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ABOUT US

WHITE BLACK LEGAL is an open access, peer-reviewed and refereed journal provided dedicated to express views on topical legal issues, thereby generating a cross current of ideas on emerging matters. This platform shall also ignite the initiative and desire of young law students to contribute in the field of law. The erudite response of legal luminaries shall be solicited to enable readers to explore challenges that lie before law makers, lawyers and the society at large, in the event of the ever changing social, economic and technological scenario.

With this thought, we hereby present to you

A STUDY ON GENDER DISCRIMINATION FACED BY FEMALE ATHLETES IN THE WORLD OF SPORTS

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ABSTRACT

Gender discrimination is a practice that acts as a barrier in the world of sports, affecting the lives and dreams of numerous female athletes around the globe. This research focuses on the issue of gender discrimination that female athletes face within the global sports landscape. The main aim of this research is to find out the challenges, problems and biases experienced by the women in sports, stretching from unequal pay to various stereotypes. Through an analysis of the data collected, the study aims to find out the root cause of gender discrimination in sports. By emphasising the importance of making changes, this research aims to help create a future that is fairer and more welcoming for female athletes all around the world.

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KEYWORDS: Sports, Female, Media, Politics, Discrimination

INTRODUCTION

Even in the 21st century, a time of talent and dreams, gender discrimination remains a problem in the world of sports. Women, more often than not, find themselves as the primary victims of this unequal treatment within the sporting arena. This research embarks on a journey to uncover the myriad challenges faced by female athletes as a consequence of this pervasive gender discrimination. In today's society, athletes inspire audiences around the globe. However, due to ongoing discrimination, including unequal pay and limited opportunities, female athletes often find themselves lacking the inspiration they deserve. This discrimination not only dampens the competitive spirit but also deprives women of their rightful place in the sporting world, impacting their careers.

Through this study, we aim to uncover the root causes of gender discrimination in sports and its impact on female athletes. Our research endeavours to illuminate a pervasive issue that transcends geographical boundaries, cultural contexts, and sporting disciplines. In doing so, we aspire to raise awareness about the pressing need for change and action within the sporting community. This study is a call for action, a chance to dig deep into the heart of gender unfairness in sports, and a path towards a future where female athletes have the same opportunities. We want to use our important discoveries to change how people think, the rules they make, and the things they do. By tackling the ongoing gender differences in sports, we aim to create a world where talent is more important than gender, and every athlete can pursue their dreams without facing discrimination.

The impact of this gender discrimination goes beyond the boundaries of a playing field. They affect the life of the athletes and have a negative impact on the society too. The study can be seen as an opportunity to understand the importance of gender equality in sports. Through compelling findings and insights, we aspire to ignite the flames of transformation in how society perceives, legislates, and practises sports. Our ultimate goal is to create an environment where talent is celebrated without regard to gender, and where every athlete is free to pursue their dreams, unhindered by the shadows of discrimination.

OBJECTIVES

1. To analyse the challenges faced by female athletes
2. To identify the root cause of gender discrimination in sports

3. To analyze the impact of gender discrimination on female athletes
4. To suggest possible remedies for abolishing the problem of gender discrimination in sports

LITERATURE REVIEW

(Spreitzer, Snyder, and Kivlin 1978) As the participation of female athletes in competitive sports has risen in recent years, it is essential to examine the attitudes towards female athletes and the potential consequences of this increased participation. This article reviews past studies on female athletes to gain insights into this dynamic. **(George, Hartley, and Paris 2001)** Despite the historical presence of women in sports dating back to ancient times, barriers to women's participation persist. This study explores the representation of female athletes in the media, shedding light on how newspapers and television companies in the UK cover female sports, often giving preference to male athletes. **(Heidari, n.d. , 2013)** Professional sports can lead to stress and burnout, and understanding gender differences in burnout is crucial. This research suggests that female athletes may be more susceptible to burnout and its negative consequences compared to their male counterparts. **(Scheidler and Wagstaff, n.d.,2018)** Perceptions that women's sports are less exciting than men's sports are widespread, and the limited media coverage of women's sports may contribute to this. Using various theories, an intervention aimed to promote women's sports to fans was developed.

