

Gender Stereotypes/Discrimination Females Experience in Sports-Related Occupations

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Abstract. With the continuous development of human society, the sense of equality is getting stronger and stronger, and feminism is also on the rise. This makes competitive sports, which was the exclusive right of men in the early days, open to women as a symbol of gender equality. In the last decade of the 20th century, gender equality in sports attracted the attention of the International Olympic Committee and other sports-related organizations. Since ancient times, female sports workers have been treated unfairly in the field of sports. How to solve the problem of gender equality in sports is a continuous concern in the research. Through the analysis of female work in the sports field: female athletes, female referees and female journalists, this paper finds that women are at a disadvantage in competitive sports, sports news, commentary and other related industries. Compared with other fields, the absolute position of men in sports is more difficult to shake. Although the number of women engaged in sports-related industries and the types involved are gradually increasing in recent years, this is only a representation, and there are still obvious disadvantages compared with men. The public's deep-rooted prejudice and potential sexist ideas about women engaging in sports-related industries are the most fundamental problems, which not only lead to the public's disapproval of women engaging in sports-related industries, but also have a negative impact on how women view themselves. After a series of analyses, it is found that female sports workers are still marginalized.

Keywords: Female sports workers; gender equality; workplace discrimination.

1. Introduction

Since the Olympic Games came into being, there have been restrictions on women's participation in sports. Under the influence of the special cultural background of ancient Greece, the Olympic Games are considered a unique activity for men. Coubertin has always been adhering to the view that "women should not defile the Olympic Games with sweat but should only crown the winners". In addition, as a basic right of human beings, with the progress of society, people's desire to enjoy sports rights will gradually increase. In the process of social development, due to various reasons, there must be different social class consciousness, which also produces certain occupational gender discrimination. Social discrimination formed when female sports workers participate in sports work will have a negative impact on female sports work and gender equality and will also affect social unity and stability.

However, from the existing literature, there are many studies on the unfair treatment of women for various social reasons, and research on women's sports participation or the work difference between the two sexes in the degree of sports participation is rare. In short, it is a long way to go to solve the survival problem of female sports workers in the field of sports. Whether female sports workers can continue to work in the field of sports for a certain period of time will become an important perspective to study the equality of male and female sports participation and gender equality in sports. Therefore, this paper aims to explore gender stereotypes females experience in sports-related occupations by comparing how females and males were treated differently at the workplace and the impact of these unequal treatments. The research in this paper will help the public to better understand the problems faced by women in the sports industry, and the targeted suggestions put forward in this paper will also help solve the survival problems of female workers in the sports field.

2. Review of Literature

Compared with the social structure, gender differences are not "natural", but are generated and spread through learning, and they are also influenced by specific social influences and gender system, so in the past 100 years, the participation of women engaged in sports activities is very low in depth and breadth [1]. At the same time, with the emergence of feminist theory and the development of the women's liberation movement, some scholars have studied and criticized gender discrimination and the vulnerability of female athletes, and they seem to hope that these studies and criticisms can produce results. Factors such as gender, age, social, economic and professional status affect the behavior choice of sports workers to some extent. Women are not as popular as men in many industries, and the sports industry is one of the most representative industries. Since the birth of sports, men have occupied an absolute hegemonic position. Coubertin, the father of the modern Olympic Games, has been opposed to women's participation in Olympic events all his life, and Olympic events have always been exclusive to women. For a long time, women have suffered gender segregation around competitive sports-related industries and are often considered incompetent for such jobs or treated unfairly [1].

In addition, women's sports work is also interfered by many factors such as economic status and professional status. This paper will analyze three female sports jobs: Athletes, Referee and Newscaster.

2.1. Athletes

Since the birth of sports, men have occupied an absolute hegemonic position. For example, the number of athletes participating in the first Winter Olympics was 258, including 245 men and 13 women. This shows that women are not sufficient in the field of sports. Compared with other fields, the absolute position of men in sports is even more difficult to shake.

