

**"FACTORS THAT SHAPE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN SPORT
IN NAIROBI KENYA"**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has never been presented to any other university for any academic credit.

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ABSTRACT

Sport is a social reality, drawing from other social spheres accused of bias against women, the study sought to discover if the problem of gender bias exists in sport in Nairobi and if it was problematic. The main argument of the study is that socio-cultural factors affect women's choice to engage in sport as well as determine their performance in it. Objectives of the study were: a) To explore the factors that made women engage in sport, b) To discover whether bias exists in sport and how it impacts on performance and c) To find out whether being in sport has affected their attitudes on femininity. This study covered women athletes in 5 team sport disciplines in Nairobi.

A survey research was carried out to achieve the goals of the study. The research site was sport fields in Nairobi. Quota sampling was used to cover a total of 150 athletes and 9 key informants from Basketball, Netball, Volleyball, Hockey and Handball. The self-administered questionnaires were the primary tools of data collection, while informal interviews were administered to the key informants within the sport institution. The raw data were processed using the SPSS statistical package; both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data.

Findings from the study revealed that women sport in Nairobi is dominated by young females. Younger females are more likely to participate in newer, more aggressive, direct contact sport while older women are likely to engage in gentler indirect contact sport. Overwhelming majority of women athletes covered (76%) were single by the time of the survey. It is either that once married women in non traditional sport quit, or those who marry and remain in sport are in particular kinds of sport. Most women are literate and relatively well educated. Most of them engage in sport for the love of it and the challenge it poses in search of objective new identities different from the one women have been socialized to accept. There exists discrimination against women athletes in Nairobi in comparison to male athletes at the sports governing body and this negatively contributes to poor performance. Indeed engaging in sport for many women has changed their perception on femininity. In the bivariate analysis; marital status, education levels and employment status were significant at the .05 probability level when cross tabulated with participation in sport.

Following such findings the study concluded that sociocultural factors do determine women's engagement in sport and therefore recommends that women as the athletes need to be more proactive and need to realize that they have a major role to play to champion their cause in sport. The study advocates for change at both institutional and national levels to tackle the problem of bias. And finally the study appeals to the research community to go deeper to our history and gather information on the games which people culturally identify with and repackage it, market it to be an international event.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background

In Kenya, sport is one of the prime ways people are brought together. Sport not only fosters social interaction, it entails social interaction. Sport as an entity in Kenya does not stand in isolation. It is linked to other social institutions like the mass media, family, education, economy and the political institution. Sport tournaments are held to commemorate special people and important events in our country. Business firms, Multinational Corporations and Non Governmental Organizations capitalized on the crowd pulling nature of sports and its requirements to market, sell, campaign and disseminate vital information to the public. As more Kenyans become aware and appreciate the importance of leisure and recreation, competitive sport as a monetarily rewarding activity is a serious issue and a common sociological feature in Kenya. In this period of modernity, organized sport is highly capitalistic. It is big business. As an emerging industry in Kenya, one can say that competitive sport contributes to progress through providing employment to coaches, doctors, cloth designers, athletes, engineers and constructors of sporting fields and stadia as well as those making sporting equipment.

This kind of solidarity¹ helps us to understand and acknowledge the fact that sport cannot be separated from other dimensions of society and an attempt to do that, is not feasible. Locally and internationally, competitive sport is so intertwined not only with the culture of a people, but with the political and economic institutions. Living in a period characterised with searches for alternative development strategies, Kenya seriously needs – policy wise – to change or shift from the largely monolithic, conventional ways of attaining development and turn inwards to itself and look for diverse strategies that will aid in combating its socio-economic problems². This requires a certain degree of latitude, committed support and creativity offered and encouraged to the general population. Harrison in Seligson and Passe-Smith (1993) believes that the creative capacity of human beings is at the heart of the

¹ According to Durkheim in Haralambos (1985) solidarity in industrial or modern society is based not on uniformity but on differences which he calls organic solidarity. Thus, the occupations are specialised yet function together to maintain the social unit.

