



Female Athletes' Experiences of Gender Based Barriers in Sports

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DOI: 10.53103/cjess.v5i6.402

Abstract

This study aimed to explore the gender-based barriers experienced by girls and women in sports in Pakistan and to develop a contemporary understanding of these obstacles. The goal is to investigate the sociocultural and socio-economic challenges faced by women in sports, as well as issues related to safety and harassment. In-depth interviews were conducted with 12 female athletes who are also students from the University of Lahore, the University of the Punjab, the Pakistan Army Taekwondo Women's Wing, the WAPDA Women's Taekwondo Team, the Pakistan Railways Team, and the Higher Education Commission Taekwondo Team. The findings reveal that gender plays a key role in limiting women's participation in sports. This thesis argues that women face several gender-based barriers, particularly in the areas of socio-economic constraints and security concerns.

Keywords: Gender-Based Barriers, Women in Sports, Sociocultural and Socioeconomic Factors, Harassment and Safety in Sports

Introduction

Women have long been fighting for gender equality in sports, and in many areas, they continue to struggle (Gender in Development GIDD, 2000). Gender equality means that women and men experience equal conditions and enjoy their full human rights, enabling them to contribute to and benefit from the socio-economic, cultural, and political development of their country, while recognizing their similarities, differences, and unique roles.

Sport is one of the most celebrated yet contested institutions in society. Historically, sport has served various social functions—from religious expression to preparation for war. It has also acted as a public spectacle, providing entertainment and social engagement. Today, sport not only entertains but also offers professional

opportunities for athletes and coaches. With proper management and coaching, sport can foster positive personal traits such as ethical development, leadership, and pro-social behavior (Weinberg & Gould, 2011). In recent years, sport has even served as a catalyst for social change, breaking racial barriers, narrowing gender gaps, and challenging inequities related to socioeconomic status.

However, sport does not always produce positive outcomes. Many scholars have highlighted the “dark side” of sport, which includes the reinforcement of racism, gender inequity, homophobia, and violence (LaVoi & Kane, 2011). While sport can challenge dominant ideologies, it also often reinforces discriminatory practices. Through a critical lens, sport can serve as a powerful instrument for social change.

In discussions of sport and gender, it is important to define the terms. Gender is a socially constructed concept that assigns specific roles and behaviors to men and women. According to Parratt (1994), gender is fluid and changes across time, space, and culture. For example, certain sports such as soccer, wrestling, and boxing are traditionally viewed as “male,” while dance, gymnastics, and figure skating are viewed as “female.” These socially constructed ideas create controversy when individuals cross these boundaries.

Research shows that young women who want to pursue sports often face significant barriers. Barnett & Hardin (2011) argue that women encounter fewer opportunities, a lack of role models, and lower-quality sporting experiences. Family and social influences play a key role in whether a girl becomes active in sports (Coleman, Cox, & Roker, 2008). Even when women overcome these barriers, participation often decreases after high school—dropping by almost 50% among young women (Messner, 1992). Social expectations tied to life transitions such as higher education, marriage, or motherhood make it difficult for women to continue sports (Arikawa, O’Dougherty, & Schmitz, 2011; Brown, Heesch, & Miller, 2009). Feelings of guilt for taking time for themselves (Appleby & Fisher, 2009) and fear of social judgment further discourage participation (Calogero, 2004; Appleby & Foster, 2013).

Historically, sports were created and dominated by men (Fasting, Pfister & Scraton, 2004). Women were often considered too weak for endurance sports such as marathons, cycling, or weightlifting (Putnam, 1999). For decades, women were excluded from the Olympic Games, with limited participation only beginning in 1900. Even then, restrictions persisted, as in the case of Katherine Switzer in the 1967 Boston Marathon, where officials attempted to physically remove her from the race.

The global movement for women in sports gained momentum in the late 20th century. The Brighton Declaration (1994) marked a turning point by promoting women’s participation at all levels. Since then, numerous organizations worldwide, such as NOWSPAR, SCORE, and EduSport, have created initiatives to expand opportunities for women and girls in sports (Burnett, 2014).

In Pakistan, women are increasingly aware of the importance of sports, and their

participation is growing despite cultural and structural challenges. Forming teams and support groups, Pakistani women aim to inspire others and demonstrate their abilities on national and international stages. Women's involvement in sports contributes not only to personal growth but also to community life and social development. Encouraging women's sports provides opportunities for empowerment and challenges long-standing stereotypes.

Research Questions

1. What are the gender barriers in Pakistan girls and women in sports?
2. What are the sociocultural and socio-economic barriers that girls and women encounter in sports?
3. What are the obstacles to the safety and harassment that girls and women face in sports?

Significance of Study

The primary purpose of this study is to address the lack of research on gender barriers in sports in Pakistan. By examining the real challenges faced by women athletes, this research provides insights that can help raise awareness of the issue and encourage more participation by women in sports. The findings of this study can assist the government and policymakers in identifying the major barriers and in creating more effective policies for the development and empowerment of women in sports.

Literature Review Gender-Based Sports Barriers

In this section, I will introduce previous research on gender-based barriers in sports. Around the world, sports enthusiasts continue to struggle for gender equality in society and sports, but girls and women still face barriers that prevent them from participating in sporting activities.

According to Lazzaro-Weis (2011), gender-based discrimination is reinforced through religious beliefs, cultural practices, and educational systems that assign women lower status and less power, since political, sporting, and religious spheres are still male-dominated and controlled. The prevalence of gender-based discrimination in sport reflects common gender stereotypes and exacerbates gender inequality. Opportunities for women to participate in sports may be restricted. Even when participation is permitted, the shifting dynamics of gender relations and the concepts of masculinity and femininity may result in gender segregation in various sports and activities (UN, 2007).