In a formal sense, equality between men and women in sports had not been promoted until the end of 2020. At that time, the Nordic women's combined event athletes made their debut in the World Cup, which was the only winter Olympic event reserved for men. After Tara Geraghty Moats of the United States won the first gold medal in the Nordic Women's Team World Cup, the media wrote: "This is a small step and a big step towards gender equality in the Olympic Games". Despite these developments, men in sports are still in a dominant field in terms of female sports representation and female athletes participating in sports competitions.

Historically, female athletes have been influenced by all kinds of discrimination and prejudice, which has affected their opportunities to participate in sports. For example, when they participated in the Olympic Games for the first time, women were forbidden to participate in the Olympic Games. To win the chance to enter Olympics, women joined the Olympic Movement and finally participated in the 1900 Summer Olympics in Paris for the first time. The characteristics of these sports events are that athletes only participate in specific gender events and several "mixed events" including sailing and equestrian [2]. Despite constant and arduous struggles with men, participation in sports for women is still limited. Even if they have the right to participate, they still cannot eliminate the deep-rooted prejudice of the public because many sports events reflect the values dominated by men, and women's participation in sports is considered to be inconsistent with the so-called gender role endowed by physiological gender. For example, Oglesby thinks that the values expressed by competitive sports are consistent with those respected by the male world, a series of concepts such as limit, domination, hegemony and quantity breakthrough are very consistent with men's way of thinking. Therefore, sports competitions have ornamental value, while women's competitions and events are easily ignored or even inconspicuous by the public because of their insignificant value [3]. When referring to equal rights in football, the most difficult goal to achieve is equal pay for equal work for men and women. Depth Charge is an American football team. In this World Cup, the American men's soccer team reached the knockout stage. According to FIFA's regulations, the team that reached the top 16 will receive a prize of 13 million US dollars. Compared with the men's team that gets the full bonus, the women's team can only get half of the required bonus after deducting the

management fee. Even during the period from 2015 to 2019, the women's team can only get a small number of bonuses, and the total amount is the same as that of the women's team in 2022.

Subjectively, it can be suggested that the unequal pay between men and women will affect the energy and interest of male and female athletes in training, which may affect their performance. Furthermore, the different pay of male and female athletes is not conducive to the transmission and development of sportsmanship.

2.2. Referee

During the 2010 FIFA World Cup, male referees were screened before the competition. In contrast, female football referees have been neglected in this respect, although they have experienced similar physical labor compared with male referees [4]. Compared with male referees, top female referees face more injuries or musculoskeletal problems. Considering the career development of female sports workers, sports organizations and the state should make injury prevention plans for female referees [5].

The treatment of female basketball coaches is also not optimistic. For instance, from 2010 to 2017, women served as coaches and referees in the Brazilian women's basketball league. Passero analyzed the gender of the coaches and referees of the two teams in all competitions during this period. The results showed that women accounted for 24% of the coaches, and this proportion remained stable in recent years [6]. These data show that the number of female coaches is much lower than that of male coaches. In contrast, the participation rate of female assistant coaches dropped from 88% in 2010 to 34% in 2017. Although the number of female arbitrators, female arbitrators 1 and female arbitrators 2 has increased slightly in recent years, these positions are still mainly held by men. Over the years, women have been able to participate more in the evaluation and calculation of time. Although the number of women participating in sports, especially elite basketball in Brazil, has increased in recent decades, the research results show that this profession is limited to less well-known positions, such as medical and security personnel. Men continue to hold the most important leadership positions, such as coaches and referees [6].

It can be seen that female coaches or referees are still marginalized by some factors in the field of sports. In many western countries, women have better career opportunities than ever before, and the proportion of female leaders in almost every industry is rising, but sports coaches are still an area where gender equality is declining or stagnant. There are few female coaches to guide women, and there are almost no female coaches to guide men [7].