² Tucker in O' Hearn and Munck (1999) observes that despite development programmes and aid, many areas of the world are worse off today than they were thirty years ago. Pointing out that millions of Africans suffer and die from starvation and malnutrition. Tucker sees that the model of development now widely pursued is part of the problem rather than the solution.

development process. The Mathare Youth Sport Association (an ongoing self-help development program in Mathare slums, registered under the Societies Act of Kenya as a non-governmental, non profit and non-political organization) is an example of what support, creativity and commitment can achieve

The argument being voiced in this thesis is that if sport in Kenya is properly invested in and managed, it can produce positive ripples to the larger society. It is argued here, that if properly supported and encouraged, sport could open doors say to, psychologists, sociologists and nutritionists who can provide invaluable insights to sport practitioners especially the athletes and coaches, thus helping in the creation of job opportunities, something seriously lacking in this country. In the Western world, sport has been commercialized and is a profitable venture thanks to the mass media. If one cares to look carefully, they will no doubt notice a relationship between the level of sport performance of a country or continent and its level of development.

In a collapsing economy entrenched with politics of tribalism and distrust, coupled with corruption at its highest, one may not expect much from such countries' athletes. This is because, these problems affect the sport institution and thus, athletes are not brought or cannot bring themselves to full self-actualisation. For Maslow in Hergenhahn (1980), after the satisfaction of other basic needs, an environment must have several other characteristics before self-actualisation can occur. These include freedom of inquiry, freedom to defend oneself, order, justice, fairness and honesty. Sadly, many developing countries like Kenya find themselves in exactly opposite environments such that athletes are relegated to secondary assets, they are marginalized, neglected and not seen as important contributors to societal development. Many people however share a belief that sport can make a difference in their lives and the lives of their community. Yes, a healthy and busy people are a vital ingredient for national progress.

As a nation, when it comes to competitive sport, the problem of performance be it of individual athletes, national teams and not excluding the coaches, is of top priority. As Kenyans we accept and demand good quality and excellent performance of our athletes manifested by medals, trophies, titles, money and other material benefits and frown upon as well as intensely criticize poor performance without duly understanding the nature of competitive sport. We fail to comprehend or are ignorant of the fact that performance is a

sum of many factors.³ Instead, emphasis is on the highly masculine and capitalist values of winning and rewards, that is, the end rather than the means to the end is elevated regardless of who athletes are.

We argue in this study that when competitive sport for a nation becomes grossly obsessed with the end, other important aspects and potentials of sport to development are hidden and interests of few people prevail. This can explain why sport as a variable in development and sociological inquiry does not even arise. Ignorance of what it takes to develop best possible performance in the athlete has rocked and robbed the country. The problem of sport management and Government aloofness to athletes has led the country to experience decline of patriotic sentiments among the athletes. This problem has seen few athletes (Kenyan) change nationalities and perform by winning medals for other countries. This should be likened to the problem of brain drain in developing nations. Popular sports like soccer in Kenya is politicized hence characterized by idle talk, hiring and firing of coaches to the experiencing of wrangles within sport governing bodies and conflicts with governmental interest, to the detriment of the institution.

Another problem of sport in Kenya and the one that this thesis concerns itself with is the issue of the Kenyan female athletes and their performance locally and internationally. From another perspective, when one talks of sport, images of men, muscles, body strength, energy, rules and competition conjure up in the minds of the individuals. Thinking of women in this word sport does not naturally come up and when it does, the thought or cognition may not be well defined and accurate. Sport is an institution gendered along masculine definitions such that women in it are anomalous. Athletic competition for women at the higher levels is a fairly recent development. de Vries (1986) states that it awaited the emancipation of females from their enslavement to puritan concepts and from clothes that were unsuited for comfortable movement, let alone athletic performance. Women first participated in the Olympics in 1928. In Africa, it is in 1963 during the Games of Friendship that for the first time ever in international competition, African women ran and jumped for laurels (Ogunbiyi in Baker and Mangan 1987). Women's athletics have developed around modifications of existing men's sport and whether these activities are

³ There are social, psychological economic physiological factors etc that contribute to successful performance. According to Peter Terry, Performance=Physical preparation+Technical Skill+Psychological readiness (Butler 1996).

best suited to the unique interests and the physiological, psychological and sociological needs of girls and women has not been really investigated (De Vries 1986).

It is therefore, the study's thesis, that sport is biased against women and biasness is further reinforced and encouraged by the other social institutions making women athletes perform below their God-given capacities. Henceforth, getting to be more sociologically acquainted with this not so well publicized unique group of women is vital in trying to comprehend the problem of sport performance of this nation and its contribution to the much needed multi-variable concept of development. This study contends that important variables in the development dialogue like peace, national identity, fairness, security, equity and equality can perhaps be understood better if they are related to sports. Given this background, this study attempts to present a sociological examination of women in competitive sport in Nairobi-Kenya.

