

**THE ROLE OF GENDER IN SPORTS PARTICIPATION
AND ACHIEVEMENT: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF
MALE AND FEMALE ATHLETES**

Sports are an important part of human life. It not only provide physical fitness, but also serve as a means of recreation, socialization and personal development. However, sport has traditionally been viewed as a male domain, with female athletes receiving far less recognition and opportunities than male athletes. This article examines the role of gender in sport participation and performance by comparing the experiences of male and female athletes.

One of the most striking differences between male and female athletes is their participation rates. Historically, sports have been viewed as a male domain, resulting in a lack of opportunities for female athletes. However, the number of women participating in sports has increased significantly in recent years, especially at the amateur level.

According to a report by the Women's Sports Foundation, the percentage of high school girls participating in sports has increased from 7.4% in 1971 to 42% in 2019. This increase can be attributed to a number of factors, including greater awareness and acceptance of female athletes, increased opportunities, and interest.

Despite the increase, female athletes still face significant barriers to participation. For example, many sports are still largely dominated by men, while women are often excluded. In addition, female athletes may experience discrimination, harassment, or abuse from coaches, teammates, or opponents, which may prevent them from participating in sports.

While progress has been made in increasing female participation rates, significant gender gaps in athletic performance remain. Male athletes continue to outperform female athletes in terms of physical fitness and athletic performance in most sports.

One reason for this difference is biological differences between men and women. On average, men have more muscle mass and strength than women, which can give them an advantage in sports that require physical strength and power, such as weightlifting or basketball. However, women tend to have better flexibility, balance and stamina than men, which is useful in sports that require agility and stamina, such as running. Gymnastics or long-distance running are both beneficial.

Another reason for gender differences in athletic performance is social factors, such as cultural attitudes toward gender and sport. Boys are often

encouraged to participate in sports from an early age and may have access to more resources, guidance and support than girls. In addition, female athletes may be subject to negative stereotypes that affect their confidence and self-esteem.

In conclusion, the role of gender in sport participation and performance is complex and diverse. Although women have made strides in increasing their participation in sports, they still face significant barriers to success. These barriers may include biological differences, social attitudes and cultural biases. However, with increased awareness and support, female athletes have shown that they can be successful in any sport, regardless of gender. It is important that society recognizes and celebrates these achievements and continues to work towards a more equitable and inclusive sporting culture.

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