



Research Article

Role of Sports Organisations in Women Empowerment

Pooja Sharma ^{1*}, Rajshree Mathpal ²

¹ Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Banasthali Vidyapith, Rajasthan, India

² Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Banasthali Vidyapith, Rajasthan, India

Corresponding Author: * Pooja Sharma

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21351221>

Abstract	Manuscript Information
Sports organisations have changed from governing sport to becoming powerful social institutions that are important for social inclusion, gender equality and women's empowerment. This paper looks at sports organisations from a sociological perspective, highlighting their impact on who has access to opportunities, who has access to resources, who leads, and who participates in sport; and their impact on social norms and on gender relations. It suggests that sporting organisations can contribute to reinforcing inequalities or to creating sporting environments that are inclusive and equitable through progressive policies and institutional practices. It delves into the primary sports organisation types, including government sports bodies, national and international sports federations, non-governmental organisations, educational institutions and sports academies, and professional sports leagues and clubs, and identifies their respective functions in relation to sports governance, sports participation, talent development and gender-inclusive sport programmes. It also defines women's empowerment as a multi-dimensional process that includes social, economic, political and psychological aspects, emphasizing the role of sport in boosting confidence, leadership, well-being, and social inclusion.	▪ ISSN No: 2583-7397 ▪ Received: 02-01-2025 ▪ Accepted: 24-02-2025 ▪ Published: 28-02-2025 ▪ IJCRM: 4(1); 2025: 170-177 ▪ ©2025, All Rights Reserved ▪ Plagiarism Checked: Yes ▪ Peer Review Process: Yes
	How to Cite this Article Sharma P, Mathpal R. Role of Sports Organisations in Women Empowerment. Int J Contemp Res Multidiscip. 2025;4(1):170-177. Access this Article Online  www.multiarticlesjournal.com

Keywords: Women's Empowerment, Sports Organisations, Gender, Institution, Leadership.

INTRODUCTION

Sports organisations are powerful social institutions that influence opportunities, norms and access in the sporting context. They are an important element in the social fabric and their significance is two-fold: they have the potential to reinforce the inequalities of gender relations or to challenge them through gender-inclusive policies, gender-responsive governance and institutional changes. As such, sports organisations are now acknowledged as significant agents of social change, which can promote women's empowerment by not only increasing their participation, but building their representation and improving their access to resources, leadership and decision-making roles within sport (Coakley 2021; Messner 2002; International Olympic Committee [IOC] 2021).

Women's empowerment in this sense is about empowering women to make strategic choices in their lives in a way that makes them equal to men in terms of opportunities, resources, education and decision making. It is not only about financial freedom, but also about social, political and psychological aspects, so that women can enjoy their rights, take an active part in society and develop their abilities. In line with Kabeer's (1999) definition of empowerment, through which empowerment is defined as the process of giving empowerment to individuals that builds their capacity to make meaningful choices, the United Nations (2015) states women's empowerment as being an element of sustainable development, gender equality and inclusive social progress.

Sport offers a compelling means by which these aspects of empowerment can be achieved. Sport positively contributes to the physical and mental wellbeing and it develops self-confidence, leadership, team work, communication skills and resiliency. These individual benefits can have a wider social impact by encouraging social inclusion, respect for diversity and challenging discriminatory attitudes and entrenched gender stereotypes. Consequently, participation in sport by women and girls can lead to greater self-esteem, educational achievement, social mobility and social engagement, thereby contributing to greater empowerment and social participation overall (United Nations, 2003; World Health Organization [WHO], 2020).

With these transformative results, sports organisations play a key role in working towards gender equality and empowerment of women. They work towards addressing the structural, cultural and institutional barriers that traditionally have limited women's involvement in sport through implementation of policies, grass-root development programmes, talent identification programmes, financial support mechanisms, safe and inclusive sporting environment and advocacy for equal opportunities. In addition, sports organisations can help to shift gender norms in the sporting sector through the increase of women's representation as athletes, as coaches, as officials, administrators and as decision makers. This institutional shift is not restricted to sport, but also has a wider impact on society, with sport contributing to society's transformation, through the promotion of equal opportunity, inclusive leadership and the progress of

gender equality as aligned with global development goals (UNESCO, 2015; International Olympic Committee [IOC], 2021).

