

Developing and Equipping Schools Sports Facilities: An Eight-Stage Model of Public-Private Partnership

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ABSTRACT

This article presents an eight-stage model emphasizing the role of government policies and physical education teachers aimed at developing and equipping school sports facilities through joint public and private sector investment. The model is introduced in four sections: government policies, teacher participation, private sector participation, and teacher evaluators, each detailing strategies in sequence. The three strategies presented in the government policy section are Legislative and Policy Frameworks, Public-Private Partnership Unit, and Formation of Research Teams, which focus respectively on legislation, establishing an organizational unit, and forming research teams. Strategies four, five, and six in the teacher participation section include Incentive Programs, Sports Facility Summits, and Harnessing social media, emphasizing promoting investment opportunities through advertising. The private sector participation section is addressed with the strategy of organizing auctions and tenders. Finally, the teacher evaluators section includes the strategy of a Project Reporting System. Implementing this eight-stage model can lead to the signing of joint contracts between the private and public sectors for developing and equipping school sports facilities, thus enabling students and teachers to engage in sports activities and attend classes in better-equipped and improved environments. This research paper also explores the critical role of teachers in facilitating public-private partnerships (PPPs) to enhance school sports facilities. The study examines how teachers can effectively engage with private entities and public bodies to secure investments and resources, creating a sustainable model for improving sports infrastructure in schools. By analyzing successful case studies and providing practical recommendations, this paper aims to demonstrate the potential of PPPs as a strategic approach to upgrading school sports facilities, ultimately contributing to the overall development of students and the promotion of physical education.

Keywords: Public-Private Partnership, Sports Facilities, Schools, Teachers.

Introductions

The sports facilities in schools play a crucial role in the growth of students and enhance their moral, intellectual, physical, and aesthetic understanding. Moreover, these facilities positively impact their physical health and fitness (Barrachina et al., 2023; Li et al., 2022). In addition, sports facilities provide students with physical activities, help them adjust to school environments, and develop physical skills, teamwork, communication, and social skills (Barrachina et al., 2023; Duan, 2024). Sports facilities in schools face significant challenges and numerous deficiencies, especially in developing countries and rural areas. For instance, many schools in Nigeria lack adequate sports facilities (Olajide, 2004).

Similarly, in the Western Uttar Pradesh region of India, rural schools have much poorer facilities compared to their urban counterparts (Singh, 2018). Some sports high schools, such as those in the Central Anatolian Region, Turkey, were opened before their infrastructures were fully developed, leading to insufficient facilities both in terms of quality and quantity (Nacar et al., 2013). In some countries, school sports facilities primarily consist of outdoor spaces, limiting the types of sports and activities that can be conducted throughout the year (Yingdong, 2014)). It is crucial to note that poor maintenance and financial constraints often hinder the development, improvement, and upkeep of existing school sports facilities (Olajide, 2004).

Schools often struggle with underutilizing sports facilities due to equipment loss and damage. They may also struggle with community needs, lack of indoor facilities, insufficient equipment, and inadequate management systems, limiting their potential for social impact and year-round physical education (Singh, 2018; Yingdong, 2014). Therefore, various countries, especially developing countries, should create conditions for equipping and establishing school sports facilities. Public sector investment is crucial in this process. On the one hand, Public sector investment is often directed towards capital infrastructural projects, including the construction of sports facilities in schools (Brnjas & Stošić, 2015). Also, Public sector investment allows for allocating resources specifically for teaching and learning in early childhood education, including sports facilities (Nazir et al., 2021). In addition, by investing in sports facilities across public schools, the government can help address disparities in access to such facilities (Singh, 2021).

On the other hand, private sector investment in school sports facilities is essential in enhancing the quality and availability of sports infrastructure for students. Private sector investment can help overcome budget constraints central and local governments face in providing quality educational services, including sports facilities. This is particularly relevant in improving physical education teaching quality (Subić & Simonović, 2019). For instance, in Russia, efforts are being made to attract private investment to boost the commercial potential of sports infrastructure beyond federal centers and into the regions (Gubarev & Zamaraev, 2022).

Considering the role of each level of the public and private sectors in developing and equipping school sports facilities, emphasis can be placed on the partnership between the private and public sectors. This is because these two can complement each other. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are a promising model for developing school sports infrastructure. They combine public sector oversight with private sector efficiency and capital. PPPs can complement government efforts, especially in areas with limited public resources, bridging sports infrastructure gaps (Singh, 2021; Subić & Simonović, 2019).