More specifically, this study will seek to explore relations among specified variables that influence women athletics in Nairobi. It seeks to expose key variables that determine women's athletic performance in Nairobi. Consequently, it aspires to relate female sport participation and the development of women as a group in Kenya. Focusing on five sport codes, the study intends to explore and understand women's social experience as athletes and how their world comes into being. This is important since it has been observed that women in many societies are oppressed, underpaid, under valued as well as denied numerous opportunities to reach self-actualisation. Is this the same experience for women athletes in Nairobi?

Findings of this research are aimed to add to the diverse sociological literature on women. Policy wise, it is hoped that all stakeholders will realize that competitive sport is a primary not secondary activity and should not be equated with leisure, hence a lot of sensitivity should be exercised when referring to and dealing with athletes (female/males) as they are human beings with visions that may have a positive effect to their community or country as a whole.

Briefly looking at inquiry in this area, one observes that in Kenya, sociological analysis of female athletes as a distinct unique group in the broad analysis of women has been at most, minimal if not non-existent. Worldwide, different aspects of women's participation in sport

have been studied. These studies although from a historical, physiological as well as from psychological perspective, have almost without exception, focused upon those women who take part in narrowly defined competitive context. According to Tait and Dobash in Mangan and Baker (1987:263):

The prevailing treatment of sporting women simply means that they are included under the category of sports men.

We therefore face the danger of faulty generalizations about women athletes. These women can be viewed as deviant, abnormal-that is, different from other women. Patriarchal bias in traditional scholarship tends to take men as the given universal standard against which others are judged. The sporting women being included under sports men and hence being judged against men means that their reality is obscured. It is rather obvious therefore, that with such little information on women in sport, much is based on the assumption that sport for women is contradictory and that those who take part are 'unnatural and/or deviant. Few studies have focused on the whole range and characteristics of women's participation in sport and the constraints which operate upon women throughout the life-cycle to affect their abilities to take part in sport. In a nutshell, in Kenya:

little is known about women's participation in sport and the factors which affect it as well as factors that it affects (emphasis mine), so a great deal may be unwittingly based on myth and hearsay (Tait and Dobash in Mangan and Baker 1987:263).

The researcher is cognizant of the fact that when one chooses to participate in a given sport, he or she implicitly accepts the structure of that sport. There is an implicit act of compliance or conformity that is perennially appealing to the socializing agents of society (Snyder and Spreitzer 1983). The player accepts the legal tools or objects connected with the sport. Examples: specific size of the ball, specific height of the net along with the acceptance of the rules and the instruments he/she is allowed to use, he/she must accept the boundaries of his/her own body. Sport thus, requires individuals to subordinate themselves, that is, submission to something larger in order to experience gratification that otherwise could not be achieved. This allows sociologists to study how sportsmen/women construct reality within the specific context where rules of the games have already been set.

Traditionally and even at present, engaging in sport for males is normal and expected, even the subordination of the body and mind to achieve and also experience gratification is to a large extent part and parcel of the male socialization process for the purpose of creating and reinforcing the male identity. What then does engaging in competitive sport for women mean to them and society at large?

1.1 Problem Statement

Given the afore mentioned realities of sport, the proposed study seeks to unearth the factors that explain women athletes sport performance in Nairobi. An understanding of the life of female athletes in the male dominated sphere of competitive sport that is structured along the patriarchal world order, which the feminist movement sought to emancipate itself from but has had minimal success, is called for. Sabo and Runfola (1980) for example, point out that the status of women's athletics within the institution of sport can accurately be described as separate and unequal. Separate because women have tended to develop their own distinct teams and organizations, "unequal" because women's sport or intramural are grossly under-funded compared to men's athletics. Female professionals are paid less than their male counterparts and the media overplay men's sport (Sabo and Runfola 1980). Edward in Sabo and Runfola (1980:202) further argues that

because of the interdependence of sport and other social institutions, until women overthrow the male domination of athletics, they will remain subjugated and discriminated against since sport disseminates, reaffirms and reinforces male values found throughout society.