Role of Sports Organisations in Empowering Women

The role of sports organisations in the empowerment of women. Empowering women through sports organisations. Sports organisations achieve this by providing equal access to training, competitions and sporting infrastructure to empower women. Gender inclusive policies are likely to mitigate structural inequalities that limit women's access to sport. These measures are a move from excluding others to institutional measures aimed at ensuring equal opportunity and therefore will neutralise the existing gender hierarchy in sport (UNESCO, 2015; International Olympic Committee). Sports organisations play a role in the empowerment of women by facilitating leadership positions in coaching, officiating and management (2016). Gender gaps in leadership positions are addressed through leadership development programmes and mentorship. The sociological impact of this process is the challenge of the male-dominated institutional power structures, and to make women more involved in governance in sport systems (Sartore, & Cunningham, 2007; Pfister, 2010).

It can contribute to women empowerment through health, nutrition, mental well-being and gender equality education programmes. Awareness campaigns are used to question patriarchy and to raise awareness about gender rights. These efforts help to develop women athletes' sense of agency through awareness and knowledge building (Brady, 2005; World Health Organization, 2020). Scholarships, sponsorship, equal prize money and financial empowerment allow women to rise above financial obstacles in sport. Sports organisations are important in contributing to the alleviation of the gendered economic disparities by means of sponsoring women's sport careers. Financial inclusion can look at a sociological level as a way to empower women and consolidate their place in professional sport systems (UN Women, 2019; Hancock, M. G., & Hums, M. A.). (2016). It also has a role to play in maintaining safe environments, through policies and procedures on harassment and discrimination. Safe sport policies are crucial to safeguarding women in sport and promoting their engagement. Safety is a critical part of the inclusion process socially, and its lack of security serves and consolidates the gender exclusion of sport systems (Mountjoy, M., et al. (2016; International Olympic Committee). (2016).

Apart from this, it promotes *women empowerment* through talent identification system, grassroots programmes and professional coaching academies. Such systems offer opportunities for skill development and competitive routes. The sociological aspect of these types of structures is that they make elite sport more accessible for everyone, but the inequalities amongst class, gender and geography still exist Houlihan, B., & Green, M. (2011; Bailey, R., et al. (2009). Therefore, Sports organisations play a part in wider social change and can help to break gender

stereotypes and raise the profile of women in sport. Media and sporting representations of female athletes have the power to change the perceptions of gender roles. From a sociological point of view, sport is a symbolic field, which can challenge and redefine traditional gender norms and bring about gender equality in the broader society (Messner, 2002; Fink, 2015).

A sociological perspective would suggest that effective women's sports interventions are a reflection of the ways in which institutional action by sports organisations has the capacity to transform gender relations and increase access to sporting opportunities, as well as contesting structural inequalities. The initiatives are at different levels: grassroots, institutional and elite, indicating that women's empowerment in sport goes beyond the individual; it is the result of organised social and policy processes. Grassroots sports programmes are one of the most effective programmes for the promotion of long-term women empowerment in sport. These programmes are based on the early involvement of girls in school and community-based physical activity, skill development and social interactions.