(Kantanista et al. 2018) This study provides important insights for designing educational programs on weight-related behaviours in female athletes, especially those participating in high-level sports at a young age. **(Invernizzi 2018)** The study examines self-confidence in sportspeople, revealing differences between male and female athletes. **(Johnston and Weatherington 2018)** This research project explores the inclusion and promotion of women in sports, identifying the barriers they face and how they perceive themselves as sportswomen at higher levels of competition. **(Killham et al. 2018)** Young female athletes often experience difficulties due to self-criticism and negative performance evaluations. This study explores self-compassion as a resource to manage these challenges. **(Emmonds, Heyward, and Jones 2019)** Despite the rise in the professionalism of female sports, a lack of research on elite female athletes limits evidence-informed practices in women's sports, hindering their performance potential. **(Kline, 2016)** This study investigates gender and sport-related anxiety, providing insights into how anxiety differs based on gender and the type of sport.

(Correia and Rosado 2019) The research highlights differences in anxiety between male and female athletes and individual and team sports, emphasising that anxiety is appraised differently based on gender and sport type. **(Lebel et al. 2021)** Despite decades of research, women's professional sports still face challenges. This paper suggests rethinking the approach to women's sport scholarship to create meaningful change. **(Perry et al. 2021)** This article reviews the existing literature on mental health and mental illness in elite female athletes, identifying gaps and offering recommendations for future research. **(Holtzman and Ackerman 2021)** Female athletes have specific nutritional needs due to differences in physiology and hormones, and this article explores the importance of considering these factors in research and practice. **(Herrero, Jejurikar, and Carter 2021)** This review examines non-physical factors contributing to athletic success in female athletes, including resilience, mindfulness, and the role of anxiety and depression in sports-related injuries.

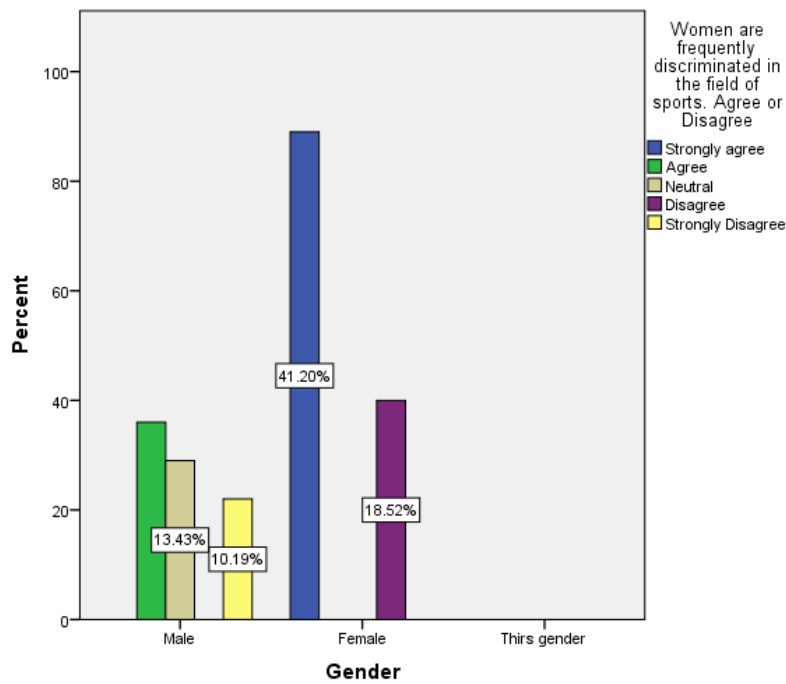
(Marwat, Khaskheli, and Ameer, n.d. , 2021) Investigating the effect of self-efficacy and achievement motivation on athletes' performance reveals significant differences based on gender in this study. **(Smith et al. 2022)** While sports nutrition guidelines promote evidence-based practices, this study highlights the lack of research focused on women in the field of performance supplements, calling for more gender-inclusive research. **(Alwan et al. 2022)** The study delves into the weight loss practices and eating behaviours of female physique athletes, emphasising the importance of professional guidance to optimise practices and minimise eating disorder risks.