In Pakistan, there are many factors that restrict girls' and women's participation in sports. These gender-based barriers can be categorized under the following subheadings:

sociocultural barriers, socio-economic barriers, and safety issues.

Social and Cultural Barrier

Social and cultural obstacles refer to specific practices, beliefs, and traditions within a community or society, and how these barriers influence self-perception and the opinions of others (Northern Ireland Parliament, 2010). In most cultures, sports are traditionally divided by gender and often reflect the values and stereotypes associated with masculinity and femininity (Huggins & Randell, 2007). Thus, sociocultural barriers can limit participation by girls and women. Stereotypes—such as women being confined to household roles or restrictions on women’s movement in public—are common examples of such barriers.

According to a study in South Africa, black IsiXhosa women reported that their families and communities did not support their participation in sports while growing up, as it was not considered part of their culture (Walter & Du Randt, 2011). Similarly, in Zimbabwe, Manyonganise (2010) argues that cultural traditions and gendered spaces restrict women from engaging fully in physical activity, thereby limiting their progress in sports. In Nigeria, Elendu & Orunaboka (2011) found that women’s sports participation continues to face social stigma, negative attitudes, insufficient media coverage, and unequal access to leadership positions.

Reports also highlight that negative community attitudes and parental disapproval are major barriers to women’s sports in South Africa (Eade, 1997). Likewise, in Tanzania, entrenched cultural mindsets have hindered the development of women’s sports movements (Massao, 2005). Family and community support, particularly from parents, is crucial for encouraging girls to take part in sports and will be further discussed under the heading “Expectations, Housework, and Family.” Before that, another socio-cultural barrier, related to health and body perceptions, will be discussed.

Physical and Health of Sports Women

Walter & Du Randt (2011) reported that many black women were aware of weight-related health risks, but their families discouraged them from engaging in sports because of cultural ideals, such as the belief that “black girls should be beautiful and heavy.” Although physical activity has well-known health benefits—including weight management and reducing the risk of chronic diseases—misconceptions about its effects create barriers for women.

For example, in Nigeria, sports are still seen as potentially harmful to women’s fertility and menstruation (Elendu & Orunaboka, 2011). Some women also fear that weight loss due to exercise might be associated with HIV/AIDS, reinforcing stigma in certain African contexts (Walter & Du Randt, 2011). These stereotypes about body image—such

as the preference for larger body sizes among black women in South Africa compared to thinner ideals among white women (Mciza, 2007)—can further discourage participation. Manyonganise (2010) also notes that sports may be seen as a threat to women's health and femininity, as physical activity is often associated with masculinity, leading to fears of social exclusion.

Expectations, Housework and Family

According to Meier (2005), femininity and athletic activity are often viewed as incompatible, and women who engage in sports may be seen as “deviant” or a source of shame for the family. In Pakistan, the traditional expectation is that a “real” woman should focus on household duties and fulfill the role of housewife. These expectations, passed down through generations, often assign household chores exclusively to girls, leaving them little or no time for sports (Huggins & Randell, 2007). Fathers and brothers usually protect patriarchal traditions and family honor, while mothers emphasize preparing daughters to become “good wives” (Meier, 2005; Ramtohul, 2010).

The United Nations (2007) notes that women who participate in male-dominated sports may face criticism, stereotyping, and labeling, such as being called “masculine” or “unfeminine.” Such attitudes, combined with a lack of parental support, significantly limit women's opportunities in sports.

Socioeconomic Barriers

Socio-economic barriers relate to financial status and access to resources. Women's traditional household roles are often undervalued as “unproductive work” (Meier, 2005), while men are regarded as breadwinners, giving them greater financial independence and access to leisure activities such as sports.

Because men generally have more stable income, they are better able to afford expenses such as sports equipment, clothing, and transportation. Women, by contrast, face limited financial support. Even women who participate in sports continue to experience economic inequalities, including lower wages, fewer sponsorship opportunities, and less commercial recognition compared to men (UN, 2007).

Safety

Participation in sports is sure to raise questions about the safety of girls and women. Risk factors for injuries and harassment may hinder girls and women from participating in sports. These barriers, such as the general economic situation of women and the expectations of women who do not participate in the “male field” (sports), may affect female participation. The risk of injury, the risk of not having enough funds to pay

for medical care and/or the inability to properly care for the family after the injury may pose a challenge for women. The risk of ridicule, harassment or sexual harassment/abuse may also be a risk for some women to take risks and participate in sports. Issues and obstacles to the safety of girls and women, especially regarding various types of harassment, are discussed further below.

Harassment

Harassment is unwelcome, offensive, threatening, and/or annoying speech or actions directed at those affected (NIF, 2010: 7). Sexual harassment is common in women's sports and is a major obstacle for top players. One consequence is that second-rate players who are willing to provide sexual favors may gain access to influential positions.

According to a United Nations report (2007), women and girls in the sports world may face verbal harassment, including sexual harassment, from athletes, coaches, managers, audiences, families, or other members of the public. Negative and unfavorable remarks are among the barriers women encounter in sports (Walter & Du Randt, 2011). Female athletes are often ridiculed, laughed at, and accused of being "crazy" or "abnormal." They may even be accused of "trying to act White." Such frustrating comments discourage women and girls from participating in sports because they want to avoid harassment, identity confusion, or accusations of adopting behaviors associated with white women. Gender-based harassment and discrimination in sports are also visible through limited employment opportunities for women and their underrepresentation in the media (United Nations, 2007).

As athletes, women often rely on the support network around them—coaches, boards, and team leaders. This can create a delicate situation because these individuals typically hold more power and authority than the athletes themselves. For instance, the support staff ultimately decide who will be selected for the next match or event. As a result, cultural norms and socialization processes can create gender-based barriers, discouraging women from taking leadership roles or initiating physical activities, as these responsibilities are traditionally assigned to men.