Various studies have emphasized the benefits and challenges of public-private partnerships in developing facilities. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) have been proposed as a solution to the challenges of funding and maintaining school sports facilities (Stainback & Donahue, 2005; Subić & Simonović, 2019). These partnerships can help address the growing gap between educational subsidies and expenses, particularly with limited state resources (Szafran, 2020). However, managing PPPs in sports infrastructure has legal, political, operational, financial, and environmental risks (Huk & Davydova, 2023). Also, Khalid et al. (2016) indicate that PPPs positively impact the provision of physical facilities in schools, enhancing teacher qualifications, infrastructure quality, and safety measures, ultimately improving the overall educational experience.

Previous research has emphasized the role of public-private partnerships in equipping and developing school sports facilities, highlighting this issue's challenges, obstacles, and benefits. However, there has been less focus in the literature on practical strategies and models that can effectively align these two domains. Furthermore, the role of physical education teachers in this process has been overlooked. Many countries have physical education teachers knowledgeable about school affairs and environments. Few groups are as well-informed as they are in planning the development of school sports facilities, as teachers are familiar with the challenges and opportunities and can plan conscientiously. Therefore, this article aims to present a model of public-private partnership investment in developing and equipping schools, emphasizing the role of teachers. It seeks to create a practical model that many countries can use to improve and develop their school sports facilities through proper policymaking and planning. This model encompasses eight strategies that should be used sequentially.

First Stage: Legislative and Policy Frameworks

The first strategy involves establishing a legislative framework. As long as a model is not included in the broader policymaking of the national education system, it will not be mandatory. Therefore, in the first step, local government education systems must pass legislation for public-private partnerships to develop and equip school sports facilities and communicate this to their regional departments for implementation.

Second Stage: Public-Private Partnership Unit Managed by Physical Education Teachers

The failure to implement many policies and strategies for developing and equipping school sports facilities is due to the lack of an established organizational unit within the local education system. By creating such a unit, numerous actions, such as surveying schools needing development and equipment, can be undertaken, and appropriate management for development and equipping can be conducted. To manage this organizational unit, highly educated physical education teachers can be employed, as they are familiar with the schools and understand the need for developing and equipping sports facilities.

This organizational unit should be specifically established to foster public and private sector partnerships, and its responsibilities will differ from those of similar units currently operating within the departments. This organizational unit will implement the model presented in this article. Its task is to manage various sectors to achieve the ultimate goal of developing and equipping school sports facilities.

Third Stage: Formation of Research Teams from Physical Education Teachers

Every action, planning, and strategy requires initial research and examination. Many physical education teachers hold advanced degrees and are research experts. Forming a research team of such teachers provides the necessary foundation for needs assessment and feasibility studies for school sports facility development and equipment projects. Research groups can conduct studies to identify schools that require equipment, development, or renovation, estimate project costs, and identify evaluation systems, new methods, and new technologies in their research. Such research teams can pave the way for implementing development and equipment strategies and their maintenance and upkeep. These research teams can be established within or operate under the supervision of the public-private partnership unit mentioned in Stage Two.

Fourth Stage: Incentive Programs for Private Investors

Many private sector investors believe that investing in school sports does not appeal to them. Apart from philanthropic and charitable outcomes, each investor seeks to gain a reputation and income. If private sector policymakers know the benefits of investing and partnering with the public sector in developing sports facilities, or if such benefits are created, they will undoubtedly be interested in participating. Consider this example: if a school and its physical education teacher, in coordination with a private company, equip the schoolyard with artificial turf, and the school allows the private sector to rent this field to athletes for three years outside of school physical education hours, the investor would likely be interested in participating. The investor would profit from renting and earning revenue, and the school and physical education classes would benefit from better facilities.

Therefore, incentive programs such as tax exemptions, joint and mutual contracts, advertising, and income generation can pave the way for private sector participation with the public sector. The roles of physical education teachers can include:

Negotiating with Private Companies: Engaging in discussions and negotiations with private companies to promote investment in school sports facilities.

Active Support: Actively supporting the implementation of partnership projects between the public and private sectors.

Collaboration and Networking: Collaborating and networking with private sector companies to foster partnerships and attract investments.

Implementation Support: Supporting the implementation of projects by assisting in coordination and communication between schools and private investors.

Monitoring and Reporting: Monitoring the progress of projects and reporting on their outcomes to ensure transparency and accountability.

By fulfilling these roles, physical education teachers can significantly contribute to the success of incentive programs, leading to improved school sports facilities and enhanced physical education experiences. Policies related to incentive programs should be identified by the research team (Stage three), reviewed, and finally approved by the relevant organizational unit (Stage two) to be prepared for subsequent actions.