This study approaches the female athletes as active agents in the world, having their own interests, shaping their own destinies within restricted possibilities, resisting and overthrowing these restrictions sometimes even acting in complicity with the forces that keep them in a state of social inferiority (Dubois, Kelly, Kennedy, Korsmeyer Robinson 1987). Of interest to the researcher is the exploration on the ways gender bias if present is manifested in the gendered institution of sport and how it affects the relative performance of the athletes. It has been noted that at the performance and excellence levels, the voluntary sector, and particularly the governing bodies of sport are key influences on the opportunity of women to participate. Their policies and practices in relation to development programmes and resource allocation are often critical in enabling women to attain higher

levels of achievement and get the necessary exposure to high-level competition and training (English Sport Council 1998). From the athletes (female) the investigator will be interested to know their experiences and perception on (a) equity and equality on opportunities for competition, rewards, incentives, recognition, sponsorship, promotion and other forms of support in relation to male athletes, (b) experiences and perceptions about the social and physical environment of games and facilities and (c) relationship between mass media and female sport in Kenya

Sport represents one of the most pervasive social institutions in our society. The prevalence of sport in modern society can be documented in terms of news coverage, financial expenditure, number of participants and spectators, movies, books, themes in comic strips, hours consumed, sales of sports equipment and time sampling of conversation (Synder and Spreitzer 1983). Apart from clothing style and language, sport also has a bearing on and influences other desperate elements as status, race relations business life, concept of the hero and ethical values. Interested in societal change both at micro and macro levels, the study seeks to establish whether or not the athletes have experienced or are experiencing social transformations in their lives as well as in their attitudes since engaging in competitive sport and how this has impacted on them. Thus, does participating in sport (competitive) impact on the attitudes of the female athletes toward various aspects of social reality? The researcher guided by this question wants to investigate whether and to what extent attitudes and perceptions on, traditional definitions of femininity (female identity) are affected due to engaging in sport. The researcher will also try to understand the effects of sport on other social experiences of female athletes, that is social experiences as workers, parents, spouse, beauty, friends, siblings, etc.

The researcher is aware that women's experience in general and specifically as athletes vary by race, ethnicity, class, age and other social factors. Women as a group also share many common experiences. Recognizing and understanding the diversity of those experiences is equally important in the construction of description and theories about women's lives. In conclusion the study will seek to answer and hence be guided by the following three questions.

1. Which factors explain the decisions by women to engage in sport and how do these factors affect the way women construct social reality as they participate in competitive sport?

2. How does any existing bias against women in sport affect their performance?
3. What is the relationship between women's participation in sport and their attitudes on society definition of femininity?

1.2 Objectives

The overall aim of this study is to explore the nature of sport in Kenya especially women sport in Nairobi. It seeks to understand the factors that affect women's sport performance in Nairobi as well as establish the background of the athletes and the impact of sport engagement on their lives. The specific objectives of the study are: -

1. To investigate the factors that explain the decision by women to engage in sport.
2. To find out if a relationship exists between bias and women's sport performance in Nairobi.
3. To find out the relationship between women's participation in sport and attitudes on traditional gender roles.

1.3 Rationale

This study is worth being carried out for various reasons. Women have been studied in various ways and in a variety of contexts for many years. However, women's studies in Third World countries have not been holistic; they have tended to concentrate on a narrow range of issues while neglecting others like sport where women are found. The proposed study is justified because serious scholarly analysis of women and sport in Kenya is lacking and yet observations show that sport and physical activity contributes to women's development.⁴ Specifically, it was observed that one of the most effective ways of advancing the international women in sport movement is not only through developing stronger international and regional links and networks within sport, but to work more closely with organizations concerned with increasing the status of women world wide. The observation emphasizes that the potential of sport and physical activity to empower women by enhancing both their physical development and their psychological development should not be under estimated.

It has been noted that those individuals/groups working in those substantive areas have seen sport and physical activity as somewhat marginal to women's global advancement.

⁴ These observations on sport and women's development were highlighted by the Vice President of Namibia in the Programme of the 2nd International Conference of Women in Sport held in Namibia 1998.

Observations like these engender and thus, justify the need for sociologists and social scientists to carry out scientific investigations to prove or disapprove the given propositions.

In the absence of scientific investigation, folk wisdom and assumptions have prevailed as 'facts'. In Kenya for example, the world of sport is not devoid of but governed by stereotypes along ethnic lines, education capabilities and levels, sex roles and economic background. Thus, there is need for non biased, non distorted, truthful information based on facts about the women who engage in sport in Nairobi, Kenya.

