

Insights into the Under-Representation of Women in Sports-Leadership in Kenya

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Abstract The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that lead to women underrepresentation in sport leadership in Kenya. The factors which were investigated included cultural, political, social and economic factors and how they interact with gender, age and positional status of the respondents to mediate women underrepresentation in sports leadership. Data was collected through questionnaires from broad spectrum of stakeholders in sport (national team players, coaches, sport science students, gamestutors and officials of sport federations, government, Kenya National sports council (KNSC), and National Olympic committee of Kenya (NOC-K). The resulting data was analyzed through t-test and one way ANOVA at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that 60% and 40% of respondents were males and females respectively. The categorical variables of gender, age and positional status had variant relationships with the factors that cause women underrepresentation in sport. The mitigating factors waned from economic, social, political and cultural factor. Recommendations from the study have practical and policy implications to the Ministry of sport, sport federations, and educational institutions. Further research on the psychological factors that impinge on women in sports leadership will be a worth while venture.

Keywords Women, Underrepresentation, Sport-leadership, Kenya

1. Introduction

Sport is one of the most popular activities of mankind across the modern world. It is appreciated and embraced among people of all ages, gender, abilities and races. The popularity of sport stems from its benefits, not only at an individual's level but also at national or societal level. Numerous scientific findings have shown that sport enhances physical fitness and health of participants. It is an important tool of bringing people together, providing opportunities for socialization, enhancing self-image and leadership training[1]. It is appreciated as a "crowd-puller", and hence, helps to enhance national social integration and unity. The fact that sport is also one of the biggest economic industries in many countries of the world is without doubt[2]. In view of these benefits, there has been emphasis on 'Mass Sport' in many countries[3]. Indeed, the United Nations International Charter on Physical Education and Sport which was proclaimed by UNESCO conference on 21st November 1978 emphasizes on access to sport and physical education as a fundamental human right[4]. Any form of discrimination in sport on the basis of gender, ability, age or race is unacceptable.

Controversy about the involvement of women in sport dates back to antiquity. Although the code of Hammurabi does specify that "all the people shall participate in exercise", there was no organized sport activities for women until the ancient Greek era. Indeed, history has shown that women have continued to be discriminated and under-represented in matters of sport. During the revival of the Olympic Games, women were not represented in the inaugural Paris Congress that organized the first modern Olympic Games of 1896, and were not given a chance to compete in the games. In addition to the long time taken to officially allow women's participation in the Olympic Games, the number of female participants in the Games has been miserably low compared to their male counterparts

It is also worth noting that women were denied administrative positions in the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for a long time. The first woman was appointed to the IOC in 1981, almost a century after the inaugural Modern Olympic Games in 1896. The sports scene in Africa is bedeviled with imbalance between male and female participants. Mazrui[5] points out that man have dominated sport in Africa over the years. In Kenya, for instance, there are more male sports administrators than females in the various national sports organizations[6]

1.1. Statement of the Problem

The under-representation of women in sport participation and leadership positions is an issue of major concern across

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Published online at <http://journal.sapub.org/ijas>

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the world. Mazrui[5], however, highlights it as being most prevalent in African countries. The under-representation is reflected in their lower participation in sports, spectatorship and sports leadership[6]. Njororai[6] revealed that Kenyan women are under-represented in sport administration at the national sports federations, Universities and in the contingents of officials that accompany athletes to the World Sports Championships. It is, therefore, in the light of this situation that this study was designed to investigate the root causes of women's under-representation in sports leadership Kenya. The study addressed the extent to which socio-economic, political and cultural factors lead to gender inequity in sports leadership in Kenya.

1.2. Conceptual Framework

It is now widely known that virtually all over the world women are under-represented in participation and leadership in sports. The underlying factors relating to the low visibility of women in various areas of sport can better be understood from the conceptual framework of patriarchy[7]. The theory of patriarchy refers to a constellation of concepts, norms, values and institutional and behavioural patterns that uphold male superiority in society. Patriarchy is therefore at core an ideology that promotes a male-hegemonic worldview[6].

