

# Females' athletes and success in elite Sports Comparison between United Kingdom and South Africa

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### **Abstract**

The main objective of the study is to discuss the female athletes' success in elite sports, with reference to the history and development in sports and comparison between sports associated policies of United Kingdom and South Africa. To achieve the objectives of the study, research process used PRISMA methodology. The PRISMA methodology is Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses, which is used to analyze the already published literature and fetch the required authentic information out of the conducted researches. This methodology is highly effective when quantitative methodology is not possible, and thus the statistic and theoretical review is conducted to answer the research questions. Each collected data was then further analyzed to investigate barriers and reasons which stop the females' athletes to do professional career in sport focused on the UK and African countries. Through analysis of the collected data, the economic, social, political, and financial factors were analyzed with their impact on professional opportunities for the female athletes.





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## Introduction

In recent years, a significant rise can be observed in the professionalism and successful participation of the female sports. Now, women have been trying hard to prove their significance in almost every field of life, including sports. They have been showing their marvelous performance in cricket, football, volleyball, tennis, and other sports. Now, their success is becoming even prominent as athlete. The practitioners or the sports professionals also provoke women to break their barriers and participate well in their sports activities and aim to apply evidence-informed approaches to boost females' performance in sports. Not only this, but also the society has been showing an encouraging attitude to women for their participation in any kind of sports. Despite of these all favours, the female athletes have been facing several challenges in elite sports. This limits their ability to adopt evidence-informed approaches and show successful performance against the opponents. Also, the challenges, social hurdles, and cultural barriers negatively affect the performance potential of the female athletes. Thus, it is crucial to conduct research regarding these topics and highlight how important it is for women to show their better performance as female athlete, and prove their success worldwide. Therefore, current study discusses the female athletes' success in elite sports, with reference to the history and development in sports. Furthermore, the study will present a comparison of the United Kingdom's and South Africa's female athletes' performance in elite sports to better understand the cultural and social impact on them.

## Problem Statement

With the increasing competition worldwide, it is crucial for women to show their equal participation in almost every field of life, including sports. Therefore, the women have now been trying hard to prove their significance in sports. They have been showing their marvelous

performance in cricket, football, volleyball, tennis, and other sports. Now, their success is becoming even prominent as athlete. However, whenever it comes to the sports participation, cultural and social practices prove to be greatest barrier to women. Though, with education, the society has been showing an encouraging attitude to women for their participation in any kind of sports, but social barriers limit their ability to adopt evidence-informed approaches and show successful performance against the opponents. Especially, when comparing the government policies of the United Kingdom to the South Africa, social barriers and difference of liberalism make differences of female athletes' participation very prominent. Therefore, current study discusses the female athletes' success in elite sports, with reference to the history and development in sports and comparison between sports associated policies of United Kingdom and South Africa.

### **Research Objectives**

The current study aims to highlight the female athletes' participation in elite forces, with comparison between United Kingdom and South Africa. With such objective, the research aims to highlight how the social and cultural barriers have limits the female sports' participation in different regions of the world. Understanding of these barriers is crucial to enhance the female potential to serve as sports woman, and motivate them for their success in elite sports. Thus, the main objective of the study is to discuss the female athletes' success in elite sports, with reference to the history and development in sports and comparison between sports associated policies of United Kingdom and South Africa. Furthermore, specific objectives of the study can be defined as;

- To analyze the role of female athletes in the elite sports.
- Evaluate history of female participation in elite sports.

- Investigate social and cultural barriers to the female athletes' success in elite forces, with comparison between United Kingdom and South Africa

### Research Question

- What is the role of female athletes in the elite sports?
- How does history of elite sports interpret the female participation?
- When analyzing the social and cultural barriers to the female athletes' success in elite forces, what difference can be observed in comparison of United Kingdom's approaches to South Africa's approaches towards female sports?

### Significance of the Study

The study is of great significance, as with time equal participation of male and female is becoming crucial in almost every field of life. Especially, when it comes to sports, female are considered to be misfit or either not capable of performing equivalent to men. This perception not only leaves negative psychological impact on the female participation in sports, but also reduces their potential to perform well as athlete. Therefore, it is crucial to highlight the major social and cultural issues, which work as the barriers to female success in elite sports. This is crucial to highlight these challenges to female and get attention of authorities towards the female success in elite sports, and need to reduce these barriers for all women in sports. Moreover, this study is a great contribution in the field of sports, which will ensure the equal participation of male and female in elite sports, and highlight the significance of potential and success for a sports person.



## Study Layout

The study consists of five sections; introduction, literature review, methodology, analysis, and conclusion. The first section is of introduction which explains what the purpose of study is and why it is significant to conduct this research process. The second section presents review of already published literature to highlight the history of female athletes in elite sports with complete description of how the participation vary in the United Kingdom and the South Africa. The third section of the study highlights what methodology has been adopted by the author to conduct the research process and in what way PRISMA process is being used to obtain the answers of research questions. Fourth section answers the research question with complete comparison of female athlete participation in elite sports of the United Kingdom and the South Africa. The findings were highlighted in a theoretical, statistical, and graphical format. Finally, the fifth section presents the conclusion of the study and suggestion for the future researchers and implications of the findings.



## Literature Review

A lot of literature has been published regarding female participation in sports, few of them also highlighted female athletes' success in elite sports. However, the current study is of great significance as it presents the comparison of United Kingdom's approach towards female athletes' success in elite sports to the approach of South Africa. In this way, the study becomes of great importance in highlighting the social and cultural barriers, along with discussion to government's political approach, towards female participation in elite sports. Now, this section of the study presents the review of already published literature to develop effective theoretical framework of the study.

