

Good research paper on gender inequality in sports author's name: institutional a...

[Politics](#), [Democracy](#)



Abstract

Since time immemorial, women have been excluded from participating in a lot of things, be it politics or sports. Although they possess skill and talent, they are being excluded because they are 'women'. Unfortunately for women, today, they do not receive opportunities like men. Even though the United States of America has made progress with regard to this issue, countries still exclude women from sports. There has been an increase in their participation but it is still not as great as the participation from men. Recently, the United Nations has started using sports as a 'vehicle' to eliminate gender inequality. Raising awareness and achieving 20% participation from women are some of its goals.

Gender Inequality in different parts of the World

While these organizations are moving forward, countries like South Africa and Canada are moving backwards. In South Africa, men still dominate sports and women are excluded due to gender and patriarchy (Taylor, Francis, 2015). Although there is an "Affirmative Action Policy", there is no female representation in South Africa for games like golf and shooting. South Africa is known for being unequal. Efforts are being taken to eliminate inequality but the implementation is too slow. Nolubabolu Ndzundzuu was a South African cricketer with dreams to make it big in her cricketing career. Sadly for her, she wasn't recognized and given equal opportunities like the South African cricketers. She said that the South African government had promised her many things but in the end, she had to rely on stipends for her meals. She also said that lack of sponsors for women's sports is the sole

reason for gender inequality. Not just South Africa, even Canada is showing signs of gender inequality in the field of sports. Gender inequality that thrives in Canada has captured the attention of the UN and many more. The wage gap problem is the predominant factor for poor participation of women in sports. A report said that women are paid 34 times lesser than men in Canada. Due to this, the Canadian government has taken steps in order to bridge the gap between men and women in terms of wages. Lectures and seminars are being conducted for women in order to make sports related employment choices. They could become coaches, trainers,, managers, administrators or players themselves, also because “ Women have been much more a part of the sporting lives of different nations in the world than has previously been believed” (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 2).

Australia is another country with poor gender equality when it comes to sports. Recent statistics show that the impact that the men’s cricket team (Australia) had a greater impact than the women’s team. Although they are skilled, Australian women face harassment when they enter into this field. Objectification of women has always been a problem. Recently, Lingerie football league came to Australia. This is a football league for women where they have to play wearing lingerie. This is certainly raised eyebrows in other parts of the world. What’s more astonishing was that, the rules said that if the women wore anything but lingerie, they would be disqualified. This doesn’t just question the morals of the people hosting it but also the morals of the people watching it. Even in Olympics for that matter, women sports were brought in for their body and ultimately, viewership. As disgusting as it sounds, it’s the truth. Despite the existing inequality in Australia, a step has

been taken forward to discard all gender stereotypes through a project called ' Sport media and stereotypes'. Too often, though, " Controversy surrounds the different treatment of men and women in sport: the glorification of male achievements and the downgrading of women's achievements" (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 3).

Muslim participation has been discouraged when it comes to sports, especially for women. It's been that way for a very long time now. Isn't physical activity a right for both men and women? Why the racism? It's because of partiality and prejudice that has led to the discrimination of Muslim women in organized sports which have caused them to extract themselves from interaction and various other activities. The reason why all Muslim women cover themselves completely is because of morale and simplicity since clothing is a noticeable feature of culture. Since they come from such a background, they aren't allowed to wear clothes which expose their body. Sports clothing can be an obstacle for rivalry for women who want to cover up and a lot of disruptions are caused because of this. For example, University of Birmingham academics highlight the exclusion of Muslim sports women at the Olympics. So, why are women excluded from the main sports? Shouldn't sports lead to empowerment of women and promote gender equality? However, women are prevented from harnessing opportunities which in turn leads to societal exclusion. Thus, sports isn't globally perceived as it is continues to be overlooked by males. Sports can satisfy women by strengthening their well being as it also promotes self esteem and ensures integrity by enhancing their abilities.

" As well as masking the harmful features of modern sport, popularizing the

individual heroine tends also to legitimate inequalities” (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 5). Under the eyes of law, women and men will always be the same. This brings us to the question, “How and why are women excluded in sports”. To answer the first question, we know there is gender inequality when it comes to distributing the prize money. Although women are allowed to participate, men get a larger portion of the prize money than women. According to A BBC report, this includes games like cricket, squash and golf (BBC SPORT, 2014). Secondly, women have to face criticism as their physical prowess is always compared to that of men. Talent among women is not nonexistent but since men play sports at a higher level, fans enjoy watching those more. Women are usually seen as ‘sex objects’ when they are participating in sports. More so, that they are used for marketing. This causes a great deal of discomfort for the women race. Society always stands as a barrier to most good things. Even in this case, the society doesn’t want to see women performing because that would mean women doing something that they ‘shouldn’t be’. When it comes to viewership, it is said that viewers look for ‘quality’ more than ‘quantity’. Physical strength and aggression are two other things that keep women away from sports. The physical strength that men possess is definitely greater than that of women but that would only matter when women and men have to go against each other in sports. This is a common understanding that “stories of sport are almost exclusively stories of those in power” (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 8).

Recently, women have also become coaches to train other women and nurture their skills. Allowing women participation in this field has also helped enhance their leadership and decision making skills. Besides all this, in

Malaysia, there has been development with regard to training women with disabilities. This is a big step forward for the country and the world, as a whole. Since viewership is solely based on education right from school, educational institutions are making it a point to develop gender equality. They are also giving physical education to girls and women so that they can make their choices to be a part of this field. Since the needs and interests of women vary from men, the United Nations has made it a point to study all the differences and come up with a neutral approach. Health is one such factor.

Combating health-related issues has always been a negative point for women. Therefore, United Nations along with a few countries is trying to bring out a solution for this. Poland has implanted a plan regarding the maternity issue. Most sportswomen, after their pregnancy, quit their job. Poland has started giving funds to these women, that is, stipends during their maternity leave so that it will motivate them to rejoin the field after giving birth. In other parts of the world, like Egypt, it is believed that older women should also be given a chance to participate. Therefore, physical trainers have been appointed in local parks to train elderly women. In Lithuania and West Bengal, steps have been taken forward by nongovernmental organizations to spread awareness regarding gender inequality in sports. A number of initiatives are being implemented to give girls the chance to be leaders, improve their confidence, increase their self-awareness and strengthen their capacities in terms of decision-making, critical thinking and negotiating (United Nations Secretariat, 2005). The Sports welfare community in Ecuador has raised funds to support

sportswomen. In Pakistan, a mini marathon was conducted for women to spread awareness. The International Olympic committee has also promised to contribute to gender equality by including women in various sports. Several countries have also introduced sports clothes for women. This is especially for women who come from communities that are strictly against exposing skin. These are important “ questions about inclusion and exclusion, about power and privilege, and about local-global connections” (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 13).

Conclusions

All around the world, steps are being taken to promote gender equality in the field. But, even after all this, women athletes face inequality. They are paid less and they are often not respected enough. Is that fair? Only when the point of view is changed, gender equality in this field will prevail. Women will be able to showcase what they are capable of doing only when they are given the right opportunities. If westernized countries like Australia and Canada do not support gender equality, then how will the African Union be able to make progress? All in all, no matter what the progress is, only if we look at the issue from a vantage point, will an actual difference be made for women as well the field of sports.

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