



Arjuna Awardee Lalit Upadhyay As An Outstanding Field Hockey Player: A Case Study

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to highlight the outstanding performance, achievements and contributions of Olympic bronze medalist (Tokyo, 23rd July 2021), Commonwealth Games silver medalist (Birmingham, 29th July 2022), and Asian Games gold medalist (Hangzhou, 23rd September 2023), Arjuna Awardee Lalit Upadhyay, towards the promotion of Indian field hockey. The study also covers his sports background, biography, and educational qualifications. The data for this investigation were derived from personal records, official records, interviews, pictorial records, published material, and secondary sources. Survey techniques were used to obtain responses and reactions about Lalit Upadhyay from selected eminent sportspersons, coaches, family members, contemporaries, and physical educationists from across the country through a self-made questionnaire to gather the desired information. Lalit Upadhyay was the first Olympian from the nineties to win a medal in the Olympic Games without attending a sports college or sports hostel. Lalit represented the Indian field hockey team at the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, where he contributed to winning a bronze medal, ending a 41-year drought. This achievement is significant in his life and sets an example for day boarding players. For his outstanding performance in field hockey, Lalit Upadhyay was awarded the Laxman Award in 2017-18 and was honored with the Arjuna Award by President Ram Nath Kovind in 2021.

Keywords: Education, Field Hockey, Achievements, and Contributions.

1. Introduction

Education is the key to knowledge, information, and power which leads to success in life. So before knowing about physical education and sports, we must know about education. Education is a lifelong process. It starts from 'birth' and 'continues' till the end of life. Education is the most powerful tool or weapon that can be used to bring about change in society, districts, states, nations, and the world. Knowledge is a form of power that is acquired through learning. Knowledge is defined as a condition of being aware of something. Which influence and mould the character, behaviour and personality of an individual. Every child is born with some innate capacities, which can be further developed by physical instruction or education. Physical education or instruction is an integral part of the overall education of each and every child. Physical education contributes to the overall growth and development of each child. Physical education is made up of two words first is 'physical' and second is 'education'. The word 'physical' is related to the human body, referring to all the physical characteristics of a person. The word education means the systematic instructions and preparation for some particular tasks. In other words, education means receiving or giving systematic instructions, preparation or training especially at a school and college level for making students or people useful and worthy for the world for some particular tasks. Education is the creation of a healthy mind in a healthy body.

1.1 Field Hockey

Field hockey is also known as 'hockey' in other places where it is more common. No one knows when or where the game of 'Hockey' originated. Its birthplace and birth date are unknown. Hockey holds the distinction of being the world's oldest ball and stick game. The early version of hockey involved balls made of cork or rubber covered with strings, and sticks crafted from ash or oak. Some evidence suggests that people used to play by chasing balls with sticks. A vase-relief discovered in Greece, dating back to around 478 BC, depicts Athenians at play, with two engaged in a hockey-like activity. The Romans later introduced this game to England, where it gained popularity.

1.2 History of Field Hockey

Field hockey has ancient roots, dating back nearly 4,000 years, with historical mentions found in Iran, Egypt, and Greece. It can be ascertained that field hockey has been the oldest of the games to exist. "The roots of field hockey are buried deep in antiquity. The historical records show that a rudimentary form of the game was played in Egypt 4,000 years ago and in Ethiopia around 1000 BC. It was the only team game practiced by the Greeks in the era of Themistocles 525-449 BC." The historians opined that it has its roots speed deep in Persia, where it was played in its raw and crude form till 2000 BC. Historians believe that it has its roots deeply in Persia, where it was played in its raw and crude form until 2000 BC. The field hockey game was acquired by the Greeks, who in turn passed it on to the Romans. A study conducted in Athens proves that the game of stick is believed to have come from the great east. It is also ascertained that Red Indian tribes played a game a long time back that resembles present-day field hockey.

1.3 Eminent Indian Field Hockey Players

Eminent Indian Field Hockey Players" refers to the most distinguished and renowned athletes in the sport of field hockey from India. These players have achieved significant success, demonstrated exceptional skill, and made substantial contributions to the sport at national and international levels. Their accomplishments often include winning prestigious awards, setting records, and being recognized for their outstanding performance and dedication to field hockey.

