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A study about the inclusion of persons with disabilities in sports An institutional analysis of Pakistan Blind Cricket Council.

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Abstract

The United Nations Organization describe Person with Disabilities in the preamble of United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) as "recognizing that disability is an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others". According to latest census data in 2023 by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics 3.1% of Pakistan's population has some kind of disability. The ratio of visually impaired is also quite high with a percentage of 2.02%. Considering the Population of Pakistan i.e. 241.49 million, this proportion is quite high hence make it very important to make their inclusion in routine life via sports. Pakistan Blind Cricket Council was established in 1997 for the inclusion of blind people in sports. This paper attempts to study the historical evolution of this institution. By going through the official institutional documents, interviewing official and players this study attempts to conclude that a lot more needs to be done by the government in order to make it fruitful for the inclusion in motion for the visually impaired population of the country.

Introduction

in Pakistan.

The type of cricket that is played by blind players is called blind cricket. Its *modus operandi* make it special and different from other types of cricket. Blind cricket was invented in Melbourne, Australia by two visually impaired workers in 1922. With the passage of time it spread all over the world. The establishment of World Blind Cricket Council in 1996 opened ways for blind persons to show their abilities in cricket. The blind cricket started in Pakistan in 1960 as local and unofficial sport. The Pakistan Blind Cricket Council (PBCC) was established in 1997. Pakistan participated in first world cup in 1998 held in India and stood runner up. Pakistan played all world cups of blind cricket from 1998 to 2018 and qualified for final in all world cups including five one day international (ODI) two T-twenty world cups and one Asia cup. Pakistan won two World Cups of blind cricket in one day international format.

The Pakistan Blind Cricket Council has developed a strong structure to run various duties and appoint governors to perform tasks related to their positions. The head of the council is chairman, who have a lot of powers. In the absence of Chairman, the Vice Chairman headed the council. The basic units of council called clubs like Faisalabad Cricket Club of the Blind (FCCB). There are 17 clubs in different provinces of Pakistan. The Cricket Board of Pakistan arranged Championships in two parts called Grade 1 and Grade 2 with 8 teams included.

The Pakistan Blind Cricket Council worked hard at both national and international levels to develop its reputation and esteem and get a name. Pakistan established and developed the Nepal and Bangladesh blind cricket council. Even a lot of rules of blind cricket are being framed by Pakistan blind cricket council. The Pakistani team has a number of records in blind cricket individually and as team in world blind cricket. There are numerous impacts of blind cricket on society in Pakistan. It enhances the financial status of blind people.

As stated by (WHO), it is generally assessed that in any case almost 2.2 billion individuals are visually challenged or blind and among those, at least 1 billion have an injury that could have been barred or has not been directed thus far. These 1 billion individuals incorporate those with

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average or acute sight damage or completely impaired vision owing to unexamined ametropia (123.7M), cataract (65.2M), chronic glaucoma (6.9M), Leukoma (4.2M), diabetic eye disease (3M), and trachoma (2M), along with near sightedness instigated by unexamined farsightedness (826M). The more deprived the society or state, the greater the chances to be dented. For example, impoverished and bourgeois regions of North Africa and South Asia have more than eight times as many visually impaired individuals as in wealthy countries. Elderly individuals, countryside neighborhood, tribal subgroups and native individuals are spoiled more.ⁱ

Before going into the details of Pakistan Blind Cricket Council, it would be pertinent to discuss a brief history of blind cricket. After Second World War the need of sports for disabled grew larger because during the World War a lot of people had become disable. It was assumed that sports can play a vital role in mental and physical stability of these disabled human beings. For this purpose, Paralympics games were introduced. In 1948, the first wheel chair games were organized at Stoke Mandeville hospital in England. United Kingdom played significant role in medical treatment for disable people like wooden legs, wheel chair and glasses for blind. Germany work hard in medical education and sports for disabled after the 1st and 2nd World War. The Berlin Deaf Sports Club (BDSC) founded in 1988. The sports started in France with formal structure by the end of 19th century. In 1911, the deaf-mute athletic club of Paris was establishedⁱⁱ.