## Background

In the present it is seen big number of changes which has been making and effort which is spent for gender equality problem in sport. This study aims to refer typical barriers and reasons which stop the females athletes to do professional career in sport focused on the UK and African countries. On the other said study the study's objective is to mention the good and strong sections which these selected countries offer to females in the sport sector.

Before going into details, it is crucial to understand the history of women's sports and professional career in elite sports. Many people do not understand the difference between the professional and amateur athletes, and consider these terms as same. However, one must understand that professional athletes are paid enough to earn a living, and gain prominent position worldwide, which makes them different from amateur athletes (Hewett, Myer and Ford, 2006). Also, it is the fact that most of the top female athletes are not being paid and are still considered as amateur athletes. As a result, such sports women have to do full-time or part-time jobs for their financial needs and completion of professional practices. Though this difference

does not seem as of significance but it proves to be the greatest barrier for the female athletes to come in their professional life. Most of the sports women fail to manage their professional and sports life and long office hours prevent them for doing their sports practice properly (Mendiguchia, 2011). This results in lack of participation of these female athletes in training, practice, and competition schedules. On the contrary, the professional athlete men get sufficient amount to live a better life and maintain their financial standard. This convinces them to offer significant time for practice and training schedules and so they perform so well in national and international competition with huge amount as reward.

Most specifically, when discussing the women's participation in sports and their professional status, some of the organizations are working hard to reduce social and financial barriers to female athletes. However, these organizations are relatively new and are not very common in developing countries, such as South Africa (Thompson and Han, 2019). In the developed countries, like the United Kingdom, the sports teams are sponsored by big companies and international investors, this gives a boost to the businesses, as well as encourages the female athletes to perform well in elite sports (Bruinvels, 2017). On the contrary, the developing countries get very less finance for their male teams, and thus cannot afford to manage their female teams associated budget. Resultantly, the country restricts the women's professional sports and does not boost their performance in sports industry. This also prevents such courageous sports women to come in International grounds and prove their professional worth. Not only this but also this results in discrimination towards male and female participation in professional sports (Emmonds, Heyward and Jones, 2019).

## History of Women's Elite Sports

Since the beginning of 1800s, the women are considered as weak, and therefore they are not considered to be fit for sports. Not only this but also the women are considered as symbol of beauty, and more responsible towards household tasks. These cultural and social beliefs restricted the women to participation in different professional fields. More specifically, cultural beliefs worked as the greatest barriers (Gallico, 1938). In most of the societies, it was considered that sports may affect the medical rationalities of the women, such as their reproductive system and keep them unable to give birth to children. Such beliefs proved to be the greatest barrier to women in almost all eras. Also, since 1800 century, women are more interested in their beauty and marriage life and therefore they prefer to stay at home and take care of their beauty, colour complexion, and skin tone (Pfister, 1990). Such beliefs also prevented them to participate well as professional sports women.

Most specifically, the aesthetic rationalities were driven by the beauty and attractiveness of the girls and therefore they could not participate in sports. However, the unattractive and ugly girls were considered to be fit for the good sports (Costello, Bieuzen and Bleakley, 2014). This difference was also generated by the cultural beliefs of playing sports in the sunny days keeps girls' skins duckling, dry, and rough. Therefore, the beautiful girls with attractive skin were not encouraged to join sports, and are supposed to stay at home and take care of their sexual attraction, charm, and beauty (Heidari, 2016). Despite, some beautiful women also wanted to join elite sports, but they were not encouraged for the act or were allowed to join their teams during winter. However, with time, the female participation is increasing and approximately 300 women participated in Olympic Games during 1982. This is evidence of the growth of female

participation, which reached to one fourth of the athletes in the beginning of twenty first century (Schultz, 2018).

The encouragement to the women for joining elite sports was never possible if media had not been playing its significant role. In the end of the twentieth century, the media models started playing sports and reflected their participation in different advertisements, movies, and plays (Fink, 2015). This resulted as motivation to the female for participating in sports just a normal girl and to show their strength to the world. Finally 1960s, the women participation in athletic talent became event prominent and also gained social acceptance in developed countries. At that time, most of the female athletes were from the United States, some of them also served as professional athlete women, such as Joan Weston and Roller Derby. They gained prominent position in sports world, and were considered as the highest paid female in elite sports. However, they were exception but they provoked other females to come and join elite sports and play their role to make this professional highly suitable for the passionate ladies. This resulted in rapid growth of female participation as athlete and in 1973, the Billie Jean King won “The Battle of the Sexes” and cracked the ceilings for the female athletes (Eisenmann, 2017). Not only this, but also women fought for their rights to end the wage gap for men and women in sports world, and players like Martina Navratilova won their competitions against men and broke the gender biased pay gap. Despite of these all efforts, the sports organizations still do not offer the equal amount to male and female athletes (Wang, 2017). Even now, in twenty first century, the most professional women athletes are not getting their pay equivalent to men athletes, which create a great difference and highlights gender discrimination in sports. Such issues reduce women’s passion to perform well in elite force because they are discouraged by gender, sex, and are challenged for their capabilities (Houry, 2011).

### **Success Model for International Sports**

For international sporting success exist three factors model which is consisted of Macro, Meso and Micro levels.