Sexual harassment may be verbal, nonverbal, or physical. This includes unnecessary intimacy related to the body, clothing, or personal life; sexually suggestive jokes; propositions for sexual favors; or pressure to engage in sexual relationships (NIF, 2010). Elendu & Umeakuka (2011) define sexual harassment as any sexual behavior that directly or indirectly targets individuals or groups participating in sports. According to NIF (2010), sexual harassment can also involve unwanted phone calls, text messages, or letters with sexual content; staring; showing sexually suggestive or offensive images or objects; and unnecessary sexual contact. Importantly, anyone—regardless of gender, socioeconomic class, age, occupation, race, ethnicity, education, marital status, or professional rank—can engage in sexual harassment (Elendu & Umeakuka, 2011). Across

all definitions of harassment, a key element is that the behavior is unwanted. Victims and perpetrators may have different perspectives about whether behavior is unwelcome, but as NIF (2010) highlights, the victim's experience is what defines harassment, regardless of the perpetrator's intent.

According to Elendu & Orunaboka (2011), sexual harassment is a serious issue for women and girls. The threat often arises from men's enforcement of gender-specific boundaries and resistance to women's independence, or from the perception that sports are a male domain. Many women who experience sexual harassment withdraw from sports and stop participating altogether. Those who continue may be reluctant to report incidents due to fear of repercussions or lack of trust in authorities.

Brackenridge & Fasting (2005) distinguish between sexual harassment and sexual abuse: sexual harassment involves unwanted attention of a sexual nature (e.g., remarks, touches, jokes), while sexual abuse involves coercion or force into sexual acts or genital contact, where the perpetrator exerts control over the victim.

Parents and guardians may also discourage their daughters from participating in sports due to the risk of harassment or abuse. Sports venues remain unsafe and unethical spaces for women and girls in many contexts (Manyonganise, 2010). Additionally, restrictions on girls' mobility and leisure time—particularly at night—pose physical and social risks that act as barriers to participation (Huggins & Randell, 2007).

To sum up: Sports have traditionally been regarded as a male domain, while the family has been considered the domain of women (Manyonganise, 2010). Women face numerous gender-based barriers limiting their participation in sports. Cultural beliefs and norms position women as housewives and caregivers, leaving little free time for leisure activities such as sports. Financial constraints further restrict their opportunities to participate. Security concerns—including the risk of injury, sexual harassment, or family-imposed restrictions—also discourage women and girls from engaging in physical activities due to fears of negative consequences.

Sports Strengthen Women/ Promotion of Women Sports

Pakistani women are increasingly aware of the significance and value of sports. Exercise is a healthy activity that is essential for everyone, as it improves health and daily life. Even inactive adults can quickly enhance their health by becoming regularly and moderately active.

There are many benefits to women's participation in sports. Not only does it improve their physical health, but women and girls also gain valuable social benefits from engaging in sports and physical activities. Sports provide women with opportunities to participate in community, social, and cultural activities, promoting their enjoyment, freedom of expression, and access to new opportunities.

The participation of women and girls in sporting activities challenges gender

stereotypes and discrimination. It can therefore be a powerful tool for promoting gender equality and empowering girls and women. Participation in sports and physical activities also promotes good mental health for women of all ages by building self-esteem, self-confidence, and social integration.

Encouraging women's sports will enable women to demonstrate their hidden potential to the world, allowing them to move forward alongside progressive communities. Sports participation also helps women develop leadership qualities similar to those of other athletes. Moreover, it raises civic awareness among women, fostering a sense that they are socially and culturally equal to men.

Women's involvement in sports can make an important contribution to civic life and social development. Therefore, women's sports and physical education should be actively promoted in our society (Smith, 1992).

Inequalities and Discrimination Constraining Women in Sports

Due to chronic stereotypes about girls' bodily and social characters, the advantageous results of recreation for gender equality and women's liberation are managed with the aid of gender-primarily based discrimination in all extents and at all tiers of sport and physical interest. Women are regularly involuntarily divided into exclusive categories of sports activities, sports and competitions especially for ladies. Women's touch to governance and decision-making positions is issue to local and global tiers. The value of ladies' movements has a tendency to be low, causing inadequate sources and inadequate wages and bonuses. In the media, ladies' sports activities are not simplest downgraded, however often provided in different styles, reflecting and strengthening gender stereotypes. Violence against girls, mistreatment and harassment in sports activities are expressions of male-dominated, bodily and electricity perceptions that have traditionally been described in male sports. A wide variety of key features were recognized to assignment gender discrimination and unequal gender institutions and to create an allowing environment for gender equality and women's empowerment in many exceptional areas, along with women and sports (Women 2000 and beyond).

Socio Cultural Factors and Attitudes Towards Women in Sports

In the social perspective, Pakistani women have deficiency in social values and position because their role as creators and producers of all social roles is denied. The son's first desire for his efficient position determines the distribution of circle of relative's assets to their gain. However, the unfold of patriarchy isn't balanced. On the opposite hand, ladies belong to the upper center class have greater training and employment opportunities than middle- and lower- stage girls in Pakistan. Women in the higher class are more capable of manage their own lives than other training. The maximum influential characteristic of the

social and cultural context is the incarnation of the patriarchal machine. When mastering to emerge as a girl in society, ladies undertake patriarchal ideology and play an essential position in moving and reconstructing gender ideology through the socialization system of youngsters. The existence components of ladies are in large part disregarded by means of the country's improvement tasks. Referring to in advance studies, women have been bodily and bodily defined as male. This cultural idea is handed down from faculty to era through faculty schooling, network, media and parents, and has been considered a fact among males and females for centuries (Ahmed, Jamshaid, & Ahmed, 2018). Gender stereotypes force ladies and men to perform in some manner to satisfy social expectations, which limits ladies' participation in physical and bodily sports, in particular lively sports. Women's inferior stereotypes in sports activities are not as complex as the assumptions of racial superiority and the concomitant means of intellectual retardation. Conversely, ladies accept as true with that the perception of terrible athletic capacity is constant with social expectations, so ladies with athleticism are vulnerable to being taken into consideration irrelevant. The carrying gain is contrary to expectations, and for some ladies, it may actually create an adverse photograph. The results of this study deliver further support for the results of many earlier studies (Schultz, 2014).

