

How does cultural diversity in women influence their participation in sport liter...

[Sociology](#), [Community](#)



Literature Review: Teacher as a Researcher

The concept of diversity in sports is an aspect that has been rooted in the history of sports, in addition to becoming an important aspect in sports. The future of all sporting events largely depends on the ability of individuals to cultivate mutual understanding, at the same time safeguard equal participation of members from all cultural backgrounds and diversities. Sport is a universal activity because it is watched and played by individuals from all cultural backgrounds. There is no doubt that sporting events constitutes an amalgamation of multiethnic communities and cultures. Despite the universal characteristics of sports and sporting events, cultural influences have played a major role in influencing an individuals' opportunity to participate in sports. Cultural influences have either shaped or ruined such opportunities. Cultural influences have undermined women's capabilities engage in sports. In the contemporary society, the participation women in sport are one of the fastest elements and more women are seeking knowledge regarding sports.

The Cultural issue

There is no doubt that many sports are blatantly sexist, and realizing success in such sports is dependent on the masculine characteristics of such sports. However, the worrisome issue is that the participation of women in sports is defined by their gender orientation and cultural beliefs and values (Greer, 2011). Such influences have prohibited women from participating in sporting events of their choice. Women are required to adhere to the codes of conduct expected in sports while at the same time being expected to

exercise their feminine characteristics. Additionally, women who had the chance to participate in sports were allowed to do so for social purposes only but not for competitive purposes. Other issues that impeded women's participation in sport included restrictive clothing styles, age issues, cultural beliefs, taboos, and male dominance.

Research conducted on this issue

Most scholars have ignored the topic of women in sports thereby explaining the low development of research in this topic. Nalluri (2010) cites stereotyping, sex roles, biasness in male research, and the structure of the society as the leading factors for the neglect of conducting research on this topic. Shaw (2007) argues that the history of women in sports is characterized by a long history guided by discriminations and divisions. However, Greer (2011) acknowledges that women have been able to realize major advancements in gender equality in sports thereby empowering women participation in sports. In the face of numerous cultural barriers and influences, women have been able to register success in enduring sports. On the other hand, Shaw (2007) argues that lack of interest in conducting research on women's participation is caused by lack of resources, religious issues, and commercial interests.

According to Sakuda (2012), the community is largely to blame for the low level of women participation in sporting events because of the presence of gender, cultural, and religious expectations. The society defines the participation of women in these events on lesser capacity as compared to the women. Past research on cultural influences on sporting overlooked the

contextual and variables affecting women participation in sports. Even though recent studies have revealed a plethora of factors affecting cultural influences on women's participation in sport, it is emphatically crucial to investigate the cultural factors responsible for undermining the participation of women in sporting events.

Causes of cultural influences of women in sport

Several cultural and structural factors act as the obstacles to women participation in sports and sporting events. First, parents and family members have shown elements of reluctance in encouraging women to participate in sports. This can be attributed to the traditional ways of living that prohibit women from taking parts in sporting events. Still from the family perspective, there have been instances of cultural disparities in orienting women to sporting activities because women's participation in sporting events has not been a common phenomenon (Greer, 2011). Another institution that has played a lesser role in eliminating the participation of women in sporting events is the lack of strategic leadership in educational institutions. Physical education leaders failed to design an equal motivation system that encourages equal participation of men and women in sports and sporting events.

Social barriers are also other form of cultural barriers that have impeded the development of women participation sports (Sakuda, 2012). For instance, gender obligations define the roles of women in the community and as well, in sporting events. Access to specific sporting events is limited when it comes to the participation of women. Speaking of the technical aspects

include lack of appropriate sports facilities to suit women such as showers and privacy, low availability of female coaches, and inappropriate programs for developing such sports. These socio-cultural factors provide the constraints and aspects of discomfort to women in participate in sports in particular social settings.

