

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sports Development has emerged as a prominent concern both within academic research and the broader realms of sports organization and administration. (Houlihan, Barrie, and Mick Green) have emphasized the growing significance of sports development as an area of study, highlighting its crucial role in shaping social, cultural, and economic outcomes. This concern is not merely theoretical but is deeply rooted in global policy frameworks, as exemplified by the International Charter of Physical Education and Sports (UNESCO, 1978). The Charter asserts that "every human being has a fundamental right of access to physical education and sport, essential for the full development of his personality." It further emphasizes that the freedom to cultivate physical, intellectual, and moral capacities through physical education and sport must be safeguarded both within educational systems and across other dimensions of social life.

Given the integral role of sports in human development, the formulation and implementation of effective sports policies have become a critical area of inquiry. Therefore, this chapter embarks on a comprehensive exploration of the literature related to sports policy implementation and Sports Development in Northeast India and the country as a whole. The chapter begins by introducing the concept of policy, a term that is both broad and multifaceted, yet central to the core of this study. A clear understanding of policy, and its various interpretations, is crucial for navigating the complex landscape of sports governance and administration.

The literature on policy analysis is rich with diverse theoretical perspectives and analytical frameworks, each offering unique insights into the processes and outcomes of policy-making. According to Houlihan (2005), the study of public policy can be approached at three distinct levels: macro, meso, and micro. The macro level encompasses theories of the state, focusing on the overarching social and political systems and structures that define a country or region. These systems are often resistant to change, providing a stable yet challenging environment for

policy implementation. In contrast, micro-level studies zoom in on specific decisions, organizations, or local cases, offering a more granular and situational perspective. This level of analysis is often used to understand the immediate and localized impacts of policy decisions.

Situated between these two is the meso level, which concentrates on national organizations such as ministries, non-ministerial bodies, and interest groups. It is at this level that public policy becomes most operational and manageable, as it involves the translation of broad state policies into actionable programs and initiatives. The meso level thus forms the core of this study, providing a focused lens through which the implementation of sports policies in Northeast India can be evaluated.

This chapter ultimately seeks to develop a holistic theoretical framework that not only addresses the specific context of sports policy implementation in Northeast India but also contributes to the broader literature on sports policy. By synthesizing insights from various levels of policy analysis, the chapter aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence the success or failure of sports policies in this unique and culturally diverse region. This framework will serve as the foundation for the subsequent evaluation of sports policy implementation, with the goal of informing future policy-making and enhancing the effectiveness of sports development initiatives in Northeast India.

2.1. POLICY

Policy can be defined in various ways depending on the specific aspects and dimensions that are emphasized, reflecting its inherently diverse and interdisciplinary nature. This complexity arises from the fact that policy does not exist in a vacuum but rather interacts with a wide range of social, economic, political, and cultural factors. As a result, definitions of policy can vary significantly based on the context in which it is being applied, the goals it aims to achieve, and the theoretical frameworks through which it is analyzed.

Hogwood and Gunn (1984) argued that the term 'policy' can be perceived as having 10 meanings, such as a series of proposals, governmental decisions, programmes of actions or an aspiration or articulation of general purposes. For example, Lasswell (1951, p. 5) defined policy as 'designating the most important choices made either in organised or in private life'. Birkland (2016), however, emphasised that policy is a statement by government – at whatever level, in whatever form – of what it intends to do about a public problem. Public policy must therefore be defined and explained to study policy at the state level. Considine (1994) stated that public policy is an action that uses governmental authority to commit resources in support of a preferred value.

Hogwood and Gunn (1984) characterized the subjective nature of defining public policy, stating that "any public policy is subjectively defined by an observer as being such and is usually perceived as comprising a series of patterns of related decisions to which many circumstances and personal, group, and organizational influences have contributed." This notion of subjectivity in policy definition is not isolated. Hecló (1972) further emphasized that the very nature of a policy can vary depending on the observer, pointing out that what one person or group might consider a policy could be seen differently by another, depending on their perspective, interests, and the context in which they operate.

This idea of subjectivity is echoed across the literature, where the definition of public policy is recognized as being influenced by the viewpoints, values, and experiences of those who study or implement it. For instance, Dye (1972) noted that policy is "whatever governments choose to do or not to do," underscoring the role of choice and perception in policy-making. This definition implies that the understanding and analysis of policy are contingent upon who is observing and interpreting the actions or inactions of governmental bodies.

Moreover, Birkland (2016) builds on these earlier discussions by summarizing six key features of public policy, offering a framework that helps to navigate its complexities. According to Birkland, public policy is purposive, made in response to a problem, based on law, made in the name of the public, and implemented by public and private actors, and it involves both actions and decisions not to act. These features provide a structured approach to understanding policy while acknowledging the inherent subjectivity and diversity of perspectives that characterize its definition and implementation.

The interplay between subjective interpretation and objective analysis in public policy is further elaborated by scholars like Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993), who argue that policy analysis must account for the beliefs, values, and preferences of the stakeholders involved. Similarly, Stone (2012) highlighted the role of narratives and framing in shaping public policy, where different stakeholders may construct competing stories to justify their policy preferences. These varied perspectives emphasize that policy is not just a technical or administrative matter but also a deeply political and social process, shaped by the subjective interpretations of those involved in its creation, implementation, and evaluation.

Birkland (2016) summed up six fundamental aspects of public policy:

- Policies are created to address a situation that requires attention.
- Policy is made for the 'public'.
- Policy aims to achieve a desired outcome, such as solving an issue.
- Governments ultimately make policy, even when ideas come from outside government or through interactions between government and nonprofit actors.
- Public and private actors understand and implement policy with varying perspectives interpretations of issues, solutions, and personal motivations.
- Policy refers to the government's actions and inactions.

Although definitions of public policy vary and are multifaceted, Jenkins' (1997, p. 30) definition is particularly practical: public policy consists of "decisions taken by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specified situation where these decisions should, in principle, be within the power of these actors to achieve." This definition emphasises the intentional and goal-oriented aspect of policy-making, indicating that policies are not random but rather deliberate decisions made by persons in positions of authority.

However, Birkland also highlights an often-overlooked aspect of public policy: what the government chooses not to do. This dimension of policy is equally significant, as it reflects the implicit choices made by the government. When certain issues are not addressed in legislation or regulation, the absence itself becomes a statement of policy. For example, when a government decides not to legislate access to specific resources or services, it implicitly communicates that those resources or services are not considered a priority or right within the legal framework.

Furthermore, Lindblom (1959) argued that policy-making is often a process of "muddling through," where decisions are made incrementally rather than through comprehensive planning. This means that both the explicit and implicit aspects of policy evolve over time, reflecting the ongoing negotiation and adjustment of goals and means. The dynamic nature of policy, as Lindblom suggests, requires continuous interpretation and re-interpretation by both policymakers and the public.

According to the classical stage model advanced by Hogwood and Gunn (1984), public policy analysis is structured around a series of critical questions that guide the understanding of how policies are formulated, implemented, and evaluated. These questions form the foundation of policy analysis and provide a framework for examining the complexities of the policy-making process.

One of the initial questions addressed by the model is: *How are problems and issues defined and constructed?* This stage involves the identification and framing of issues that require government intervention. The way a problem is defined significantly influences the policy solutions considered and the subsequent actions taken by policymakers. This concept is echoed by Cobb and Elder (1972), who argue that issue definition is a key element in the policy process, as it determines whether a problem is recognized as a public issue and what aspects of the problem are emphasized or downplayed.

The second question asks: *How are the problems placed on political and policy agendas?* This involves the process through which certain issues gain the attention of policymakers while others are ignored or marginalized. Kingdon (1984) refers to this as the "agenda-setting" stage, where issues compete for attention among decision-makers. He suggests that the success of an issue in reaching the agenda depends on a confluence of factors, including problem recognition, the availability of viable policy solutions, and the political climate.

The third question in the model is: *How do policy options emerge?* This stage examines the development of alternative solutions to the identified problem. Lindblom (1959) describes this process as one of "incrementalism," where policy options often emerge through a series of small adjustments rather than through comprehensive, sweeping changes. This approach reflects the complexity and uncertainty inherent in the policy-making process, where decision-makers often rely on previous policies as a guide for developing new options.

The fourth question, *How and why do governments act or not act?* delves into the decision-making process itself, exploring the factors that influence whether a government decides to intervene in an issue. This includes examining the role of political ideologies, institutional constraints, interest group pressures, and the strategic calculations of policymakers. Allison (1971) contributes to this understanding by offering models of decision-making that highlight

the organizational, bureaucratic, and political dynamics that can drive or hinder government action.

Finally, the model addresses the question: *What are the effects of government policy?* This stage involves the evaluation of policy outcomes, assessing whether the implemented policies achieve their intended objectives and what unintended consequences may have arisen. Bardach (1977) emphasizes the importance of this evaluation phase, noting that it provides critical feedback for future policy decisions and helps refine and improve the effectiveness of public policies.

As noted, this thesis seeks to offer a comprehensive examination of the impact of sport policy in Northeast India, aiming to explore and analyse both the external and internal factors that influence the processes of policy implementation. By delving into the complex dynamics that shape how sport policies are executed in this region, the study aims to provide an insight on their efficacy and contribution to sports development in Northeast India.

To achieve this, the research draws extensively on mainstream policy theories and analytical frameworks, which provide the necessary tools to critically address key questions within the policy analysis domain. Specifically, the thesis focuses on three central questions: *How are these sport policies being implemented? What is the tangible impact of these policies on sports development in Northeast India? And what are the challenges and barriers encountered during the policy implementation process?*

2.2. SPORTS POLICY IN INDIA

India has undertaken significant steps toward developing a comprehensive sports ecosystem through the implementation of multiple government schemes and policies. The establishment of the All India Council of Sports (AICS) and the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports provided

the necessary administrative backbone, enabling direct investments in elite athlete development and grassroots participation. Schemes such as the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) and Khelo India have allowed increased resource allocation for talent identification, scientific training, and infrastructure modernization, enhancing both athlete support and mass sports engagement (Clarke, 2022).