Methodology

Social research is systematic and scientific. It isn't simply estimation and ingenious paintings. Estimation, Intuition and not unusual feel all have a vital part to play in sociological research, but they cannot produce truthful records on their very own. Trustworthy evidence may be produced only through using a studies method. "A technique is a gadget of policies, ideas and tactics, which publications medical investigation."

This chapter explained the approach of research observe in the present research examine. Research approaches an effort to discover intellectual and realistic answers to problems via the software of scientific approach to the knowable universe. Research discuss an important and exhaustive research of experimentation having as its goal the revision of popular conclusion within the light of recent located reality.

Method approaches the studies techniques or equipment used to acquire statistics. Philosophy of research procedure is technique, which includes the assumptions and values that function as a motive for studies and requirements or criteria; the researcher makes use of for decoding facts and accomplishing conclusion. Scientific technique is one of the critical necessities of empirical studies, through which the speculation may be generated on the idea of commentary, deduction and theories testing.

Research Design

The present research used phenomenology design which involves trying to

understand the lived experience of a phenomenon through interviews with subjects. Phenomenological approach to qualitative research will be used by the researchers which focus the common attributes of a lived experience within a certain group. The first and foremost goal of this approach is to arrive at a description of the nature of the particular phenomenon.

Site Select for Data Collection

In this research study, the data was collected from University of Lahore, Punjab university team, Pakistan army taekwondo women wing, Pakistan railways team, Higher education commission Taekwondo team and WAPDA sports complex.

Sample Size and Strategies

Sample size is another factor which is important to improve research quality and authenticity. Convenient sampling techniques are used in data collection. And study sample is consisted of 12 female who are athletes some of them belong to rural background and some live in developed urban areas. Interpretive phenomenological strategy is used for gathering information because in this strategy participants share their concepts and experiences regarding sports and gender base barriers with aim to explore detailed sense and relative information of participant's personal experiences in different social conditions. And saturation was achieved during data collection.

Data Collection Tool

Data collection tools play an important role while recognizing root of the study and in this research, data was collected through interviews along with comparison of already existing studies for developing themes in research. An interview guide was made for the sake of drawing data for this research work.

Experiences and Challenges while Data Collection

Data assembling is necessary for the social inquiry process. When dressed appropriately, data selection enhances the quality of a social research study. However, researchers may encounter challenges while data collection with different references and ethical considerations. And in Pakistani society people don't want to share their personal experiences regarding their personal life; after convincing them for interview, they hesitate to communicate properly specially about gender base barriers and its impact on well-being. First of all, researcher faced some difficulties to convince female sports female students to give interviews because they are busy in their classes or in their matches. After getting the

data it took time to understand and arrange the acquired dataset according to the need of the research. Hence, after assuring the confidentiality they provided the relative information which was helpful for the study. Interview was taken in Urdu language for easy communication and better understanding with research topic.

Data Analysis

Data evaluation consisted of field notes, recorded materials and private observations. Codes have been emerged and discovered from information, problems, similarities, and differences are also revealed through the individuals lived reveal in and interpreted with the aid of the researcher. According to this process, accrued facts became analyzed and described the participant's angle. Coding was carried out by hand on a hard reproduction of the transcript, via making notes inside the margin or by using highlighting and naming sections of textual content. Field notes compiled all through an interview can be a useful complementary supply of statistics to facilitate this procedure, as the space in time between interviews, transcribing, and coding can bring about memory bias concerning nonverbal or environmental context problems which could have an effect on interpretation of statistics. After that these codes and other relevant material were discussed under the major themes and each theme was also discussed properly and thoroughly.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical consideration in a study is important as well as critical. Qualitative study is exploratory in nature and depends on the respondent's information and compatibility. Qualitative researchers focus their investigation upon the base of exploring, examining, also presenting masses along with their natural environments. Installed contemporary partial analysis is the concepts of relationships as a consequence power enclosed by researchers and participants. Powerful desire to take part in a study depends upon a participant's willingness that one may divide his or her experience. And ethical consideration is defined as "an accumulation of values and principles that cope with questions of what is ideal or terrible in human affairs Ethics searches for reasons for acting or refraining from performing; for approving or no longer approving behavior; for believing or denying something approximately virtuous or vicious behavior or excellent or evil regulations". During the study researcher changed into very cautious about the respected respondents, demographic information. Respondents have been assured that their private facts will now not be disclosed. The view of participants was of well worth meaningful. To live impartial authentic perspectives of respondents were analyzed without including researcher s private opinion.

Data Analysis

Analysis is in some cases hard to recognize from transcription. Mishler (1991) noted, "How we organize and adjust the interview content in light of our findings is a procedure of testing, illuminating, and developing our comprehension of what is occurring in the discourse".

