

Fostering Inclusion: *The development of Girl's Volleyball at Kankia School*



The girls in action during a training session

The girls' volleyball team at Kankia school is the most recent program at the Khel Vikas project. Whilst the eventual aim is to produce high quality team players, it was initially started to ensure that all students were afforded the same opportunities to participate. The technical progress achieved by the girls in a relatively short period has been exceptional but more importantly the group is growing as a team and are beginning to gain recognition within the school community.

The benefits for participants within the program are wide ranging and the girls are developing as people as well as players. One example of such is Runita Rauta, class nine, from Dalaka Village, Ganjam District. Having transferred from Rudhapadar School and moving further from her family, Runita has just completed her first year at Kankia. She spent much of her early time at the school with a firm friend with whom she joined Kankia, yet more recently Runita has become more outgoing and states that "making friends and spending time with them is one of the best things about being in the volleyball program."

Prior to being introduced to volleyball at Rudhapadar, Runita explains that she did not know about sport, she definitely did not know about volleyball. However, to be able to play a sport that she enjoys learning in a safe atmosphere is beginning to help her in more ways than just making friends. Becoming more outgoing, Runita has begun to take on an ad hoc leadership role within the group, helping to organise extra informal sessions.

As a reward for her hard work within the group, she has recently been selected alongside two other girls from the volleyball program to represent the student body on the

student sports committee, more than any other contributing sport program.

Runita Rauta is an increasingly intelligent and confident girl who wishes to teach Sanskrit in the future. She has also stated that whilst attending university, she intends to continue participating in volleyball and if she teaches at a residential school, like Kankia, she aims to help with the provision of volleyball for students so that she can pass on her enjoyment of the sport.

That the recreational sport programs are teaching students that they can be involved in any sport, they have the option to continue participating after school thus benefitting health and employability and that they have a voice that can be heard, which are crucial lessons for students to learn.

Key Findings

"making friends and spending time with them is one of the best things about being in the volleyball program."

The program has made individuals:

- More outgoing
- More aspirational
- Improved organisation
- Enhanced their leadership ability



Runita in action cleaning the girls volleyball court