Religious factors are other major hindrances to the development of sporting activities among women. According to Chuang, Church, & Zikic (2004), religious beliefs and obligations limit the chances of women engaging on particular sports on a particular time or day of the week. Equally, some religious such as Islam dictate that women must participate in a female-only environment. Certain religious require women to dress in a particular manner. For instance, women who observe the hijab might be restricted from participating in many sporting events.

Treatment and Response

Given the context of women participation in sports from the cultural perspective, several measures needs to be implemented to not only increase research interests in women's participation in sports but also encourage women to participate in sporting events. This broad aspect entails the identification of barriers, and deconstruction of the cultural and structural barriers to research activities in cultural influences to participating in sporting events. It is also important to acknowledge that the importance of conducting research to uncover multiple categories of cultural influences to women's participation in sporting events. A major milestone in strengthening research initiatives on this field include focusing on the equality of sporting

processes among men and women as compared to focusing on the outcomes of such events.

Another strategy for encouraging increased research initiatives in the women's participation in sporting activities is to encourage participating from organizations. Involvement from organizations can help in injecting the much needed resources and support that will encourage research initiatives. Shaw (2007) argues that it is important to overlook certain assumptions that have been taken for granted. Such assumptions include the belief that women from certain communities often do well in particular sporting activities and hence, those who lack such cultural roots must not be allowed to participate in such sports.

Reduction in prevalence

Physical activity in the form of sports provides several health benefits to different populations. For this reason, various campaigns have been launched to promote participation of both women and men in sports. As previously mentioned herein, social norms inclusive of culture have a significant influence on participation in sports particularly for women. In fact, culture limits participation of women in sports (Mawdsley & Howes, 2004). In order to reduce the influence of culture on women's participation in sports, there is a need to develop viable strategies that can reduce the ways in which culture influence women's participation in sports.

Cortis, Sawrikar, and Muir (2007) carried out a research on how cultural norms in terms of employment influenced the participation of women in

sports. Notably, the research findings indicated is a higher participation in sports amongst females who are employed. As such, the influence of culture in women's participation in sports can be reduced by increasing the employment opportunities for women. Increasing the employment opportunities of women empowers them socially by imparting skills such as teamwork that are essential in sports. On the other hand, women's employment enables women to gain freedom of expressing themselves in different societal platforms including the sports sector. In addition, increased employment opportunities for women increases their social economic capability to acquire resources essential that can be utilized in sports.

Reduction in the influence of culture on women's participation sports can further be reduced through the creation of awareness in the society on the importance of participation in sports by all community members. According to Billings and Hundley (2009), education as a cultural norm influence women's participation in sports indicated by increased participation amongst women who have higher educational credentials. Therefore, creation of awareness amongst women through education plays a crucial role in reducing the ways in which culture influences their participation in sports. Arguably, education institutions provide recreational facilities and information on sports. To this purpose, women education facilitates reduction of how culture influences their participation in sports. Overall, the reduction of the prevalence in which culture influences women's participation is attainable through sustained provision of opportunities essential in women's participation in sports. As an example, development

women sports activities that are culturally acceptable and attractive for women can be used to increase access to sports by women.

Research Implications

Research studies aimed at explaining the cultural influences that undermine the participation of women in sporting activities have generated mixed results. While many of these researches have been concentrated on explaining the benefits and effects of cultural influences to sports, other studies have been hesitant to investigate the relationship between cultural influences and the participation of women in sporting events. Equally, researchers have failed to identify a direct link that uncovers the causes of cultural factors in influencing the participation of women in sporting events. This study aims to investigate the roles played by cultural influences in influencing the level of participation in sports. Research is conducted on the causes and effects that make culture a major influence in women sports. Findings from this research will provide evidence of disparities in cultural influences to sports. Such influences will be important in enabling policy makers to implement measures to eliminate factors that encourage the participation of women in sporting activities. Equally, it will encourage the development of equality in sports among men and women.

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