METHODOLOGY:

The research method followed was empirical research. A total of 207 samples have been taken. The research was conducted through online mode. The dependant variables are: Women are frequently discriminated in the field of sports. Agree or Disagree, Have you noticed disparities in media coverage between male and female sports?, Do you agree or disagree with the statement that male athletes receive more support from society, while female athletes are often demotivated by society?, Who do you believe should play a significant role in promoting female sports in the country?, What are the effects of discrimination against females in sports?, Can gender discrimination faced by female athletes be eradicated in the foreseeable future?

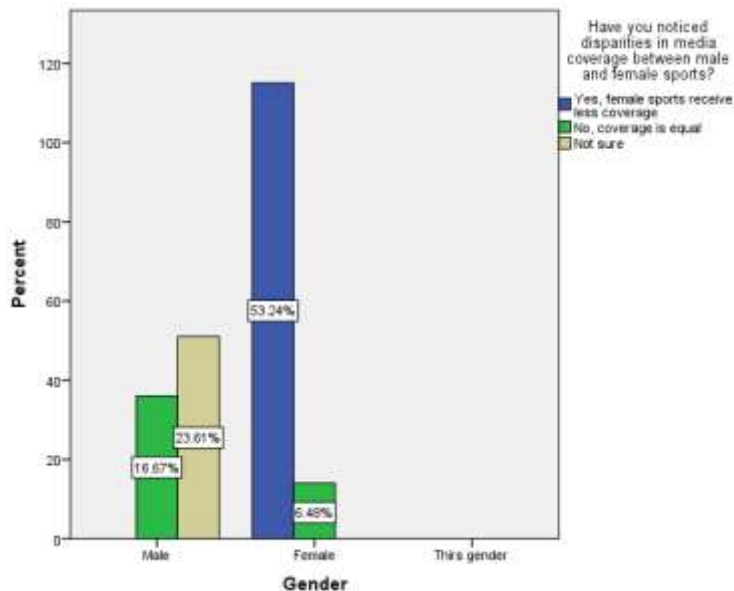
ANALYSIS:

Figure 1



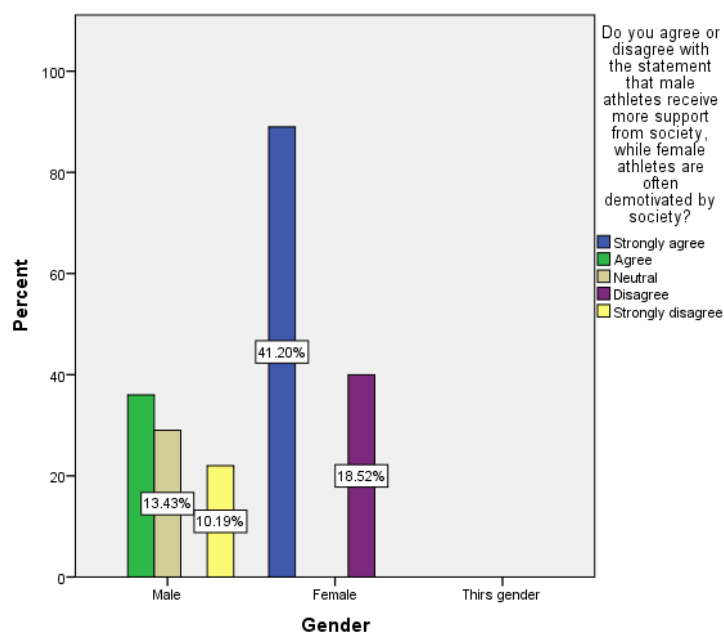
Legend: Figure 1 represents the response to the question “Women are frequently discriminated in the field of sports. Agree or Disagree?”

