

Introducing Competition: *The Impact on School Sports Programs*



Boys competing in the 50m sprint

Santilata also commented that “the pupils now participate with a new energy and focus in the PE classes.” In addition, 8 pupils from the school went on to participate in District level kho-kho and kabbadi, citing the internal school competition as a great help in their preparation.

On an individual level too the competition had an impact. Manoj Bisoye, class 7, from Nabagocha village, Ganjam did not manage to win an event on the day but was clearly inspired by the competition. Santilata said that “he is now practicing with more dedication and is focused on improving his skills. He now shows great promise and serves as an example to other students.”

Competition has always been a vital tool for those wishing to progress in a sport. Not only does it give an outlet to measure progress and put skills learnt into practice, the effects can be far reaching. Competition is fun, develops leadership and team working skills and gives experience of dealing with pressure situations.

In July 2014, Pro Sport Development appointed a full-time Physical Education (PE) teacher (Santilata Pradhan) at Gram Vikas Vidya Vihar School in Rudhapadar, Odisha. To gauge the interest created by regular PE lessons and recreational sports programs, on the eve of Independence Day, Santilata organised athletics, kho-kho and kabbadi competitions for the pupils. This was the first time that an internal competition had been introduced to the school and the children had a chance to compete against those outside their class. They were divided into 2 categories: Junior (Class 3, 4 & 5) and Senior (Class 6 & 7).

The innovation had a great impact on the morale of the pupils, and resulted in them participating more actively in sport. Competing against their elder peers, the younger pupils were determined to prove their ability and had a major boost of self-confidence when they realised they could compete. The competition was successful in generating interest within sport, with more than 60 school children (over 1/3 of the school) taking part in the event.

The competition generated enough enthusiasm and interest that the girls of Class 6 requested that athletics be added to the after-school program. The current after school program has 22 children, 15 Senior and 7 Junior, and is now set to grow on the back of the competition.

Key Findings

“the pupils now participate with a new energy and focus in the PE class.”

The competition has made pupils:

- More interested in sport
- More confident
- More focused on sport
- More determined to improve
- Better prepared for external competition



Girls in action at the finish line of 50m sprint race