Major Dhyan Chand: Major Dhyan Chand, born on August 29, 1905, in Allahabad (now Prayagraj), Uttar Pradesh, India, is widely regarded as one of the greatest field hockey players in history. His father, Sameshwar Dutt Singh, served as a Subedar in the British Indian Army, and Dhyan Chand followed in his footsteps, joining the army at 16. His exceptional hockey talent was discovered and nurtured during his military service. Dhyan Chand made his debut for the Indian national hockey team in 1926 at age 21 and quickly became a key player. Known for his extraordinary goal-scoring ability and impeccable ball control, he earned the nickname "The Wizard." He participated in three Olympic Games, securing gold medals in each: the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics, the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics, and the 1936 Berlin Olympics. From 1926 to 1949, he scored 570 goals in 185 international matches. Dhyan Chand's skills were legendary, with stories of authorities in Holland breaking his stick to check for magnets and in Japan suspecting glue on his stick. His birthday, August 29, is celebrated as National Sports Day in India. The Vienna Sports Club honoured him with a statue featuring four hands and four sticks, symbolizing his extraordinary talent. Major Dhyan Chand passed away on December 3, 1979, in Delhi, leaving a legacy that continues to inspire generations in Indian sports.

Roop Singh: Roop Singh, born on September 8, 1908, in Jabalpur, Central Provinces, was a key member of the Indian hockey team during its peak. As Dhyan Chand's younger brother, he made significant contributions to Indian field hockey. Roop Singh debuted internationally in 1930 and was crucial to India's victories in the 1932 and 1936 Olympics. Known for his excellent stick handling and powerful strikes, he also captained the Indian team multiple times. Post-retirement, Roop Singh served in the Indian Army and developed hockey infrastructure in India. He was posthumously awarded the Padma Bhushan in 2002.

Kunwar Digvijay Singh: Kunwar Digvijay Singh, also known as "K.D. Singh Babu," was born on February 2, 1922, in Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh. A legendary Indian field hockey player, Babu was renowned for his passing and dribbling skills, often compared to Dhyan Chand. His talent shone from his school days, leading him to play for the LYA Club in Lucknow. He joined the All-India Hockey Team in 1946-47, becoming vice-captain in the 1948 Olympics and captain in the 1952 Helsinki Olympics, winning gold medals both times. Post-retirement, he coached the Indian team in the 1972 Munich Olympics and received honours like the Padma Shri in 1958.

Mohammad Shahid: Mohammed Shahid, born on April 14, 1960, in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India, was a legendary Indian field hockey player celebrated for his exceptional dribbling skills, speed, and agility. He earned the nickname "The Wizard" for his ability to mesmerize audiences with his extraordinary talent. Shahid's hockey journey began in Varanasi, where he honed his skills and quickly rose through the ranks to join the Indian national team in the late 1970s. Shahid made his international debut in 1979 and went on to represent India in numerous field hockey tournaments and matches. His playing style was characterized by incredible speed, dribbling ability, and close ball control. Alongside Zafar Iqbal, he formed a formidable duo, breaching even the strongest defences in World Hockey. Shahid was a pivotal member of the Indian team that clinched the gold medal at the 1980 Moscow Olympics, where his performances were exceptional. His influence extended to the 1982 Asian Games in New Delhi, where India won gold, and the 1985 World Cup in London, where India finished as runners-up. Shahid's ability to create opportunities for his teammates and score crucial goals in critical moments made him a standout player. Shahid's career was marked by numerous awards, including the Arjuna Award in 1981 and the Padma Shri in 1986. He represented India 167 times, scoring 66 goals, and participated in three Olympic Games: 1980 in Moscow, where India won gold, 1984 in Los Angeles, and 1988 in Seoul. Even after retiring from international field hockey in 1989, Shahid continued to inspire as a coach and mentor. Despite facing health challenges, including diabetes and liver-related issues, Shahid's legacy as one of the greatest hockey players endures. He passed away on July 20, 2016, in Gurgaon, Haryana, India, leaving behind a lasting impact on the sport and inspiring generations of hockey players in India and beyond. Mohammad Shahid's family members, including Mrs. Shahid Praveen (wife), Mohd. Saif (son), Hina Shahid (daughter), Mohd. Rafi (brother), Mohd. Faiyaz

(brother), Mohd. Nasir, Mohd. Afzal, and Azhar Abbas (nephew), are carrying forward his legacy by promoting field hockey at the grassroots level. Their dedication to the game and commitment to nurturing young talent exemplify his values. Through their efforts, they honor his memory and ensure that his passion for hockey continues to inspire future generations. The memorial of Mohammed Shahid and his family's promotion of field hockey are significant contributions to the sport in our country.