The theoretical thrust of patriarchy draws attention to the intimate connection between women's lives in other social spheres and their status in sport. The latter is no less valued an activity as is politics, dance and even the production of food and other economic goods and services. In male dominant worldview, such valuable social activities are gender contested. Since sport is, for a variety of reasons, a valued social activity, the theoretical perspective of patriarchy views the activity as a cultural domain in which values, meaning and norms are contested along gender lines[7-9]. Put in a sharper focus, the theory of patriarchy recasts the whole arena of sports as sport is a patriarchal (male-dominant) institution, sexist ideology pervades sport, there is a bias in the study of women in sport, sport sociology is dominated by sexist research paradigm and women are ineluctably and irreversibly different from men and are inferior[7].

Mazrui[5] points out that African woman both in pre-colonial and post-colonial periods have had fewer opportunities to participate because the warrior culture of pre-colonial society linked sports to physical combat and militarization of sports. In addition, the kind of sports ushered into Africa by colonialists namely soccer, athletics, boxing, basketball, hockey and golf were male specific. However, some efforts have been made in the post-colonial period to correct the bias in sport but the under-representation of women still persists. It is in the light of this that it becomes imperative to objectively identify the main reasons for the gender imbalance in sport leadership in Kenya.

2. Literature Review

Although history reveals that women are

under-represented in all facets of sport, it is imperative to review studies, which have been done in other parts of the world and East Africa touching on women in sport participation and leadership. Akinsanmi[10] studied the barriers to females (n=375) sports management and participation in selected Nigerian Colleges of education. The results of the study showed that inadequate funds, personnel, facilities, equipment, supplies and management of sport's supervision and coaching were some of the barriers to female sports management and participation. In another related study, Oloyede[11] investigated on the psychological and social variables that militate against female participation (n=150) in physical activity. On the basis of the findings, socio-economic status, religion, and culture and sex role orientation were some of the factors notably militating against female participation in physical activities. This study illuminates on factors that militate against female participation in physical activities at college level.

Eboh[12] investigated the nature of institutional support or motivation provided for female students (n=355) participating in university sports. The findings of the study revealed that both moral and material support was offered by higher institutions to promote female sport participation. Secondly, there was no significant difference revealed with respect to the opinion expressed among the respondents in the nature of institutional support provided for female student's participation in university sports.

Morakinyo and Olufolake[13] studied the social factors that influence women's participation in sports in Ondo and Ekiti States of Nigeria. The five factors that were considered included educational systems, mass media, peer group influence, economic values medical care. Results revealed that the five factors had significant influence on female participation in sports in Ondo and Ekiti States of Nigeria. The study therefore, recommended that more athletic programmes should be designed specifically for women and also ensure that the responsibilities of administration and organization be taken up by women.

Generally, a number of studies indicate that at high school, college, national and international levels, women are not well represented in a variety of leadership positions including sports leadership. Acosta and Carpenter[14], for instance, noted that in IOWA, where high school girls' basketball attracts as many (or more) spectators as boys' basketball and a large number of participants, women coach only 12% of the teams. Furthermore, it is reported that in 1984 women coached only 53.8% of US college women's teams across twelve sports. Moreover, as the level of college competition increases, the percentage of male coaches increases. Thus, in 1984 males occupied 50.1% of the coaching positions for women's teams in Div. I, 47.8% in Div. II and 41.2% in Div. III respectively. Male athletic directors supervise 86.5% of the NCAA college or university programs, and 38% of the programs do not have a female involved at the administrative level. This data support the idea that males tend to dominate the higher echelons within sport.

In East Africa Kavuma[15] studied the profiles and role performance of athletics coaches in Uganda. It was found that men were over-represented with a big percentage of 77.8% as opposed to the female coaches who constituted only 22.8% of the total coaches in Uganda. Two years later Nsengiyunva[16] surveyed coach education programs in selected sports associations in Uganda. It was not surprising that more men took part in the courses than women. Ananura[17] studied the socio-cultural factors that affect the development of women's football in Uganda was studied. A random sample of 150 women players and 30 officials was used to provide information. The study established that most of the women who play football had to overcome socio-cultural beliefs and negative attitudes, which militated against their participation in sports.