A grassroots initiative as having a value at the beginning of gender socialisation where stereotypes of "appropriate" activities for girls are often formed. They ensure access to coaching and facilities, and the opportunity to find safe spaces, which normalise women's participation in sport and provide a basis for future participation throughout life (Brady, 2005; Houlihan & Green, 2011). **Women's sport leagues** are an important institutional development toward gender equality in professional sport. These leagues create a competitive arena specifically for females' athletes, ensuring visibility, professional recognition, and economic opportunities. Sports organisations are powerful social institutions that impact on opportunities, norms and access in sporting contexts. They are also significant in shaping gender relations from a sociological point of view, as they have the power to either reinforce and perpetuate inequalities or to break them by developing policies that include gender and address inequalities and by introducing equitable governance and institutional change. Sports organisations are therefore emerging as vital catalysts for social change, through increasing the number of women participating in sport, enhancing representation, and facilitating women's access to resources, sport leadership and decision-making (Coakley, 2021; Messner, 2002; International Olympic Committee [IOC], 2021).

In this framework, women's empowerment is the process of improving women's strategic life choices through equal opportunity to and access of women to opportunities, resources, education and decision making. It goes beyond economic independence to include social, political, and psychological aspects, giving women the means to exercise their rights, hold their own in society and fulfil their capabilities. Emancipation, as put forward by Kabeer (1999), is basically related to increasing people's ability to make meaningful choices and the United Nations (2015) considers women's empowerment as a fundamental condition for sustainable development, gender equality and inclusive social progress. Sport is a good vehicle for delivering these aspects of empowerment. Sport helps enable

children to build self-confidence, leadership, team working, communication and resilience in addition to physical health and mental wellbeing. The individual-level benefits frequently result in collective social benefits through social inclusion, respect for diversity and the challenge of prejudiced attitudes and entrenched gender stereotypes. Participation of women and girls in sport is thus associated with improved self-esteem, educational outcomes, social mobility and engagement in the community, contributing to women's empowerment and social participation (United Nations, 2003; World Health Organization [WHO], 2020).

However, sports organisations are in a key role to **promote gender equality and women's empowerment**. They adopt gender-sensitive policies, grassroots development programmes, talent identification programmes, financial support programmes, safe and inclusive sporting environments and advocate for equal opportunities to help end structural, cultural and institutional barriers that have historically limited women participating in sport. Additionally, the representation of women in sports is not just in the role of athletes, but also as officials, administrators, coaches, and decision-makers by encouraging their participation in such roles, sports organisations help to shift the gender norms within the sporting sector. This institutional change is not unique to sport, but rather constitutes a societal change with a focus on women, by extending to the broader community and society, including equal opportunities, inclusive leadership and advancing gender equality in line with the global development agenda (UNESCO, 2015; International Olympic Committee [IOC], 2021). Sports Organisations are also playing a vital role in empowering women. Sports Organisations play a significant role in empowering the women. Sports organisations also foster women empowerment through providing equal opportunities for training, competitions and sports facilities. Gender-inclusive policies can help to diminish structural inequalities that limit women's access to sport. The measures are a move away from exclusionary practices to institutional frameworks that promote equal opportunities, which is challenging the current gender hierarchy in sport (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015; International Olympic Committee. With their leadership opportunities in coaching, officiating and administration, sports organisations play a part in women's empowerment. Leadership development programmes and mentorship programmes help to tackle gender imbalance in decision making positions. In terms of sociology, it can challenge an institutional power system that is male-dominated and allow women to take part in governance within the sport system (Sartore, & Cunningham, 2007; Pfister, 2010). It strengthens women's empowerment by offering educational programmes on health, nutrition, mental health and gender equality. Awareness campaigns have the power to defy the norms of patriarchy and foster critical awareness of gender rights issues. Initiatives that enhance knowledge and awareness to foster agency in female athletes (Brady, 2005; World Health Organization, 2020). Scholarships, sponsorships and equal prize money provide women with financial empowerment to break the economic

barriers to sport. Sports organisations have key role in closing the gendered economic gap through women's sports. On the sociological level, financial inclusion empowers women as it places them in a better position in professional sport structures (UN Women, 2019; Hancock, & Hums, 2016). It is also responsible for providing **safe environments** through having safeguarding policies in place against harassment and discrimination. To ensure the safety of women athletes and promote their participation, sport safety frameworks are vital. Safety socially is a precondition for inclusion and when this is not provided, it contributes to gender-based exclusion in sport systems (Mountjoy M et al. 2016; International Olympic Committee). (2016).