Programs like TOPS are particularly noteworthy for their impact on elite sports outcomes. They support medal prospects for the Olympics and Paralympics by offering financial assistance, world-class coaching, and sports science expertise. The creation of National Centres of Excellence under the Sports Authority of India further exemplifies capacity building to prepare athletes for global success. These measures have contributed to India's improved medal tally and international presence, marking a significant paradigm shift in athlete preparation (Clarke, 2022).

At the grassroots level, initiatives such as the Khelo India Youth Games have expanded the talent pool, democratizing access to sporting opportunities and nurturing participation among young athletes from diverse regions. Through multi-level competitions and talent identification programs, Khelo India has begun embedding a strong sporting culture in schools and universities. Public-private partnerships and commercial investments in sports infrastructure have further boosted the positive outcomes of these schemes, while not-for-profit organizations have contributed by supporting athletes and using sports for social change (Clarke, 2022).

The Fit India movement, launched in 2019, is another example of proactive policy action aimed at tackling inactivity and promoting fitness as a national priority. By setting guidelines for age-appropriate physical activity and integrating sports into school curricula, the government works toward healthier lifestyles among citizens. These initiatives serve broader

social goals such as economic upliftment, gender inclusion, and community empowerment, highlighting the societal impact of effective sports scheme implementation (Clarke, 2022).

The implementation of sports schemes in India has yielded measurable positive outcomes, particularly since the government adopted a more holistic and strategic approach to policy and program delivery in the last decade. Major reforms have targeted both high-performance and grassroots development, creating new opportunities and improving recognition for sports at multiple levels (Clarke, 2022). For example, the National Sports Policy has emphasized capacity building through physical education in schools, increased funding, the creation of multi-purpose sports complexes, and partnerships with the private sector. These reforms have not only enhanced accountability in sports administration but also laid a foundation for sustained future gains (Majumdar & Bandyopadhyay, 2021).

One of the most widely recognized positives is the expansion of athlete support and resources. Through TOPS, athletes now have access to world-class coaching, sports science expertise, and international exposure, which previously were out of reach for most Indian athletes. Empirical evidence suggests that this improved support has contributed to India's improved Olympic performance and more consistent international results (Clarke, 2022; Majumdar & Bandyopadhyay, 2021). A further positive is the streamlining and digitalization of monitoring practices and results-based management, allowing policymakers to make data-driven decisions and better track the progress of funded athletes and programs (Clarke, 2022).

Inclusion and empowerment are also notable achievements. India's policies have begun to address the needs of women, marginalized groups, and para-athletes, particularly through Khelo India and Fit India, which promote sport for all and focus on participation over mere achievement (Majumdar & Bandyopadhyay, 2021). Research documents an increase in

grassroots engagement, marked by a greater number of young athletes participating in district-level competitions and public awareness campaigns around fitness and health (Clarke, 2022).

The shift toward policy-driven investment in infrastructure is another success. Recent years have seen the construction of high-quality sports facilities, such as the redevelopment of existing stadiums and the creation of new National Centres of Excellence, along with more equitable resource allocation to underserved regions (Clarke, 2022; Majumdar & Bandyopadhyay, 2021). These improvements have been crucial for both talent development and widening access, enabling rural communities and smaller towns to participate in the national sports movement.

India's journey in developing a comprehensive sports policy has been complex and multilayered, reflecting the broader socio-economic and political landscape of the country. Despite a long-standing tradition of sports, systematic efforts to promote and regulate sports through formal policies only began in the mid-20th century, with the establishment of the All-India Council of Sports (AICS) in 1954 (Choudhary, 2021). This initiative marked the beginning of India's formal engagement with sports development at a national level, laying the groundwork for future policy frameworks.

Over the decades, India's sports policy has evolved through various stages, responding to both domestic and international challenges. The National Sports Policy of 1984 was a significant milestone, aiming to create a structured framework for sports development, focusing on infrastructure, talent identification, and mass participation (Sharma, 2017). However, its impact was limited due to bureaucratic inefficiencies and a lack of coherent implementation strategies (Bhatia, 2019). The revised National Sports Policy of 2001 aimed to address these shortcomings by emphasizing more focused investment in infrastructure, the creation of a sports culture at the grassroots level, and the development of athletes capable of competing

internationally (Kumar, 2018). Despite these ambitious goals, the policy faced criticism for inadequate implementation and failure to create a sustainable sports ecosystem (Desai, 2015).

Challenges in policy implementation remain a persistent issue. Chelladurai et al. (2011) argue that improper execution has been a significant barrier to progress, often compounded by political interference and lack of accountability. Hogwood and Gunn (1984) suggest that policy failure can result from poor execution, flawed design, or external circumstances. In India, this has manifested in uneven resource distribution, mismanagement of funds, and disruptions due to political changes, affecting the continuity of sports initiatives (Sharma, 2017).

Institutions such as the National Institute of Sports (NIS) and the Lakshmbai National College of Physical Education (LNCPE), established in 1986, have faced ongoing criticism regarding outdated curricula and insufficient infrastructure, reflecting broader governance challenges (Chelladurai et al., 2002; Business Standard News, 2019). Similarly, political entanglements within National Sports Federations have at times obstructed the implementation of governance reforms (McLeod et al., 2020).

Financial constraints further complicate effective policy execution. Despite targeted funding for initiatives like the Olympic team, overall budget allocations often fall short of ambitious policy goals, limiting the reach and quality of athlete support and infrastructure development (Farooqui, 2020; Mahapatra, 2020). Additionally, gaps in modern talent identification practices, such as reliance on one-off physical tests rather than holistic biopsychosocial assessments, hinder the creation of long-term elite athlete pipelines (Abbott & Collins, 2004; Pankhurst, 2014).

Examples like Tamil Nadu's World Beater Talent Spotting Scheme illustrate the challenges in aligning policy design with on-ground realities. Despite noble intentions, poor infrastructure, lack of trained personnel, and inadequate awareness led to ineffective implementation (Cairney,

2012; Tegero, 2021). Such instances highlight the importance of feasibility studies, stakeholder engagement, and adaptive learning in ensuring successful policy outcomes.

In conclusion, the literature highlights that India's sports policies and schemes have catalyzed a more inclusive and aspirational sporting culture. While historical challenges in implementation, infrastructure, and governance persist, initiatives like TOPS, Khelo India, and Fit India reflect a clear shift toward holistic development, athlete empowerment, and grassroots engagement. Strategic investment, improved governance, and international benchmarking continue to drive progress, gradually transforming India's sports ecosystem into one that is dynamic, equitable, and competitive on both national and international stages (Clarke, 2022; Majumdar & Bandyopadhyay, 2021).

2.3.THE ANALYTICAL MODEL - SPLISS

SPLISS is an acronym for Sport Policy factors Leading to International Sporting Success (De Bosscher et al., 2006). The SPLISS model has been chosen as the key analytical model in the study because it is the prevailing model for examining national policy for sport organisation (Andersen et al.,2015b) and for examining policy factors leading to national/international sporting success (Henry, Dowling, Ko, & Brown, 2020). SPLISS has exceeded other similar studies by creating a framework, by applying a mixed methods approach and by including athletes, coaches and performance directors as the key stakeholders in sport (De Bosscher et al.,2015). In addition, SPLISS is significant since it encompasses diverse countries and since it is an on-going study (Andersen et al., 2015b).

The SPLISS model was developed to address the absence of comprehensive frameworks for evaluating the effectiveness of sport policies (De Bosscher et al., 2011). It employs a mixed-methods approach (De Bosscher, Shibli, van Bottenburg, De Knop, & Truyens, 2010; De Bosscher et al., 2015), where data are converted into a quantitative scoring system (De

Bosscher et al., 2010), allowing the application of quantitative measurement techniques (De Bosscher et al., 2015).

SPLISS is rooted in a content analysis of an extensive literature review on the organisation of elite sport development at the national level, complemented by two micro-level studies examining the determinants of success for individual athletes (De Bosscher et al., 2015; De Bosscher, Shibli, Westerbeek, & van Bottenburg, 2016). In addition, expert consultations and stakeholder interviews with elite athletes, coaches, and performance directors were conducted using open-ended questions to identify the most influential factors in achieving international sporting success (De Bosscher et al., 2016). The collected qualitative data were then grouped into themes through an inductive approach (ibid.), leading to the identification of nine key policy areas, or pillars, crucial for international sporting success and the development of a conceptual framework for sport policy factors contributing to elite performance (De Bosscher et al., 2010).

This process culminated in SPLISS 1.0 (De Bosscher et al., 2015), an international comparative pilot study conducted across six countries to assess the functioning of these pillars in different national contexts. Furthermore, the pillars were refined into measurable indicators of successful sport policies, termed Critical Success Factors (CSFs) (De Bosscher, 2016; De Bosscher et al., 2015; De Bosscher et al., 2011). The SPLISS model comprises 96 CSFs and 750 sub-factors that provide a structured approach to evaluating sport policies.

The second SPLISS study expanded beyond SPLISS 1.0, covering 15 country to deepen the understanding of the relationships between policies, pillars, and success while refining methodology and collecting richer qualitative data (De Bosscher et al., 2015). Two research instruments were used: an overall sport policy inventory, which gathered qualitative data through policy documents and interviews, and an elite sport climate survey, which collected

quantitative data via structured questionnaires with athletes, coaches, and performance directors. Qualitative data analysis involved both induction and deduction to examine each pillar and the broader elite sport context. A scoring system was applied, converting qualitative and quantitative data into 0-1 scores for cross-state comparisons.