Figure 2



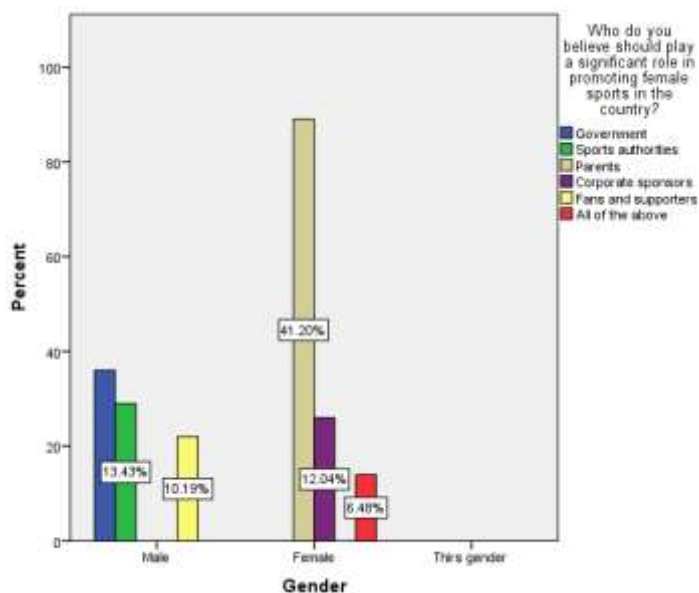
Legend: Figure 2 represents the response to the question “Have you noticed disparities in media coverage between male and female sports?”

Figure 3



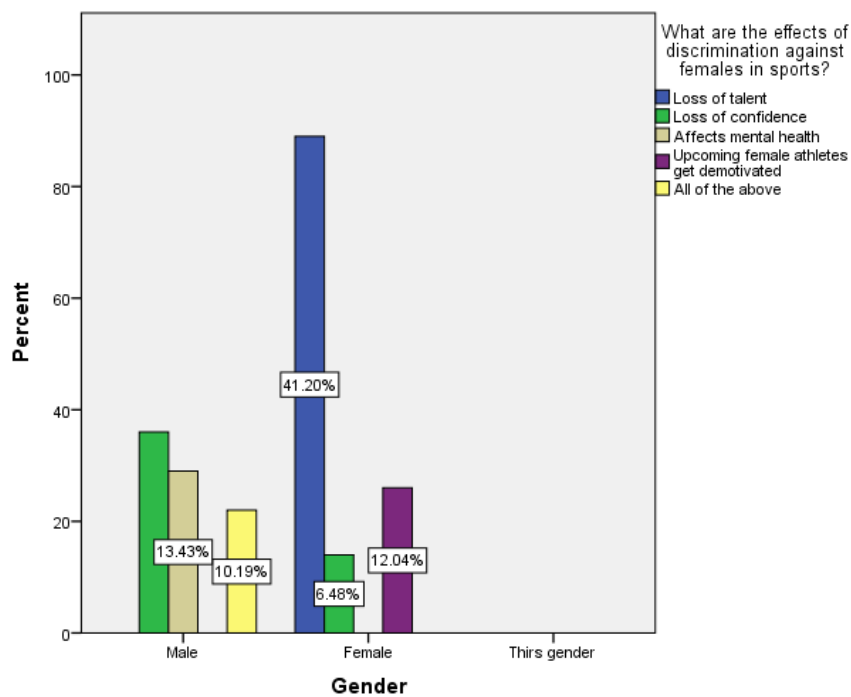
Legend: Figure 3 represents the response to the question “Do you agree or disagree with the statement that male athletes receive more support from society, while female athletes are often demotivated by society?”