Table 1: Profile of the respondents

Respondents	Age	Education	Department
Flower Zaheer Bajwa	21	B.sc sociology	PAK WAPDA Team
Romana Majeed	21	B.s social sciences	UOL UNI / HEC Team
Sarah Rehman	20	B.sc Psychology	PAK Railways Team
Tahleel Bashi	21	BBA	UOL Team
Attiqa Sajjed	22	MBA	UOL Team
Farah Amjad	20	BS Gender studies	PU & HEC Team
Naqsh Hamdani	18	D Pharmacy	KU / PAK ARMY
Rubina Sikander	21	MSc sports sciences	WAPDA Team
Iqra Zaheer	24	M.Phil. sports sciences	Railways Team
Farseen Hamdani	20	BS sports sciences	KU / PAK ARMY
Samra Taj	24	MSc sports sciences	Railways Team
Laraib Manan	21	BS sports sciences	PU & HEC Team
Asifa Ali	23	MBA	PAK Wapada Team

In this chapter researcher discussed those themes that causes and reason behind the gender-based barriers females faced in sports in Pakistan. 12 female athletes were students at university of Lahore, University of the Punjab, Pakistan Army taekwondo women wing and WAPDA Taekwondo Team & Pakistan Railways taekwondo team were interviewed by researcher and they help in this work to identify the factors that were the actual reason

behind the barriers that sports woman face in Pakistan. To identify the factors, in-depth interviews were conducted with the selected respondents, and they told the researcher about the factors that usually create hurdles between their passions.

This chapter was divided into two sections. At first level, thematic approach was used in this chapter on the basis of the themes produced from the research question. All the themes were discussed. At the second level all the themes were critically analysis by researcher and try to figure out gender-based barriers, socio-culture and socio-economic barriers and the safety related means harassment these sports women face in sports in Pakistan. The interpretive structure was used to make logic of interview data in relation to their background that from which sports category she belongs or what is the real reason behind these barriers by analytically examining the information, to deliver a clear forming structure. The general to specific responses of the participant were analyzed here to develop an analytic framework which examined the factors or reasons.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic Analysis is commonly used in qualitative research. It mainly focuses on highlighting, examining and recording patterns within the present data. These themes are the detailed description of a research process to a specific research question. These themes are basically the categories for analysis.

The process of my data analysis was inductive approach. In an inductive approach, the themes were linked to the data obtained because all the assumptions were purely data-driven. My thematic analysis focused on the gender-based barriers, socio-culture and socio-economic barriers and the safety related means harassment these sports women face in sports in Pakistan, viewpoints, feelings and practical experiences as the paramount object of study. The analysis themes were concerned about female athlete's students that how she faces the barriers in their path to the passion. In this analysis researcher try to dig the exact reason behind the barriers that women in sports in Pakistan faces.

General Views

For understanding the each and every aspect of this research there is a lot of need to know about the all-possible barriers the sports woman faced in Pakistan. So here are the views of the participants.

"According to Participant 1, 2, 4 & 6 started that in Pakistan Sports women must face many problems. Their struggle is much more than struggle of men. The participant said that we belong to middle class family where girls don't get permission to get education easily. That's why we would say that we are lucky to be here today as sports woman. Fellow girls of my society always dreamt of coming here. We also followed my Passion because we got admission in this University on Sports Quota due to which my costs of taking part

in my Sports Competition as well as taking part in the university are funded by the university. And as far as the matter of the ratio of my area's females that is very high in participation in sports."

"Participant 3, 6, 7 and 8 belongs to Gilgit where women get very limited opportunities of getting part in sports even in these area males also don't get many opportunities, so women must face many problems. Therefore, sports are neglected very badly, same as other fields. According to this participant, if she is studying here at PU or UOL and is participating in the National Football team, that is only because of her parents' support. Along with this, the participant has said that even in Gilgit, women's education and participation in co curriculum activities is now appreciated. That's a great and appreciable change. Because of our competency, talent and skills, our region comes on the top of the list of Pakistan's top skilled people. But if we compare participation of women from Gilgit in sports from central Punjab then our regions participation is lesser."

"According to Participant 8, 9, 11 and 12 says that her area where she belongs is not that developed in terms of participation in sports. The participant said that we belong to middle class family where girls don't get permission to get education easily. That's why we would say that we are lucky to be here today as sports woman. Even now my family relatives create problems for me by pressurizing my parents to ask them to bring me back by quitting my studies and sports, but my parents support me very well. Also, we would like to say that my society supports men to participate in sports, but they don't allow much to women."

"According to the participant 6, 7, 9 and 11 belongs to the area where women get very limited opportunities of getting part in sports, so women must face many problems. Therefore, playing sports is very rare. According to this participant, if she is studying here at PU and is participating in the National cricket team, that is only because of her parents' support. She also told that her city is now getting more awareness related to women's education and girls are getting education freely and passionately in her city. She said that she has the passion of playing cricket and she will continue it no matter how hard is it and how much obstacles she must face."

"Participant 3, 6, 7 and 8 also has a place with Gilgit where ladies get exceptionally constrained chances of getting part in sports even here guys additionally don't get many chances, so ladies need to confront numerous issues. In this way, sports is disregarded seriously same as different fields. As per this member, if she is considering here at PU or UOL and is taking an interest National Football group and taekwondo, that is simply because of her parent's help. Alongside this, the members have been informed that even in Gilgit, ladies' training and cooperation in co-educational programs exercises is currently valued. That is an awesome and calculable change. Considering our competency, ability and aptitudes, our area goes ahead the highest priority on the rundown of Pakistan's best gifted individuals. Be that as it may, on the off chance that we think about investment of

ladies from Gilgit in sports from focal Punjab then our areas interest is lesser.

Gender Based Barriers That Girls Experience in Sports in Pakistan

The medium to understand the gender-based barriers that girls in sports in Pakistan faces are the responses of these female athletes. Here are the responses:

“The participant 1, 2, 3 and 6 said that indeed he belongs to a very big city, but she belongs to a class that has great impact on women education and specially women sports. But still people in my area are allowing women for getting education but participation in sports is not permissible as compared to males in fact women sports quota is much lesser than male's quota. Women's quota is not equal to men's quota. And if we talk about the tournaments then ratio of male's tournament is much more than female's tournament. It's the ration of 10:2 that is very inappropriate. But one of the benefits we have received is by getting admission to Punjab University and Lahore University that we are able to continue my studies and also, we can continue my passion of participating in sports. Another thing that we Sports Women face is that if we go for playing a tournament, our budget is very limited like we do not have good equipment. We are not provided good transportation as well.”