History of Blind Cricket

In 1922 two blind workers in Australia invented blind cricket. They used the wooden piece as bat, tin can fill with rocks as ball and drum as wicket. The modern blind cricket was invented by George Abraham and Aga Shokat Ali. Before establishment of the world blind cricket council a federation for the disable was established in November 1994 by Fred and Dick. The federation opened the way for world blind cricket council. In the beginning of last decade of twentieth century George Abraham successfully held first national tournament of blind cricket in 1992 in India. In 1993 he promised to held world cup for the blind in 1998. At the same time Pakistan arranged the national tournament of blind cricket among blind schools. For the purpose to held world cup Abraham called to cricket boards of different countries for a meeting. There were some table talks among the member of blind cricket and they took a comprehensive decision for

The creation of Pakistan in 1947 was golden time for freedom and sports. At the same time after Second World War, sports for disabled started in world. Pakistan played its first cricket match in 1952 and opened ways for disabled cricket in Pakistan. Blind cricket has started in 1960 unofficially. The commentary of normal cricket attracted the disabled people, especially blind people and compel them to play cricket practically. The establishment of World Blind Cricket Council (WBCC) bring revolution in the lives of blind people. The game removes the blindness of blind players. George Abraham and aga Shokat Ali played important role in the establishment of world blind cricket council. The world council not only played the role of a professional body but it gave new lives to the blind people.

According to WHO, visual disability involves the injuries, restrictions and constraints that an individual with an eye-illness has to encounter during communication and interaction with the corporeal, societal, or attitudinal settings.ⁱⁱⁱ In Sports, there are three categories of Blindness or severe visual impairment as defined by International Blind Sports Federation^{iv} based on World Health Organization (WHO) classification i.e. Completely Blind (B1), Moderately Blind (B2) and partially sighted (B3). There are many indoor and outdoor Sports for the visually impaired but one of the widest playing sports around the globe is Cricket. This form of Cricket is the adaptive version of general Cricket with some changes in rules and cricket gears. Cricket for the blind is being played around the world for last many years, commenced from Australia in 1922, and then spread into different countries. People with blindness in Pakistan started playing Cricket in 1960's. World Blind Cricket Ltd. (WBCC), the Global governing body of Cricket for the Blind was formed in 1996, thereafter WBCC has hosted seven (7) Blind Cricket World Cups in last 24 years and as many as 40 bilateral International Blind Cricket Series has been played between the Blind Cricket playing nations^v. Soon after the establishment of world blind cricket council in 1996 Pakistan established the Pakistan Blind Cricket Council (PBCC) in 1997. It was a great achievement for the blind cricket. Blind cricket played significant role in personality grooming and creation of social image of blind players. It also enhances the financial opportunities for the players. Confidence and independence are the prominent traits of blind players. Pakistan blind

Blind cricket is the sport of blind players who can b divide in three categories B1, B2, B3.

B1 is the first category blind which mean fully blind. Second category is the partially blind called B2 and last or third category is partially sighted. These categories were introduced by world health organization (WHO). These are applied in blind cricket applying team which consist of 11 players of all these categories with sequence. There used to be 4 players who belong to B1, 3 players to B2 and 4 players to b3 categories. In blind cricket there is no single 12th players 3 players are as 12th men plays one for each category.

The normal cricket had significant role in the development of blind cricket in Pakistan. Soon after the partition of subcontinent the sighted or the normal cricket promoted through the live commentary on Radio Pakistan which increased the interest of game in blind players. In this sense the visually impaired persons use their different listening powers and enjoy like normal people. This activity increased the interest of cricket in the mind of blind people and compel them to perform practically in ground. In the beginning of blind cricket blind players used the pitch with little size instead of normal pitch and the team consist of six players. At that time the flat bat used which length was four feet and four-inches wide and cane fiber used as a ball not regular stumps used an empty drum instead of stumps. Empires create sound through these drums which helped the blind players during the running between the wickets. This method of blind cricket continued for a long-time till 1975. At that time there were no fixed rules and regulation of playing blind cricket in world. In coming 7 years the blind cricket converted into regular blind cricket (1975-1982) at school level.