Fifth Stage: Host a yearly "Sports Facility Summit

The annual sports facilities summit can allow gathering and collaboration between the private sector, government representatives, and local education authorities. During these summits, entrepreneurs, investors, government officials, educational administrators, and physical education teachers present various programs, statistics, and articles on current sports facilities and discuss topics such as investment opportunities, school needs in sports, technical and legal aspects, and the benefits of participation in school sports facility development. Private sector investors should be invited to familiarize themselves with collaboration opportunities at these sessions and participate actively. The role of physical education teachers in these summits is crucial; as individuals familiar with the real needs and conditions of schools, they can serve as primary representatives, actively contributing to the formulation of needs, proposing solutions, and managing the implementation of sports initiatives. In summary, this meeting outlines incentive programs for private sector participation with the public sector in developing and equipping school sports facilities.

Sixth Stage: harnessing social media

The power of social media in development, information dissemination, and advertising is crucial for creating a conducive environment for public-private partnerships in equipping school sports facilities. Media can significantly impact education by disseminating educational and informative content, sharing videos and images, and showcasing improvements in school sports through these partnerships. Effective use of relevant hashtags and impactful social media advertisements can attract more community attention and support. Talk shows featuring physical education teachers on radio and television to present public-private partnership

programs can also serve as platforms to attract more investment. These programs should highlight successful examples of private and government investments and introduce investors to increase motivation and interest. Overall, the role of mass media in this field is remarkable and highly influential.

Social media is another suitable tool that physical education teachers can use to promote private sector participation incentive programs. The relevant organizational unit (Stage two) can create a dedicated media platform to produce content related to public-private partnerships and enlist physical education teachers to contribute content to this platform.

Seventh Stage: Organizing auctions and tenders

Organizing auctions and tenders to equip school sports facilities to foster public-private partnerships and collaboration can be a great way. In these tenders, other criteria such as equipment quality, consumables, implementation schedule, technology used, and other important conditions are evaluated in addition to price. This process ensures that the best proposal based on all these criteria is selected and announced as the tender winner. Schools should also offer incentives in their tenders, such as after-hours facility use rights, tax exemptions, government cooperation, and advertising opportunities.

Furthermore, schools can hold auctions to purchase equipment and consumables needed for school sports facilities, such as goals, nets, scales, railings, and sports equipment, as these are attractive incentives. In these auctions, suppliers of these items present their proposals, and the best proposal is selected based on price and other conditions.

Physical education teachers can be designated as implementing agents with the assistance of education authorities to oversee these tenders and auctions. Through these methods, local schools and education systems can create better sports facilities for their students by attracting investments from the private sector and government funding, thus benefiting from the advantages of tender and auction processes.

Eighth Stage: Project Reporting System by Physical Education Teachers

After securing appropriate funding from public and private partnerships for the development and equipping of school sports facilities, and after the groundbreaking ceremony, it is essential to have a dedicated overseer. Unfortunately, many school projects remain incomplete due to a lack of follow-up and supervision. Thus, a project overseer is needed—not necessarily a structural engineer, but someone who can track the progress and provide regular updates to public or private investors or the local education system through required forms on a monthly or seasonal basis. This overseer can be the school's physical education teacher, as they are likely the most dedicated and invested in the project's success. For this role, it is crucial to provide training and empowerment courses to teach these teachers report writing and project management skills. With such measures, the project's progress will be monitored more effectively, ensuring it reaches its final goal.