“The Participant 3, 5, 7 and 8 said that we belong to an area where people are asked to see what skills they have. My region's people are considered backward and conservative also they are considered less educated and unskilled and untalented. This perception is wrong. My area is developing day by day and people are getting education, even girls are allowed to get education as well. Some people misunderstand that girls are not allowed to study in Gilgit. Even girls can also participate in sports if their parents allow them and support them by resolving society's pressure. If I talk about football, then we do not have sufficient opportunities in football as compared to males.”

“According to the 5, 9, 11 and 12 said that she belongs to a city is developed in almost every field other than participation in sports. Here I mean there are less opportunities and support of society but still some girls from my society like me and others step forward for our career and go against the culture. But still people in my area are allowing women for getting education but participation in sports is not permissible as compared to males. She said that we always get degraded as compared to men in my family that I am not supposed to play and participate in sports because we are a girl, and we have household duties to fulfill. She also told that there are very lesser opportunities for females in sports as compared to men. Men get more chances to participate in international tournaments. Also, males have latest sports equipment's and system as compared to females.”

“The participant 4, 5 and 7 said that indeed he belongs to a very big city, but she belongs to a class that has great impact on women education and specially women sports. But still people in my area are allowing women for getting education but participation in

sports is not permissible as compared to males. But one of the benefits I have received by getting admission to Punjab University and university of the Lahore is that I am able to continue my studies and also, I can continue my passion of participating in sports. Another thing that we Sports Women face is that if we go for playing a tournament, our budget is very limited like we do not have good equipment. We are not provided with good transportation as well. She also told me that I have experienced very difficult situations that even in more advanced and developed cities like Multan and Lahore, people are reluctant to send their daughters in sports because of gender barriers. I have seen many girls who have potential and skill, but their family or parents don't allow them to pursue their passion."

"The Participant 3, 6, 7 and 8 said that I have a place with a region where individuals are requested to perceive what aptitudes they have. My district's kin are viewed as in reverse and moderate additionally they are viewed as less instructed and incompetent and unskilled. These observations aren't right. My region is creating step by step and individuals are getting instruction even young ladies are permitted to get training also. Individuals misjudge that young ladies are not permitted to contemplate in Gilgit. Indeed, even young ladies can likewise partake in sports if their folks permit them and back them by settling society's weight. On the off chance that I discuss football, at that point we don't have adequate open doors in football as contrast with guys."

The Socio-Cultural and Socio-Economic Barriers Girls Face in Pakistan

The medium to understand the socio-cultural and socio-economic barriers that girls in sports in Pakistan faces are the responses of these female athletes. Here are the responses "The participant 1, 2, 5, 7 and 12 said that as she belongs to a developed city, so she does not face much cultural barriers. But she faces socio economic problems as she belongs to a middle-class family, so she has got lesser opportunities to participate in international level training. If we talk about overall Pakistan and Rawalpindi is a developed city, so I do not have to face Cultural barrier as literacy rate of Rawalpindi is good people are educated and sensible. They give their girls liberty to grow their careers and to get education. One of the financial obstacles that I got to face because I belong to a middle-class family is also resolved because of getting admission in University on Sports quota." "The participant 3, 6, 7, and 8 said that I got admission on sports quota. That is why I am getting many benefits. Mainly because I am studying at a very good educational institution and secondly, we are fulfilling our passion. But ratio of women getting education in Gilgit is very low and limited so it would not be wrong to say that we need awareness on it. And if I talk about taking part in sports, it depends on family support. Because women in our society faces social barriers and cultural barriers at our every point and step. People of Gilgit, especially men, believe that girls cannot do things that boys can do. And sports are considered as

men's field. Therefore, if women of Gilgit want to participate in sports, they don't only face social barriers, but also cultural barriers. They face Cultural barrier at the time when parents allow their daughters to participate in sports. That means they are doing this against the culture and society, and they face pressure because of this obstacle. But if I'm here at this place, only because of my parents' trust and support."

"Participant 1, 3, 9 and 10 said that we face much cultural barriers. She said that as we told you earlier that my family relatives, even my brother is against my passion and field so they pressurize my parents to bring me back. They are not against my education but they are against my participation in sports. We also face financial obstacle that I got to face because I belong to a middle-class family but that is resolved because now, we are supporting my own parents financially for my education. She further said that because of financial stress my other siblings are also suffering." "The participant 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8 said that we got admission on sports quota and this is benefiting me on many levels, she said I am lucky to be studying in a renowned educational institution and I am getting financial assistance because of sports quota. We face some cultural barriers because of the society but my parents support me so we don't feel much pressure. People do talk about me living here alone and playing sports as women are considered to take part in household activities but as my parents and family supports me so we don't feel much pressured. Also, we change many people's perception after playing good sports at national level." "The participant 4, 8, 9 and 11 said that we got confirmation on sports portion at PU and UOL. That is the reason I am getting numerous advantages. Primarily I am contemplating from a decent instructive establishment and besides I am satisfying my enthusiasm. In any case, proportion of ladies getting instruction in Gilgit is low and constrained. So, it would not be right to state that we require mindfulness on it. What's more, on the off chance that I discuss participating in sports, it relies upon family bolster. Since ladies in our general public face social obstructions and social boundaries at each point and step. Individuals of Gilgit, particularly men, trust that young ladies can't do things those young men can do. Also, sports are considered as men's field. Along these lines, if ladies of Gilgit need to take an interest in sports, they don't just face social boundaries, yet in addition social obstructions. They confront Cultural obstruction when guardians enable their girls to participate in sports. That implies they are doing this against the way of life and society and they confront weight as a result of this hindrance. Be that as it may, in case I'm here at this place, simply because of my folks' trust and support."