The World Blind Cricket Council (WBCC) was established in August 1996 in Delhi, India, with two primary objectives; firstly, to foster the globalization of blind cricket through a unified administrative discipline; and secondly, to facilitate combination and agree participating nations. Seven test cricket-playing nations, including Pakistan, established the World Blind Cricket Council (WBCC).

Establishment of Pakistan Blind Cricket council

In 1997, the Pakistan Blind Cricket Council was established with the objective of promoting and advancing the sport of blind cricket throughout Pakistan. In February 1997, the leader of national-level organizations advocating for the interests of the blind and cricket for the blind convened a meeting. In attendance at that gathering were sixteen (16) important person who voted for the inaugural office bearers of the PBCC. Syed Sultan was designated as the first captain, while A.S Ali was appointed as first chairman. It was announced that the inaugural Blind World Cup would be contested in New Delhi, India, in December 1998^{vii}. The first selection committee was established by the PBCC and consisted of Muhamad Israr, Syed Sultan Shah, and Mr. Nafees Ahmad. In 1998, following Syed Sultan Shah's appointed as the inaugural Captain of the Pakistan blind cricket team, he tendered his resignation from the member of selection committee and was succeeded by Mr. Tarfani. Pakistan Blind Cricket Council was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission of the Government in September 2003 in accordance with Section 42 of the Companies Ordinance of 1984. The incorporated entity was initially presided over by Agha Shaukat Ali, and Maher Yousaf Haroon Masood was appointed as the Secretary of the Council. In 2005, PBCC was granted complete membership in the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), which granted it voting rights^{viii}.

Soon after the creation of Pakistan it was analyzed that the visually impaired show great interest in cricket through their listening power. The Radio commentary moves their thought and force them to dive in the ground to play cricket. They ignored their disability and decide to play like normal people. A 'Playing XI' consisted of only six individuals and a tiny field with a ball made from cane fibers. In addition, the pitch was reduced in length by half, and a 4-foot-by-4-inch piece of wood was employed as the "bat." Empty drums were utilized in place of the stumps. At the command of the bowlers, the batsman ran between the wickets in time with the percussion.

The absence of established rules for this particular variant of cricket for the visually impaired until 1975 put down it to a purely recreational activity. A steel ball changed the cane fiber from 1975 to 1982, during which time a full-length pitch was utilized. The number of participants changed from six to eleven, but the design of the wickets and bat remained unchanged.

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The inaugural blind regular match took place at Karachi in 1978, featuring IDA REU School, Karachi and Lahore. During this time period, numerous school-level competitions were held. Blind individuals' energy for cricket multiplied quickly, and the sport became domestic phenomenon. The steel ball was substituted with a plastic ball from 1982 to 1996. Instead of the drums, stumps constructed of pipe resembling the standard ones were installed. In lieu of a piece of wood, a standard cricket bat was adopted during this time, and padding and gloves were also implemented. In addition, regulations for blind cricket were established. However, the most significant development of this era was the formation of blind cricket organizations in Pakistan. A numerous of cricket tournaments were routinely held at both the district and provincial levels. Observed individuals began to develop an interest in the blind cricket as well. The inaugural International Conference on Cricket for the Blind took place in Delhi, India, in August 1996. Seven (7) nations from around the globe were in attendance.

Pakistan was represented at this conference by Agha Shokat Ali, who is regarded as the founder and spirit of blind cricket in Pakistan. During this conference, rules and regulations for cricket of the blind were established. The 'Pakistan Blind Cricket Council' (PBCC) was established in 1997 with the intention of advancing blind cricket in Pakistan^{ix}. Since 1997, a considerable number of registered societies that are associated with the Pakistan Blind Cricket Council have emerged. Tournaments are numerous organized in various cities of the country so that impaired individuals can gather, socialize, and enjoy themselves while playing cricket in schools. Whenever cricket for the blind is played, regulations close to those of "sighted cricket".