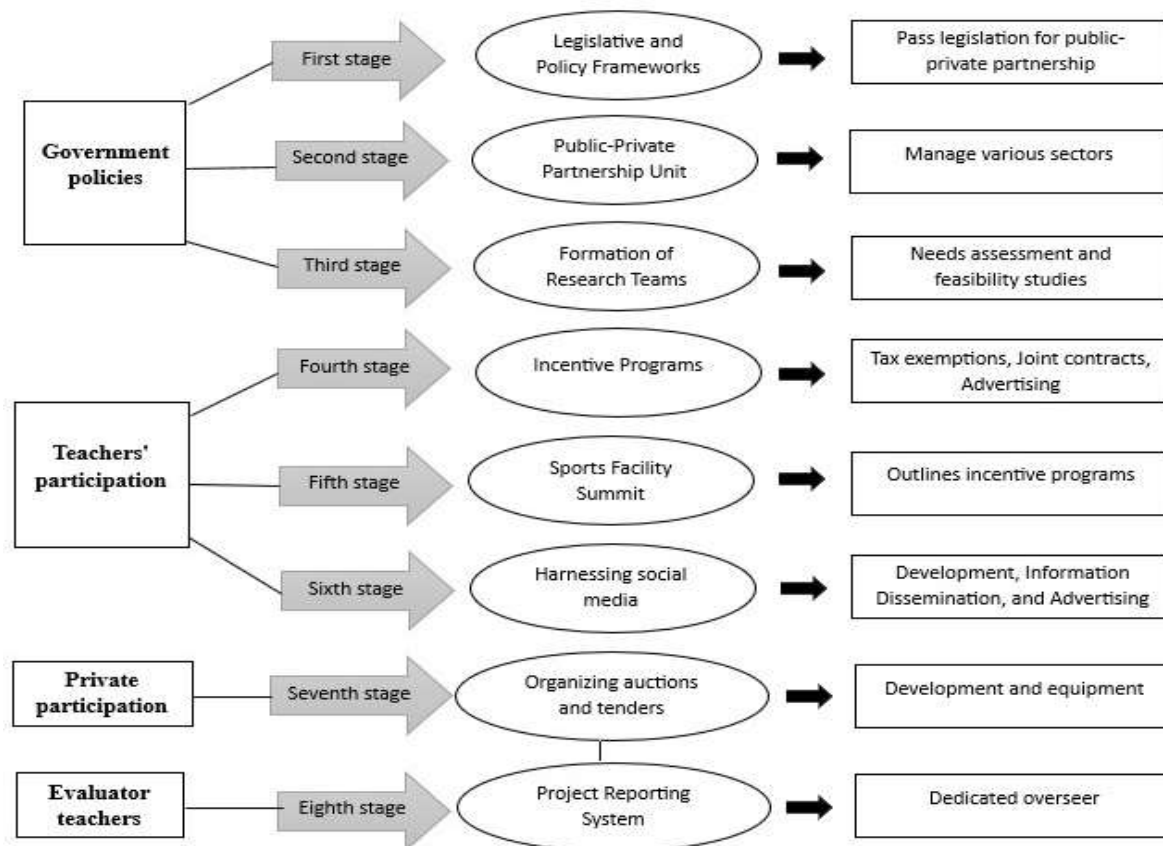


Figure1: Model of Public-Private Partnership Investment with the Role of Educators

Conclusion

Many countries face significant challenges in developing and equipping school sports facilities. While some schools have adequate facilities and can accommodate students in their sports yards, others lack sufficient or quality sports amenities. Therefore, needs assessment and feasibility studies in this area are essential for most countries. Many schools rely on government support or private sector involvement. However, the simultaneous presence of both is often overlooked in schools. There are numerous reasons for this, perhaps the most important being the private sector's lack of familiarity with school investment opportunities. Additionally, the absence of regulations and organizational units within local government education systems exacerbates the issue.

Thus, developing and equipping school sports facilities through public-private partnerships (PPPs) presents a viable and sustainable strategy. The model presented in this article assists in implementing this strategy in eight stages, considering government policies and the role of teachers. The first Stage emphasizes the creation of legislation; without passing laws for public-private partnerships in developing and equipping school facilities within local education systems, implementation will not be possible. After passing this legislation, in the second Stage, an organizational unit responsible for executing this law must be established within local education systems.

In the third Stage, the organizational unit should hire research teams to conduct needs assessments and feasibility studies to identify target areas. These first three stages pertain to government and organizational policies. In the fourth, fifth, and sixth stages, the role of school physical education teachers is crucial. These stages focus on introducing the attractiveness of private-sector investment in schools and encouraging partnerships with the public sector. Teachers can identify and promote incentive programs through mass media and annual summits. The relevant organizational unit should oversee all these activities, and policies and guidelines should originate from there.

In the seventh Stage, auctions and tenders must be held. Here, the role of private sector participation is more significant. The law has been enacted at this Stage, the organizational unit is operational, the research team has identified opportunities, and teachers have promoted incentives through media and summits. Therefore, in the seventh Stage, a call for tenders and auctions for private sector participation in developing and equipping school sports facilities is announced, attracting informed companies. Ultimately, the public-private partnership contract is signed with the winning company within the organizational unit, and the project to equip the school's sports facilities begins.

In the eighth Stage, project oversight is essential. Many physical education teachers can oversee the project alongside structural engineers, providing reports to the organizational unit, which can then monitor the project's progress.

Many countries can bring the model presented in this article to their think tanks or experts to review, modify, and localize it for possible implementation in developing and equipping their school sports facilities. Implementing this eight-stage model can create a practical pathway for successfully developing sports infrastructure in schools. This comprehensive approach not only enhances students' physical health and social skills but also contributes to the overall educational experience, fostering a healthier, more active future generation.

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