Lalit Upadhyay: Lalit Upadhyay is a well-known personality in Indian field hockey. He was born on 1st December 1993 in the holy city of Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. His permanent home address is S-7/53 Bhagatpur, Shivpur, Varanasi. His grandfather's name was the late Shri Rammurat Upadhyay, and his grandmother's name is Champa Devi. His grandfather's ancestral small business was selling clothes. His father's name is Shri Satish Upadhyay. He worked in a private job at Union Bank of India, handling tasks related to cheque clearing and delivering posts to other branches. His mother's name is Shrimati Rita Upadhyay, and she is a housewife. His family was not financially strong. His brother, Shri Amit Upadhyay, was also a national-level hockey player. Lalit Upadhyay started his field hockey career in 2004 at the age of about 10 years. He learned the basics (abc..) of field hockey under the guidance of Dr. Akhil Mehrotra for the first year and then continued his training for a longer period under the guidance of Shri Parmanand Mishra, SAI Hockey Coach at Udai Pratap College, Bhojubeer, Varanasi. Sports Authority of India (SAI) coach Shri Parmanand Mishra, who taught Lalit Upadhyay his early hockey lessons at UP College, said, "I corrected his hitting almost daily, sometimes with a slap. I remember how hard he worked to master it. The 2007-08 batch of 14-15 players was the best in my career at UP College." Lalit Upadhyay was a hard worker and a dedicated Indian field hockey player. He was the first Olympian from the nineties to win a medal in the Olympic Games without attending a sports college or sports hostel. Lalit Upadhyay represented the Indian field hockey team at the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, where he contributed to winning a bronze medal, ending a 41-year drought. This achievement is significant in his life and sets an example for day boarding players. Lalit plays as a right-in or forward for the Indian national team and has been a member since 2014. Prior to this, he was part of the Under-21 junior Indian team. His individual achievements include being named the Best Player of the Tournament at the Beighton Cup in Kolkata in 2010, the Player of the Tournament in the Bangalore League in 2011, and in the All India University Zonal in 2012. Lalit Kumar made his debut for India in 2014 and has since participated in numerous national and international competitions and tournaments. He participated in the senior national hockey team for the first time in 2014 at the FIH 35th Hero Men's Champions Trophy in Bhubaneswar, India. He secured a gold medal at the 4th Men's Hero Asian Champions Trophy in Kuantan, Malaysia, in 2016, and he earned a bronze medal at the Men's FIH Hockey World League 2016-17 in Bhubaneswar and a gold medal at the Asia Cup 2017 in Dhaka. Additionally, In 2018, he won a bronze medal at the Asian Games in Jakarta, and another gold at the 5th Men's Hero Asian Champions Trophy in Muscat, Oman, in 2018. Lalit Upadhyay represented the Indian field hockey team at the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, where he contributed to winning a bronze medal, ending a 41-year drought. His journey to the Tokyo Olympics is exceptionally inspiring, marked by consistent excellence and dedication to the sport. Hockey India President, Padma Shri Dr. Dilip Tirkey, stated, "I congratulate Lalit Kumar Upadhyay on earning his 150th international cap. It is truly special and memorable for any player to wear the Indian jersey and represent the country. Over the past few years, Lalit has demonstrated his skill with outstanding performances. I am confident he will continue to make the country proud and earn more accolades. Lalit Upadhyay has predominantly played the forward position in the Indian national field hockey team. Lalit's journey to the Olympics is exceptionally inspiring.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

The statement of the problem was stated as: **“Arjuna Awardee Lalit Upadhyay As An Outstanding Field Hockey Player: A Case Study”**

1.5 Objectives of the Study

- i) To study his outstanding performance.
- ii) To enlist and highlight the sports achievements.