When we talk of women, one can observe that formal barriers to discrimination have been removed and women have in numbers moved into many of the top professional positions, that is, position of women in many societies has changed dramatically. These changes have led many to conclude that women now have made it and that as long as women and men chose a satisfying life-style, no further change is needed. Even though women are in active sport, they are under-represented and under funded (Edward in Sabo and Runfola 1980). The proposed study is justified on the ground that change might be needed in the sport institution. Academically, this study will try to make sense of women's experience in sport because in general, traditional social thought and scholarship has been based largely on the lives of men and have not provided such an account.

Feminist studies are not meant to construct abstract analyses that have no relevance to human lives. Although one purpose of feminist scholarship is to develop more accurate accounts of the social life of women, its purpose also is to provide the knowledge that will enable the creation of a society that works for all women (Andersen 1997). Sport and its dynamics being a social phenomenon should not be excluded in the analysis of social life and is thus, justified as an area for sociological investigation. The sociology of sport being a relatively young disciple rationalizes the proposed study and its potential to develop the discipline to add more information to gender issues and inform those who are a majority and naïve about Feminist Scholarship.

1.4 Scope Of Study

Geographically, the study was carried out in Nairobi Province. It analyses and limits itself to women sport teams in Nairobi at the National League Level. Of the many sport codes in Kenya, this research covers only five sporting codes namely: Volleyball, Netball, Handball,

Basketball and Hockey. It covers only selected respondents within the sports institution. Knowing that the institution of sport does not stand in isolation to other social institutions, the research takes both micro and macro approaches. The microanalysis will concern itself mostly with internal dynamics of the sport social structure as well as on the personality of the individual female athletes. At this level, the athletes' accounts of the sport institution in terms of, reasons for participation, challenges, performance, status perceptions and its bearing on their lives will be of interest to the study. At the macro level, utilizing specified team and sport officials as key informants, the study attempts to focus on the broader picture, that is, the interaction between women sport and other social institutions namely the government, business firms, Non-Governmental Organization.

This study is not limited to academics only. It lies on the premise that academic inquiry must be tied to social change. Hence the study is both applicable and academic. It is envisioned that findings can help improve the success and performance of female athletes in the five sports both local and internationally and increase the number of professional female athletes in Nairobi. By writing and researching about women in sport, the study is adding more to the scholarship on women. The research anticipates on a wider scale that the findings will also impact on stakeholders to act on issues of representation and performance of the female athletes in leadership or key positions and in international competitions like the Olympics respectively.

Focusing solely on the women athletes, the study is highly influenced by Cixous. Cixous in Ritzer (1997:188) states that

Women must write herself: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies... ..women must put herself into the text – as into the world and into history – by her own movement...

1.5 Working Definition of Key Terms

In this section, an attempt to operationalize the studies key variables is made.

- (a) **Sport:** Study utilizes the definition of sport as given by Snyder and Spreitzer (1983). They define sport as exhibiting 3 dimensions simultaneously. Sport is a

competitive, human physical activity of high prowess governed by institutionalised rules. Sport is undertaken by women/men and requires serious commitment and training for a season(s) in order to achieve some goal. Sport is not perceived as a secondary activity to work, it is a primary activity for the athletes it is therefore an athletic activity requiring skill or prowess often of a competitive nature (LeUnes and Nation 1991). In this study, sport refers to Handball, Hockey Volleyball, Netball and Basketball.

- (b) **Gender:** The socially learned behaviour and expectations associated with men and women.
- (c) **Patriarchy:** Institutionalised power relationship that give men power over women.
- (d) **Gender Equity and Equality:** The sharing of opportunities and resources equally amongst the male and female gender and also equality of the sexes, other than physical differences between the male and female genders, the two sexes are equal.
- (e) **Athlete(s):** This term is used in the same way Butler (1996) utilized it, in a generic sense, covering sports women from across a number of sports in this case athletes are the women in the discipline of Hockey, Volleyball, Handball, Basket ball and Netball. Athletes are the women who engage in sport.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

For purposes of a better understanding of the topic under study, a critical background of various studies and themes, which are deemed relevant to the topic, will be presented. This critical background is sourced from diverse literature (books, dailies and hand outs from various sport organizations worldwide). This chapter opens with a brief sociological introduction to sports and women. This is followed by a discussion on five major themes that relate to the topic and research objectives. Some relevant theories are highlighted in tandem with the themes and sub themes. Key studies relating to the themes are provided in this section. A theoretical framework, discussing three theories (liberal feminism, radical and socialist feminism) socialist follows and these theories provide the framework and grounding for the study. The chapter closes with a conceptual framework that tries to relate and model the relevant variables in the study.