Thus, SPLISS, described as “one of the largest empirical studies of its kind within the sport management domain” (Henry et al., 2020, p. 527), SPLISS identified nine key sport policy pillars essential for international sporting success (De Bosscher et al., 2006) and examined how they can be developed (De Bosscher et al., 2008). The study emphasized that achieving success in sport requires a holistic and strategic public policy approach (De Bosscher et al., 2006, 2011). As governments increasingly invest in elite sport (De Bosscher et al., 2011; Shibli et al., 2014) and adopt similar elite sport systems in a ‘global sporting arms race’ (Oakley & Green, 2001b), understanding their policy approaches becomes crucial.

According to the SPLISS framework, the factors influencing sporting success are categorized into three levels: macro, meso, and micro (De Bosscher et al., 2006,).

Macro-level includes the broader social and cultural context, such as population, wealth, political and cultural systems, urbanization, and geographic and climatic variations. At this level, sports organizations compete for resources with other sectors like culture and media (De Bosscher et al., 2011).

Meso-level consists of sports policies and governance that impact long-term performance, such as coaching development and talent identification policies (De Bosscher et al., 2008).

Micro-level focuses on individual athletes, their genetic traits, and their immediate environment, including parents, coaches, and friends. While genetics cannot be influenced by policy, aspects like training methods, medical support, and psychological assistance can be shaped through targeted policies (De Bosscher et al., 2006, 2008, 2009, 2015).

Figure 2.1

Relationship between factors influencing individual and national sporting success

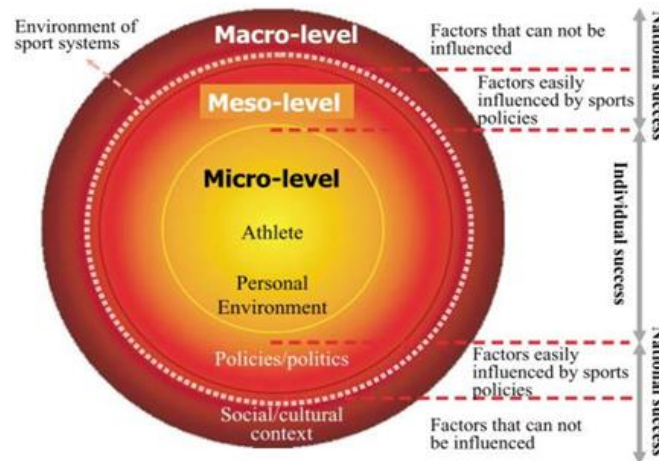


Figure 2.1 illustrates the model depicting the relationship between factors influencing both individual and national sporting success (De Bosscher et al., 2008, p. 17).

Throughout the SPLISS studies, De Bosscher et al. (2006) emphasize that the three levels are interconnected rather than independent. Elite sporting success is best explained by the interaction of these factors (De Bosscher et al., 2015). For instance, sport development is significantly influenced by the private sector, education system, mass media, sports tradition, and culture (De Bosscher et al., 2006).

2.4. FINANCIAL SUPPORT IN SPORTS

Financial support refers to public expenditure on sport at the national level - that is, expenditure derived from central government and other nongovernmental sources. Shaw and Pooley (1976) discovered that economic factors are more important determinants of sporting success in developing nations than in Western and socialist nations. The expenditure on sports in India is meagre in comparison to the proportion of the young population. There was an increase in the budget allocation for sports during the years from 2005 -10, due to the

Commonwealth Games, for the construction of required infrastructure and organising the games. After the completion of the games, the budget allocation to sports for the year 2011-12 was reduced massively by almost one-third. In addition to governmental sources of funds, efforts are taken to mobilise the resources from nongovernmental sources. National Sports Development Fund (NSDF) was instituted by the Central Government in 1998 with a view to mobilizing resources from nongovernmental sources, including the private/corporate sector and non-resident Indians, with the government providing a matching grant, for the promotion of sports and games in the country. In order to make contributions to the fund attractive, 100% exemption from income tax is available on all contributions.

Financial support is a critical determinant in the successful implementation of sports policies and the overall development of sports infrastructure and participation. De Bosscher et al (2019) stated that sports policy's inputs are financial and human resources. Nations that spend more on top sports may offer players greater chances to train in optimum conditions. Many countries have improved their athletic performance as a result of increased expenditure on top sports. This has happened many times when major international events have failed. Additionally, he noted that these events direct policymakers' attention to recommendations for enhanced elite sports strategies. Having the resources may increase your probability of success, but it is by no means a certainty. The efficiency of sports policies, or the best approach to manage inputs to create the desired outcomes, is referred to as the processes underlying policy. As a result, a robust organizational structure is required.

The provision of financial support by the government is an important factor in implementing a successful policy framework in a country (Stewart, 2017). Several scholars have emphasised the importance of financial resources in shaping national sports policies and development outcomes. According to Houlihan, B. (2013), robust financial support is essential for implementing sports policies effectively, as it enables the development of infrastructure, talent

identification, and high-performance programs. Financial investments are often targeted at improving athletic performance, increasing participation rates, and ensuring social inclusion through sports.

Myas (2019) reported that the 2019-20 budget for “the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports was Rs. 2,216 crores. This is an 11 percent rise above the revised expectations of 2018-19 (Rs 2,002 crore) (Rs 2,002 crore). The Department of Youth Affairs has a 2018-19 budget estimate of Rs 621 crore, while the Department of Sports has a 2018-19 budget estimate of Rs 1575 crore. The assignments for the key heads across the two departments are provided. National sports federations as well as the Sports Authority of India, get the most funding from the Department of Sports' Khelo India initiative. Together, 58 per cent of the Ministry's appropriations have gone to these heads. National Sports Federations (NSFs) are independent entities registered under the Companies or Societies Acts. They support the growth and development of internationally recognized sports 72 disciplines in their home countries.\

Currently, there are 56 NSFs in India. The SAI is the key body at the national level to encourage sports excellence. In addition, SAI helps NSFs find, train, and coach athletes as well as put up the necessary infrastructure. In 2019-20, the Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan and the Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakaram each got Rs 257 crore from the Department of Youth Affairs, the largest grant.”

Financial support directly influences the construction and maintenance of sports facilities. Sport England (2016) highlights that financial investment in sports infrastructure is a prerequisite for promoting participation and improving athlete performance. In Northeast India, despite the existence of sports policies that aim to foster sports development, the region continues to experience infrastructural deficiencies.

The lack of adequate financial support for infrastructure has also been a barrier to hosting large-scale sports events, which could otherwise promote community engagement and stimulate local economies. Antonio (2011) carried out a study titled “How construction trends of university sport facilities will be affected by financial crisis”. The results showed that a high percentage of the respondents agreed that the use, construction and renewal of sports facilities in Spanish Universities would continue increasing for the next three years. They observed that with respect to the architectural trends, the wellness and recreational centres would be more successful than other options, such as climbing walls or centres integrating sports and arts. They further observed that these trends are more affected by cultural and social factors than by the economy.

Chelladurai (2002) states that insufficient and the unavailability of funding, as a result of insufficient and inefficient investment by sports regulating associations and bodies, is among the key causes of Indian sports' low level. He also mentioned that due to a lack of ideas by sports organizations, many of our stadiums are still unused, competitions are still unsponsored, coaches are still demotivated, and fields are still littered with weak athletes. Due to a lack of financial expertise and a marketing plan, many sports organisations become supplicants before the government, begging for funding to satisfy their daily demands. He went on to say that these sports organizations can't afford adequate training equipment, much less nutrition and apparel.

2.5. SPORTS GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governance through networks and partnerships among organizations with clearly defined responsibilities is essential for establishing a robust sporting system in any country. Effective governance requires the collaboration of various stakeholders, including government bodies, sports federations, private sector entities, and community organizations, each playing a distinct

role in the development and promotion of sports (Phillpots et al., 2011). This approach ensures that responsibilities are not only shared but also aligned towards common goals, fostering a more cohesive and efficient sports infrastructure.

The term "sport governance" encompasses the exercise of control and decision-making within sports organizations, focusing on factors such as influence, authority, and the processes by which decisions are made. Effective governance in sports is critical as it shapes the direction and integrity of sports at multiple levels, including local, state, national, and international stages (Hums & MacLean, 2017; Henry & Lee, 2004).

At the local level, sport governance can involve the management of community sports clubs, particularly in how they engage with underserved youth populations. The governance structures of these clubs determine how resources are allocated, the inclusivity of their programs, and the ways they foster talent development within the community. These decisions directly impact the accessibility of sports and the opportunities available to young athletes (Ferkins, Shilbury, & O'Boyle, 2005).

State-level governance often involves the relationships between board members and their influence on state athletic associations. The dynamics within these boards can significantly affect how policies are implemented, funding is distributed, and which sports are prioritized. Effective governance at this level ensures that the interests of all stakeholders, including athletes, coaches, and local communities, are adequately represented and addressed (Shilbury, Ferkins, & Smythe, 2013).

On a national scale, sport governance is reflected in the strategies employed by national sport governing bodies, such as focusing on elite success versus promoting mass participation. The balance between these two objectives often requires careful consideration of resource allocation, talent identification, and long-term sustainability of sports programs. National

governance decisions can also influence international competitiveness, as seen in how countries prioritize funding for Olympic athletes or grassroots sports initiatives (Houlihan & Green, 2009; Henry, 2011).

At the international level, sport governance involves complex issues such as corruption and the integrity of the processes used to award major competitions like the Olympics. The exercise of power in these scenarios can have far-reaching consequences, affecting not only the host cities and countries but also the global perception of fairness and transparency in sports. Corruption scandals and the manipulation of bidding processes can undermine the credibility of international sports organizations and erode trust among stakeholders (Jennings, 2011; Chappelet & Mrkonjic, 2013).

