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### **ABSTRACT**

India's present status in any sport can be assessed by analysing its past performance at International sporting events. Looking into the history of Indian Hockey team, it has been one of the most successful team ever in the Olympics as compared to any other country. The men's hockey team won its first Olympic gold medal in the year 1928 and till 1956 remained unbeaten in the Olympics, garnering six gold medals in a row. But presently, it is lagging far behind at International level and for more than thirty years India has not won a single medal in Olympics despite following a packed preparation schedule, employing a foreign coach, short-corner experts and modern physiotherapists. The study was needed to analyze the factors responsible for decline in the performance at International level and to create awareness about various areas facing neglect. The objective of the study was to identify the impact of social, economic, educational, political and psychological factors on the performance of Indian hockey players and provide recommendations for improvement in the standards of the game. Descriptive survey method was applied to conduct the study on one hundred National and International Indian hockey players. The tools employed for data collection were Questionnaire method and semi structured interview.

The findings revealed that majority of the respondents were satisfied with the social, educational, economic, political and psychological status achieved by choosing hockey as a career. Rest either belonged to 19-35 years of age, could not attend college or found their salaries low to run a house. Unsatisfied respondents had not played a single tournament at

International level. They felt that game does not have large participation at local level tournaments and it is confined only to certain regions and lacks media support.

Factors reveal that Hockey game has failed to develop a solid foundation within educational systems and other sports are preferred by parents over Hockey. Only 11-19% respondents felt there was lack of required infrastructure like Astro-turf hockey grounds, quality hockey equipment, Physiotherapists, Dieticians and supporting staff to the game. More than 80% respondents agreed that there is political interference in selection of hockey players. Respondents themselves do not want their next generation to take to this game. They felt that the lucrative awards and recognition is only at top levels and there is lack of regular counselling sessions of players, mental focus and self-evaluation amongst players.

After the analysis of result, some of the suggestions recommended were that talent in hockey should be identified at the grass root level. The state associations should consider maintaining one stadium of international standard at their venues. Weightage should be given to sports and hockey in prestigious exams like IIT, AIIMS, PMT, IMA etc. All hockey academies should have good hostel facilities along with other supporting facilities and good quality playing equipment. The gap between money allocations made by the Government and it reaching to the players should be reduced by implementing transparent process and systems. The Government of India could provide tax exemption to private sectors for investments in Hockey. Biased attitude towards players in any form should be eliminated. Selection for teams at any level should be completely based on performance. Regular and systematic counselling sessions should be held for players and their parents. A policy related to grading in hockey should be well devised and implemented. Government should formulate special policies and schemes for girls who want to pursue hockey as a career option but cannot afford. The recommendations, if implemented, can help Indian Hockey to regain its lost glory.