

Gender-equality in sports remains elusive

Women's sports have gained exposure lately, either through their teams' success or claims of discrimination. Two fact-based articles from the American *The Atlantic* dated March 2016 and April 2021 and an opinion piece from the British broadsheet *The Guardian* dated August 2022 look into the differences in attitude regarding women's sports, while a 2016 humouristic cartoon by Darry Lambert and a 2018 British survey provide further insight into the matter.

To what extent is gender discrimination a reality in sports?

Although women's success in sports is undeniable, women remain unequally rewarded as a result of long ingrained prejudices.

Women have achieved great feats in sports, particularly in football as pointed out in Documents 3 and 5. The US and British women's soccer teams have smashed records, doing better than their male counterparts, which Document 5's writer views as cause for celebration. Even at college league level, Document 4 argues, sportswomen are hugely popular, as proven through social media following. Moreover, Document 5 shows they draw crowds from both genders to the stadiums and in front of their TV sets, a point ironically illustrated in Document 1, which depicts a couple on a settee watching female sports.

Nevertheless, sportswomen do not manage to achieve similar compensation as their male counterparts, a point made by all three articles and indirectly by Document 2. Some high profile people in the tennis world claim, in Document 3, this is justified owing to different gender requirements in the games. Still, even with identical requirements, women remain underpaid, be they soccer players (Documents 3 and 5) or collegiate sportswomen (Document 4). Such discrimination has led some women to resort to legal complaint, as for the US female soccer team (Document 3) or female basketball college teams, who should, what is more, be protected from gender discrimination by law (Document 5).

Another recurring argument put forward to explain women's lesser wages is their lack of bankability as regards media coverage, a claim debunked in all articles. Document 3 and 5 actually argue that women teams' games have yielded more TV-viewers than men's while Document 4 highlights the unwillingness of organisers to disclose true figures. In truth, 'good old' plain gender discrimination seems at work when it comes to female players' wages, as illustrated by the survey's results and how poorly colleges defend their female teams' interest. Documents 1 and 5 show how too often, sportswomen are only viewed as sexual objects, being denied opportunities and facilities granted to men, as pointed out in all articles.

Gender discrimination remains a harsh reality in sports through unconscious or wilful bias from viewers and organisers.

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