Parent and Russell (2018) conducted a systematic review to explore the impact of governance concepts on the performance and practices of sports organizations. Despite analyzing a wide array of studies from academic, grey literature, and broader social sciences databases using protocols like Warwick, PIECES, and PRISMA, they found only 19 relevant studies out of 2,155. These studies primarily came from developed countries and often used case studies to investigate governance issues, revealing a correlation between board structure and organizational performance. However, the review highlights a significant gap in the literature, as many governance principles discussed were not empirically linked to organizational success. This indicates a need for more diverse and comprehensive research that examines the practical impact of governance structures across various contexts in the sports industry.

Chappelet (2018) highlighted that since the beginning of the 21st century, numerous governance frameworks have been proposed by a variety of entities, including governmental and intergovernmental organizations, international and national sports governing bodies, and

academics. Over 30 distinct sets of governance principles have been put forward, reflecting efforts from independent organizations such as Play the Game/Game Observer for national and international sports federations, elements of the Olympic Movement like the International Olympic Committee and the European Olympic Committees, as well as national peak organizations like the Sport and Recreation Alliance in the United Kingdom. Additionally, governmental bodies like the Australian Sports Commission, Sport New Zealand, and UK Sport, alongside independent academic groups such as Birkbeck University in the UK, have also contributed to the development of governance concepts aimed at improving the management and ethical standards within sports organizations.

Caiger and Gardiner (2000) significantly contributed to the discourse on sports governance by examining the complex interplay between sport, industry, and policy. They highlighted the numerous challenges associated with enforcing governance in this context, particularly the need to clearly delineate the boundaries between sporting rules, regulations, and broader legal frameworks. Their work underscores the importance of adapting governance structures to accommodate the evolving nature of the sports industry, which is increasingly intertwined with commercial interests and legal oversight. This perspective aligns with other scholars who have argued for more robust regulatory frameworks to ensure transparency and accountability in sports governance (Forster & Pope, 2004; Katwala, 2000). The necessity of rethinking governance in the context of sports has also been echoed in studies examining the global nature of sports and the corresponding need for governance structures that can address the unique challenges posed by internationalization (Henry & Lee, 2004; Thibault, 2009).

Anderson, S. D, McKenzie, et al (2003) explained that because of the broad number of players involved, effective sports governance is especially difficult. Players and clubs, local, national, and International organizations, fans, the media, commercial (sponsors), and noncommercial interests, as well as educational and training bodies, are among the participants.

Within and outside of the sport, these classes usually have different interests and interrelationships. Individual sports are traditionally defined by a complex mixture of legal, controlled, and self-regulatory systems, contractual relationships, procedures, implicit relationships, and tacit understandings, as well as multiple interests and positions. The continued and widespread trust in governing organization's institutional frameworks, governance arrangements, rules, and dispute mechanisms are critical to their position and legitimacy. The value of the games, competitions, and tournaments for which they are responsible will be harmed if they do not have this trust.

Sport organizations face a crucial challenge in governance as they transition from amateur, volunteer-run entities to professionally managed institutions operating in a complex sports marketplace. The role of governance has become increasingly significant in managing these organizations effectively. Thoma and Chalip (2003) provide a comprehensive overview of this issue, detailing how governance impacts various aspects of sports management. Their work covers a broad spectrum, including the Olympic movement, international sports event management, "sport for all" initiatives, and the global growth of sport, all framed within the context of political and policy analysis. This exploration highlights the evolving demands on sports organizations and the need for robust governance structures to navigate the intricacies of modern sport management and policy.

Shilbury, Ferkins, and colleagues (2013) further contribute to the understanding of sports governance by investigating the lived experience of an individual involved in the governance of two sports organizations over a 30-year period. Their study explores the daily realities of governance in sports and provides insight into the transformation from an amateur ethos to a commercialized sports environment. The narrative of their informant reflects the collision of two worlds the traditional amateur model and the emerging professional landscape shedding light on the broader implications of this transition for sport governance practices.

Adriaanse and Schofield (2013) looked at gender roles in sport governance through the boards of Australian National Sport Organizations. Data suggest directors' participation in sports governance was not uniform in terms of gender dynamics. Central to the regime associated with gender equal governance was the presence of women on the board.

According to Teja A. (2013), athletic activity was controlled by the state during fascism and served as a means of regulating citizens' leisure time, private lives, and social relationships. The dictatorship was able to observe and exploit young people and their abilities by controlling sport. Sport, on the other hand, was used to promote and spread fascist ideology both at home and abroad.

National sport governing bodies (NSGBs) differ from other nonprofits in that they are the mechanism for governing other sport organisations that provide services in their respective sports. A NSGB's formal status positions it at the pinnacle or apex of a network of organisations involved in the same sport. Chelladurai, P., & Zintz, T. (2015) identified the essence of the center of a network of sport organisations and the roles that are special to that position.

According to Geeraert A. (2015), benchmarking good governance in ISOs is needed in order to improve governance in (International) sport. The various benchmarking methods that are emerging fill a gap that has hampered changes in sports governance to some degree. More involvement of stakeholders, especially ISOs, in this phase than has been the case thus far will encourage information sharing. This, of course, underlines the need for ISOs to 'take the leap' and adopt one or more of these benchmarking tools. It will increase the probability that the sports world will pay attention to the concepts of good governance being promoted.

To mitigate governance failures in sport, organizations are encouraged, and some-times obligated, by external stakeholders (e.g. independent agencies, international sport governing bodies, government agencies) to develop and implement policies and procedures aimed at

improving their governance structures and processes, a concept referred to as good or better governance (hereafter, better governance is used to move away from the good/bad dichotomy; cf. Chappelet, 2018; Chappelet & Mrkonjic, 2013; Parent et al., 2022; Zintz & Gérard, 2019). Better governance is recognized as the incorporation of normative and ethical standards for managerial behaviours in sport organizations (Zintz & Gérard, 2019). Implementing policies and procedures to improve organizational governance is seen as central to the performance and effective governance practices of sport organizations² and sport systems (e.g. Green & Houlihan, 2006; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2007)

To improve (sport) governance, a wide range of governance principles have been developed by sport academics and practitioners over the last 20 years (e.g. Australian Sports Commission, 2015; Chappelet, 2018; Chappelet & Mrkonjic, 2013; IOC, 2016a; Sport and Recreation Alliance, 2017). Parent and Hoye (2018) identified several gaps in our understanding of governance principles in sport, like the lack of an agreed-upon set of sport governance principles and the diversity in specific principles developed and proposed. This limitation extends not only to the principles themselves but also to the terminology used by academics and practitioners. To wit, though he defined ‘indicators’, Geeraert (2022) alternatively used the terms ‘indicators’, ‘principles’, and ‘dimensions’ when speaking of the same set of governance constructs, where as other authors (e.g. Chappelet & Mrkonjic, 2013) do not define what they mean by these terms. Beyond these issues, Parent and Hoye called for researchers to examine sport governance principles and their similarities and differences.

Several narrative literature reviews (hereafter ‘literature reviews’; e.g. Chappelet & Mrkonjic, 2013; Mrkonjic, 2013), one scoping review (Dowling et al., 2018), and one systematic review (Parent & Hoye, 2018) examined governance principles in sport. While literature reviews allow researchers to present and discuss research on a given topic, this type of review is based on the subjective selection of records by researchers, arguably resulting in a

biased or incomplete representation of the body of knowledge. In turn, scoping reviews ‘aim to map rapidly the key concepts underpinning a research area and the main sources and types of evidence available’ (Mays et al., 2001, p. 194). Despite scoping reviews’ ability to mitigate some literature review issues (e.g. pre-planned methodology; Arksey & O’Malley, 2005), they do not assess the quality of the body of knowledge for the given phenomenon to derive research outcomes (Higginset al., 2019)

2.6. GRASSROOTS SPORTS PARTICIPATION

SPLISS Pillars follow a logical progression and represent key stages in athlete development (De Bosscher et al., 2006, 2016). Pillar 3, in particular, focuses on sports participation, school-based opportunities, and quality improvement management (De Bosscher et al., 2015).

Education, broadly defined any experience that shapes an individual's mind, character, or physical abilities. Formal education, which is systematically imparted through institutions such as schools and universities, transmits cultural heritage, knowledge, values, and skills across generations (Naik, 1974). Physical education, a crucial component of this system, facilitates holistic development through physical activity, fostering social, mental, and moral growth alongside physical fitness (Ali, 2005).

The Central Advisory Board of Physical Education and Recreation (1964) emphasized that physical education is an integral aspect of overall education, focusing on the complete development of a child's body, mind, and spirit. It aims to instil essential life skills such as discipline, resourcefulness, social responsibility, and environmental awareness, contributing to a well-adjusted life in a democratic society.

Grassroots sports participation in India has emerged as a transformative tool for youth development, social inclusion, and national progress (Sinha, 2024). It not only fosters physical health but also bridges societal gaps, promotes gender equality, and strengthens community

ties (State of Play in India Initiative, 2024; Sinha, 2024). Research indicates that sports at the grassroots level serve as an essential mechanism to engage youth in constructive activities, keeping them physically active and socially involved (Sinha, 2024).

Engaging in grassroots sports activities contributes to improved physical health outcomes. Regular participation enhances cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength, and overall physical endurance (Bergeron & Michael F, 2007). These activities serve as preventive measures against chronic conditions, including obesity, diabetes, and hypertension, which are rising concerns in India (Bhan, 2020; State of Play in India Initiative, 2024). The accessibility and inclusivity of grassroots sports provide opportunities for underserved communities to participate, thereby reducing health disparities (Sinha, 2024; Sports Yodha, 2024).

Grassroots sports also foster social cohesion and community development. Local sports clubs and community programs provide a platform for interaction among individuals from diverse backgrounds, promoting inclusivity and shared social values (Sinha, 2024). Children participating in such clubs report higher levels of social connectedness, a sense of belonging, and enhanced emotional well-being (University of Bath, 2024). In India, initiatives like the "State of Play in India" project highlight the role of sports in strengthening community bonds and reducing social isolation (State of Play in India Initiative, 2024). Evidence further suggests that participation in team-based sports instills cooperative skills and mutual respect, contributing to positive social outcomes (Sinha, 2024).