Other than this, it empowers women by creating **structured talent identification systems**, grassroots programmes and professional coaching academies. These systems offer access to skill development and competition pathways. From a sociological perspective, such systems contribute to the democratization of elite sport participation, but, as with many sports, inequalities in class, gender and geography continue to influence access to elite sport (Houlihan, & Green, 2011; Bailey, et al., 2009).

Therefore, Sports organisations have a role to play in social change in broader terms of challenging gender stereotypes and making women more visible in sport. Media and competition coverage of female athletes can challenge and change the view of gender roles. Sociologically, sport serves as a symbolic space that can challenge and reshape traditional norms, fostering gender equality in the broader community (Messner, 2002; Fink, 2015).

Successful Initiatives

Successful Initiatives, from a sociological point of view, successful actions in the field of women's sport can serve as an example of how institutional action by sports organisations can actively change the gender dynamic, increase access and challenge structural inequalities. These activities take place at various levels – grassroots, institutional and elite – revealing that women's empowerment in sport is both an individual and an organised social and policy development. Developing a grassroots sports programme is one of the best ways to help empower women in the long term. These programmes are around getting girls involved at school, in the community and engage in a structured programme of physical education, skills development and social interaction. From a sociological perspective, grassroots projects have a significance because they take place at the very beginning of the process of gender socialisation, when stereotypes about “appropriate” activities for girls are being built. These programmes can help normalize women's involvement in sport, provide access to coaching, facilities and safe environments and provide a foundation for continued lifelong involvement in sport (Brady, 2005; Houlihan, & Green, 2011). Women's Sports Leagues are a key institutional milestone for gender equality in professional sports. These leagues are set up specifically for women athletes, providing

visibility, economic opportunities, and professional recognition. In a sociological sense, these leagues contradict the centuries of domination of the elite sport by male players and help to reshape the social understanding of sport. They also form role models: which is clearly necessary in order to inspire younger generations of girls to engage in sport. These leagues, however, also show the continuing disparities in structural inequalities like funding, media coverage, and sponsorship of women's leagues versus men's leagues (Fink, 2015; Cooky, Messner, & Hextrum, 2013; International Olympic Committee, 2021). The success of women athletes is a testament to how sports organisations can unlock individual potential at an institutional level to achieve global success. Professionally coached, financially supported athletes who have access to structured training often become self-assured heroes of social mobility. These stories can be seen as culturally powerful social tools to challenge gender stereotypes and expand the social imagination of what women can do. It is, however, essential to consider the institutional environment, such as national sport organisations, federations, and Olympic institutions that offer resources and legitimacy that underpin such success (Messner, 2002; International Olympic Committee, 2016; Hargreaves, 1994). The scheme by the Government of India, known as “Khelo India Scheme” is one of the most impactful grassroots programmes. It offers structured sports training and scholarships and infrastructure support to young girls at school and district level. This programme has identified and trained thousands of girls in sports like athletics, wrestling and boxing in rural and semi-urban areas. Likewise, the “Magic Bus India Foundation” is working on life skills programmes through sports to transform the lives of adolescent girls of marginalised groups. It functions in various states of India and educates, builds awareness about health and gender equality using football and organised play. Globally, UNICEF has implemented “Girls' Education through Sport” programs in countries such as Kenya and Nepal, which have involved using sport as a vehicle to help reduce school dropouts among girls and the promotion of leadership skills (Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, 2023; Magic Bus India Foundation, 2024). The professional women's leagues have been a game-changer for gender equality in sport. One of the most successful examples is of the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) of the United States, which was established in 1996. It has created a professional avenue for women's basketball players, and made women's basketball more visible worldwide. The Women's Premier League (WPL) India, which was introduced by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) in 2023, has transformed women's cricket by offering a high-level league, extensive media attention, and lucrative rewards such as prize money and sponsorships, very similar to men's cricket. Likewise, the FA Women's Super League (FA WSL) in England has professionalised women's football and helped to boost both attendance and women's football's international success, while also providing the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA), England's women's national team, with more interest, sponsorship, and international success (Board of Control for Cricket in India, 2023; The Football Association,