In Kenya, Munayi[18] studied the coverage of women in sports by the print media six months prior to the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney. Findings showed that of the pages allocated to sports, women sports occupied only 20% of the space. Equally, only 20% of the pictures appear on these sport papers had women. Njororai *et al*[6] reported that women are under-represented as participants in competitive and recreation sports, sports leadership and sport related academic fields in Kenya. However, the study did not illuminate on the actual causes of women under-representation, more particularly in sports leadership.

From the above literature review, it is apparent that gender imbalance in sport is quite pronounced. However, the studies reviewed only point out the causes in a casual and speculative manner.

Kenya enacted a new constitution in the year 2010. One of the cardinal requisites of this new constitutional framework was that all public offices/positions need to be occupied by not more than two thirds of each gender. Since, then all the sport federations/associations have been striving to ensure that women are represented in the management of federations/associations. However; this has been done with a lot of difficulties as women are not elected and they get absolved into sport federations through directly nominations in order to satisfy the constitutional requirements. Thus, this study was out to establish the social, cultural, economic, and political factors, which militate against equitable representation of women in sport circles. Secondly, the study was interested in establishing how the categorical variables of age, gender and positional status would impact on women underrepresentation in sports leadership.

3. Methods and Procedures

3.1. Research Design

The survey research design was used in this study. The design enabled the researcher to determine the current status of women involved in sports leadership and establish the causes of their under-representation in the administration and management of sports in Kenya[19].

3.2. Sample and Sampling Procedures

Stratified random sampling was utilized to get the sample of the study as shown in Table 1. The total number of respondents included 72 (40%) females and 108 (60%) males. These were composed of national team players 44 (23.9%), Sport federation officials, 30 (16.7%), Sports Science Students 26(14.4%), Government Sports Officers 22 (12.2%), National Coaches 21(11.7%), Games Tutors 20 (11.1%), Officials of Sports Council 11 (6.7%), and Officials of National Olympic Committee of Kenya 6 (3.3 %).

Table 1. The Sample of Respondents

Positional Status	Male	Female	Total
National Team Player	16	28	44
Sports Federation Officials	24	6	30
Sports Science Students	17	9	26
Government Sports Officers	16	6	22
National Coaches	12	9	21
Games Tutors	10	10	20
Officials of Sports Council	7	4	11
Officials of National Olympic Committee of Kenya	6	--	6
TOTAL	108 (60%)	72 (40%)	180 (100%)

3.3. Instruments for Data Collection

The instrument for data collection was direct contact questionnaire. It was designed and validated by a team of experts in research methodology and sport sociology. The instrument had three sections, which sought to gather information on demographic data of the subjects (such as age, positional status and gender); the extent to which social, political, economic and cultural factors have led to gender inequity in sports leadership. Items on the above factors were weighed on a 5-point Likert Scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). They were scored as 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively, depending on the wording of the items. Negatively worded items were scored on the reverse.

The instrument had been pilot-tested among 8 district sports officers and 12 sports science students who were not eventually included in the main study. The results after the test-retest method of establishing reliability yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.80, which was considered adequate for the study.

3.4. Data Analysis Technique

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme for data processing was used to organize the data. Data was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Frequencies, percentages and means were used to describe the data along conceptual indexes. The t-test and the one-way ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses of the study.

and the resulting significant differences after the one-way ANOVA were subjected to Post Hoc tests of Tukey Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) at 0.05 level of significance.

4. Results and Discussion

Since the majority of the respondents were players as shown in Table 1, and they belonged to the age bracket of 20-25. This age bracket also is likely to have consisted of the majority of sports science students most of whom are young. The observation that the respondents over the age of 46 are the least compared to those under 46 years of age is a reflection that there are more Sports leaders in the older age brackets than in the lower ones. Indeed, McPherson[9] observed that leadership positions in sport were generally given to individuals considerably older participants. This was probably the result of a normative belief that chronological age is equivalent to experience, wisdom and leadership ability.