Psychologically, grassroots sports participation is linked to improved self-esteem, resilience, and mental health outcomes. For youth, sports involvement encourages the development of essential life skills such as teamwork, leadership, and time management (Sinha, 2024). A longitudinal study in India found that consistent engagement in sports positively influenced physical fitness, social interactions, and psychological well-being over time (Sinha,

2024). Additionally, sports participation reduces the likelihood of risk-taking behaviors and fosters emotional regulation, particularly in adolescents.

Despite these benefits, challenges impede the effectiveness of grassroots sports programs in India. Limited funding, inadequate infrastructure, and the shortage of trained coaches restrict opportunities for widespread participation (Sports Yodha, 2024; Sinha, 2024). Cultural attitudes and gender disparities further influence participation rates, with girls and marginalized communities often facing barriers to engagement (Sinha, 2024; State of Play in India Initiative, 2024). Policy support and strategic investments remain critical to addressing these issues and ensuring equitable access to sports opportunities (Bhan, 2020; State of Play in India Initiative, 2024).

Government initiatives in India play a vital role in promoting grassroots sports. Programs like Khelo India, along with public-private collaborations, aim to improve access, provide quality coaching, and enhance infrastructure at the community level (State of Play in India Initiative, 2024; Sports Yodha, 2024). Such efforts align with evidence suggesting that systemic support and policy implementation are necessary to increase participation and sustain long-term development (Bhan, 2020; Sinha, 2024). The integration of sports into schools, combined with community outreach, further expands opportunities for youth engagement and fosters a strong sporting culture across regions (Sinha, 2024; University of Bath, 2024).

In conclusion, grassroots sports participation in India offers multifaceted benefits, including improved physical health, social cohesion, psychological well-being, and community development. While challenges such as infrastructure deficits, funding limitations, and socio-cultural barriers exist, strategic policies and coordinated interventions can maximize participation and its associated benefits. Supporting grassroots sports is thus essential for nurturing healthier, more resilient, and socially connected communities across India.

2.7. TALENT IDENTIFICATION

Talent identification plays a crucial role in shaping future elite athletes by recognizing and nurturing individuals with the potential to succeed at the highest level. According to Johnston (2018), an effective talent identification process ensures equal opportunities for athletes to maximize their potential in international sports. Talent identification and development programs should be dynamic and interconnected (O'Connor et al., 2016), as seen in the case of Athletics Canada, where a strong inter-organizational relationship with key partners has contributed to international sporting success (Green & Houlihan, 2005).

In the context of athlete development, Pillar 4 of the SPLISS model focuses on talent identification and development (De Bosscher et al., 2006). Athletes demonstrating potential may be recognized as 'talented' and receive specialized attention (De Bosscher et al., 2015). Talent identification involves discovering promising individuals who are then supported by their respective national governing bodies (NGBs) (Shibli et al., 2014). Talent development, on the other hand, focuses on refining athletes' skills and preparing them for elite competition (De Bosscher et al., 2015). Many nations have introduced structured programs to help athletes balance their academic and sporting careers while providing high-performance training and competition opportunities (De Bosscher et al., 2015).

According to Johnston et al. (2018), creating a proper talent identification process would be able to establish equal opportunities for everyone to achieve their optimum potential in sport at the international level.

The debate on the ideal age for talent identification remains unresolved. Hugo (2004) suggested that highly competitive sports should begin only after the age of 14-15, while Arnot and Gaines (1986) argued that early identification should start at 10 years, with final selection occurring around 14 years. Similarly, research suggests age thresholds for talent detection vary

across sports. For instance, in Australia, secondary school children aged 12-15 years are typically targeted for talent identification programs (Riordan, 1998). Scholars such as Gulbin (2001) and Pletola (1992) recommend initiating talent detection at 12-14 years, while structured developmental programs should start as early as 6-7 years to provide a diverse physical activity foundation.

Despite extensive research, the concept of 'talent' remains a complex and debated topic among sports scientists and coaches (Abbott & Collins, 2004). Some argue that talent is an innate ability, while others believe it can be cultivated through training and support. In the sporting context, talent identification aims to recognize individuals with the potential to win medals at the highest levels of competition. However, the question remains whether talent is purely genetic or can be developed, with research on autistic savants providing evidence of innate abilities in certain domains (Howe et al., 1998; Miller, 1989).

Ommundsen (2009) defines talent as both a genetic predisposition and a dynamic trait influenced by the environment. Factors such as coaching quality, training facilities, and parental support significantly impact an athlete's development. Studies indicate that children with active parents are 5.8 times more likely to engage in sports than those with inactive parents (Hugo, 2004). However, despite the importance of talent identification, research in this area remains limited (Pearson, 2002). It was only in 2007 that the field gained serious attention, with international studies emphasizing the need for talent identification across all age groups and levels of play.

The talent identification programme was introduced very recently, and the goals of the national sport policy framework are in the process of being implemented. O'Connor et al. (2016) observe that talent identification and development programmes should be dynamic and interconnected. Green and Houlihan (2005) observe that a strong inter-organisational

relationship between Athletics Canada and its key delivery partners was taking Canadian athletes onto the international podium.

Talent identification in India has evolved significantly over the years, yet challenges persist in establishing a standardized and effective scouting system. Historically, talent selection was largely decentralized, relying on local sports clubs, schools, and state federations, leading to inconsistencies and limited opportunities for athletes from rural and tribal areas. Recognizing these gaps, the Government of India launched initiatives such as *Khelo India* and the *Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS)* to streamline talent scouting and development (Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, 2022). The *Khelo India Talent Development Programme* aims to identify promising athletes through structured grassroots competitions, while *TOPS* provides elite athletes with financial support, international training exposure, and sports science interventions (Sports Authority of India, 2023). Despite these efforts, the lack of a nationwide database, limited use of sports science in scouting, and high dropout rates among young athletes remain key barriers to an efficient talent identification system.

To strengthen talent identification in India, a more integrated and scientific approach is required. Establishing a centralized national talent database, incorporating AI-driven scouting tools, and expanding grassroots talent detection programs can help bridge existing gaps. Additionally, sustained athlete development through better access to nutrition, psychological training, and long-term financial support can prevent talented individuals from dropping out due to socio-economic constraints (Kumar, Akash, et al, 2024). Successful state-level initiatives, such as the *Odisha High Performance Centres*, demonstrate the potential of collaborative models between government and private stakeholders in nurturing young talent (Government of Odisha, 2022). By enhancing infrastructure, adopting global best practices, and ensuring long-term athlete support, India can build a more robust talent pipeline, ultimately improving its performance in international sports.

2.8. ATHLETE CAREER AND POST-CAREER SUPPORT

The final stage of athlete development is represented by Pillar 5, which builds upon the foundation established in Pillars 3 and 4 (De Bosscher et al., 2015, 2016; Shibli et al., 2014). This phase, managed by National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and sports clubs (Shibli et al., 2014), includes athletes who have successfully progressed through the talent development process and are now competing at the highest levels (De Bosscher et al., 2006, 2015). While Pillar 5 primarily focuses on elite performance, it also highlights the importance of financial and career support, as many athletes identified as talented leave their sport before reaching their peak due to financial constraints and lack of post-career planning (De Bosscher et al., 2015). Given that only a few sports provide long-term financial security, many countries implement athlete funding programs to cover both training expenses and living costs (Shibli et al., 2014). However, as Shibli et al. (2014, p. 93) emphasize, athletes must prepare for life after sport while they are still engaged in their athletic careers. Thus, Pillar 5 requires a sport-specific approach to analyzing how governments and sports organizations support athletes both during and after their competitive years (De Bosscher et al., 2015).

Athlete support extends beyond financial assistance, with psychological, social, and career transition services playing a crucial role. Moulton, Molstad, and Turner (1997) examined athletic trainers' perceptions of their roles in counseling athletes and found that while trainers acknowledged the need for psychological support, they often felt underqualified to provide it. Most athletic trainers were aware of on-campus student support services, but none had direct access to a sport psychologist, highlighting a gap in mental health and psychological counseling in elite sports. The study recommended that National Athletic Trainers' Associations (NATA) incorporate counseling preparation into curriculums to better equip trainers to handle athletes' mental health needs. Similarly, Barefield and McCallister (1997) investigated the role of social support provided by staff and student athletic trainers. Their findings indicated that while

athletes valued social support, they did not differentiate between student and professional trainers in terms of the support received, suggesting that consistent and structured mentorship programs could be beneficial.

The transition from an athletic career to post-sport life presents a significant psychological and professional challenge for many athletes. Wylleman et al. (2004) emphasized the holistic athlete development model, which considers not only athletic progression but also academic, vocational, and psychosocial transitions throughout an athlete's career. Research by Stambulova et al. (2009) highlighted that athletic retirement is a critical period that requires structured career transition programs, including education, skill development, and career counseling. A study by Park et al. (2013) on retired athletes demonstrated that those who had access to dual career programs which balance sports training with education or vocational training reported smoother transitions and lower post-retirement distress. In contrast, athletes without career planning support often experienced identity crises, financial instability, and mental health challenges (Torregrosa et al., 2015).

Many countries have implemented career transition initiatives to support athletes. For example, the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) provides education and workforce integration programs (Grove et al., 2017), while the European Union's Athlete Career and Education (ACE) Program ensures structured career planning for elite athletes (Guidotti et al., 2014). In the Indian context, post-career support for athletes remains underdeveloped, with limited formal transition programs. While schemes like Khelo India and the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) focus on athlete development, there is a lack of structured career transition pathways, leaving many retired athletes struggling to integrate into mainstream careers. (Kumar et al., 2024) argue that India needs to adopt a dual career model similar to European systems, ensuring that athletes receive higher education opportunities, vocational training, and financial planning assistance alongside their sporting careers.