2023; FA Women's Super League, 2024). Institutional support by sports organisations has been demonstrated by the achievements of top female sport stars. One such example is Mary Kom (India). With assistance from the Sports Authority of India and the national boxing federations, she won the Olympic medal as well as becoming a six-time world boxing champion, despite being a woman and a person from a different region. Structured institutional coaching is exemplified by P.V. Sindhu who was the first Indian woman to win an Olympic silver medal (Rio 2016) and bronze medal (Tokyo 2020). In her local role, Serena Williams was backed by the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) and structured tennis academies and has become one of the most successful players to ever grace the world, changing the perception of female players in professional sports throughout the world. These examples clearly illustrate that sports success is not only a product of talent but also the result of on-going institutional investment, coaching structures and organizational support (Sports Authority of India, 2023; Women's Tennis Association, 2024; International Olympic Committee, 2021).

Challenges Faces by Women in Sports Organisations

Although there have been great strides in sport in recent decades, the deep-rooted structural inequalities remain and continue to influence women's involvement in sport. Sociologically, these problems are not standalone but are part of a system of gender-based inequalities, such as unequal access to resources, and culture that views sport as largely a man's world. Sport organisations are becoming more inclusive but they also reflect and, in some cases, perpetuate these inequalities.

Gender bias: Gender bias is still the most prevalent challenge in the empowerment of women in sport. Societally, stereotypical images of sport can reinforce the type of sport as "masculine" and women as less physically capable or less fit for sporting involvement. This results in reduced encouragement for girls' involvement from a young age and an impact on selection, provision of coaching opportunities, and recognition. For instance, sport sociology research demonstrates that females' sporting performance is assessed more on appearance than male athletes' performance (Messner, 2002; Fink, 2015), reinforcing gendered perceptions of sport.

Poor Accessibility and Infrastructure: Economic inequality is a significant structural disadvantage in women's sport. Women's teams and programmes tend to be under-funded, with access to quality coaching, facilities, travel and equipment being far less than those provided to men. At the highest level, there is still significant wage inequality. Research in the field of sports economics internationally, for example, consistently demonstrates that men's sports are more commercially visible and thus more sought after for sponsorship and investment, thus resulting in a vicious cycle of inequality in resource allocation (Hoye, Smith, Nicholson, & Stewart, 2015).

Limited Media Coverage: Media representation has a strong influence on the public perception of sport but women's sport is still underrepresented relative to men's sport. The data also

reveals that women's sport represents a small share of sports media in many countries, and in most countries, less than 10% of the overall sports media content is dedicated to women's sport. When it does happen, the focus is more likely to be on physical looks, personal life, or feelings than on sports. This invisibility diminishes the opportunities for sponsorship and strengthens the view of the unimportance of women's sport (Cooky, Messner, & Musto, 2015; Fink, 2015).

Safety Concerns: Safety is a priority for women in sport; including the risk of harassment, abuse and unsafe training settings. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has stated that harassment and abuse in sport are a problem worldwide, impacting athletes at every level. The fear of harassment can be a barrier to participation and reduce retention of women in sport, especially in settings where safeguarding practices are weak or not well established (Mountjoy, et al. 2016; International Olympic Committee, 2016).

Under-representation in Decision Making: Women are still largely underrepresented in sports organisations in leadership and decision-making positions. Men still hold a strong presence in key roles, including coaching and federation office, and still have a strong voice over policy and resource allocation. From a sociological perspective, the situation is considered a "glass ceiling" within sport governance, as the structures and cultural norms of sport still prevent the upward progression of women in the sport governance pathway. This imbalance plays out in setting priorities, which can lead to policies not being responsive to women's needs (Sartore & Cunningham 2007; Pfister 2010).