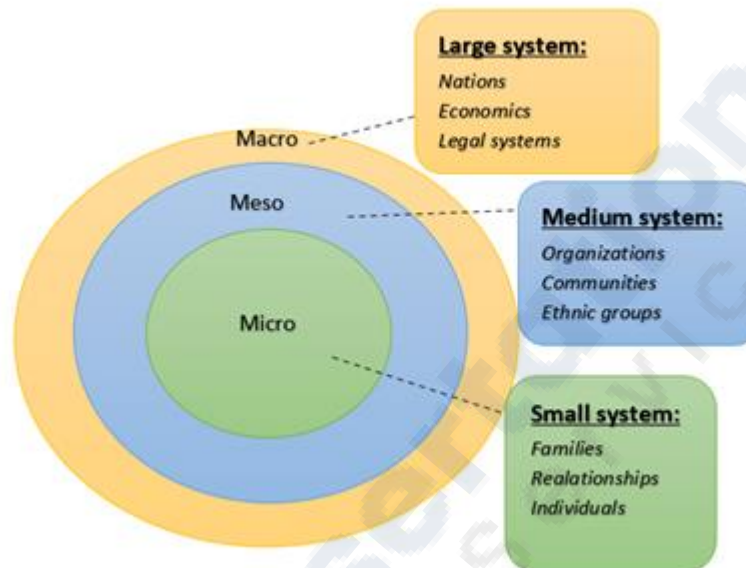


Figure 1 Three factors model for international success in sport

As is seen on the Figure 1 each level is consist of many others factors which may affect international sport success. Macro-level factors influence the social and cultural enviroments in which people live, including economy, demography, geography, climate, urbanisation, politics and national culture. Meso-level factors influence the policy enviroment of nations included policies on coach development, policies on talent identification and selection. Micro-level factors include the success of individual athletes, ranging from the influence of inherited genes to social influence of parents, friends and coaches.

Women have a more difficult way to become professional athletes and engage in sports than men. The influence of these factors comes from different sides and it is not always possible to influence them. This might be caused because women usually need to care about home duties, children and it is definitely not so easy to train every day or several times per week how it is needed for great results (Hartmann *et. al*, 2003). Also the other factors called as macro factors which dependent on external factors that are not so easily influenced by individuals.

There is many questions how it is possible to make better conditions or support for female athletes and help them to do what they really love. In history it is known that women could not play any sport and definitely not in the professional way. This research shows how it looked, currently situation and how it could look in the better future for female athletes. Research will suggest development for United Kingdom and shows how does it work in South Africa.





## Methodology

Female participation in sports is highly criticized by the societies, either due to their incapability to prove their power or due to impact on their physical structure and beauty. Therefore, highlighting the issues to female athletes in elite sports is of great significance. Thus, the current study aims to highlight the female athletes' participation in elite forces, with comparison between United Kingdom and South Africa. With such objective, the research aims to highlight how the social and cultural barriers have limits the female sports' participation in different regions of the world. Understanding of these barriers is crucial to enhance the female potential to serve as sports woman, and motivate them for their success in elite sports. To attain this purpose of study, two types of methodologies can be adopted; qualitative and quantitative. However, further discussion of research method and the sample size is given below;

### Research Paradigm

Research Paradigm reflects the structure of data collection and analysis, to either get answer of the research question or prove hypotheses as true or false. The research paradigm is further distributed in three categories; Realism, Positivism, or Interpretivism. The realism is based on the idea of realistic approach towards the facts. For example, how the people think about specific matters in reality with comparison to the published literature. The purpose of current study is to investigate barriers and reasons which stop the females athletes to do professional career in sport focused on the UK and African countries. However, it is not possible to conduct a quantitative approach in which interview of athletes can be conducted to test the difference of opinion. However, the systematic review will be conducted to check how authors have reflected this difference and female athletes' participation in elite sports of respective

countries. Thus it is mostly based on the systematic review of already published literature. Thus, the current study will not follow the realism approach.

The second category of the research paradigm is positivism, which is based on the observation of facts through measurements and other factual study patterns. It is also said as quantitative approach in which the data is collected from specific sample population through quantifiable observation. These patterns include survey, interview, and pool process. Now the purpose of current study is to investigate barriers and reasons which stop the females athletes to do professional career in sport focused on the UK and African countries. Therefore, it will include the analysis of different online surveys, conducted to evaluate cultural and social challenges to the female athletes in the elite sports of respective countries.

The final category of the research paradigm is Interpretivism, which is a form of criticism to the positivist approach or follows the qualitative methods in which the already published literature reviews and examined to present researcher's views and concepts. As the purpose of current study is to investigate barriers and reasons which stop the females athletes to do professional career in sport focused on the UK and African countries, so it will review the already published literature, such as review of scholarly published articles, books, peer reviewed articles, news reports, and other. Through this review, the study will investigate the barriers and reasons which stop the females athletes to do professional career in sport focused on the UK and African countries.

## **Requirements**

The requirements of the study are to investigate and analyze the barriers and reasons which stop the females athletes to do professional career in sport focused on the UK and African countries.

## Preparation

To get the answers to the research questions, it is necessary to review the already published literature regarding barriers and reasons which stop the females' athletes to do professional career in sport focused on the UK and African countries. For this purpose, the search engines, such as Google, were used. Different keywords were used to get the required search results, out of which recently published and most related articles were accessed online. To make the study procedure ethical, only open access articles were collected and analyzed. Further, university library sources and study notes were consumed to improve the research pattern and make findings more authentic.

## Considerations

The study aims to investigate barriers and reasons which stop the females athletes to do professional career in sport focused on the UK and African countries. With this aim, the research aims to highlight the significance of female participation in elite sports. The study is highly significant as it drives attention of the authorities towards barriers and reasons which stop the females athletes to do professional career in elite sports. Thus the study is conducted to bring a positive change in the society, for which all ethical measures will be on priority. All the information collected during the study was accessed through open source software, and was never is used for bias or unethical purpose. The paper reports were collected into a bag that no one sees and after processing the data the original reports will be destroyed by a shredder.