Athletes often face significant challenges when transitioning from their sports careers to non-athletic professions. This transition, commonly referred to as "athletic retirement," can impact an athlete's mental well-being, financial stability, and social identity. Debois et al. (2015) emphasized that structured support systems and education programs are crucial in helping athletes navigate this phase successfully. Without adequate career planning and psychological preparation, many retired athletes struggle with post-career depression, financial insecurity, and identity crises, which can hinder their reintegration into society.

Many European nations have implemented comprehensive policy frameworks to aid athletes in their post-career transition. These frameworks include career counseling, educational support, financial planning assistance, and media and communication training, ensuring that athletes can smoothly shift into new professional roles (Baron-Thiene & Alfermann, 2015; Lupo et al., 2015). Programs such as the *Athlete Career Programme (ACP)* by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) offer career transition support to help elite athletes prepare for life beyond sports. However, in contrast, the post-career support models in several Asian countries, including Sri Lanka, have been criticized for their lack of systematic structures and institutional backing (Tshube, 2014). Athletes often face difficulties in accessing career transition programs, financial support, or educational pathways after retirement, leaving many uncertain about their futures.

Sum et al. (2017) further argue that the development of a well-structured social-ecological environment is crucial for fostering dual-career opportunities for athletes in Hong Kong and Taiwan. A dual-career approach allows athletes to pursue both education and professional training alongside their sports careers, ensuring a smoother transition once their competitive years are over. Based on these findings, this research suggests the need for a well-implemented policy framework in Sri Lanka, addressing key areas such as educational pathways, career counseling, and financial planning. A national-level initiative incorporating these elements

could help elite athletes transition more effectively, reducing the risk of post-retirement instability and enhancing long-term career sustainability.

2.9. TRAINING FACILITIES

Pillar 6 explains about a critical phase of investment essential for developing elite athletes by addressing both recreational and sports development (De Bosscher et al., 2006). It specifically highlights the importance of high-quality training facilities. These facilities play a crucial role in providing athletes with an optimal environment for growth and performance (De Bosscher et al., 2015; Shibli et al., 2014). The availability and quality of these resources also bridge the gap between grassroots participation and elite sports (Shibli et al., 2014). At the high level, Pillar 6 focuses on a well-structured network of regional and national training centers that offer comprehensive support, including medical, scientific, educational, and accommodation services (De Bosscher et al., 2015).

Sports infrastructure is fundamental for the growth and development of sports in India, particularly in nurturing grassroots participation and enhancing athlete performance. Developing sport infrastructure facilities and introducing new sport programmes are essential to achieve the development goals of a national sport policy framework (Hu et al., 2016) The availability and quality of sports facilities directly impact the ability of individuals to engage in sports, as well as the overall effectiveness of sports programs. (Bhardwaj and Singh, 2017) highlights that without adequate infrastructure, aspiring athletes are often unable to develop their skills, limiting the potential for talent identification and nurturing. This sentiment is also echoed by (Preuss, 2013), who emphasize that access to quality sports facilities significantly influences a region's capacity to host national and international events, thereby promoting local economies and tourism.

The National Sports Policy (NSP) of India has long recognized the necessity of comprehensive infrastructure development. Initiatives like Khelo India aim to address the deficiencies in sports facilities across the country, particularly in underserved areas. However, despite these efforts, challenges persist. Many studies, including those by (Skinner, 2008) point to inadequate funding, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and regional disparities as significant barriers to effective sports infrastructure development. Northeast India, in particular, faces unique challenges due to its geographical isolation and socio-economic factors, which complicate the establishment and maintenance of sports facilities.

Research also indicates that the impact of sports infrastructure extends beyond just sports performance; it has broader social implications. For instance, access to sports facilities can promote community health, social cohesion, and youth engagement, as noted by (Meir, et,al 2019). These studies emphasize the benefits of investing in sports infrastructure, suggesting that a holistic approach is essential for maximizing the potential of sports in society.

(Nassr.et.al, 2021), stated that, to increase the level of sports and increase the participation in sports, good sports infrastructure is essential. When a country provides a good sports infrastructure to promote sports in that country, it leads to success in field of sports and health.

Feng and Humphreys (2018) conducted a study to assess the impact and role of sports facilities on the economic value of residential properties in Columbus, Ohio. A hedonic model was used to achieve the objective of study and it was carried out that it had a significant impact of sports facilities on house values and the other residential properties in Columbus. The study supports the idea that professional sports facilities create significant tangible benefits for the local economy.

Christopher et al. (2015) investigated whether facilities/equipment are an interpreter of game development in Edo State, Nigeria or not. The study shows how the sports facilities will

be a path for game development in Edo State. For the study, the prior post-factor design was adopted, and the main research tool used was the modified and validated Clocked Likert Type Questionnaire. It was discovered that facilities/equipment did not considerably forecast game development in Edo State, Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted. Among others, it was recommended on the basis that the development of sports facilities be planned and taken in parts, keeping in view the educational interest of diverse sports and people. The government should take an interest and persuade the private sector to promote the growth of sports in Edo State. The authors found that sports facilities were a predictor of game development. The study showed that sports development in Edo State was the lowest due to inadequate sports facilities and a lack of good maintenance of some sports equipment.

A comprehensive review by Chankuna et al. (2021) assessed the efficiency of sports training facilities in Thailand, focusing on three national training centres. The study revealed that these centres were perceived to operate at a high level of efficiency. The authors proposed that enhancing facility management should prioritize data-driven needs assessments, development of high-quality facility networks, and securing renovation funding to maintain and improve infrastructure.

A study analyzing the elite sports development system in Central Java, Indonesia (2021), using the SPLISS model, highlighted that while facility support received the highest scores, there were notable deficiencies in sponsorship support. This suggests that, despite having adequate facilities, other factors such as financial backing are crucial for a holistic elite sports environment.

A comprehensive study by De Bosscher et al. (2015) analyzed elite sport policies across 15 nations and highlighted that substantial investment in training facilities is a critical determinant of international sporting success. The research underscores that nations with well-developed

training infrastructures provide athletes with environments conducive to optimal performance, thereby enhancing their competitiveness on the global stage. Furthermore, an international comparison of elite sport systems by De Bosscher et al. (2009) revealed that countries with systematic investments in training facilities, alongside other support mechanisms, tend to achieve higher levels of success in international competitions. The study suggests that the quality and accessibility of training facilities are pivotal components of an effective elite sport development system

In conclusion, the evidence consistently indicates that high-quality training facilities are integral to athlete development and international sporting success. Investments in such infrastructures not only enhance athletic performance but also contribute to the holistic development of athletes, underscoring the importance of prioritizing facility development within sports policies

2.10. COACHES DEVELOPMENT

Pillar 7 of the Sports Policy factors Leading to International Sporting Success (SPLISS) framework highlights the critical role of coaches in athlete development and overall sports performance. According to Shibli et al. (2014, p. 93), "the quality and quantity of coaches is important at each level of the sport development continuum." This suggests that having both a sufficient number of coaches and ensuring their quality through proper training and support is essential for nurturing athletes at all stages of their careers.

De Bosscher et al. (2015) further elaborate on the role of coaching at the elite level, identifying two key factors that influence its effectiveness. The first is the organization and quality of coach education, training, and certification programs. Well-structured coaching education ensures that coaches are equipped with the latest methodologies, scientific insights, and best practices necessary to optimize athlete performance. Countries that invest in robust

certification programs, continuing education, and professional development opportunities tend to produce more effective coaches, which in turn enhances athlete development.

The second factor is the availability of coaches in terms of time and commitment. Even the most skilled coach cannot be effective if they are unable to dedicate adequate time to their athletes. Full-time coaching positions allow for greater engagement, personalized training programs, and long-term athlete development. However, in many countries, coaches face financial constraints that force them to take on multiple jobs, limiting their availability and effectiveness.

The recognition and status of coaching also vary across different nations. In some countries, coaches are highly respected and well-compensated, receiving financial stability and institutional support. Conversely, in other nations, coaching is undervalued and underpaid, making it difficult to attract and retain talented individuals in the profession. This disparity in recognition directly impacts the quality of coaching available to athletes.

Shibli et al. (2014) emphasize that elite athletes can only reach their full potential if they have access to the best coaches. Just as athletes require structured training and development, coaches also need continuous learning opportunities to refine their skills and stay updated with evolving sports science and training methodologies. A well-functioning sports system should not rely solely on a few exceptional individuals but instead have a structured mechanism that ensures a continuous pipeline of well-trained coaches.

To sustain long-term success in sports, it is essential to establish a systematic approach to coaching development. This includes structured training pathways, mentorship programs, and national coaching standards that ensure consistency in coaching quality across all levels. Instead of depending on a handful of key individuals, a country's sports system should have

institutionalized structures that foster the continuous production of skilled coaches, thereby strengthening the overall sporting ecosystem.

In sports, a coach does much more than just teach techniques or plan strategies—they lead, inspire, and shape individuals into a team. Every athlete comes with their own personality, background, and stage of development, and it's the coach's job to bring them together and guide them toward a common goal (Fogelqvist & Lestander, 2017). Good leadership in coaching means keeping athletes motivated, making tough decisions, giving clear and constructive feedback, and building strong relationships within the team. A great coach isn't just someone who trains athletes but someone who understands them, supports their growth, and pushes them to be better. As Vella et al, (2014) point out, when a coach fulfills their leadership role well, they give athletes not only the vision to succeed but also the confidence and support to get there. More than anything, coaching is about creating an environment where athletes can thrive—not just in their sport but in life.

Sotiriadou et al. (2013) emphasize that the quality and quantity of coaches significantly influence athlete development. They advocate for structured coach education programs and continuous professional development to maintain high coaching standards, which are vital for nurturing athletic talent.