Recommendations for Strengthening Women's Empowerment in Sports Organisations

The recommendations are building upon the STEM principles and themes, and offer insights on strengthening women's empowerment in sports organisations. Sociologically, the solution is a structural transformation, not one-off measures, to combat gender inequality in sport. The sports organisations in India are part of a larger social structure, which is also patriarchal, unequal in resources and constrained in culture. Thus, the recommendations in this document will focus on institutional changes that can lead to long term sustainable impact in increasing women's participation, representation and empowerment in sport. The sociological perspective highlights the need for transformation in the structure of sport and not individual measures to tackle gender inequality. Sports organisations in India exist in an environment of patriarchy, inequitable allocation of resources and cultural limitations. For this reason, the following recommendations are directed to institutional changes that can help to promote long term and sustainable differences in women's participation, representation and empowerment in sport.

Invest more in Women's Sports: A major step towards Gender Equality in sport is to increase the amount of investment in women's sporting programmes from both the public and private

sectors. Historically, sports in India have had a great focus on men's cricket and other elite sports, with women's sports sometimes being under-resource, particularly at the elite level. Greater financial investment, through schemes such as Khelo India and specific corporate sponsorships, can enhance infrastructure, coaching abilities and pathways for the athletes. Also, investment should be focused on rural and semi-urban areas where sports facilities for the girls is still not available.

Equal opportunities and pay: Making sure there is equality of opportunity in selection, training, access to competitions and remuneration is vital in minimising structural gender inequality. Despite efforts to bridge the gender gap in sport in India, including the BCCI introducing equal match fees for men and women cricket players in 2022, there are still disparities in other sports, such as earnings and sponsorships. The application of equal pay and clear selection procedures can minimize institutional discrimination and boost women's sustained involvement in sport.

Improve Anti-Harassment and Safeguarding Policies: It is important to make sporting environments safe to ensure continuity of participation for women. Sports organisations should enhance their anti-harassment policies, provide for the existence of independent grievance redressal processes and enforce the safeguarding procedures. In India, there are legal provisions like POSH (Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act) and they are not always implemented in sports institutions. There must be regular audits, awareness sessions, and athlete reporting systems in place to establish trust and safety in sports.

Ensure women in leadership positions: More women in sports governance, coaching and administration are a prerequisite for institutional transformation. The leadership of sports federations and coaches is largely male and reduces the role of women in the creation of policies that are sensitive to gender. Leaders of sports federations and coaches are mainly male, which restricts the role of women in the creation of gender sensitive policies. Implementing women's reservation, leadership training and mentorship initiatives can help to enhance the diversity of decision makers and ensure women's needs are met in sport institutions.

Increase grassroots participation:

Grassroots development is fundamental to Achieving long-term gender equality in sport. Offering women more opportunities to participate in sport in schools, rural areas and in community centres can help normalise girls' involvement in sport from young age. Khelo India Centres need to be scaled up with a targeted approach to enrol more girls, have female coaches and be accompanied by safe transport to these centres in India. Exposing girls to sport at an early age is key to breaking culture that makes girls less inclined to engage in sports.

Enhance Media Representation: The visibility of women's sport in the media is a key issue on the public image and

commercial value of women's sport. Women sports are not given much importance in India as compared to men's sports, especially cricket. Longer broadcast time, equal stories and promoting women athletes can improve the chances for sponsorship and motivation for participation. It is also essential that digital platforms and social media are used to boost women's sports success and find alternative ways to give visibility to sports beyond traditional media.

More women in sports governance and leadership, including as coaches and administrators, is critical for institutional change. The leadership of sport federations and coaching structures in India is largely male, with a lack of gender-sensitive policy making. Reserving places, organising leadership training programmes and mentoring networks for women can help to enhance the diversity of decision making and ensure that women are represented in sports institutions.