## Research Method

The research can be conducted via adopted of two types of methodology; qualitative and quantitative methodology. The qualitative methodology is based on the analysis of already published or established facts and results are inferred from already established data. For this purpose, the researcher used the review of already published literature and interview methods.

This methodology is further divided into multiple other methods, such as systematic review of the literature or inclusion-exclusion patterns. On the other hand, the quantitative research methodology is based on the quantifiable methods via survey, pools, questionnaire based interviews, and analysis of statistical data. In the quantitative methodology, the research collects data from specific sample population size, and then analyzes the collected data to obtain statistical outcomes. Finally, the results are displayed in form of statistics; including graphs, tables, and other statistical formats. Furthermore, different software, such as SPSS, have been used to analyze the data and test hypotheses.

The current study aims to investigate barriers and reasons which stop the females athletes to do professional career in sport focused on the UK and African countries. Thus, it will be based on both qualitative methodologies, for which it will review already published literature. The findings will be then analyzed through excel or any other software format to display outcomes in terms of theoretical and statistical format.

### **Sample Size**

Sampling is the way to decide what population or the material will be used during the study. The sample must be suitable to answer the research questions in a specific way, and must be related to the target audience. For the current study, the already published literature was collected to conduct PRISMA research method. The PRISMA methodology is Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses, which is used to analyze the already published literature and fetch the required authentic information out of the conducted researches. This methodology is highly effective when quantitative methodology is not possible, and thus the statistic and theoretical review is conducted to answer the research questions.

## 1.1 Data Collection

The data collection was based on the review of already published literature and analysis of the interview answers of the participants. Search engines, such as Google, were being used to collect data regarding the research topic and questions. Each collected data was then further analyzed to investigate barriers and reasons which stop the females' athletes to do professional career in sport focused on the UK and African countries.

## Data Analysis Techniques

The data was collected via PRISMA patterns, and each collected study was analyzed separately to answer the research questions of the study. The irrelevant and redundant data was extracted from the research process and the remaining data were further analyzed via graphical or statistical analysis technique to investigate barriers and reasons which stop the females' athletes to do professional career in sport focused on the UK and African countries. For the inclusion and exclusion process, following criteria had been used during the research;

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
<b>to investigate barriers and reasons which stop the females athletes to do professional career in sport focused on the UK and African countries</b>	
<b>The Google scholarly were used to get access to the scholarly published articles and other reports</b>	Redundant information and old published literature were excluded. Also, the irrelevant material was extracted.
<b>Fetches the related data to answer the research questions and to investigate barriers and reasons which stop the females athletes to do professional career in sport focused on the UK and African countries</b>	Irrelevant and redundant data was extracted
<b>Final data was re-arranged to answer the questions and infer authentic conclusion</b>	All remaining data was vanished

### **Research Analysis**

The current study aims to refer typical barriers and reasons which stop the females athletes to do professional career in sport focused on the UK and African countries. On the other said study the study's objective is to mention the good and strong sections which these selected countries offer to females in the sport sector. To attain the objective of the study, PRISMA qualitative methodology had been adopted, according to which review of already published literature was done to get answers of the research questions. The scholarly published literature was accessed through Google Scholarly or other authentic search engines, whereas all open-access articles were used for the analysis. Now, this section of the study presents the review of literature with discussion of professional career of female athletes in elite sports of the UK and African Countries.

### **General Participation of Female Athletes**

Before analyzing the participation of female athletes in elite sports of UK and SA, it is crucial to investigate a general perspective regarding females' sports participation. The literature analysis revealed that most of the top female athletes are not being paid and are still considered as amateur athletes. As a result, such sports women have to do full-time or part-time jobs for their financial needs and completion of professional practices (Eisenmann, 2017; Gallico, 1938). Though this difference does not seem as of significance but it proves to be the greatest barrier for the female athletes to come in their professional life. Most of the sports women fail to manage their professional and sports life and long office hours prevent them for doing their sports practice properly (Mendiguchia, 2011). Furthermore, in the developed countries, like the United Kingdom, the sports teams are sponsored by big companies and international investors, this gives a boost to the businesses, as well as encourages the female athletes to perform well in elite sports

(Bruinvels, 2017). On the contrary, the developing countries get very less finance for their male teams, and thus cannot afford to manage their female teams associated budget. Moreover, the beautiful girls with attractive skin were not encouraged to join sports, and are supposed to stay at home and take care of their sexual attraction, charm, and beauty (Heidari, 2016). Despite, some beautiful women also wanted to join elite sports, but they were not encouraged for the act or were allowed to join their teams during winter. In most of the societies, it was considered that sports may affect the medical rationalities of the women, such as their reproductive system and keep them unable to give birth to children. Such beliefs proved to be the greatest barrier to women in almost all eras. These cultural and social beliefs restricted the women to participation in different professional fields. More specifically, cultural beliefs worked as the greatest barriers (Gallico, 1938).

In the beginning of the twentieth century, media played significant role to encourage women's participation in sports, and different models worked as influencer by acting as sports women or participating in different types of sports activities (Fink, 2015). This resulted as motivation to the female for participating in sports just a normal girl and to show their strength to the world. Finally 1960s, the women participation in athletic talent became event prominent and also gained social acceptance in developed countries. The results even became more prominent in 1973 when the Billie Jean King won "The Battle of the Sexes" and cracked the ceilings for the female athletes (Eisenmann, 2017). Not only this, but also women fought for their rights to end the wage gap for men and women in sports world, and players like Martina Navratilova won their competitions against men and broke the gender biased pay gap. However, still the women have to work hard to prove their worth as sports women and gain prominent position as professional athlete.

