

# Women Sports — Struggle for Recognition.

## Outline.

(1)

Introduction.

Their statement:-

Women like Billie Jean King and Serena Williams have pioneered advancements in sports. Yet women of today continue to face challenges in gaining recognition from battling stereotypes to limited professional leagues. However, with firm commitment and practical steps women can reshape the dynamics of sports.

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Decoding the topic.

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Women who have change the dynamics of sports.

a- From a feminist to challenging stereotypes women see no boundary

(Billie Jean King, Serena Williams)

b- Mirre Hamon a pioneer of women sports

c- From multisports athlete to winning gold in long jumping

(Babe didrikson Laharias, Jackie Joyner)

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Challenges for women recognition in sports.

- a- Patriarchal and misogynistic mindsets have become barriers in women's struggle.
- b. Lack of proper facilities in school and colleges.
- c- Absence of sponsorship programmes  
(women's sports funding foundation)
- d- Void of women leaderships in sports  
(women sports foundation report)
- e- Inadequate media coverage  
(media centre report)
- f- Sexualizing and objectifying women  
(Serena williams)
- g. Health and safety concerns gets overlooked.

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Way forward in increasing women participation in sports.

- a- Community engagement and government commitment can paved the way for women (New Zealand, Brazil)

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b- Adequate media coverage.

c- Strict actions need to be taken against objectifying and harassing the women. (Canada, Germany)

d- Increasing women leadership in sports (India, France, Frons)

6)

Conclusion.

I think the biggest struggle is just being taken seriously. I believe women can do anything that men can do." This quote from Billie Jean King highlights how women are capable of doing anything but treating women as a lesser being creates challenges for their recognition. Women have proven themselves as being the pioneer of sports from Billie Jean King to Min Hamer. Women have broken the stereotypes and encourage women to strive. Nevertheless, even today women are struggling for their acknowledgment in world of sports. The challenges that girls/ women growth includes patriarchal culture and norms that are entitled to confine women in homes alone. Along with it, women in sports receive a few or no sponsorship with less media coverage as compared to their male counterparts, and FIFA is one of prime examples of it. Also, misogynistic mindset of the society views women from the only lens of pleasure and sex. Which entitled them to objectifying and harassing the women in every sphere of life be it sports or top tier positions. However, these challenges can be addressed by engaging and guiding committees. With government firm commitment to

enactment on laws and increasing women participation in leadership by taking actions against harassment. Also providing adequate coverage and acknowledging the women in sports. Athlet women like Billie Jean King and Serena Williams have pioneered advancements in sports. Yet women of today continue to face challenges in gaining recognition from battling stereotypes to limited professional leagues. However, with firm commitment and practical steps women can reshape the dynamics of sports.

Women have to face the challenges in every walk of life from personal to professional and sports is one of untouch field where women considered as a taboo. In 1940's and 60's women have proven themselves that <sup>women</sup> can do everything as their male counterparts. Nevertheless, women of today still treated as this is not where women belong to. In the world where women have right to vote, to life and property, choosing a career is still have limited scope for women. Additionally, women sports are considered as less exciting or competitive that result in less media coverage and acknowledgment. The lack of visibility not only affects athlete's career but also diminishes the opportunity for young

girls to aspire in sports. "Through concerted efforts in media representation and grass root support, we change the dynamics of sports for women."

Today history is being written by women who have fought against the odds and paved the way for future generations in sports. One of them is Billie Jean King, a tennis legend and advocate for gender equality. She won 39 Grand Slam titles and was instrumental in the fight for equal pay in sports. She has been the number one tennis player and strong advocate of women's participation in sports. Together with Serena Williams in game speed and introduction have inspired the young girls that no career is men-centric. She has won 23 Grand Slam titles and one of the greatest players who have broken the records by setting the new ones. She was also the strong women rights advocate like BJK. Hence, women with focus see no boundary in paving the way for future generations.