CONCLUSION

Hence, Sports organisations play a crucial role in the sociology of sport as a central institution in the media of access, opportunity and representation. Their involvement in activity participation is just one aspect of their empowerment as women; their involvement is also in the larger processes of social transformation. Sport organisations can affect the construction of gender and its lived experiences in sporting places through their policy-making, allocation of resources, and setting norms for institutional relations. In this way, they can be seen as catalysts and mirroring the social structures in place. Sports organisations play a major role in contributing to the empowerment of women in terms of equality, confidence and leadership development. Sport provides women with the opportunity to enhance their physical awareness, self-esteem, working in a team and making decisions as well as the opportunity to break down negative gender stereotypes that restrict women's social role. Women's presence at the societal level of sport can contribute to a better inclusion and to normalisation of women's presence in sport areas, traditionally defined as male, which can lead to a gradual change in gender relations. But empowering sustainable is not possible by single actions. It requires the cooperation of governments, sports organisations, educational institutions, media and the local community. To build an equitable sporting ecosystem, policy, infrastructure, safety and leadership opportunities for women need to be enhanced. For India, investments in initiatives like Khelo India, professional women leagues and grassroot programmes will be extremely important in filling the gender gaps. Lastly, an inclusive sporting culture is not only about the expansion of females in sport, it is also about the culture and condition of sport itself. Sports organisations are effective vehicles that can be used to help facilitate the realisation of gender equality and for women to fulfil their potential in sport and society if they are really inclusive organisations.

REFERENCES

1. Andreff W, Szymanski S, editors. *Handbook on the economics of sport*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing; 2006.