## History of Females History In Sport And Results

In the distant past females did not have any opportunities to do sports. It was also because in this time was sport just for men and the activities had been made for them. For example knighthood and fencing were typical competitions where men could show their strength and masculinity.

It is known that the UK is generally one of the best sport countries on the world, especially in football. A specifically the England is in the ranking of FIFA for males is cast on the 4th place and females have a beautiful 6th place (FIFA,2021). On the Olympic Games they gained 851 medals from 1896 to 2016! It is really remarkable and in this case UK earned fifth place. USA earned first place with the number of medals 2522. It is three times bigger number than have a UK. On the other side USA is definitely bigger than UK what means that they have bigger number of athletes who are potential candidates for Olympic Games with best results. Unfortunately these data shows results summary of all genders athletes what means that males as well. However this research is focus on the females and their better future and easier way in sport life. Females' athletes appeared for the first time in 1900 with number of athletes 22 what was 2.2 percent out of a total of 997 athletes competed in five sports: tennis, sailing, croquet, equestrian and golf. It was the historical first time for women on the Olympic games in Paris, France. It is really fantastic that in the year 2019 the number of women athletes on IOC increase and it was finally 3 per cent of all Members.



## Gender Equality in Sport Pass To Present

This project is important also from the point of view that females' athletes are still not on the same level of interest like a male athlete. As can be seen above on the picture one, it was year 1900 when first female athletes were come on the Olympic Games. The first Olympic Games took place already in the Greek city-state of Elis in 776 B.C. However it is possible and generally accepted that the Olympics were at least 500 years old at that time (A&E, 2020). The sport could do only men during this time and women had to be in the background. Later, women have played some specific but marginal activities (Hartmann-Tews *et. al*, 2003). It means that females are in the world of sport so many years shorter than males' athletes and the results are still visible in the present time. It is also the one of the cases why women are not equal to men in sport. For this reason, women deserve attention and solutions as to how it would be easier for them to be included in sport and to feel equal to men's representation.

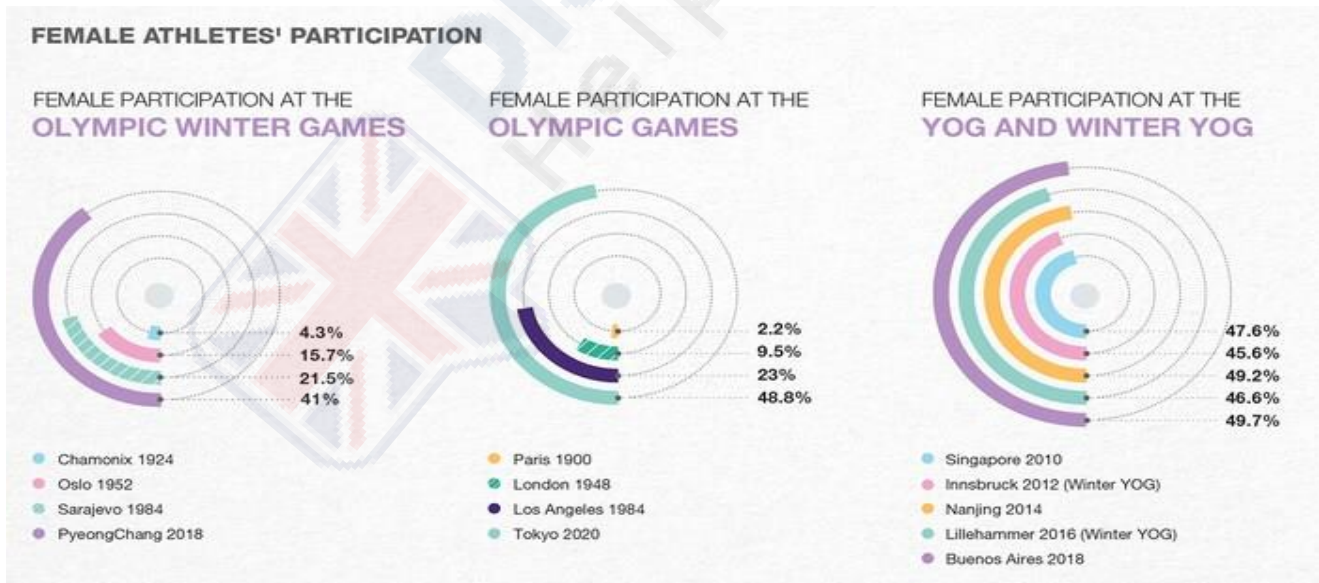


Figure 2 On the picture is shows how was the increase number of females participants every Olympic games. It is also divided in three different periods of games when they are carried out (Olympic, 2020).

### Factors which are affect sport development aimed at female athletes

The factors which have a biggest impact on female development in sport we include also so-called „Country-level factors“. There are factors like economic development and talent pool, climate, socio-cultural and political system. These factors affect female athletes depending on the country where they live. Economic-development and talent pool factors. Economic-development factor is basically about the maturity of the country and also about the size of the population. In developed countries is possible to see the biggest a positive effect on sport success, included female side. One of the reasons is possibly these countries are also at the forefront of equality what means that women have either more leisure time or availability of the better sport infrastructures than in less developed countries.

Talent pool factor it is closely connected with the aforementioned economic-development factor. Basically if the country dispose with large population it is easier to find people who would like to become to be athletes and selected the biggest talents from bigger number of participants. Climate factor it is focus on the location and climate where the country is located. The best countries are countries with temperate climate for athletes and their practice frequency. Extremely cold or hot conditions are more difficult for athletes trainings especially outside (Hoffmann *et al*, 2002). However there is not study which has been focus on female athletes so it is not substantiated in the case of women.