No matter what the professional knowledge level of referees is, the prejudice against women is very strong, and the stereotype of male referees toward female players is often negative [8]. However, according to a survey among students, the gender of participants has no influence on gender bias, and participants can reduce this bias under the condition that they are motivated to control it. Therefore, it is very necessary to educate students on gender equality [8].

However, in the world, examples of men as coaches of female athletes can be seen everywhere. It can be seen that the unequal distribution of gender in sports-related occupations will further stabilize the dominant position of men in sports competition, and at the same time, it will further deepen the stereotype that female coaches are not as good as male coaches, thus affecting the employment of female sports workers.

2.3. Newscaster

Although female sports reporters have entered the backstage and dressing room of sports competitions, they have not been accepted [9]. For many male athletes, the entry of female sports journalists makes them feel embarrassed. If they can choose the gender of sports journalists, they are more willing to choose male sports journalists. The perception of journalists is also significantly influenced by their gender: female journalists are rated as inferior to male ones. Compared with male journalists, when female journalists are accused of challenging the comments of "consensus" winners (such as Duke University in basketball), respondents (both male and female) are more determined to

stick to the team with the same views when choosing to support the expected winners. However, if the reporter is a woman, the interviewee will strongly resist the statement that the reporter does not support the consensus team, thus boycotting the reporter's interview. This influence is also consistent among respondents' gender, athletes' gender and media [10].

Female athletes will appear more in the reports of female journalists, while male journalists will be more willing to interview male athletes. Male athletes will occupy a more prominent position in the reports of male journalists [11]. Compared with interviewing female athletes, male journalists are more willing to spend time interviewing male athletes. In terms of women's sports, female commentators have received more positive comments [12]. Although women appear more and more in sports newsrooms all over the country, women think they are invisible to their colleagues in many ways such as being expected to know less, accept more humble tasks and become the target of sexist language. Despite the discrimination, about three-quarters of female sportsmen said they were satisfied with their jobs [9]. In contrast, male newscasters are considered to be more reliable people [13].

How should female journalists report in the long run in order to keep the position continuing to exist for the female population requires further analyses.

There are also some practices in the international community that have begun to consciously protect women's rights and interests in sports-related fields. American universities guarantee fair competition opportunities, software and hardware facilities (training conditions), financial subsidies, etc. by legislation and system, and ensure equality in all aspects, which is of reference significance to the world [14]. However, in the actual operation process, there is still gender inequality in the number of students, scholarships and funds, and only by eradicating this fundamental reason can qualitative change occur. The root cause being cured means that the public concept of gender is truly required to be changed. If people are only under the pressure of law and system, and never respect women's opportunities to participate in competitions and recognize their abilities from the bottom of their hearts, female sports workers will still suffer unequal treatment to varying degrees.

3. Recommendations

Based on the analysis above, several recommendations to promote gender equality in the sports field are suggested. First of all, women should get enough sports opportunities through participation. In adolescence, schools should strengthen education so that girls can also participate in sports. Society should publicize the concept of women participating in sports widely, so that more women can understand the sportsmanship of sports, so as to promote women's participation in sports activities. Secondly, men should accept women with a positive attitude and become effective and efficient sports workers. From the training of male athletes, male athletes should establish the view that male journalists and female journalists are equal and do not conflict with female journalists' interviews. Meanwhile, they should support the work of female journalists from the sports environment and give them the same interview opportunities as male journalists. At last, sports associations should adhere to the principles of democracy and equality between men and women. It is necessary to affirm the existence of female sports workers, so as to support their work. Schools, governments and other departments should intensify social propaganda, create more female sports jobs and encourage more women to participate in sports work.

4. Conclusion

This paper analyzes some unfair treatment of female sports workers in their work. After analyzing the treatment of female sports workers, the author suggests calling on people to pay attention to the necessity of the existence of female sports workers and affirm their value through school social propaganda, male individuals and sports associations. Unfortunately, this paper did not collect data

for data analysis and draw conclusions. In the future, this study can be modified by collecting data from the group through questionnaires to get more perfect results.

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