2. Research Methodology and Procedure

The research methodology involved a combination and synthesis of literature review, questionnaires, and interviews to examine Lalit Upadhyay's journey in Indian field hockey and his impact at the national and international levels. A case study was designed on Arjuna Awardee Lalit Upadhyay to highlight his outstanding performance, achievements, and contributions to promoting field hockey in India. It also examines his sports philosophy, qualities as a player, leadership abilities, and impact on the game nationally and international level. Information will be collected through questionnaires and interviews with Upadhyay's colleagues, relatives, teammates, friends, students, family members, sports personalities, and coaches. The questionnaires, prepared with help from experts in field hockey and sports education, will target those who have influenced his career. Data will be gathered from personal records, photographs, certificates, internet sources, newspapers, magazines, websites, social media, textbooks, research papers, personal visits, and interviews. The research follows a systematic process from problem identification to conclusion, using an integrated approach for valid, reliable information. The study is limited to information disclosed by Upadhyay and his associates, acknowledging some facts may remain undisclosed or misunderstood due to unconscious efforts. Research methodology involves a systematic process by which the investigator starts from the initial identification of the problem

and progresses towards its conclusion.

2.1 Research Design of the Study

The study adopts a qualitative research design to provide an in-depth understanding of the factors contributing to the outstanding performance and achievements of Lalit Upadhyay in field hockey. This design is suitable for exploring the detailed personal, social, and professional contexts that have shaped Upadhyay's career. The study employs a narrative historical overview combined with survey techniques to gather comprehensive data from various sources. The integrated approach ensures valid and reliable information for this study. Data sources include literature review, surveys, interviews, and questionnaires technique as tools for gathering data have been used for the study. The study follows a systematic research process, from problem identification to conclusion. The design includes subject selection, data collection, data interpretation, and statistical analysis.

2.2 Sports Career and Achievements of Arjuna Awardee Lalit Upadhyay

Lalit Upadhyay is a well-known personality in Indian field hockey. Lalit Upadhyay represented the Indian field hockey team at the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, where he contributed to winning a bronze medal, ending a 41-year drought. This achievement is significant in his life and sets an example for day boarding players. Lalit Upadhyay achievements are:

- (i) Participation in Men's Hockey World Cup, Bhubaneswar, India 2023.
- (ii) Gold Medal in Asian Games, Hangzhou 2022.
- (iii) Silver Medal in Commonwealth Games, Birmingham 2022.
- (iv) Bronze Medal in Olympic Games, Tokyo, Japan 2020.
- (v) Winner in Tokyo Olympic Games Qualify, Bhubaneswar, India 2019.
- (vi) Silver Medal in Men's Champions Trophy, Holland, Europe 2018.
- (vii) Participation in Men's Hockey World Cup, Bhubaneswar, India 2018.
- (viii) Bronze Medal in Asian Games, Jakarta, Indonesia 2018.
- (ix) 4th Position in XXI Commonwealth Games, Gold Coast, Australia 2018.
- (x) Silver Medal in Champions Trophy Breda, Netherlands 2018.
- (xi) Winner in 5th Men's Asian Champions Trophy, Oman, Muscat 2018.
- (xii) Runner-up in 4th Nations Invitational Tournament, New Zealand, 2018.
- (xiii) Gold Medal in Men's Hero Asia Cup, Dhaka, Bangladesh 2017.
- (xiv) Bronze Medal in Odisha Men's World League Final, Bhubaneswar, India 2017.
- (xv) Gold in Europe Tour, Belgium & Netherlands 2017.
- (xvi) Gold Medal in 4th Men's Asian Champions Trophy, Kuantan, Malaysia 2016.
- (xvii) Gold Medal in Test Series India vs New Zealand, New Zealand, 2015.
- (xviii) Gold Medal in Europe International Tour, France & Spain, 2015.
- (xix) Participation in Hockey World League Semi Final, Antwerp, Belgium 2015.
- (xx) Gold Medal in Test Series India vs Japan, Bhubaneswar, India 2015.
- (xxi) 9th Position in FIH 13th Men's World Cup, Netherlands, 2014.
- (xxii) Participation in Europe International Tour, Netherlands 2014.
- (xxiii) Gold Medal in Test Series Australia, Perth, Australia, 2014.
- (xxiv) Participation in FIH 35th Hero Men's Champion Trophy, Bhubaneswar 2014.
- (xxv) Silver Medal in Hockey India 5th Senior National Hockey Championship (Men) "A" Division, Pune, MH 2015.