4.1. Factors Influencing Gender Inequity in Sports Leadership

4.1.1. Economic Factors

The responses received with regard to the economic factors showed that inadequate financing of women to further training in sports was rated the highest compared to lack of financial empowerment to enable them to participate in sports politics and electioneering contributor to the under-representation of women in sports leadership. t-test results showed a significant difference between women and men ($t=3.07$ $df=178$; $p < 0.05$) with regard to the economic factors that have led to the under-representation of women in sports leadership. This implied that women perceive themselves to be economically disadvantaged than men in meeting expenses involved in sports politics and electioneering. The respondents' views on the economic factors contributing to the under-representation of women in sports leadership on the basis of their age categories are analyzed using ANOVA are shown in table 2 below.

Table 2. ANOVA results on economic factors and women underrepresentation based on the participants' age category

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Economic	Between Groups	9.37	6	1.56	1.42	0.20
	Within Groups	189.26	173	1.09		
	Total	198.63	179			

$p > .05$

The results in Table 2 show that there were no significant difference ($f=1.42$ $df=1.42$; $p > 0.20$) in the responses of the subjects regarding the influence of economic factors in the under-representation of women in sports leadership based on their age categories. This implies that respondents in all the

age categories unanimously agreed that economic factor was among the main contributors of women's under-representation in sports leadership. This is consistent with the observations of Akinsanmi[10] that women sporting activities, inclusive of leadership, is accorded inadequate funds. Similar findings were found by Morakinyo and Olufolake[13] among women in Ondo and Ekiti states of Nigeria.

The ANOVA on the extent to which economic factors have led to the under-representation of women in sports leadership based on respondents' positional status revealed significant differences ($f=2.33$ $df=177$ $p < 0.02$). It was evident that the Coaches', Federation Officials' and Government Sports Officers' responses had the highest means than the rest. This implies that their views put a remarkable emphasis on the contribution of economic factors to the under-representation of women in sports leadership than the players, officials of NOCK, games tutors, officials of sports council and sports science students. The Tukey HSD showed that the views of the sports officers, coaches and federation officials differed significantly from those of the NOCK officials, games tutors, officials of sports council and players. This state of affairs may be due to the fact that Government Sports Officers, Coaches and Federation Officials deal with issues relating to sports activities, events funding and recruitment of sports personnel. They are therefore, well placed to gauge the magnitude of the impact of economic factors on women's participation in sports leadership. Indeed, Coakley and Pacey[20] opined that some of the economic disadvantages of women participation in sports is replete with lower budgets as reflected in lower prize structure, fewer athletic scholarships and less access to commercial endorsements.

4.1.2. Cultural Factors

The t-test analysis of these responses on the basis of the gender revealed that there was no significant difference ($t=1.63$ $df=178$ $p > 0.55$) in the means of the women and men's responses regarding the extent to which cultural factors influence women's under-representation in sports leadership. This implies that irrespective of the respondents' gender differences; they all perceived the cultural factor from a common angle because they embraced the same cultural values. These results are congruent with the findings of Oloyede[11] and Ananura[17] that cultural factors are a major deterrent to women participation in sports either at active levels or leadership. Therefore, it can be argued that cultural factors play a dominant role in women under-representation in sports leadership, especially in Africa, and Kenya, in particular. That is why Mazrui[5] opined that women have always been under-privileged in sports participation in both the pre-colonial and post-colonial period.

The respondents' views on the cultural factors influencing the under-representation of women in sports leadership on the basis of their age categories were analyzed using ANOVA and returned significant differences ($f=2.51$

df=2.51 p<0.02) in the means of the responses of the subjects based on their age categories on cultural factors over the under-representation of women in sports leadership. The Tukey HSD test showed that the significant difference was attributed to the respondents in the age categories of 41-45 whose mean was the highest (3.07), implying their strongest emphasis on cultural factors as an impediment to women's representation in sports leadership than respondents in other age categories.

The ANOVA on the extent to which cultural factors influence the under-representation of women in sport leadership on the basis of respondents' positional status did not return any significant differences (f=1.764 df=177 p>0.09). Nevertheless, the ratings of games tutors was the highest, while the officials of sports council rated cultural factors as least contributing in the under-representation of women in sports leadership. This implies that the officials of sports council do perceive cultural factors as contributing less to the under-representation of women in sports leadership. Since the Kenya National Sports Council is the umbrella management body of all sports federations and associations, it is surprising that they rated cultural factors as not being significant. This may be due to lack of gender issues awareness. It is therefore not surprising that all members of the KNSC executive are men, except for only one woman[6].