Figure 4



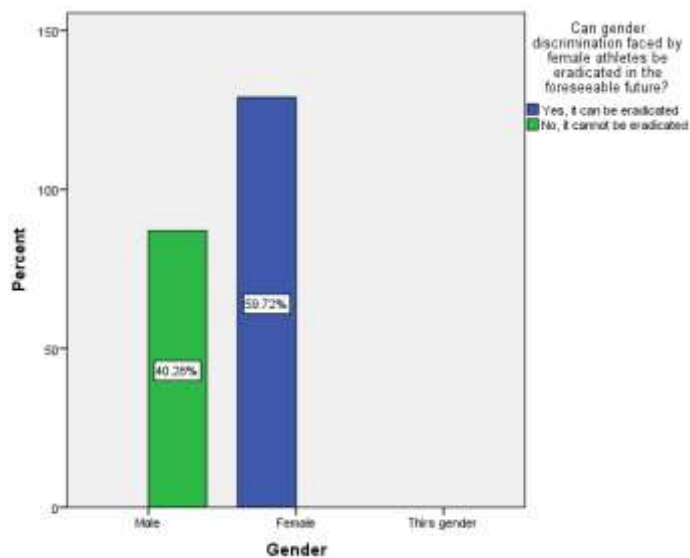
Legend: Figure 4 represents the response to the question “Who do you believe should play a significant role in promoting female sports in the country?”

Figure 5



Legend: Figure 5 represents the response to the question “What are the effects of discrimination against females in sports?”

Figure 6



Legend: Figure 6 represents the response to the question “Can gender discrimination faced by female athletes be eradicated in the foreseeable future?”

RESULTS:

From **Figure 1** 13.43% of response by Male are Neutral, 10.19% of response is Strongly Disagree, 41.20% of response by female is strongly agree, 18.52% of response by female is disagree. From **figure 2** 16.67% of response by Male is “No, coverage is equal”, 23.61% of response by Male is “Not sure”, 53.24% of response by female is “Yes, female sports receive less coverage” and 6.48% of response by female is “No, coverage is equal”. From **figure 3** 13.43% of response by Male is Neutral, 10.19% of response by Male is Strongly disagree, 41.20% of response by female is Strongly agree and 18.52% of response by female is Disagree. From **figure 4** 13.43% of response by Male is “Sports authorities”, 10.19% of response by Male is “Fans and supporters”, 41.20% of the response by female is “Parents”, 12.04% of response by female is “Corporate sponsors” and 6.48% of the response by female is “All of the above”. From **figure 5** 13.43% of response by Male is “Affects mental health”, 10.19% of response is “All of the above”, 41.20% of response by female is “Loss of talent”, 6.48% of the response by female is “Loss of confidence” and 12.04% of the response by female is “Upcoming female athletes get demotivated”. From **figure 6** 40.28% of the response by Male is “No, it cannot be eradicated” and 59.72% of the response by female is “Yes, it can be eradicated”.

DISCUSSIONS:

From **Figure 1**, it is evident that the majority of the responses indicate "Strongly agree." This suggests that the general public holds a strong belief that women continue to face significant gender discrimination within the realm of sports. When we consider a female athlete's journey, it becomes apparent that she encounters discrimination from various sources, including her own family and society. Furthermore, the media and sponsors tend to allocate more attention and resources to male athletes, resulting in unequal support and coverage for their female counterparts. Given these observations, it is undeniable that women athletes are still grappling with gender discrimination in sports.

Based on the results in **Figure 2**, the predominant response indicates "Yes, female sports receive less coverage." A cursory observation of our surroundings confirms that the majority of people tend to watch men's sports. In virtually every nation, male athletes enjoy substantial support and a dedicated fan base, while female athletes often do not receive equal recognition. Despite the equal talent demonstrated by female athletes, the media typically overlooks their sporting events. Media channels are primarily profit-driven, and they find men's sports more profitable to cover.

Therefore, in this scenario, the public also plays a pivotal role. To rectify this disparity, it is essential for the public to extend their support to female athletes equally. This increased support can motivate the media to initiate equitable coverage of women's sports alongside men's sports.