2.3 Honours and Awards

- i) Lalit Upadhyay, a Varanasi hockey player, will receive a total of Rs 1.25 crore in rewards. This includes Rs 1 crore for being part of the Indian hockey team and an additional Rs 25 lakh for participating in the Olympics as a player from Uttar Pradesh.
- ii) Lalit Kumar Upadhyay was awarded Rs 1.5 lakh and a trophy for completing 150 international caps.
- iii) Lalit Upadhyay was honored with Rs 5 lakh for his role in India's gold-winning performance at the 2022 Asian Games.
- iv) For his outstanding performance in field hockey, Lalit Upadhyay was awarded the Laxman Award in 2017-18 and was honored with the Arjuna Award by President Ram Nath Kovind in 2021.

2.4 Academic Achievements

- i) High School First Division, Passed in 2007 from U.P. Board.
- ii) Intermediate First Division, Passed in 2011 from U.P. Board.

iii) Graduation Second Division, Passed in 2015 From V.B.S. Purvanchal University, Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh.

2.5 Collection of Data/Information

Both primary and secondary sources are used to collect data and information for this investigation. Data will be gathered through interviews with Lalit Upadhyay, his colleagues, relatives, teammates, friends, students, family members, and well-known sports personalities. Additionally, information will be collected from various sources such as personal records, photographs, certificates, internet sources, newspapers, magazines, questionnaires, websites, social media, textbooks, research papers, personal visits, and other reliable sources.

3. Analysis of Data/Information

The data collected through interview techniques and opinion rating questionnaire filled by 100 sportspersons, coaches, teachers, colleagues, family members and relatives to know their response and reactions. The case study on Lalit Upadhyay was conducted using a questionnaire and face-to-face interviews, supplemented by Google search engine services. The questionnaire, developed with the help of experts, aimed to gather comprehensive information about the successful Indian field hockey player and his associations. Questions covered Upadhyay's relationships with friends and relatives, their influence on his participation, and the expectations of people from different parts of the country. The research scholar also conducted interviews with individuals close to Upadhyay to gain deeper insights, making this interactive approach the most effective method for understanding Arjuna awardee Lalit Upadhyay. The first part of the questionnaire deals with personality traits of Lalit Upadhyay. It has 25 statements regarding his personality.

4. Result and Discussion

To assess the different personality dimensions of Arjuna Awardee Lalit Upadhyay, opinion rating survey was conducted. The data collected through interview techniques and opinion rating questionnaire filled by 100 sportspersons, coaches, teachers, and relatives to know their response and reaction. The researcher used a Likert scale test with five options to estimate the strength of feelings. The Likert scale, which has been found helpful for this purpose, includes the following five responses: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). Responses will be collected on these five scales to verify the statements from the respondents. To have insight on various aspects of personality of Lalit Upadhyay a self-designed questionnaire was prepared. Almost twenty-five personalities who has been allied with him as players, colleagues, coaches, teammates, family members, relatives were chosen for the purpose. From the information collected we know that Lalit Upadhyay's professional career is in at national and international level from 2014 to till present.

5. Conclusion

As a forward field hockey player, Lalit Upadhyay has a strong bond with his teammates and coaches, being good-natured, honest, dedicated, and emotionally expressive. He is soft spoken and a religious person. He is a picture of fitness and easily approachable. He is proud of his country and always down to earth personality. He has never lost his temper and he has a great sense of humor. He is very friendly with public and good at motivating others. He seems to be health conscious and he believes in learning by doing. He is a good role model to others and he knows how to cope with hurdles. He never lets emotions overcome him and He possesses good leadership qualities. He is one of the best hockey players India has produced and he is always cooperative and has the maturity to overcome team challenges. Lalit values hard work and prefers making decisions collaboratively. His impressive career includes participation in numerous national and international tournaments, winning several gold, silver, and bronze medals. Lalit serves as a role model, inspiring the younger generation to engage in field hockey and other sports.

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