Furthermore, Taylor and Garratt (2010) discuss the professionalization of sports coaching, noting that systematic approaches to coach development contribute to improved coaching practices. They highlight that such professionalization leads to better athlete outcomes and enhances the overall effectiveness of sports systems.

Green and Houlihan (2005) examine the relationship between national policies and elite sport success, highlighting coach development as a crucial factor. They argue that nations investing in structured coach education and robust support systems tend to achieve greater

international sporting success. Their research underscores that such investments enhance the quality of coaching and contribute to the effectiveness of elite sports infrastructure. However, they also point out the challenges faced by governments and national sports bodies in balancing resources between elite programs and grassroots initiatives. Through case studies of countries like Australia, Canada, and the UK, they demonstrate how targeted investments in coaching and support structures can lead to sustained international success while navigating potential conflicts arising from funding priorities.

2.11. SPORTS COMPETITION

Pillar 8 of the Sports Policy factors Leading to International Sporting Success (SPLISS) framework highlights the crucial role of hosting national and international sports competitions in shaping the development of athletes and contributing to a nation's economy. According to De Bosscher et al. (2015), hosting sporting events provides athletes with high-level competition exposure while also fostering economic benefits for the host region. A well-structured domestic competition system allows athletes to develop progressively through different levels of competition, preparing them for international success. At the same time, the financial investments associated with hosting major sporting events have been shown to create employment, improve infrastructure, and enhance tourism (Preuss, 2019).

2.11.1. Economic Impact of Hosting Sports Competitions

The economic impact of hosting sporting events extends beyond ticket sales and sponsorship revenue. Large-scale sporting competitions contribute to a region's economy through increased tourism, urban regeneration, and job creation (Baade & Matheson, 2016). For example, in India, the hosting of the 2010 Commonwealth Games led to significant infrastructure development in Delhi, with long-term benefits in the transport and hospitality sectors (Mishra, 2020). Similarly, studies on the 2002 FIFA World Cup in South Korea and

Japan suggest that the event generated substantial economic activity, including increased foreign investment and tourism (Kavetsos & Szymanski, 2010). However, research also indicates that economic benefits are not always evenly distributed and depend largely on the governance and planning involved in hosting such events (Solberg & Preuss, 2007).

While mega-events such as the Olympics and the FIFA World Cup are known for their large-scale economic influence, national and regional sports competitions also play a key role in stimulating local economies. The Indian Super League (ISL), for instance, has contributed to the sports economy by generating employment in sectors such as media, event management, and hospitality (Majumdar & Naha, 2021). Local businesses benefit from increased footfall, while the demand for accommodation, transportation, and food services rises significantly during the tournament period. Additionally, sports competitions encourage long-term investments in sports infrastructure, which, if managed well, can continue to support local development even after the event concludes (Gratton, Shibli & Coleman, 2006).

Despite these benefits, some scholars argue that the economic impact of hosting sports competitions can be overstated. Research by Zimbalist (2015) suggests that while initial revenue figures may appear promising, many host cities struggle with post-event infrastructure maintenance and long-term financial viability. For instance, the 2016 Rio Olympics left Brazil with underutilized facilities and substantial financial losses, raising concerns about the sustainability of hosting mega-events (Gaffney, 2017). This highlights the need for effective planning to ensure that sports competitions lead to lasting economic benefits rather than short-term financial burdens.

2.11.2. Opportunities for Local Athletes

Hosting national and international competitions provides local athletes with invaluable opportunities to compete against high-level opponents without the barriers associated with

travel and adaptation to foreign environments. Research indicates that athletes often perform better when competing in familiar conditions, benefiting from home crowd support, lower travel fatigue, and a deeper understanding of local climate and playing conditions (Shibli et al., 2014). The concept of home advantage has been well-documented in sports literature, with studies demonstrating that athletes competing on home soil tend to achieve higher success rates compared to those competing abroad (Nevill & Holder, 1999).

In addition to performance benefits, hosting competitions increases exposure for emerging athletes, offering them greater visibility among national selectors, scouts, and sponsors. According to Wilson (2021), international events attract talent scouts and professional league representatives, providing local athletes with opportunities to secure contracts and sponsorships. This phenomenon has been observed in leagues such as the ISL and Pro Kabaddi League (PKL), where domestic players have gained national recognition and lucrative contracts after strong performances in home tournaments (Majumdar, 2021).

Furthermore, the presence of international athletes in local competitions allows homegrown players to learn from experienced professionals, raising the overall standard of competition. Studies on athlete development pathways highlight the importance of exposure to high-level competition in fostering talent progression (Güllich & Emrich, 2014). When young athletes compete against seasoned international players, they gain firsthand experience in advanced techniques, game strategies, and mental resilience—skills that are crucial for success at the elite level (Baker et al., 2003).

Another key aspect of hosting sports competitions is its role in inspiring grassroots participation. Research by Green and Houlihan (2005) suggests that hosting national and international sports events leads to a surge in sports engagement at the community level. When local athletes perform well on home soil, it generates enthusiasm among young aspiring

athletes, encouraging increased participation in sports programs. Countries that have successfully used sports competitions as a tool for grassroots development, such as Australia and Canada, have demonstrated the long-term benefits of integrating elite and community sports initiatives (Hogan & Norton, 2000).

However, the extent to which local athletes benefit from hosting competitions depends on the accessibility of talent development pathways. In some cases, economic and social barriers prevent young athletes from fully capitalizing on these opportunities. A study by Sotiriadou et al. (2013) highlights that while hosting events increases exposure, without proper talent identification programs and structured pathways, many promising athletes fail to transition into professional sports. This underscores the need for well-integrated national competition structures that connect grassroots talent with elite sports opportunities (De Bosscher et al., 2015).

2.11.3. Challenges and Considerations

While the benefits of hosting sports competitions for local athletes and the economy are well-documented, there are also challenges that must be addressed. The financial burden of organizing large-scale events can be substantial, and in some cases, the return on investment may not justify the costs (Zimbalist, 2015). Additionally, governance issues, such as mismanagement and corruption, can hinder the successful execution of sporting events, reducing their positive impact on both economic development and athlete progression (Andreff, 2019).

Moreover, research suggests that while home advantage benefits athletes, the pressure of performing in front of home crowds can sometimes lead to heightened anxiety and decreased performance, particularly for less-experienced competitors (Carron et al., 2005). Managing

athlete psychology and providing adequate support structures is therefore critical to ensuring that local athletes maximize the opportunities provided by hosting events.

In some cases, local athletes may also face challenges in securing opportunities to compete if international events prioritize foreign participants or if selection processes favor established elite athletes over emerging talent (Taylor, 2004). Ensuring fair and transparent selection policies, along with adequate representation for homegrown athletes, is essential for maximizing the developmental benefits of hosting sports competitions.

2.12. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL SUPPORT

Pillar 9 of the SPLISS framework is dedicated to scientific research and innovation in elite sports, focusing on how nations systematically develop, organize, and apply sports science knowledge to enhance performance (De Bosscher et al., 2006). This pillar examines the extent to which countries integrate research across various domains, including talent identification, psychology, physiology, medicine, nutrition, biomechanics, and coaching methodologies (De Bosscher et al., 2015, p. 46). Historically, such scientific advancements were characteristic of former communist nations, but they have now become essential for any country striving for sporting excellence (Shibli et al., 2014).

The role of scientific and technological support in elite sports has grown exponentially in recent years, with advances in sports science significantly improving athlete performance and injury prevention (Güllich & Emrich, 2014). Many nations now incorporate scientific research into their sports policies, ensuring that findings are not only published but also practically applied in coaching and athlete development (Taylor, 2004). Investment in sports science infrastructure, such as biomechanics laboratories, physiological testing centers, and nutrition research hubs, has given certain countries a competitive edge in international sports (Hogan & Norton, 2000).

2.12.1. Talent Identification and Development

One of the key components of scientific support is talent identification and development. Advanced methodologies assess young athletes based on physiological and psychological factors, ensuring that potential elite performers receive targeted training from an early age (Baker et al., 2003). Countries like Australia and the UK have pioneered national talent identification programs that employ data-driven approaches to scout and develop future champions (Green & Houlihan, 2005). Psychological support, including resilience training and cognitive behavioral strategies, has also become a fundamental part of athlete preparation, enabling competitors to perform under high-pressure conditions (Carron et al., 2005).

2.12.2. Sports Medicine and Injury Prevention

Elite athletes are highly susceptible to injuries due to the extreme physical demands placed on their bodies. Therefore, comprehensive medical support, rehabilitation technologies, and injury surveillance systems are critical in ensuring athlete longevity and peak performance (Nevill & Holder, 1999). Nations that invest in cutting-edge rehabilitation techniques and medical innovations often experience lower rates of career-ending injuries (Shibli et al., 2014).

Injury prevention strategies have evolved significantly, integrating advancements in biomechanics, physiotherapy, and sports science. High-performance sports programs now emphasize prehabilitation structured training programs aimed at strengthening muscles, improving flexibility, and addressing movement imbalances to reduce injury risks (McCall et al., 2016). Additionally, load management techniques, including GPS-based workload monitoring and heart rate variability tracking, enable coaches to optimize training intensity while minimizing overuse injuries (Impellizzeri et al., 2020).

The introduction of wearable sensors and real-time biometric monitoring has further enhanced injury prevention by allowing coaches and medical professionals to detect early signs

of fatigue or stress (Preuss, 2019). Motion capture technology and force plate analysis have become standard tools in elite training facilities, enabling detailed assessments of athletes' biomechanics to identify potential injury risks before they manifest (Bahr & Clarsen, 2018). Moreover, advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning have enabled predictive injury modeling, allowing teams to adjust training regimens based on real-time data analysis (Thorborg et al., 2021).