Structure of (PBCC)

The Board of Governors, which consists of at least seven (7) and at most fifteen (15) members at all times, will be responsible for managing PBCC's business. Within fifteen days of the election of Board of Governors, the members of the Board of Governors shall choose these officers from themselves. Unless someone resigns early or for some other reason, the following individuals will serve as the first Governors of the PBCC and will remain in office until the end of the organization's first Annual General Meeting:

Sr#	Designation	First Governors	Current Governors
1	The Chairman	Agha Shokat Ali	Syed Sultan Shah
2	The Vice Chairman	Lt. Gen. M.R. Malik	Illyas Ayoub
3	Director of International	Ghulam Rabbani	M. Nasrullah
	Affairs	Ghulum Kubbum	ivi. i vasi allali
4	Director of Finance	Ghulam Mustafa	Dr. Anwar Ali
5	Director of Coordination	Muhammad Ayoub Ilyas	Abdur Razzaq
	and Information		
6	Director of Cricket	Amir Ashfaq	Muhammad Bilal
	Relations		
7	Director of Management	Saleem Zia	Ali Dino
8	Director Education and	Maqbool Ahmed	Maryam Rauf
	Rehabilitation		
9	Marketing Director	Imran Ahmad	Syed Salman Tariq
			Bukhari

Source: Syed Sultan Shah, Chairman Pakistan Blind Cricket Council.^x

Rules of Blind Cricket

Different games have different rules and regulation about teams, ground, time and playing rules. The laws of disabled games made it unique from the common games. The rules and regulation of blind cricket also make it unique from the normal cricket. ICC and some amended it for facilitate to blind players. For the rules of blind cricket credit goes to Syed Sultan Shah, the president of world blind cricket. He introduced the maximum of rules, like double score for B1 players no bounce for B1 players black out glasses for B1 center line on pitch. After the success of blind cricket Syed sultan shah established the blind cricket for women in 1918 with the help of Australian High Commission. Two camps arranged for women. 1st in Abbottabad and 2nd in Lahore. After camps Pakistan arranged a series of Pakistan Women Blind team vs Nepal Women

The international rules of world blind cricket have significant role in attract the people of society. There are some rules of blind cricket after some amendment applied or blind cricket like team and players in which team selection rules describe the rule of classification of sight used for players categories. Identification of players through white wristband red and blue wristband in field. The umpires and scorer have special course for blind cricket. No bounce of ball for B1 batsman. One day match consist of 40 overs and twenty has format blind cricket. Blind cricket rules allow to runner or substitutes to B1 and B2 players in international matches but Pakistan blind cricket from normal cricket one bounce ball would be catch out if it was in the hands of B1 players. The bowlers bowled under arms and must bounce both side of the center line of the pitch. The wide is considered if ball get out side of the wide mark^{xi}.

Objectives

There are some major objectives of Pakistan blind cricket council. Mainly these are to discuss and promote Pakistan blind cricket. The council work hard for blind cricket improvement and is responsible to set academy and training clubs for improving the skills of blind players. It also worked hard to create awareness among general public about blind cricket, to enhance the funds for blind cricket, and to accept gifts, donations, grants and aids to fulfill its requirements.

Articles

There are some articles of association of Pakistan blind cricket council as a company to set up its structure. The head of the council is chairman and has a lot of powers. In the absence of chairman, the vice chairman is the head of council. There is a Board of Directors under the chairman for three years. A secretary appointed by board of governors who arranged set up the record of council. Director of international affair is responsible for international relation Pakistan blind cricket council with others countries. Finance directors is responsible to solve and arrange financially bank account and funds issue. Director of co ordinations and information responsible for public ally information and relation. Director of cricket council responsible to coordinate Remittances Review June 2024, Volume: 9, No: 3, pp.1492-1506 ISSN: 2059-6588(Print) | ISSN 2059-6596(Online) people who take interest in cricket and awareness of blind cricket. Management director responsible to maintain the function and tournament of (PBCC). Education and Rehabilitation is responsible for players education and rehabilitation and marketing responsible to maintained marketing affairs.