In **Figure 3**, the majority of responses indicate "strongly agree." This consensus highlights that the respondents agree with the fact that male athletes receive more support, while female athletes often face demotivation in society. This problem begins within families, where gender bias takes root. Parents tend to support their sons when they aim for a career in sports but discourage their daughters from doing the same. This bias extends to society as a whole, which still clings to the notion that physical work is primarily for men. Surprisingly, even in the present century, some individuals maintain this outdated mindset. It's essential for people to realize that women are equally capable of achieving anything men can. To address this issue, society must provide women with equal opportunities, enabling them to pursue sports without discrimination or demotivation.

In **Figure 4**, the majority of responses point to "Parents." This finding underlines the strong belief among the public that parents play a pivotal role in promoting female sports. It's crucial to acknowledge that parents are often the primary figures responsible for limiting their daughters' opportunities in the realm of sports. This restriction can hinder many talented female athletes from realizing their potential and expressing themselves in the field. Therefore, it's imperative for parents to act responsibly and understand that their daughters are equally capable of achieving greatness, just as their sons can.

In **Figure 5**, the majority of responses point to "Loss of talent." Respondents highlight that the talent of female athletes often goes to waste due to gender discrimination. Talent is regarded as a valuable resource for our country's progress. Wasting such a resource because of this unjust practice has a detrimental impact on our society. Therefore, it is crucial for sports authorities and the public to recognize the importance of these talents and provide opportunities to every female athlete who aspires to pursue a career in sports.

In **Figure 6**, the majority of the responses indicate "yes, it can be eradicated." This study reveals that parents, the public, sports authorities, and the government play important roles in promoting female sports. Essentially, everyone must treat female athletes similarly to male athletes. So, if everyone acts responsibly, understands the importance of females in sports, and works towards the progress of women's sports, this practice of gender discrimination against females in the field

of sports can undoubtedly be eradicated in the near future.

LIMITATION:

The research faced a significant limitation due to network connectivity issues that arose during the online survey. Additionally, a noteworthy challenge encountered was the limited social awareness among participants, which acted as a substantial barrier to the study.

SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION:

Gender discrimination constitutes a significant obstacle to our nation's progress. It is disheartening to acknowledge that such an unjust practice persists in various fields, sports included. Despite our claims to uphold equality, one must question if this principle is genuinely upheld. The presence of female athletes in our country is notably outnumbered by their male counterparts. Our primary objective should be to level the playing field for both men and women in the realm of sports. From this study, we have ascertained that parents, the government, sports authorities, media, and the public each bear a pivotal role in addressing this issue. First and foremost, parents must recognize the equal potential of their sons and daughters in sports. It is essential to cease viewing their daughters as liabilities and to invest in their athletic pursuits. Parents hold the responsibility of creating pathways for their daughters to excel in sports. Secondly, the government can implement initiatives to promote female sports. This may involve offering financial support to girls pursuing sports careers and spreading awareness about the significance of girls' participation in sports. Thirdly, sports authorities and sponsors must shoulder their share of responsibility. Sponsors should extend financial backing to female athletes equivalent to what they offer to males. They must wholeheartedly support female athletes. Fourthly, media plays a crucial role. It is imperative for media outlets to broadcast women's sports on par with men's sports. By doing so, they can not only provide deserved recognition to female athletes but also reap benefits in terms of viewership. Lastly, the public plays an instrumental role in promoting women's sports. They should offer equal support to female athletes as they do to males. The public must recognize that women possess the same capabilities as men in bringing honour to their nation through sports. The society's backing serves as a substantial motivator for female athletes.

In conclusion, the accomplishments of female athletes can serve as profound inspiration for countless young girls aspiring to embark on careers in sports. Our society must grasp the significance of women's participation in the sports arena, which would undoubtedly contribute to

our nation's progress and renown. Therefore, if all segments of society take responsible action and begin to champion women's participation in sports, the practice of gender discrimination can undoubtedly be eradicated in the foreseeable future.

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