Socio-cultural factors such as religion, cultural heritage and gender equality and their influence of socio-cultural variables were explored in relation to international women football outcomes. The opinions and studies are different. One the one hand in 2002 Klein declared that religion does not have any impact on sport development (Klein, 2002). On the other hand was later found

that countries where religion mainly focus on Islam faith, female perform significantly worse because they have not the same rights as men, so their options are much more limited (Congdon *et al.*, 2011). The countries where level of gender equality is important and set to the correct level females have many more options for their improvement or development in sport activities. It is also because potential sponsors will invest also in women sports and their better future in this area (Brendtmann *et al.*, 2016).

**Political system factor** is still not so clear-cut. Studies that have focused on this factor have yielded differing views and results. Researches have examined past and present regimes and their implications for women's performance in football. The results from two studies were with positive results for communist regime (Hoffmann *et al.*, 2006), while Jacobs (2014) cannot find support for this relationship. However researches been focused only on football and not on sport in general. Although the results are different in these studies, should be noted that democracy level moderates gender differences in sport participation and is positively associated with increased participation rates, especially for women (Balish, 2017).

### **Female athletes in United Kingdom (UK)**

With the passage of time, the government's inclination towards women's sports is increasing. Now, the UK's government has introduced several new programs to promote sports amongst women, and facilitate them with advanced coaching. Not only this, but also the government is concerned to reduce the wage gap between professional sports men and women. This gap reduction is crucial to encourage more women for joining different types of sports of the UK and represent their teams worldwide. Such great efforts by the government have proved

to be the attractive step towards women’s encouragement to show more potential in sports ground. Also, it resulted in more women participation in almost every type of sports, including cricket, football, volleyball, athlete, and other sports activities. The investigation of the women’s professional participation in sports, with reference to survey (Insure4Sports, 2018), made it clear that with time women’s professional attitude is encouraged in sports industry. However, still the gender inequality and wage gap is a prominent factor. This becomes clear with the following details;

	Avg. prize money for men	Avg. prize money for women	Prize Gap
Football	£22,075,000	£561,230	£21,513,770
Cricket	£3,100,000	£470,500	£2,629,500
Golf	£1,021,033	£492,875	£528,158
Cycling	£35,518	£5,942	£29,576
Tennis	£1,452,022	£1,452,022	£0
Volleyball	£83,011	£83,011	£0
Athletics	£31,008	£31,008	£0
Swimming	£25,097	£25,097	£0

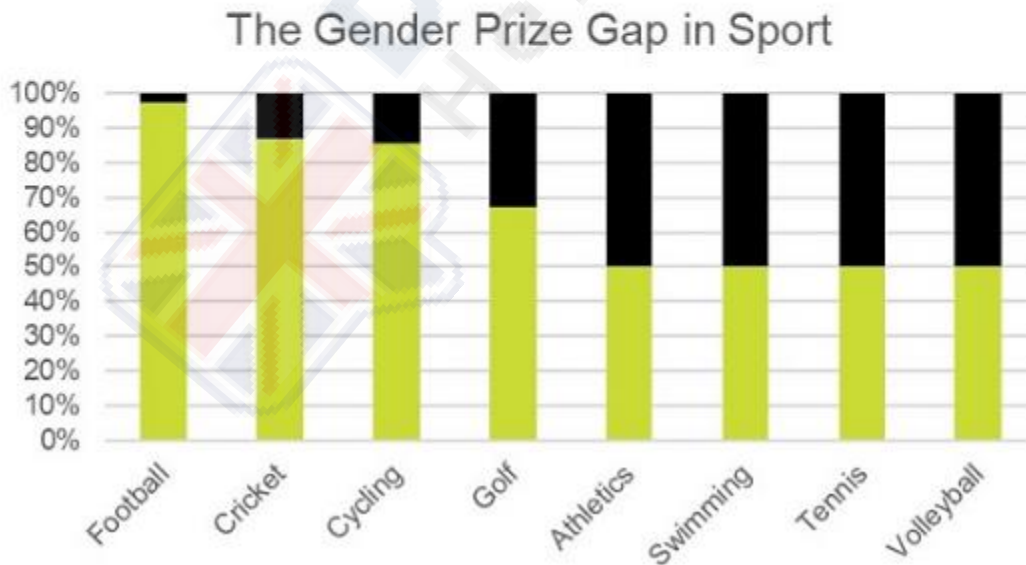


Figure 3 Women Participation in UK's Sports Industry (Insure4Sports, 2018)

The findings of the above results make it clear that women are paid far less in some of the sports, whereas this gap has been covered by the government in elite sports. Especially, when analyzing the women athletic participation in UK Sports industry, the prize gap seems to be 0%, which makes it clear that athlete women are encouraged to participate and are provided better professional opportunities. This proves that at national level, the athlete women are performing so well and are encouraged for their professional activities. However, people's interest to see the women in sports is also a matter of great concern, which also proves to be the greatest barrier to them. People are less interested to see women in sports industry, and this becomes even clear with the survey results (Insure4Sports, 2018).

