



SOCIAL REPRESSION OF WOMEN IN SPORTS

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ABSTRACT :

History bears witness that women were even debarred from witnessing games and sports. There were strict rules for the Olympic Games that married women were not allowed even as spectators. It is doubtful if unmarried women ever dared to see the competitions. Time is changing with change of time almost everything has changed but the women in sports is still facing the same mental blocks as she was facing 119 years before Modern Olympic Games. She is still not welcomed in sports wholeheartedly. Society does not attach value to see women in sports.

KEYWORDS : women, sports, discrimination, society.

INTRODUCTION:

Participation of women in sport has a long history. It is a history marked by division and discrimination but also one filled with major accomplishments by women athletes and important advances for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Indeed, even following 119 years of Modern Olympics still women needs to confront the practically same status in games difficulties, gender standards and keep on being portrayed in conventional jobs that reaffirm their refinement, as spouses, moms or sex objects. Male competitors, still are encircled by gallant manly beliefs that respect mettle, quality, and perseverance. Although women are equal to men under the law but they do not seemequal in the world of sports.

These days women are running countries as Prime Minister, Member Parliament, has right to vote, entered in service occupations such as CEOs of company, or be collegiate architecture, lawyers, financial services, engineering, medical and IT jobs, a nurse, a beautician, a sales worker, a waitress, etc. They are earning as much as their male folks do, their employment nonetheless adds substantially to family and gives family an economic advantage over the family with only one breadwinner. They have demonstrated that they can do nearly whatever men can do, yet the manner in which they are seen inside the sports world does not coordinate their real capacities.

The light in which women in sports are depicted is immeasurably dimmer than the one sparkling upon men in expert and university sports, despite the fact that women' games are required to be as effectively available and as similarly supported as men in sports because of Title IX enactment. Gender claim, instead of acknowledgment of athletic achievements, is as yet common. A lady's body isn't depicted as a



solid, strong machine fit for phenomenal athletic accomplishments like a man's body is, however, rather is considered more to be an article pleasurable to the eye when it is uncovered outside of the domain of games. At the point when men see these typified pictures, they don't take a gander at a women competitor as a competitor; rather, they see an overseer, a guardian of the family unit, a

spouse, mother, and frequently, a sex object. The guardian picture comes from TV and media-created generalizations that have framed after some time through the introduction of women cleaning, cooking, and dealing with the family, basically making life simpler for their men and families. Women bodies are misused through swimsuit photograph shoots as opposed to through focused activity shots in uniform as men are depicted.

Donna de Varona, a 1964 Olympic swimming hero, feels uneasy that women are compelled to protect their physicality by anticipating their ladylike side and can't just be their identity to pick up credit for their various uncommon accomplishments. She wholes it up consummately when she contends, "we always have to prove that we are feminine and sexy. We can be tough and sweaty, if we do that, we're acceptable. With scientific evidence that men are biologically programmed to be stronger and faster, coverage of their sports is considered to be more entertaining, filled with greater excitement and action but why women are pushed to the rear of the limelight, hardly spotlighted at all."

It has been 46 years since Title IX legislation granted women equal playing time, but the male-dominated world of sports still moving in the turtle pace. It is true that women have come light-years from the first modern Games, held in Athens in 1896, when their presence was welcomed only as spectators. Slowly but women have made significant gains even since the Atlanta Games in 1996, when 26 nations did not send women athletes. The charter of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) prohibits discrimination against women in sport, slowly their participation number in sports has been started rising, when a *pan-Arab newspaper based in London, Al-Hayat, reported that the Saudi Crown Prince Nayef bin Abdul Aziz has approved the participation of women athletes in London as long as their sports "meet the standards of women's decency and donot contradict Islamic laws."* This would be the first time that women have been allowed to represent Saudi Arabia in the Olympics, and it would represent a step forward for women who struggle to be athletes in a culture that suppresses them.

As of 2010 Brunei was, along with Saudi Arabia and Qatar, one of only three countries to never have sent a female athlete to the Olympic Games, despite only having a total of four Olympians beforehand. The International Olympic Committee in 2010 announced it would "press" these countries to allow and facilitate women's participation, and shortly thereafter the Qatar Olympic Committee announced that it "hoped to send up to four female athletes in shooting and fencing to the 2012 Summer Games in London(Qatar Inside Games 2010)

Brunei, independent Islamic sultanate on the northern coast of the island Borneo I South Asia, had send its first woman athlete named MaziahMahusin,a Bruneian hurdler hadparticipated in 2012 London Olympics. She was the first women athlete to compete for Brunei at the Olympic Games. She has also been selected as their flag-bearer.