Along with Billie Jean King and Serena Williams, Mia Hamm is one of the greatest female soccer players in history. She joined the Women's National

Team at age of fifteen and become one of the top scorers, with 158 goals in 276 caps. Hamm was instrumental in the United States victory at the 1999 FIFA women's world cup. Beyond her athletic achievements, she advocates for gender equality in sports through the Mia Hamm foundation, promoting opportunities for young women and raising awareness for women health. Hamm's legacy includes inspiring women and advancing recognition for women in sports.

Women in sports not only inspire the new generation but also open the avenues for women that there is nothing that can hinder women's potential. One of them is Babe Didrikson Zahavis, a multi-sport athlete who excelled in track and field, basket ball and golf. She is often regarded as one of the greatest athletes of all time. Also, the other athlete who is prominent of long-jumping: Jackie Joyner-Kersey. She is an Olympic heptathlete and considered one of the finest athletes in long jumping, as long jumping is often regarded as the sports for men. She has paved the history by winning three gold medals and one silver across four Olympic games. Thus, women is created equal as men and there is nothing that

can slip them from touching heights. Despite women have achieved a lot in every field of life especially sports. Women still has to struggle for making the world realize their existence. Sports is considered a career opted and made for men. The patriarchal culture and misogynistic mindset considered women as a lesser being. Misogyny often perpetuates stereotypes that women are less capable or less competitive than men in sports. Also, in some cultures, traditional gender role dictates that women should prioritize family and domestic responsibilities over career. This societal pressure and culture limit women's participation in sports. According to Global Gender report by the World Economic forum only 25-30% of total professional support participation of women. This clearly illustrates how rigid practices and beliefs led to the underrepresentation of women in sports.

In addition, patriarchal culture and misogynistic mindset that hinders women's representation in sports the lack of sponsorship of women in has further exacerbated the situation. The United States women soccer team, despite



their success and popularity, often struggled to secure sponsorship at levels comparable to male athletes, impacting their earning and recognition. Women have to face family and professional barriers to often make their place in every field. According to women sports funding foundation shows that only 4% of all sports sponsorship dollars are allocated to women's sports. While that women athletes only receive 0.4% of endorsement deals in sports. This stark contrast underscores the significant gap in financial support.

Further more with absence of adequate sponsorship, there is a void in women leadership in sports. Leadership is important to aspire, guide and voicing the concerns of the athletes. However, there is a huge gap in women representation in leadership positions. Only a handful of women serve as head coaches in international leagues. The report published by sports and gender equality in sports represents women hold only 5% of executive roles and only 17% account for board membership. Hence, today women lack in leadership position in sport that can guide and support women.

Together with, lack of women leadership in sports, inadequate media coverage of women's sports significantly hampers the visibility and recognition of women athletes. Studies shows that women sports receive only 5-10% of overall media coverage, which contrast sharply with extensive attention given to men's events. The women sports foundation report consistently highlight the gender gap in media coverage. It shows women athletes receive only 4% of media coverage, when female athletes rarely featured in media their achievement go unnoticed and potential role for young girls are sidelined.

Besides the impartial media coverage for women athletes, women often gets objectified and sexualised in sports that undermine their achievements. Media coverage often emphasises appearance over athletic performance, portraying women as objects rather than competitors. This narrative often view women as image of looks rather than her skills and achievements. For instance, sports advertisements frequently use sexualised imagery of women to attract viewers, reinforcing the stereotype that their value lies in their physical appearance rather than their athletic

abilities. Serena Williams had face social media harassment due to ~~the~~ her attire. Hence, objectifying and sexualize women have only harm the women's existence and achievements.

Increasing women struggle in participating and acknowledging women with objectifying the women to lack of proper facilities are some of the challenges. The lack of facilities for women in sports is a significant barrier to participation and development. Many sports programs, especially at the youth and amateur level, often prioritize funding and resources for male athletes, resulting in inadequate training facilities for women. This disparity can be seen in school, colleges and community centres where girls have less access to quality fields, gyms and practice spaces. The lack of investment not only hinders performance but also discourage girls from pursuing sports, increasing gender inequalities.