Basic Units

The basic unit of the PBCC are the affiliated clubs spread all-over the Pakistan. There are seventeen operational clubs till date.

Sr. No	Name
1	Attock Blind Cricket Club.
2	Azad Kashmir Blind Cricket Club.
3	Abbottabad Blind Cricket Club.
4	Bahawalpur Blind Cricket Club.
5	Faisalabad Blind Cricket Club.
6	Gujranwala Blind Cricket Club.
7	Hyderabad Blind Cricket Club.
8	Islamabad Blind Cricket Club.
9	Karachi Blind Cricket Club.
10	Lahore Blind Cricket Club.
11	Multan Blind Cricket Club.
12	Okara Blind Cricket Club.
13	Peshawar Blind Cricket Club.
14	Quetta Blind Cricket Club.

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Sheikhupura Blind Cricket Club.	
Sargodha Blind Cricket Club.	
Gilgit Baltistan Blind Cricket Club.	
	Sheikhupura Blind Cricket Club.

Source: Mr. Ali Dino, Director Admin Pakistan Blind Cricket Council.^{xii}

Each club nominated a member of itself who represent his/her club and member of PBCC general council according to the clause 3 of the PBCC constitution. To fulfil and ensure the requirements of this council. One-third members chosen by different sectors. The members are Electoral College for electing the PBCC board of directors. These board of directors elected for three years. The clubs are affiliated with Pakistan blind cricket council and council is responsible for their management. These clubs are basic units of council. The head of club is president and has powers. In the absence of president, the vice president is responsible for the president duties. The general secretary is responsible for his duties such as to maintain record of each member e.g. name, address etc. The treasure, public relation secretary and two executive members are the officers of clubs and responsible for its run.

Management:

The Executive Committee will be in charge of running the Club's business; at no point will there be fewer than five (5) or more than seven (7) members on the committee. Honorary members are not eligible to hold elected office.

Officer Bearers:

- 1. The President
- 2. The Vice-President
- 3. General Secretary
- 4. Treasurer
- 5. Public Relations Secretary
- 6. Executive Member 1

7. Executive Member 2

Source: Mr. Bilal Hassan, Executive Member of Faisalabad Cricket Club for Blind (FCCB).^{xiii}

Records

Pakistan blind cricket council has numerous records in blind cricket. Pakistan blind cricket team has played five ODI World Cups, Two T20 and one Asia cup. Pakistan has record of playing the finals of all international tournaments. Pakistan played (ODI) world cup of (1998, 2002, 2006, 2014, 2018) and twenty world cups in (2012, 2017), Asia cup in (2016) and Pakistan won (2002, 2006) (ODI) world cup. Pakistan played numerous serios with India, Australia, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, New Zealand and South Africa and won all except to which lost against India. Pakistan blind cricket has various record in T-twenty, one day internationals and individual record. Pakistan blind cricket has got maximum civil award in disabilities. Pakistan blind cricket has significant impact on society culturally, politically, economically, educationally, morally, and socially. Blind cricket has been grooming the image of blind players in society. It provides the good image of blind players and increase the respect and status of visual impaired in society. Blind cricket also financially helped of players. The blind cricket also increases the status of blind women in society. Finally, the impact of blind cricket is uncountable.

The Pakistan blind cricket team won 27 matches consecutively in one day international format which were the maximum winning match by single team in the world cricket history.

Pakistan blind cricket team won 7 consecutive series of ODI from India, South Africa, Australia, Nepal, and England (twice), and Sri Lanka.

Pakistani team secured 6 consecutive wins against above mentioned teams in T-twenty internationals format.