Beyond preventive measures, effective rehabilitation protocols play a crucial role in athlete recovery. Cryotherapy, hydrotherapy, and regenerative medicine such as platelet-rich plasma (PRP) therapy have emerged as popular recovery modalities in professional sports (D'Hooghe et al., 2020). Additionally, virtual reality (VR)-based rehabilitation programs have been introduced to enhance neuromuscular retraining and aid psychological recovery during long-term injury layoffs (Gokeler et al., 2019).

Different countries have adopted unique approaches to sports medicine to optimize athlete performance. In the United Kingdom, the English Institute of Sport (EIS) operates state-of-the-art rehabilitation centers, integrating multi-disciplinary teams of physiotherapists, nutritionists, and sports scientists to facilitate holistic recovery plans (Gleeson et al., 2022). Similarly, Australia's Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) has pioneered research in athlete recovery science, developing heat and altitude chambers to simulate various environmental conditions during rehabilitation (Crowcroft et al., 2019).

In India, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) has invested heavily in high-performance medical support through initiatives like the National Centre of Sports Sciences & Research (NCSSR). These facilities provide state-of-the-art sports medicine services, including physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, and biomechanics-based rehabilitation techniques, aimed at enhancing athlete recovery and reducing injury risks (SAI, 2022). The Target Olympic Podium

Scheme (TOPS) has also incorporated advanced injury management protocols, ensuring that elite athletes receive world-class medical care and rehabilitation support (Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, 2022).

2.12.3. The Role of Nutrition in Performance

Nutrition is another crucial factor in athletic success, as dietary strategies directly influence energy levels, recovery, and endurance. Advances in sports nutrition research have led to individualized meal plans, hydration strategies, and supplementation programs tailored to the specific needs of athletes (Mishra, 2020). The development of specialized diets for different sports disciplines ensures that athletes maintain peak physical condition throughout training and competition cycles (Majumdar & Naha, 2021).

2.12.4. Technological Innovations in Sports

Technological advancements have revolutionized training methodologies, performance analysis, and injury prevention in modern sports. Virtual reality (VR) simulations, motion capture analysis, and AI-driven coaching tools have become integral components of athlete preparation, enhancing both training efficiency and competition strategies (Solberg & Preuss, 2007). VR technology allows athletes to immerse themselves in race scenarios, tactical gameplay, and pressure situations, helping them refine their decision-making abilities without physical strain (Wilson, 2021). This is particularly beneficial in sports like motorsports, skiing, and team-based games, where split-second decisions determine success.

Moreover, AI-powered analytics provide real-time insights into performance metrics, biomechanics, and workload management. By analyzing vast amounts of data, AI can detect inefficiencies in movement, predict injury risks, and recommend personalized training programs tailored to an athlete's strengths and weaknesses (Zimbalist, 2015). Motion capture technology further refines biomechanical assessments, enabling coaches and sports scientists

to optimize movement efficiency and technique (Fuss et al., 2019). Additionally, wearable sensors and GPS tracking devices monitor physiological parameters such as heart rate variability, muscle fatigue, and hydration levels, ensuring athletes remain in peak condition while minimizing injury risks (Maughan et al., 2012). As sports continue to embrace digital transformation, technological innovations will play an even more significant role in maximizing athlete potential and redefining the future of competitive performance.

2.12.5. The Indian Perspective

In India, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) has established high-performance centers equipped with state-of-the-art sports medicine facilities, including physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, and biomechanics-based rehabilitation techniques (SAI, 2022). The Mission Olympic Cell under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) has introduced specialized nutrition plans and supplementation programs designed to meet the physical demands of elite athletes (Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, 2022). Additionally, AI-driven training initiatives at institutions like the Inspire Institute of Sport (IIS) are helping refine athlete performance through real-time biomechanical analysis and predictive modeling (Sharma & Iyer, 2021).

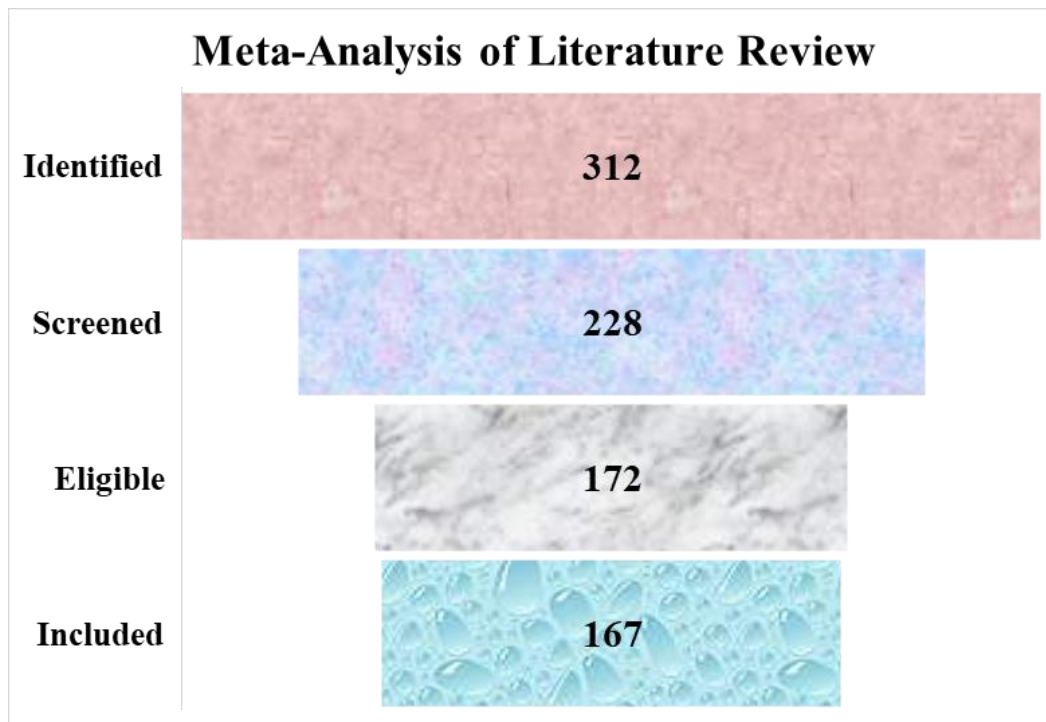
Sports governance in India is also evolving to integrate scientific advancements into policy-making. The use of data analytics to monitor athlete performance, assess injury trends, and optimize resource allocation has improved decision-making processes (Verma, 2021). By systematically embedding scientific research into its sports development framework, India is laying the groundwork for long-term success on the global stage (Gaffney, 2017).

2.13. META-ANALYSIS OF LITERATURE REVIEW

A meta-analysis of existing literature was conducted to systematically assess and synthesize studies related to sports policy implementation and governance in Northeast India. The review process followed a structured approach to ensure a transparent and rigorous selection of relevant studies. The process consisted of four key stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. Keywords used in the search included “sports policy India,” “sports governance Northeast India,” “policy implementation sports,” “National Sports Policy,” “SPLISS framework,” “sport development programs,” “athlete support systems,” “grassroots sports participation,” “elite sports performance,” “sports administration,” “talent identification,” “infrastructure development in sports,” and “sports policy evaluation.” These keywords were combined and filtered to include peer-reviewed journal articles, government reports, and systematic reviews relevant to sports policy and governance in the region.

Figure 2.2

Meta-Analysis of Literature Review



The graph represents the systematic selection process used in the meta-analysis of the literature review. It demonstrates how the total number of studies was gradually filtered through four stages: Identification, Screening, Eligibility, and Inclusion.

At the **Identification** stage, an initial 312 studies were gathered from various sources, including academic databases, policy documents, and governance assessment frameworks. These studies broadly covered topics related to sports governance, policy implementation, financial management, and athlete development.

Next, during the **Screening** stage, studies were reviewed based on their titles and abstracts. Duplicate records and those irrelevant to sports policy in India, particularly Northeast India, were removed. As a result, 228 studies remained for further evaluation.

In the **Eligibility** stage, the 228 studies were assessed in greater depth. The inclusion criteria required studies to provide empirical evidence, discuss governance structures, or evaluate policy frameworks such as SPLISS. Theoretical studies, lacked sufficient data or focused on international contexts without relevance to India were excluded. This process led to the selection of 172 studies.

Finally, in the **Inclusion** stage, the 167 studies were confirmed for analysis in the literature review. These studies serve as the foundation for evaluating the National Sports Policy 2001 and its impact on sports governance and development in Northeast India.

The graph effectively illustrates this rigorous filtering process, ensuring that only high-quality and relevant literature contributes to the study's findings.

2.14. CONCLUSION

The review of literature has provided a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing sports development, particularly in the context of India's sports policy framework.

Using the SPLISS (Sports Policy factors Leading to International Sporting Success) model, the study has explored existing research on key variables such as financial support, sports participation, talent identification, Training facilities, coaching, competition, scientific research, and athletic support.

One of the most significant findings from the review is the lack of research evaluating sports policy implementation in Northeast India and India as a whole. While several international studies have examined how different nations structure their sports policies for performance enhancement, there is no systematic evaluation of how India's National Sports Policy has impacted different regions, especially the Northeast. This gap in the literature makes it difficult to assess the effectiveness of policy-driven interventions on factors like athlete development, resource allocation, and competitive performance.

The review also highlights that while financial support has been extensively studied in the context of sports success, the distribution and utilization of funds in India remain underexplored. Similarly, research on talent identification and athlete pathways has primarily focused on metropolitan regions, with little attention given to regional disparities in scouting and nurturing talent. Furthermore, infrastructure and coaching standards have been widely discussed in sports development studies, but there is limited empirical data on their impact across different states in India.

Given this critical research gap, the present study aims to evaluate sports policy implementation in India through the SPLISS model, focusing on the effectiveness of financial investments, talent identification systems, infrastructure development, and athlete support mechanisms. By systematically analyzing these factors, the study will contribute to a better understanding of how sports policies are shaping athletic performance and what improvements can be made to enhance sports participation, competitiveness, and long-term success in India.