This liberation to participation of Saudi women in sports during London Olympics 2012 made Olympic history wherein all the participating teams had women athletes. Indeed, this was a major boost for gender equality. Itfurther demonstrated the progress that continues to be made towards the goal of gender equality in sport, with the inclusion of women's boxing on the Olympic programme meaning that women competed in every Olympic sport for the first time. The participation of women on National Olympic Committee teams from Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Brunei Darussalam also meant that every National Olympic Committee has sent women to the Games. In total, more than 44 per cent of the competitors in London were women, while women athletes outnumbered men on 35 Olympic teams, including some of the largest delegations, such as the USA.

Jacques Rogge, who has been president of the IOC for 11 years, stated with proud, "Following the gender equality landmarks that we witnessed at the London Games, we must continue to build on the progress we have made through our successful collaborations with the United Nations and other allies by strengthening and expanding those partnerships. Having seen great successes to strive for gender equality on the field, we will now need to step up our efforts in integrating more women in leadership and administrative structures."

Yet the fight for true equality is far from being won. It has been a long time since Title IX enactment allowed women rise to playing time, however the male-commanded universe of games still can't seem to get up to speed with the law. Inclusion of women's games lingers a long ways behind men's and spotlights on women competitors' gentility and sexuality over their accomplishments on the court and field. By examination, male competitors are encircled by courageous manly standards that respect mettle, quality, and perseverance. As mentioned earlier, for the first time, Saudi Arabia sent two women athletes to compete in London, along with at least one sports official. But the three women who participated in the opening ceremony walked behind the men, not among them. The moment was undoubtedly scripted, but it would have been unrealistic to expect anything else in a society where men and women are generally separated, said Christoph Wilcke, an expert on Saudi Arabia for Human Rights Watch, which has forcefully pushed for inclusion of the country's women in the Olympics.

The participation of Saudi women remains complicated, even as the London Games are under way. Wodjan Ali Seraj Abdulrahim Shahrkhani has competed in Judo by wearing a hijab, or head scarf. But the international judo federation said last week that Shahrkhani could not compete with a head covering for safety reasons and to preserve the "principle and spirit of Judo." Next day according to New York Times (2012) a Saudi newspaper, quoting Shahrkhani's father, said she would withdraw from the competition if she could not wear a hijab. Olympic officials said Sunday that they were trying to resolve the situation. Soccer once banned hijabs, too, but approved them again. Granted, judo is a different sport; the use of hands is critical. Safety should be paramount. But surely a remedy can be found. Otherwise, it will be hugely embarrassing to the I.O.C. and to the Saudis.

The other Saudi athlete competing in 800-meter runner named Sarah Attar. She grew up and lives and trains in Southern California, where she attends Pepperdine. Her family asked the university to remove photographs of Attar from her online biography. And the only photographs and video issued of Attar by the I.O.C. showed her hair, arms and legs fully covered. She has also declined interviews, further seeming to confirm that hers is but a token presence in London. Yet, small steps can be important ones. Qatar also entered its first women athletes in the Summer Games. One of them, a shooter named Bahiyaal-Hamad, carried her country's flag in the opening ceremony. Beforehand, she said on Twitter that she was "truly proud and humbled."

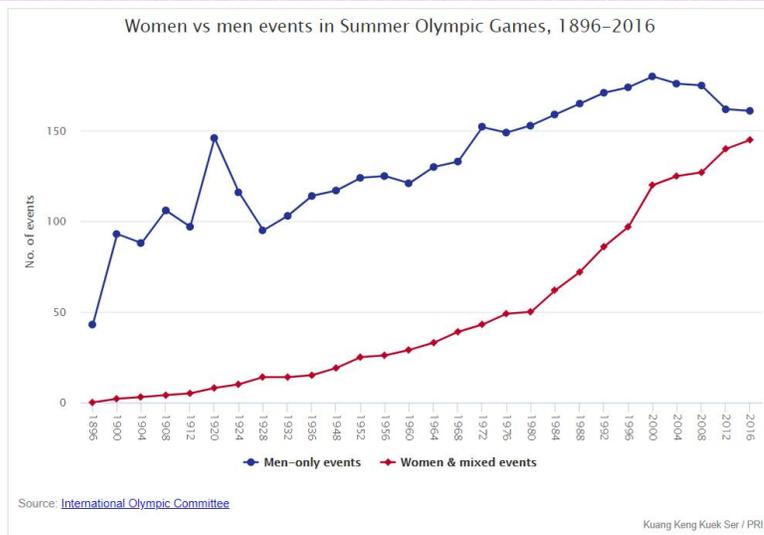
About 45 percent of the 10,500 athletes competed were women. Restrictions are falling away, stereotypes are being turned on their head. NurSuryani Mohamed Taibi, a shooter from Malaysia, became one of the few Olympic athletes to compete while pregnant when she participated in the 10-meter air rifle event and gave birth to daughter in the next month of participating on London Olympics. Such incidents have been unheard and break the stereotyping image. Women represent a huge level of the donning scene, yet it is debilitating and disheartening to a large number of women competitors that they represent just an insignificant portion of its media inclusion.