Pakistan set highest total against South Africa in one day international which was 517.

Pakistan also has the record of highest margin victory from 399 runs against South Africa. In April 2010 Pakistan set a new record to chase of 439 runs against England in one day international. This chase score was the highest in any form of blind cricket.

In April 2010 Pakistan made a new record to set a partnership of unbeaten which was 399 runs against England in Sharjah.

Different individual awards/record^{xiv}

Impacts

Blind cricket has deep impacts on society. It is responsible to bring change on large scale in the lives of blind people. Blind cricket bring revolution in the lives of blind players. It enhances the self-confidence, personality grooming, and the identification of players in national and international level. Blind cricket has significant role in the public awareness about the visual impaired people lives. Blind cricket had more than role to other sectors, institute or media. Through this game increased the strength of visual students in the educational institute^{xv}. The most of the people were unaware about the visual impaired people sports and education and considered them disabled. Blind cricket and its achievements highlight that blind or not actual blind. The impacts of blind cricket change the thought of whole society and compel them to consider the visual impaired as competitive^{xvi}.

Blind cricket has deep impacts on education. Pakistan blind cricket council also helped visually impaired students to get higher education. It helps the students financially to complete their study. Blind cricket is one of the best field games for disable. It won three civile award which is the maximum in this field. Rather than Yousaf Saleem got civile award as judge, Professor Ilyas got civil award on the base of education who was the vice chairman of blind cricket council of Pakistan. Third was also visual impaired Dr. Ameer Alin Majid got civile award.

Financial help of the blind cricket players also drag the visual impaired people toward blind cricket. The financial help is not equal to sighted cricket but enable them to survive in society. PBCC also helped players through match fee, central contract and in the shape of different award. The government of Pakistan is failed to help the players and council on large scale.

Pakistan blind cricket council also helped to players to stand on jobs in different department of government and private. The PBCC also bear the expenses of transportation of the players, uniform hoteling and medical.

Sports always leave the impact on society but the sports of disabled create deep impact on society. Blind cricket proved this after leave the deep impact on society. Blind cricket try to create society for visual impaired people in which they spend their lives in peaceful manners like the normal people with respect. The great example for the facilities of disabled in Greece during Paralympic games the Shops reconstructed for special persons. In Tokyo Paralympic in 1964 enhance the technology to facilitate all visual impaired and others types of disabled. Blind cricket council of Pakistan start the domestic national and international events of cricket and enhance the status of visual impaired in our society. Government also played significant role to increase the status of special or disabled people to replace the word of disabled with different abled it is great social achievement and impact of special people on society. The government also stood this step after the great achievement of blind cricket not only increase the status of visual impaired tutor. Blind cricket not only increase the status of visual impaired tutor. Blind cricket not only increase the status of visual impaired tutor. Blind cricket not only increase the status of visual impaired people proudly and on merit.

Conclusion

Pakistan Blind Cricket Council (PBCC) has significant role in the development of cricket for visually impaired in Pakistan. It takes various steps to rise the status of blind cricket in Pakistan. Blind cricket bring change in the lives of visually impaired people. Blind cricket is not only fun but it is also a source of enhancement in social and economic status of players.

Blind cricket has an elaborated history. The game rose high and high step by step from local level to national and international level. It started from Australia by two factory workers as fun but with the passage of time it became an international game. Many countries become the members of World Blind Cricket Council.

The blind cricket changes the definition of blind and disabled. Through the sports maximum disabled and especially visually impaired people become independent. Initially, blindness was

considered as disability and visually impaired people suffered the most. They were helpless, weak, dependent, incapable and disabled but the game brought huge change in the thought of society. Now they considered them independent, strong, influential, dominant, impressive, and competitive.

The Pakistan Blind Cricket Council arranged numerous series and world cups for blind cricket and a lot of domestic series. The Pakistan Blind Cricket team won a number of series against different teams of various countries. These achievements of Pakistan Blind Cricket Council and team create significant history. This brings about the positive change in society.

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