2. Bailey R, et al. Educational benefits of sport participation. *Res Pap Educ.* 2009;24(1):1-27. doi:10.1080/02671520701809817.
3. Board of Control for Cricket in India. *Equal pay announcement for men and women cricketers* [Internet]. 2022. Available from: <https://www.bcci.tv>
4. Board of Control for Cricket in India. *Women's Premier League official report.* 2023. Available from: <https://www.bcci.tv>
5. Brady M. Creating safe spaces and building social assets for young women in the developing world. *Womens Stud Q.* 2005;33(1-2):35-49.
6. Chalip L. Toward a distinctive sport management discipline. *J Sport Manag.* 2006;20(1):1-21. doi:10.1123/jsm.20.1.1.
7. Chappelet JL, Kübler-Mabbott B. *The International Olympic Committee and the Olympic system: The governance of world sport.* London: Routledge; 2008.
8. Coakley J. *Sports in society: Issues and controversies.* 13th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Education; 2021.
9. Cooky C, Messner MA, Hextrum RH. Women play sport, but not on TV. *Commun Sport.* 2013;1(3):203-230. doi:10.1177/2167479513476947.
10. Cooky C, Messner MA, Musto M. Media coverage of women's sports. *Commun Sport.* 2015;3(3):261-287. doi:10.1177/2167479515588761.
11. Eitzen DS, Sage GH. *Sociology of North American sport.* 8th ed. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers; 2009.
12. Fink JS. Female athletes, women's sport, and the sport media commercial complex. *Sport Manag Rev.* 2015;18(3):331-342. doi:10.1016/j.smr.2014.04.001.
13. Green M. *Olympic glory or grassroots development? Sport policy in the UK.* London: Routledge; 2007.
14. Hancock MG, Hums MA. Women in sport leadership roles. *J Sport Manag.* 2016;30(1):1-14. doi:10.1123/jsm.2015-0096.
15. Hargreaves J. *Sporting females: Critical issues in the history and sociology of women's sports.* London: Routledge; 1994.
16. Heinemann K. Sociological aspects of sports organizations. *Apunts Educ Fis Deportes.* 1997;49:10-19. Available from: <https://revista-apunts.com/en/sociological-aspects-of-sports-organizations/>
17. Houlihan B. *Sport, policy and politics: A comparative analysis.* London: Routledge; 1997.
18. Houlihan B, Green M. *Routledge handbook of sports development.* London: Routledge; 2011.
19. Hoye R, Cuskelly G. *Sport governance.* London: Routledge; 2007.
20. Hoye R, Smith A, Nicholson M, Stewart B. *Sport management: Principles and applications.* 4th ed. London: Routledge; 2015.
21. Ingham AG, Hardy S. Sport: Sociology of sport. In: *Encyclopedia of applied ethics.* San Diego: Academic Press; 1993.
22. International Olympic Committee. *Safeguarding athletes in sport.* 2016. Available from: <https://olympics.com>
23. International Olympic Committee. *Olympic Agenda 2020+5.* Available from: <https://olympics.com/ioc/olympic-agenda-2020-plus-5>
24. International Olympic Committee. *Olympic Agenda 2020+5: 15 recommendations.* 2021. Available from: <https://stillmed.olympics.com/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/News/2021/03/Olympic-Agenda-2020-5.pdf>
25. Kabeer N. Resources, agency, achievements: Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment. *Dev Change.* 1999;30(3):435-464. doi:10.1111/1467-7660.00125.
26. Kidd B. A new social movement: Sport for development and peace. *Sport Soc.* 2008;11(4):370-380. doi:10.1080/17430430802019268.
27. Levermore R, Beacom A, editors. *Sport and international development.* London: Palgrave Macmillan; 2009.
28. Magic Bus India Foundation. *Annual impact report.* 2024. Available from: <https://www.magicbus.org>
29. Messner MA. *Taking the field: Women, men, and sports.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press; 2002.
30. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. *Media guidelines for gender-balanced sports coverage.* 2023. Available from: <https://mib.gov.in>
31. Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India. *Khelo India annual report.* 2024. Available from: <https://yas.nic.in>
32. Mountjoy M, et al. IOC consensus statement on harassment and abuse in sport. *Br J Sports Med.* 2016;50(17):1019-1029. doi:10.1136/bjsports-2016-096121.
33. National Commission for Women. *Guidelines on safety in sports institutions in India.* 2023. Available from: <https://ncw.nic.in>
34. Penney D, Jess M. Physical education and physically educated people: A question of professionalism. *Sport Educ Soc.* 2004;9(1):11-22.
35. Pfister G. Gender relations and leadership in sport. *Sport Soc.* 2010;13(2):234-248. doi:10.1080/17430430903522954.
36. Sartore ML, Cunningham GB. Explaining the underrepresentation of women in sport leadership. *J Sport Manag.* 2007;21(3):245-264. doi:10.1123/jsm.21.3.245.
37. Sports Authority of India. *Annual sports development report.* 2023. Available from: <https://sportsauthorityofindia.nic.in>
38. Sports Authority of India. *Annual report on coaching and administration roles.* 2024. Available from: <https://sportsauthorityofindia.nic.in>
39. The Football Association. *FA Women's Super League overview.* 2023. Available from: <https://www.thefa.com>
40. UN Women. *Sport for Generation Equality.* 2019. Available from: <https://www.unwomen.org>
41. UNESCO. *International charter of physical education, physical activity and sport.* 2015. Available from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org>
42. UNICEF. *Sport for development: Empowering adolescent girls.* 2022. Available from: <https://www.unicef.org>

43. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *International charter of physical education, physical activity and sport*. 2015. Available from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org>
44. United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace. *Sport for development and peace: Towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals*. New York: United Nations; 2003. Available from: https://www.un.org/sport2005/resources/task_force.pdf
45. Women's National Basketball Association. *About the WNBA*. 2024. Available from: <https://www.wnba.com>
46. Women's Tennis Association. *WTA player development programmes*. 2024. Available from: <https://www.wtatennis.com>
47. World Health Organization. *WHO guidelines on physical activity and sedentary behaviour*. Geneva: WHO; 2020. Available from: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240015128>

Creative Commons (CC) License

This article is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) license. This license permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.