According to Brown[21] and Therberge[22] women under-representation in sports leadership is attributed to cultural factors such as continued prejudices, taboos and stereotypes that lead to sport being viewed as a male preserve, and low standard gender role socialization processes that discourage females from sports. Mazrui[5] avers that the demilitarization. This is due to the fact that most traditional sports in Africa had a warrior tradition where females played a passive role. This was extended to the Western games where boys were more involved than girls.

4.1.3. Social Factors

The views of the respondents on social factors that influence women's under-representation in sport leadership showed that low participation of women in sporting activities and lack of women role models in sports leadership were rated the highest respectively. On the other hand, the factor on lack of qualified women applicants was least rated, followed by women's lack of interest in providing sports leadership. In order to determine whether the views of men and women respondents differed significantly, a t-test was computed as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. t-test results on Social Factors in Women's Under-representation of Women in Sports Leadership on the basis of Respondents' Gender

Gender	n	Mean	Sd	df	T	Sig.
Women	72	3.44	0.89	178	1.99	0.04
Men	108	3.70	0.83			

p<.05

Table 3 shows that there was a significant difference in the

means of responses on social factors influencing the under-representation of women in sports leadership on the basis of the respondents' gender. This implies that men perceive social factors as contributing to women's under-representation in sports leadership than women themselves. This is supported by Coakley[23] who asserts that more men than women perceive social factors as contributors to the phenomenon of women under-representation in sports leadership. This difference in perception between the men and women respondents can be attributed to the fact that there are more men in leadership positions, which strategically places them in a better position to understand the social impediments to women's representation in sports leadership. In fact, Coakley[23] further asserts "because men are in positions of power than most women in sports programs, their perceptions shapes whom they recruit, interview, hire and promote" (p. 219). Respondents' views on the social factors that influence women under-representation in sports leadership on the basis of age categories are shown in table 4.

Table 4. Means and standard deviations on Social Factors and Under-representation of Women in Sports Leadership on the Basis of the Respondents' Age Categories

Age Category	n	Mean	Std. Deviation
20-25	59	3.49	0.88
26-30	18	3.29	0.91
31-35	20	3.87	0.69
36-40	26	3.50	0.81
41-45	35	3.93	0.76
46-50	9	3.55	0.91
Over 50	13	3.41	1.02
Total	180		

From table 4 it is evident that respondents from the age category of 41-45 and 31-35 rated highly the social factors as leading to under-representation of women in sports leadership. On the other hand, respondents from the age category of 26-30 and over 50 years rated social factors as least in influencing under-representation of women in sports leadership. However, the ANOVA test showed no significant difference (f=1.95 df=179 p>0.07) in the means of the responses based on age categories and positional status (f=1.08 df=177 p>0.05) of the respondents. The respondents were categorical that social factors contribute to the under-representation of women in sports leadership. This is buttressed by the findings of Oloyede[11] that both psychological and sociological factors hinder women from occupying leadership positions in Nigeria. Thus, the African culture still bars women from attaining positions in sporting activities.

4.1.4. Political Factors

The views of the respondents on political issues that contribute to women's under-representation in sports leadership showed that women's failure to use their own network to help female friends and associates to get jobs and

men's use of an efficient "old boy" network to get jobs was rated highest. However, the factor on sports policies favouring men than women was rated lowest. The t-test on the means shows that there was a significant difference ($t=2.36$ $df=178$ $p<0.01$) in the means of the views of the respondents on the extent to which political factors negatively influence participation of women in sports leadership on the basis of the respondents' gender. This implies that women view political factors as contributing to women's under-representation in sports leadership than men. Indeed, even in theory and practice fewer women involve themselves in politics, a reason as to why they viewed political issues to be outstanding in their under-representation in sports leadership. There is a lot of politics in sports circles that tend to keep them away. Indeed, Coakley[23] was categorical that women under-representation in sports is caused by the lack of power in gender relations and the strength of "old boy" networks, failure of women to apply for job vacancies in athletics and lack of female personnel to coach and administrate athletics.