Lastly, health is a prime factor in excelling sports and achieving milestones. However, women in sports lack basic health and safety that prevent them in pursuing sports. Health

and safety concerns for women in sports are critical issues that often receive insufficient attention. Female athletes may face unique injuries due to their anatomy and physiology, such as higher rates of knee injuries and hormonal fluctuations. Additionally, inadequate attention to mental health, nutrition and access to proper medical care further compromise their well-being. According to a report by the Women's Sports Foundation, 40% female athletes experience depression, anxiety, and absence mindness, which undermine their performance and achievement in tournament.

Nonetheless, every problem has a solution and women participation in sports is no exception. Community engagement through awareness and government support by increasing women facilities and promoting women can paved the way for future generation. Community engagement is necessary in uplifting the miseries of women. Programmes that provide female involvement and encourage participation can empower girls. Programmes like Girls on the Run, this combine running, team work and healthy living for women. Government of New Zealand has launched

women and "Girls Sports Strategy" that focus on enhancing female participation. Through targeted programmes of funding, creating facilities to encourage women participation in sports. Also, in Brazil the programme named 'Mãe Brasil program' has launched to engage women in sports along with their children to create a supportive community for women. Thus, these initiatives have increased women participation in sports by making them the part of community.

Aside from engaging communities and government to increase women's participation, proper media coverage is also one of the significant aspect in promoting women. Media outlets can highlight the success stories of athletes like Simone Biles, Mir Hamon, and Serena Williams can draw attention and interest of the audience. Also engaging social media campaigns in leveraging social media platform to promote women's events and share encouraging events of them will boost visibility and acknowledgement. Lastly, media coverage can be enhance by promoting women's events along side men's can features women competitors and can ensure both genders receive equal promotion and representation. Hence, media coverage play an important part in increasing visibility.

and equality.

Along with boosting visibility by adequate media coverage, strict actions against the harassment and objectifying the women in sports is essential to create a safe and equitable environment. Implementing robust policies that explicitly prohibit harassment and objectification with clear consequences for the violator, sends a strong message that such behaviour will not be tolerated. One of the prime ensembles of Canada that has impressive legislation addressing harassment in sports called 'Sport Canada policy on harassment and Abuse', which outlines strict policies and guidelines procedure for reporting. With that South Africa is taking initiative in increasing women participation by strict laws on harassment and objectifying women.

Apart from implementing strict policies against harassment, there is a dire need of increasing women in leadership and executive role in women. Increasing women's leadership roles in sports is vital for promoting equity and equality. Policies prioritizing gender diversity on boards and in executive positions can ensure women's voices and concerns are included in decision making.

Countries like India encourage women representation as around 15-20% of leadership positions in sports organizations are held by women. Also women like Cynthia Marshall, CEO of the Dallas Mavericks, she is the first black woman to lead an NBA team, focusing on inclusivity and equality. And Janet Evans, a former Olympic swimmer currently the Chief Strategy officer for the LA 2028 Olympic Games, she has been a true advocate for women athlete representation.

However, women in top tier position are crucial for the growth and stability in the world.

To conclude, women in sports have to face ~~many~~ challenges and struggle. Nevertheless, history is filled with women like Billie Jean King and Jackie Joyner who are not the athletes to be remembered to but strong advocates for women representation and rights in sports. Although, women still have to face the struggle in the realm of sports. From misogynistic society to being objectified as a source of pleasure and home maker. Despite of it, if women decided to pursue their career in sports, she lacks basic facilities from spaces, to gym, and women trainers. which further prevent the women in proceeding their careers as sports women. Women have always treated as less competitive.

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Capable than men. No matter how far have women come, women still has to struggle in realizing their existence, achievements and acknowledgements. After all no problem is alien to human and making women the part of sports is no exception. Through engaging communities and launching programmes for empowering women by providing them safe and secure environment will clear the way for women visibility and recognition. The world will be beautiful if all the genders equally support each other and in every sphere of life. Ensuring women representation by denouncing all rigid and outdated practices will reshape the dynamics of sport for women.