

Research on Gender Equality and Difference in Sports Events

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ABSTRACT

Sports events are closely related to gender inequality. In recent years, influenced by the feminist movement, gender equality in sports has become a new research hotspot. This paper studies the phenomenon of gender equality and difference in sports through literature research, and summarizes and reflects on the phenomenon of gender inequality in the starting point, process and result of women in the field of sports. This paper holds that only by defining gender in sports from the perspective of women's own values can they truly gain the freedom and liberation of sports participation.

KEYWORDS

Gender Equality; Sports Events; Sexual Dimorphism.

1. INTRODUCTION

The fairness and equality of categories and events in men's and women's sports have long been discussed in world sports. The issue of gender inequality in sports, which has persisted for millennia, remains unresolved in the present day. Examining the historical context of gender disparity in sports reveals that despite several efforts to promote gender equality, prejudice against women in sports has persistently endured. There has been a long-standing belief among people that there are fewer sports available for women and that women are hindered from pursuing sports due to prejudices that are ingrained in them from a young age. Historically, ancient Greece held specific festivals that documented women's participation in running events, and women were also successful in equestrian competitions. Women in Spartan culture can engage in power sports, including discus throwing. Native American history also documents the presence of women's wrestling. Why does the classification of men's and women's sports continue to be contentious in the 21st century? This discussion will examine the moral rights and gender inequalities in sports to determine if women should be allowed to engage in sports that are exclusive to boys.

2. SEXUAL DIMORPHISM IN ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE

The question of gender, about men and women, has long been a complex subject in sociology and philosophy. When this matter is brought into the realm of sports, opposing viewpoints can still be observed. Historical research indicates that the Victorian era witnessed the highest gender disparity in sports. Women were commonly regarded as delicate and dependent during that period in Western Europe. Women were depicted as excessively delicate to endure physically demanding occupations in social constructs. Engaging in sports activities can deplete women's energy levels, perhaps resulting in infertility or the birth of offspring with poor health conditions (Goal Five, 2022). This irrational speech and thinking also resulted in women's participation in gender-specific activities influenced by social status and societal norms. Nevertheless, numerous feminist movements emerged

during the 20th century, progressively enhancing women's social standing. The public progressively embraced women's presence in sports and athletics. During the 1900 Olympics, a total of 22 women took part in athletic activities. Since 1920, around 20% of universities in the United States have included sports courses specifically designed for women. The All-American Women's Professional Baseball League (Goal Five, 2022) was established by women in 1940, making it the first professional sports league of its kind. Researchers discovered in 1960 that women could become athletes and that engaging in sports had no adverse effects on their health or reproductive system. Despite progress in the past century, women in the sports world have faced inevitable challenges and discrimination in their quest for higher prominence.

3. PHYSIOLOGICAL DISPARITIES BETWEEN MALES AND FEMALES INFLUENCE VARIOUS SPORTS.

Gender differentiation in various sports results from the physiological disparities between men and women. Initially, women's physiology-imposed limitations on certain activities, such as boxing and select track and field events. Gender has commonly been perceived as the primary determinant of sports performance, according to public preconceptions. The initial settings of many sports were designed for men due to various physiological parameters, including heredity, height, weight, shape, muscle content, and others (J Sports Sci Med. 2010). Women's involvement in power sports such as boxing and wrestling was uncommon in the previous century. This is because if the male opponent is replaced with a female, there is a significant likelihood that the game will lack suspense. This disparity arises from the divergence in physical power between males and females. Women typically have lower muscle strength, resulting in less captivating wrestling or boxing matches compared to men's matches. This also results in the prevalence of certain sports only played by guys.

4. WOMEN ENGAGE IN SPORTS ONLY FOR WOMEN.

Based on the most recent data survey, approximately 6-7 sports are exclusively for women globally. However, when seeking only male sports, the response is negative. This is because men can engage in virtually all sports. Except for the 6-7 sports, the predominant sports in international championships are tailored explicitly for male athletes. Thus, advocating for the inclusion of girls in women-only sports can contribute to diminishing gender disparities in athletics and fostering a comparatively equitable atmosphere.

