues to maintain gendered divides and conventional notions of femininity and masculinity (48). Female athletes continue to be treated as second-class citizens who are trivialised, sexualized, and denigrated in the majority of powerful organisations, according to an overwhelming amount of factual data obtained from media coverage of sport. People internalise the words, ideals, and ideologies that the media propagates, therefore if sexist notions are present in media texts or commentary, the effects of this internalisation are detrimental to the careers of female athletes. The media contributes to the limitation of women's full potential as athletes by consistently depicting females in ways that emphasise their sexual difference from males. All of these media creations place a strong emphasis on power, including the power of access to money, opportunities, and identities as athletes (46). A 26-year-old disabled swimmer described how her inability to continue performing sports was severely hampered by her lack of awareness. "My mum signed me up for disability matches initially. I've had a variety of playing, winning, and engaging with other handicapped players' parents and other players' families experiences. Since we were from a lower middle class household and my mother invested a lot of time and money to make sure I could play, but there was no recognition or chance to earn a decent future, after a few years she stopped taking me to these tournaments. Disability prevents us from accessing natural resources and health-related resources, and a lack of competent coaching and training prevented my mother from continuing to encourage my involvement in sports. But playing has always encouraged me to view life positively. In any case, I don't feel inferior to the general populace; on the contrary, I find inspiration in them. "I feel terribly alone when I imagine myself without sports." "Traditional games like 'kana-machi' and 'kit-kit' helped me grow up playing and connecting with other handicapped persons and people in general." "My senior advises me to coach individuals as they

do specific things when I compete at the national level since there are certain that I am unable to perform.

Because of this, there is peace between us, and even they perceive my participation in the activities.

The kinds of sports that are accessible to women and girls reflect prevailing cultural conceptions of femininity. Women in our Indian society often confront obstacles that deter them from participating in sports and undoubtedly restrict how seriously any woman may pursue sports to the point of training at an elite level. These obstacles are structural as well as normative (i.e., they form attitudes about what is and isn't suitable) (i.e. restricting access to opportunities and to the things they need to take advantage of the opportunity). The usual viewpoint of ableism was changed by a second respondent, who was also a State level athlete. No physiological disability could compete with this girl's optimism and sense of hope to make her feel less capable or prepared to engage in any sociocultural activities or make decisions. "I do get confused sometimes, but that has never stopped me from trying new things." "My parents always treated me and my other siblings (who are generally) equally," says the author. "I never viewed my handicap as any kind of impediment." Thus, early socialisation was crucial in bolstering her will and right to undertake actions on a level playing field with everyone else. Her desire to see the globe and travel has always inspired her to keep doing sports. I have continued to see plays because I like travelling. "In our home, financial constraints prevented us from travelling, but sports have enabled me to do so." My main problem is that I often have to postpone matches due to health reasons. In terms of life chances and lifestyles, economic constraints have led to social stratification, which for her has led to the neglect of her education and access to health care. "My hesitation to speak regardless of my knowledge on matters has decreased ever since I have started to travel and mingle communicate with a lot of people, " she said. Now, I believe I can start a conversation in an emergency circumstance with ease. My self-assurance in my body, intellect, and health has grown. Her success as a national team player has increased her self-assurance, wealth, and conviction, not only in athletics but in other spheres of life.

as well as other hobbies. "My first experience in an official impaired match was in Kolkata, and while I was extremely anxious, I felt like I could do it too when I watched other challenged swimmers." I learned to play by watching the motions rather than receiving any instruction. "I won my first match, and I was immediately dispatched to Bangalore for the next match. That was crucial in establishing my self-trust and consistency." The excluded have suffered negative effects as a result of society's prolonged, never-ending efforts to separate, accept heteronormative behaviour as "normal," and isolate the "other". Disability and gender interact to complicate

circumstances and opportunities for those who fall outside the "able-bodied" and "able-minded" categories, exacerbating their socioeconomic barriers. However, in order to bring about the fair and equal development of society, the functioning of sports in these circumstances must be intervened.

Individuals' subjective and objective well-being is deeply correlated with sports, according to several definitions. The result of subjective well-being brought on by sports is the development of an aggressive, active self that aids in enhancing the mental joys. While impartiality is reliant on the athletes' performance, their capacity to make a living off of it, and their capacity to follow their aspirations. These favourable conditions will help people's social interactions and decision-making positions to flourish. In this sense, every one of our responders reaffirms the logic that sports would be essential and would unavoidably be complicit in fostering social capital via the inclusive involvement of all societal stakeholders. Five impaired athletes who participated in disability sports passionately described how their lives had changed both before and after their involvement. These ladies have emancipated themselves despite coming from a disadvantaged group in society via persistent practise and playing.

The majority of the people we interviewed came from less affluent economic situations. Their living conditions did not allow them to afford adequate healthcare for their disabilities. But these ladies choose to fight for their own lives and means of subsistence. Through repeated passion and dedicated efforts, they continued their careers in Sports. Many of them continue to receive higher education from the sports scholarships, despite their successful career in athletics and Sports. It has helped them to negotiate with their vulnerabilities and cope with the impairments. Exposure to Their desire to explore oneself, other people, and places in ways they haven't previously has been helped by collaborative activities outside of their recognised community. All of the athletes we spoke with expressed a desire to play and pursue a career in sports (49). Indian women athletes with impairments are on par with all other female athletes worldwide. They work just as hard and are just as good as other "abled" or "masculine" athletes, but they encounter considerably more difficult challenges. Girls who shared their personal hardships also advised us on how to improve the situation for women athletes with disabilities in India (46). The effectiveness of these changes via sport programmes depends heavily on their long-term viability or sustainability in providing social benefits. More flexibility and choice are required by modern society, and this should apply to how local communities and people access a variety of options. All community and individual requirements cannot be met by a one-size-fits-all strategy. To supply a variety of goods, including low-cost, locally generated, grass roots possibilities and

expanded public/private/third sector-linking social capital projects, it is necessary to move beyond present sport delivery processes. However, depending on this mostly volunteer-based sector to provide social effects carries some risk. Since volunteering is largely a transient, ad hoc, and elective procedure, attainable results are never certain. By fostering unity in heterogeneity and justice without stratification, inclusive involvement and systematic representation will synchronistically bring about social changes and be beneficial to society (1).

The research has several ramifications for disability sports in general. Sports have been demonstrated to support a variety of psychological characteristics (50), but the contribution of sports to the development of social capital among women with disabilities in India has just recently been studied. This research if Future research that includes more respondents will be beneficial for intersectional policies that emphasise gender, sports, and disability rights. This research also demonstrates the exclusion of women with disabilities from society and the significance of social capital in removing these obstacles.

### **CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTION**

The aforementioned examples show how sport may be used in a variety of ways to support community development, social capital building, and sustainability building. That is, a lot of good things have come out of utilising athletics in this way, which supports our study's primary goal. The socio-cultural components of social capital also came into focus with all five respondents, who saw sports as a crucial unifying factor in enhancing their socio-cultural index. Even though it only included 5 participants, the research paints a comprehensive picture of the value of sports for persons with impairments, particularly among women, in overcoming both mental and physical limitations. One of the study's key limitations is the small number of respondents. The study's limitations may also be increased by the absence of the social capital's economic component. Finally, the use of narrative analysis has the potential to limit the study's ability to address larger primary issues. We might get more specific suggestions about the necessary strategies for the development of social capital for women with disabilities from further dynamic research with more participants.

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