The Barriers Related to Safety and Harassment That Girls Face in Sports

The medium to understand the barriers related to safety and harassment that girls in sports in Pakistan faces is the responses of these female athletes. Here are the responses the participants 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 said that we had to face many issues related to Safety

because in the start I had to get training from local coaches because of my financial problems. Our economic obstacles forced me to get training from local coaches because of whom we suffered harassment in many situations and levels. But now we somehow got control over this problem because now we have awareness about this issue and we know how to handle this situation. We sometimes take actions against it. As far as we talk about Sports Club of the University of the Punjab and university of the Lahore, it is very organized and coach is also very good so we don't face any issue and harassment obstacle here in my university club But if we go on tournaments, we interact with Males, some are reasonable and decent but some create problems for us but we overcome the situation by handling it wisely as I am an educated woman."

"The participants 6, 7, 8 and 11 said they are facing harassment in any form but they do not report this issue because people will somehow blame them. She further said that we have seen many girls facing this issue but they tolerate this because of their career and reputation. Because in our society women are always treated with less importance and respect so they feel fear of telling anyone. According to this participant if she highlights any harassment case with her it's just because of her family because her family gives her support and confidence to cope up with any these kinds of issues. Her family has so much faith in her and they encourage her to take actions and fight against any wrongdoing with her."

"The participant 3, 4, 6 and 9 said that we had not faced any issue related to Safety yet because she knows how to protect herself from non-decent males. We have controlled this problem because we have awareness about this issue and we know how to handle this situation. We sometimes take actions against it when my fellow girls face this issue. We force them to take actions against this harassment and make them aware of the helping resources. As far as we talk about Sports Club of the University of the Punjab and UOL, it is very organized and coach is also very good so we don't face any issue and harassment obstacle here in my university club but if we go on tournaments, we interact with Males, some are reasonable and decent but some create problems for us but we overcome the situation by handling it wisely as I am an educated woman."

"The participant 6, 8, 9 and 12 said that being girls she sometimes faces safety issues especially on outside the city tournaments. She said we've faced many issues including harassment and even some disgusting comments from the audience as well but we face them gracefully and we don't allow anyone to harass me or create problems for me. We are aware of our values and respect and we will take strong action if something happens. My coaches and management give us great respect, but sometimes local coaches create problems."

"The participant 2, 3, 5 and 11 said they are confronting badgering in any shape however they don't report these issues since individuals will some way or another point the finger at them. She additionally said that I have seen numerous young ladies confronting

this issue yet they endure this in view of their vocation and notoriety. Since in our general public ladies are constantly treated with less significance and regard so they feel dread of telling anybody. As indicated by this member in the event that she features any badgering case with her it's a direct result of her family since her family gives her help and certainty to adapt to any these sorts of issues. Her family has such a great amount of confidence in her and they urge her to take activities and battle against any bad behavior with her.”

Discussion

This thesis highlights the gender barriers in sports for girls and women in Pakistan. If I can draw conclusions based on the discussions presented, I will talk that ladies and women do come across bodily barriers because of gender inequalities in society, in particular in sports activities. From the attitude of feminism and numerous feminist actions, those actions are frequently established while historical and political environments encourage public reputation of discrimination in opposition to girls, and people may think that there are nonetheless long way to visit realizing gender equality in sports in Pakistan. There are severe feminists attitude helps to boom possibilities for women and girls to participate in sports activities. He argues that the liberal approach objectives to provide women and ladies with the identical opportunities and assets as men, while radical feminists recognize the differences among ladies and query male- dominated sports. In order to acquire extra gender equality in Pakistani sports activities, it could be essential to use each strategies, because the effects show that women come across obstacles in acquiring the equal sources as men (liberal feminists), but on the identical time, Sports are dominated and described via guys (radical feminists).

One viable cause why girls and girls “haven't any strong voice” in Pakistani sports activities can be girl's very own lack of influence and expertise. The lack of initiative and expertise of girls across the region, no matter background, might also prevent ladies and ladies from constructing sturdy and effective voices in male-ruled sports. Because males and females play a high-value selection-making role in Pakistani society, the dearth of women in choice- making and management positions may also have cultural and conventional interpretations.

Depending at the cultural expectancies and gender roles of males and females, ladies generally tend to stay at domestic for house responsibilities, at the same time as men and women have leisure time to participate in sports activities and recreational activities. It is critical to train boys and men, girls and girls, as traditions, cultural ideals, gender roles and girls.

Focusing only on women will only leave boys and men away, and may create divisions rather than unity in projects, projects or initiatives. Sports other than boys and men can create embarrassing boys, leading to riots, teasing and/or manipulating

girls/women's plans. The principles and ideas of femininity and masculinity, in addition to the cultural notions of women's lack of leadership, training and the capability to arrange others to take part in sports, may additionally need to be renegotiated to mission the many obstacles girls and women face in Pakistani sports.

In the sphere of improvement, recreation-promoting groups and programmes still don't forget recreation as a conventional device that may make contributions to a number of development desires, which include social mobility and challenges to traditional gender roles. For those programmes to succeed and increase, it is vital to emphasise the limitations skilled by means of girls and girls, thinking of their sociocultural and socio-monetary background. Therefore, converting existing gender roles may additionally take time, no matter the perfectly tailor-made initiatives and plans.

Pointed out that the "Gender Equality Campaign" software calls for recognition of the connection among masculinity and femininity, as well as the that means of gender department and sociocultural stereotypes. For new packages that seek to achieve gender equality and sports activities equality, one might think that various factors have to be taken into consideration earlier than imposing the plan.

Findings

- Study finds that due to lack of transport particular hassle for women with younger youngsters, aged girls, women and girls with disabilities, and women and ladies living in rural regions.