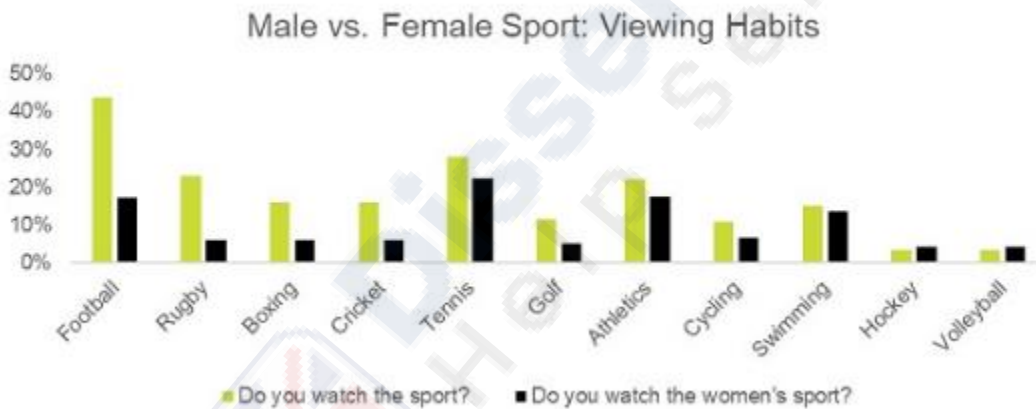


Figure 4 People's interest to see women in Sports (Insure4Sports, 2018)

The above figure makes it clear that people are less interested to see women in sports, which become the major reason of getting less sponsored, and thus women are paid less than male in sports industry. However, this gap is very little in elite forces, due to which women of UK can participate well as athletes and enjoy their professional status at national level. When it comes to the international industry then they, the female athletes of UK, face greatest challenges of sponsorship and wage gap. To better understand this gap, the comparison of female athletes' participation in UK Sports with US Sports industry can be highly significant. The results through

survey, conducted by Clark (2015), reflect how the sponsorship, people's attitude towards their female athletes' participation, and government's reward price play role towards female encouragement in elite sports (Clark, 2015).



Figure 5 Comparison of reward money and wage of UK's Female Athletes to US Female Athletes (Clark, 2015)

This huge difference highlights how the sponsorship, central contracts, and club contract work to create the wage gap for the female athletes of UK at international level. However, the government of the United Kingdom is focused to improve female participation in almost every type of sports and creating their positive image in audience. This will result in people's interest to watch the female sports women in elite sports and more international sponsorships to the professional athletes, and other sports women.

## Female athletes in South Africa

Developing countries are still facing great challenges in providing better professional opportunities to the sports women. They have financial and social limitations to improve their male participation in sports industry, and thus they do not get sufficient margin for females' professional encouragement. Therefore, there exist very few organizations for the professional grooming of the female athletes. Even, for the participating professional women, the wage gap is the greatest barriers. However, some of the International organizations are working hard to reduce wage gap for the female professionals of the South Africa but lack of budget, social, and cultural barriers have reflected a great gap in women participation in sports industry. Though, the women's participation was increasing in Olympic sports, but this participation again showed a decline in 2016. These findings even become prominent with the survey results (Adom, 2019).



Figure 6 SA's Female participation in sports (Adom, 2019)

The findings of the above results make it clear that women are participating far less in sports. Especially, when analyzing the women athletic participation in SA Sports industry, the

prize gap seems to be the highest, which makes it clear that athlete women are less encouraged to participate and are not provided with sufficient professional opportunities. Furthermore, people's interest to see the women in sports is also a matter of great concern, which also proves to be the greatest barrier to them. People are less interested to see women in sports industry, and this becomes even clear with the survey results (MediaCommons, 2019).

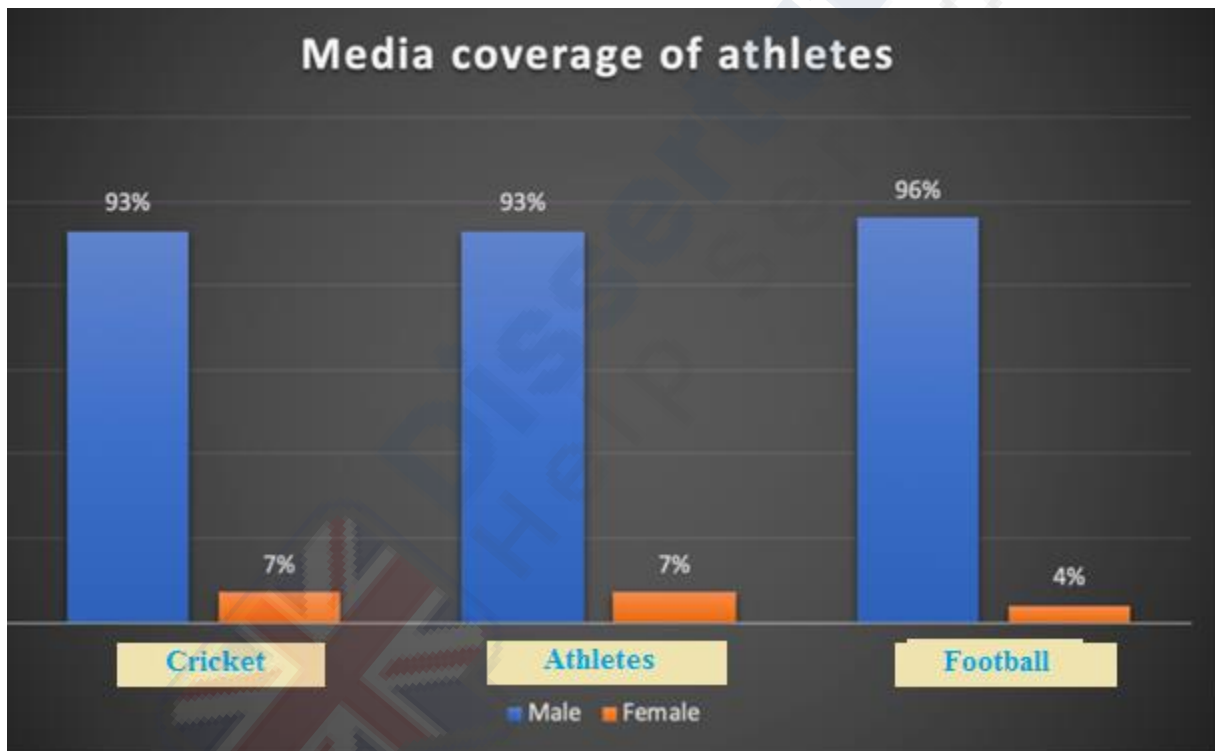


Figure 7 SA's Media Coverage and People's interest to watch Female in Sports (MediaCommons, 2019)