The respondents' views on the extent to which political factors contribute to under-representation of women in sports leadership on the basis of their age categories and positional status did not reveal significant differences ($f=1.50$ $df=179$ $p>0.18$). This implies that the older one is, the, more likely to embrace politics because he/she understands political machinery involved in sports. Consequently, the respondents irrespective of their age were in agreement that political factors contributes to the under-representation of women in sports leadership. According to[9] political considerations influence policy making, the recruitment of new members, promotion to executive positions and evaluation of performances in sports organizations. This emphasizes the need for more female representation in leadership so as to influence decisions. The respondents' views on the extent to which political factors contribute to the under-representation of women in sports leadership on the basis of their positional status are analyzed using the ANOVA as shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Means and standard deviations on the views of Political Factors and Under-representation of Women in Sports Leadership Based on Respondents' Positional Status

Positional Status	n	Mean	Std. Deviation
Player	43	3.19	1.04
Federation official	30	3.45	0.77
Official of NOCK	6	2.86	0.38
Games tutors	20	3.88	0.79
G.K, Sports officer	22	3.75	0.66
Coach	21	3.34	1.12
Official of sports council	12	3.30	0.87
Sports science student	26	3.41	0.87
Total	180		

Table 5 above shows that the rating of the extent to which political factors have contributed to under-representation of women in sports leadership was high among games tutors followed by government sports officers while the least rating

came from the officials of NOCK. Therefore, the respondents based on their positional status are in agreement that political factors contribute to the under-representation of women in sports leadership. These findings bring out the need for more gender sensitization among the sports political leadership. It is surprising that NOCK, which is a national umbrella body, has members who feel that politics do not play a significant role with regard to women participation. The irony is that NOCK has only one woman on its executive of 11 people[6]. This situation is similar to Nigeria where Morakinyo and Olufolake[13] asserts that Nigerian sports organizations at best have only two or one woman member serving in the national executive comprising 11 to 18 board members. In consideration of the four main factors and the extent to which they contribute to under-representation of women in sports leadership, economic factors received higher rating (mean = 3.80), followed by social factors (3.59), then political factors (3.43), and last, the cultural factors (2.85). Hence, based on these means it is evident that the economic factors stand out to be the main impediment to women's representation in sport leadership. Cultural influences in this case have the least but significant effect. This is in agreement with the findings of Akinsanmi[10] that inadequate provision of funds is a barrier to female sports management and participation.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

From the findings of the study, it is concluded that Inadequate financing of women to further training in sports is the key economic factor that contributes to the under-representation of women in sports leadership and more women than men were in agreement with Government Sports Officers, National team Coaches and Officials of Federations that economic factors played a big role in denying women leadership positions in sports. Secondly, the belief that women cannot lead men was singled out as the main cultural factor that denied women leadership positions in sport and Low women participation in sports and lack of role models are the major social factors that lead to women under-representation in sports leadership. Indeed, gender is a determinant in the way sports personnel view social factors as impediments to women participation in sports leadership. More men perceive social factors as the key to the under-representation of women in sports leadership than women. Women's failure to use their own networks to help their fellow friends and associates stands out as a political factor that leads to the under-representation of women in sports leadership and age is a significant factor in the sports personnel's perception of the extent to which cultural factors undermine women's participation in sports. Whereas the older ones blame the under-representation on cultural factors, the younger ones perceive it otherwise. It is recommended that the Ministry of Sports and Gender, commercial organizations and sponsors of sports activities should adequately finance further training of Kenyan women in

sports. The Ministry of Sports and Gender should come up with affirmative action that guarantees women access to sports activities, selection to international competitions and provision of leadership. Secondly, the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) should come up with a curriculum that dispenses the cultural stereotypes that militate against women's leadership opportunities in sports. Institutions of learning, including universities and other tertiary institutions should embrace the teaching of Physical Education (PE) and Sports to all young people irrespective of gender. This includes socializing the girl-child into sports from an early age. The media should be used as a valuable tool of educating the public of the importance of sports to all irrespective of gender and giving more coverage and exposure of female athletes to attract more women to sports.

Further research on the technical and tactical factors that affect women's performance in sports competitions in Kenya will be valuable. Secondly there is need to investigate on the effects of psychological factors on women's participation and performance in sports.

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