The involvement of women in sports that are exclusively for women can contribute to the advancement of gender equality in the sports industry. Despite the numerous gender challenges women have encountered throughout sports history, a significant advancement towards achieving gender equality in sports has been made by allowing women to participate in international tournaments alongside men, rather than restricting them to women-only sports. These exclusive events have the potential to garner increased public interest when the media cover them. Consequently, there has been a progressive increase in attention and recognition towards the status of women in the sports industry. These sports demonstrate that women possess distinct athletic advantages and establish that sports involving women may be equally captivating as those involving males. Popular women-only sports in international tournaments include synchronized swimming, gymnastics, and softball. *Synchronized swimming* is an Olympic discipline that integrates swimming, dancing, and gymnastics. *Synchronized swimming* is an Olympic sport that women predominantly practice in a group or duet format. This sport effectively showcases women's artistry and exceptional athletic abilities in sports. This significantly enhances the visibility and acknowledgment of women in athletics while simultaneously elevating women's sports standing.

Furthermore, women's involvement in sports designed explicitly for women might enhance their political and social standing. As the number of distinctive women's projects or sports that facilitate

women's participation increases, there will also be a greater focus on women in the sports industry and their involvement in sports. As an illustration, the U.S. Congress enacted Title IX of the Comprehensive Education Act of 1972, which mandates the federal government to ensure equal financial opportunities for both male and female students in higher education. This legal amendment enhances the limitations on women's participation in sports and underscores the parity between men and women in getting physical education. These restrictions will incentivize women to engage in and participate in sports and reduce the disparity between genders in the sports industry. Thanks to the implementation of these restrictions, the participation of high school girls in sports in the United States has surged from 30,000 to 300,000. This significant surge has also compelled the general public to consider women's sports and sports specifically for women. The modification to Title 9 additionally empowers women and girls to engage in sports, enhancing their competitiveness. During the 2012 London Olympics, women's sports were primarily comparable to men's sports. For the first time in history, the number of international events for women equaled the number of events for men. Consequently, women's involvement in sports designed explicitly for women might enhance their political and social positions.

5. MORAL EVALUATION

Ethically, women are entitled to engage in sports exclusive to their gender. Based on the principles of sociology and feminism, it is expected that the behavior of men and women in society should be reasonably equitable. Hence, because men have historically had numerous sports restricted to them, it is only fitting that women likewise have sports exclusively for them, to advance gender equality and social justice. Furthermore, granting women the opportunity to engage in distinctive initiatives serves as a form of reparation for their previous unjust treatment. Throughout sports history, women have faced societal and male-imposed limitations on their mobility, resulting in male dominance in numerous sports. To achieve social equity, it is imperative to grant women the opportunity to cultivate their unique athletic pursuits. Furthermore, from a societal standpoint, women possess the entitlement to reject gender-based discrimination. Honoring and endorsing women in cultivating their distinct athletic pursuits will also engender a sense of contentment and dignity among women, thereby significantly contributing to societal equality.

6. CONCLUSION

This article primarily examines the moral and gender-based considerations surrounding women's participation in sports. Based on the historical gender-based treatment of women in sports, the selection of specific sports by women has a beneficial impact on social stability and the creation of a balanced society. The physiological disparities between males and females also result in distinct benefits for each gender in sports. Due to men's higher level of competitive intensity and talents in numerous initiatives, a significant number of sports are exclusively tailored for males. Nevertheless, women exhibit superior physical flexibility and balance compared to men, thereby warranting the inclusion of activities that align with their competitive and artistic values. Moreover, considering social equity and the ethical aspect of individual rights, women's sports have the potential to enhance women's societal standing and ensure their rightful entitlements. By implementing women-only sports, we can redress the historical injustice towards women and foster a more inclusive and equitable sports culture.

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