The above figure makes it clear that people are less interested to see women in sports, which become the major reason of getting less sponsored, and thus women are paid less than male in sports industry. Moreover, the sports industry of the SA get very less finance for their male teams, and thus cannot afford to manage their female teams associated budget. Resultantly, the country restricts the women's professional sports and does not boost their performance in



sports industry. This also prevents such courageous sports women to come in International grounds and prove their professional worth. Not only this but also this results in discrimination towards male and female participation in professional sports work as the greatest barrier for female participation as professional (Emmonds, Heyward and Jones, 2019).



### **Conclusion**

Women have been trying hard to prove their significance in almost every field of life, including sports. They have been showing their marvelous performance in cricket, football, volleyball, tennis, and other sports. Now, their success is becoming even prominent as athlete. However, it is the fact that the female athletes have been facing several challenges in elite sports. This limits their ability to adopt evidence-informed approaches and show successful performance against the opponents. However, whenever it comes to the sports participation, cultural and social practices prove to be greatest barrier to women. Though, with education, the society has been showing an encouraging attitude to women for their participation in any kind of sports, but social barriers limit their ability to adopt evidence-informed approaches and show successful performance against the opponents. Understanding of these barriers is crucial to enhance the female potential to serve as sports woman, and motivate them for their success in elite sports. Thus, the main objective of the study was to discuss the female athletes' success in elite sports, with reference to the history and development in sports and comparison between sports associated policies of United Kingdom and South Africa.

To achieve the objectives of the study, research process used PRISMA methodology. The PRISMA methodology is Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses, which is used to analyze the already published literature and fetch the required authentic information out of the conducted researches. This methodology is highly effective when quantitative methodology is not possible, and thus the statistic and theoretical review is conducted to answer the research questions. Each collected data was then further analyzed to investigate barriers and reasons which stop the females' athletes to do professional career in sport focused on the UK and African countries.

The review of the collected data revealed that the UK is generally one of the best sport country on the world, especially in football. A specifically the England is in the ranking of FIFA for males is cast on the 4th place and females have a beautiful 6th place (FIFA,2021). On the Olympic Games they gained 851medails from 1896 to 2016! It is really remarkable and in this case UK earned fifth place. However this research is focus on the females and their better future and easier way in sport life. Females' athletes appeared for the first time in 1900 with number of athletes 22 what was 2.2 percent out of a total of 997 athletes competed in five sports: tennis, sailing, croquet, equestrian and golf. It was the historical first time for women on the Olympic games in Paris, France. Furthermore, there are factors like economic development and talent pool, climate, socio-cultural and political system which affect female athletes depending on the country where they life. Economic-development factor is basically about the maturity of the country and also about the size of the population, whereas talent pool factor it is closely connected with the aforementioned economic-development factor. Basically if the country disposes with large population it is easier to find people who would like to become to be athletes and selected the biggest talents from bigger number of participants. Climate factor it is focus on the location and climate where the country is located. Socio-cultural factors such as religion, cultural heritage and gender equality and their influence of socio-cultural variables were explored in relation to international women football outcomes. The opinions and studies are different.

The review also revealed that with the passage of time, the UK's government has introduced several new programs to promote sports amongst women, and facilitate them with advanced coaching. Not only this, but also the government is concerned to reduce the wage gap between professional sports men and women. Specifically, the analysis revealed that for the

women athletic participation in UK Sports industry, the prize gap seems to be 0%, which makes it clear that athlete women are encouraged to participate and are provided better professional opportunities. Moreover, they are also politically and socially encouraged for their professional activities. When it comes to the international industry then they, the female athletes of UK, face greatest challenges of sponsorship and wage gap. There exists a huge difference, due to the sponsorship, central contracts, and club contract work, to create the wage gap for the female athletes of UK at international level. However, the government of the United Kingdom is focused to improve female participation in almost every type of sports and creating their positive image in audience.

On the other hand, some of the International organizations are working hard to reduce wage gap for the female professionals of the South Africa but lack of budget, social, and cultural barriers have reflected a great gap in women participation in sports industry. Though, the women's participation was increasing in Olympic sports, but this participation again showed a decline in 2016. Furthermore, people's interest to see the women in sports is also a matter of great concern, which also proves to be the greatest barrier to them. People are less interested to see women in sports industry, and this becomes even clear with the survey results (MediaCommons, 2019). The sports industry of the SA gets very less finance for their male teams, and thus cannot afford to manage their female teams associated budget. Resultantly, the country restricts the women's professional sports and does not boost their performance in sports industry. Not only this but also this results in discrimination towards male and female participation in professional sports work as the greatest barrier for female participation as professional (Emmonds, Heyward and Jones, 2019).

These all factors prove that professional opportunities for the female athletes is found to be limited in South Africa than in the United Kingdom, due to the economic factors, political strategies, lack of budget, social and cultural practices, and people's perception towards watching female sports games. These all barriers can be overcome by providing better professional opportunities for the female athletes in elite sports, encouraging brands to sponsor their games, and enhancing media coverage of female sports at national and international level.



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