- Study finds that due to Lack of time and lack of childcare. Women's entertainment tends to be reactive to the needs in their families. They regularly have less enjoyment time than men, as they take on the greater burden of responsibility for housekeeping and take care of youngsters and elderly family.

- Study finds that due to Low earnings households might not be capable of find the money for to put money into membership club or pay for carrying apparel and equipment.

- Study finds that due to Personal safety on the streets, on public shipping, and in and round sports and community venues is a specific trouble for ladies.

- Study finds that due to lack of facilities Women and girls can't play sport. Too frequently, sports halls priorities male recreation in terms of pitch time in order that men and boys get centers at their desired instances, even as women and ladies must make do with less convenient times.

- Study finds that Girls, on average, have much less self-assurance than boys and rate their overall performance or ability greater negatively than boys do. This is connected to issues about body photo: ladies who don't sense precise about their bodies can lack self-belief of their bodily competencies and can be over-negative approximately their performance.

- Study find that because of Sexual harassment and abuse Sport-based totally research in this subject matter is lacking, however latest studies indicate that sexual harassment and abuse is a hassle in game, just as it's far inside the wider community. Research indicates that the considerable majority of perpetrators of sexual harassment and abuse are men, and that women and girls are greater frequent victims than men and boys.

Recommendations

- Physical Education (P.E.) is presently no longer a compulsory concern in all governmental and private schools. Some faculties have applied physical education as part of their college schedule, but some distance from all colleges has bodily schooling and/or activities for the scholars. Growing up with P.E. As an obligatory Subject for each boys and ladies might trade some mother and father/guardians regulations on girls and women's involvement in game, as well as boys and woman's well-known notion and understanding approximately physical pastime.

- Through education, workshops and campaigns targeting boys and guys, women and women, parents/guardians and the community may create extra know-how, attention and consequently also get admission to sport for women and ladies.

- More recourses and accelerated availability for women to get concerned in recreation, in phrases of variety of playing on hand fields and to be had device. More media insurance of lady position fashions may create a pathway for other girls and ladies to get concerned in sports activities.

- Provide crèche centers or classes for babies and children, in order that adults can bring their children after they visit exercising.

- 'Fit for girls' (a partnership initiative among game Scotland and Youth Sport Trust) observed that allowing women to wear something they like, to do physical education and in clubs, helped increase participation.

- Subsidies for girls' sports could make them extra affordable. If subsidies cannot be sustained, recollect presenting them on the begin of a brand new task or activity, and then steadily introduce charges.

- Explore partnerships with delivery vendors. Provide statistics approximately public shipping. Develop a device so individuals can arrange percentage-a-ride structures. Promote bodily pastime which doesn't require shipping, which include walking and going for walks.

- Make a protection evaluation of the venue, thinking of the safety of the area, avenue lighting, transport hyperlinks, and so forth.

- Review the allocation of facilities and pitch time, and paintings to save a few pitches during height instances for ladies' sports activities and teams.

- Make sure all ladies and women, irrespective of capabilities or experience, get

the danger to be an energetic part of activities and teams.

- Confront discrimination. Be conscious that homophobia can be subtle as well as open. There is a need for more open dialogue in this location, in addition to educational tasks to raise awareness and stimulate debate.

- Adopt rigorous screening techniques and establish codes of ethics and conduct for all workforce and volunteers, whether or not they paintings with adults or kids. Staff and volunteers ought to be required to sign an settlement to abide with the aid of the code.

- Ensure your entire group of workers and volunteers who paintings with youngsters are trained in Child Protection and have gone through the important assessments.

Conclusion

The study involved the participation of 12 women of different presentation and leadership levels in different provinces of Pakistan in the sport. Consequently, the data carried out is not adequate to summarize and compare with other readings in the country or among the area. However, I hope that this study is a diffident contribution to considerate the numerous gender- based barriers women face in participating in sports in Pakistan.

The results show that girls and women involved in sports encounter numerous obstacles in terms of culture, traditions and expectations, in further verses, sociocultural barriers. Social established gender roles, norms and expectations are considered to prevent girls and women from participating in sports more than men and women. The social structure and gender roles of Pakistani society may obstruct the participation of girls and women in sports, as physical activity is not an activity accepted by girls or women. Participants stated that girls and women should play a role in the family, and that family duties account for most of the time for girls and women. Women may also face obstacles due to their physical ability, femininity, masculinity and stereotypes of the female body. Girls and women involved in sports stated that they face the challenge of gaining respect and access to sports from their own family. Compared with male family members, Pakistani women may be considered too weak in physical activity, so women may face challenges due to the participation of sports activities and their actual benefits.

Participants said that having a medium-sized body is beneficial in both exercise and life. In general, the socio-economic condition in Pakistan is considered to be a barrier for men and women involved in sports, but more precisely girls and women. Due to the lack of funds and resources to access facilities, equipment and appropriate sportswear, a huge percentage of poverty indicates that women are involved in sports.

Culture, gender roles, personal and national economies, and lack of resources are all considered to be interrelated and affect security issues. The results show that girls and women involved in sports face challenges in terms of injuries and face the risk of being

teased, harassed, sexually harassed and/or abused. People in decision-making positions, such as coaches, administrators, and board members, have the supremacy and authority to use their powers and lesser women to prevent them from gaining access to sports and decision-making positions, thereby consolidating their position. Getting women out of the decision-making process can strengthen the strong position of men and put power in the hands of men. The power of men in society, especially in sports, and the traditional gender roles in women (and men) in Pakistani society may be protected and strengthened when men and women harass sports. Emphasis must be placed on the barriers to girl's participation in sports activities and the benefits of physical pastime, as this may help to exchange the deep-rooted attitudes and gender roles in society. These initiatives are probable to have a huge impact in rural areas in which traditional gender roles nonetheless exist and the level of publicity to sports activities and bodily activity is lower than in city areas.

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