According to Cecily Hilleary (2012), after the London Olympics finished, Christoph Wilcke, Human Rights Watch was believing that the participation of Saudi women in the London Olympics will become a huge symbolic step, but, "..... we should be mindful that nothing has happened on the ground inside Saudi Arabia to open up sports for women, and that's where I think the promise of increasing women's participation in the workforce holds the greatest promise for real change on the ground for women."

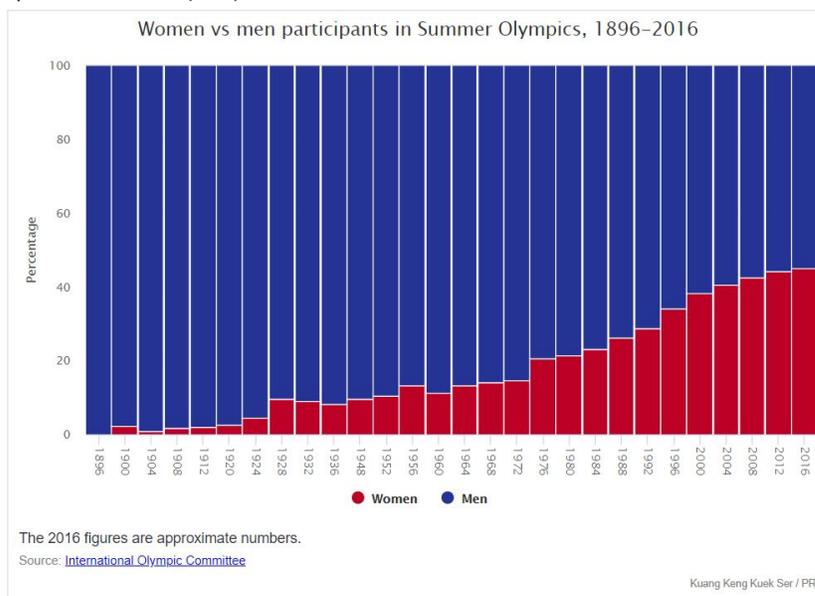
After more than 100 years, gender equality is still more goal than reality in the 2016 Rio Olympic Games where there are more men's events (N=161) than women's and mixed events (N=145).

IOC has played an important role in establishing a positive trend to enhance women's participation in sports. It is witnessed that over the last 20 years, the IOC has been advocating for the participation of women at all levels of sports, encouraging National Olympic Committee (NOC's) and International Federations (IFs) to enhance the presence of women in sport. Using the latest data from the International Olympic Committee's Studies Centre, we made an animated visual to show the 120-year struggle of women to achieve equality in 28 Olympic Summer Games.

The chart below shows the total events for both male and female athletes.



The 2016 Rio Olympic Games has both the highest ever number of women competitors and the highest percentage, with women making up about forty five (N=45%) of the total participants, according to the International Olympic Committee (IOC).



Here are a few other findings from the IOC data — and the stories behind them:

- The first woman to win an Olympic gold medal in an individual event was Charlotte Cooper of the United Kingdom, who won the tennis women's singles in 1900.
- From 1964 to 1992, women were allowed to compete against men individually in some of the shooting events.
- Margaret Murdock from the US won a silver in a tie in the 1976 Rifle Event, one of the events in the shooting categories. The rifle event was split into men's and women's events in 1984.
- In the 1992 Barcelona Games, China's Zhang Shan defeated her male competitors and took a gold medal in the skeet competition, another event in the shooting category, with a new world record. In the following games in Atlanta, all shooting events were either men's or women's.

- During the 1972 Olympics, Germany's LiselottLinsenhoff won the first individual gold medal in direct competition with men in the individual equestrian dressage event. Since 1972, women continued to dominate the event by winning gold medals from 1976 to 2012 with the exception the 1984 Games.
- Currently the equestrian events are the only Olympic events in which women compete one-on-one against men.
- Women were also given the chance to compete against men individually in certain sailing events such as Finn and Laser until the 2008 Beijing Games, although they were usually dominated by male sailors. After 2008, only sailing events with at least two sailors were gender independent.
- Softball was featured as a women-only sport in Olympic Games from 1996 to 2008. The male equivalent was baseball, which was played from 1992 to 2008. Both sports were dropped from the Olympics, though are set to return in 2020.
- In the 2016 Rio Olympics there are two women-only events: Synchronized Swimming and Rhythmic Gymnastics.

CONCLUSION

It is acknowledged fact that biologically she is inferior to men, she is emotional, but she has surpassed her limits. She is excelling in sports and breaking records as men conquered and made her space to build a culture of peace in countries emerging from conflict. Her power to excel in sports brought people together across boundaries, cultures and religions, resulting promotion in tolerance and reconciliation. Time has changed and with the change of time we need to change our mind sets too, we need to clear our mental blocks to facilitate women into sports whole heartedly.

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