2.1 Sport Perceived as Leisure Activity by Social Scientists.

Sport is a major phenomenon in modern society; in fact in Kenya, it has a ministerial status. Nevertheless, it has been given lesser status than other social activities in sociology. Generally, the sociology of sport and leisure in Home and David (1987) still promote sceptical and even amused responses in some quarters. To some, leisure is a 'trivial' or marginal phenomenon and simply unworthy of serious sociological study and furthermore, many commentators would seem to regard leisure as a mainly individual matter with little requirement or scope for sociological explanation (Home and David 1987). In spite of these opinions, leisure studies have at least managed to pick up and entrench themselves within sociological themes like work and urbanization. On the other hand, sport has been difficult to envisage as a sociological theme. Home and David (1987:1) have pointed out that:

history of sociology shows however, that apparently marginal social phenomena e.g. sports the minutiae of social life, have many times been demonstrated to possess central and surprising sociological significance.

The question to be posed at this point is why has the social scientific study of sport only

recently been approached as a legitimate area for study by social scientist? Synder and Spreitzer (1983:6) state that

perhaps one answer to this question lies in the assumption that sport prudently meant physical rather than social interaction and was thus, devoid of interest to social scientists.

The sociology of sport in Kenya and perhaps many Third World regions has not been a preferred area of social analyses because of the focus and concerns of these countries. With developmental issues being at the forefront, these countries have pursued development as defined, propagated and perceived by the West and this has been reflected in the academic circles and inquiry. The definitions and process/methodology of development utilized by these countries are narrow. For Harrison (1998), the definition of development is far broader than just the productive dimensions of human existence. Development for him, embraces the social dimension, particularly health, education and welfare. It is the government that bears the principle responsibility for progress in these sectors within which, apparently sport falls and as with economic progress, innovation and creativity are at the root of social progress (Harrison 1998).

Horne and David (1987) argue that the sociology of sport can make contributions to the mainstream of sociology by throwing new light on aspects of cultural and social change previously neglected by the discipline. For example, indulgence in competitive sport by women implies that no longer is the woman and her body confined to a specific social space performing particular roles. Thus, changes in body practices can aid us comprehend socio-cultural change.

Analyses of sport according to Hargreaves (1987) have taken the structural function approach. The basic assumption in this perspective is that society is a complex system of interrelated parts (institutions) each having a vital function to play. Society can be seen as a persistent, cohesive, stable and generally integrated whole where consensus of basic values holds it together/. Sport in this perspective:

provides meaningful activity for individuals by allowing them to express themselves and to acquire stable personal identities, thereby integrating them into the structure

of society where it stabilizes the social order by reinforcing common norms and values (Hargreaves 1987:2)

As much as sport satisfy and promote social integration, both their harmonizing controlling and exploitative aspect need to be taken into account. If this is not done, sport will be depicted in a one-sided, fundamentally misconceived way (Hargreaves 1987). In other words, sport can never be explained purely as an instrument of social harmony or as a means of self expression or a vehicle for satisfying individual needs. If explained with this logic, it will ignore the divisions, conflicts and the inequalities of power in society which if we care to look more closely register themselves in sports (Hargreaves 1987).

Majority of the studies on sport have tended to be confined to the internal structure and history of a particular sport. One alternative to this has been to set sport in the context of 'leisure activities'. Competitive sport in Kenya appears to fall under the rubric of leisure. This is because, most of the athletes – female and male – in many sports as well as their coaches and sport body officials are employees elsewhere like – parastatals and public institutions while other are in private employment. Sport therefore is not largely professionalized like in the West. Hall in Hargreaves (1987:xi) however, criticizes this approach by stating that:

while 'leisure' is an important valuable concept, placing sport in that context often results in a rather slack or loose formulations, which lack either a sense of the organic relationships between sport and wider social questions or a sense of the tensions and pleasures which are intrinsic to its pursuit as a social activity.

Many, including social scientists, deny the possibility of a relation between sport and power. Accordingly, Hargreaves (1987:2) points out that:

the issue (sport and power) rarely if ever, reaches the agenda in a serious form, let alone pursued by systematic investigation: for common sense decrees that the character of sport is obvious enough. How could such a benign pursuit be of any such consequence at all for the ways in which power is wielded?

Thus, a proposal to investigate, for example, the relationship between sport and power would seem to the majority to be to be impugning the integrity of sport and of its

practitioners and administrators. It also seems like a plot to look for a conspiracy at work within an institution embodying some of the finest values and standards as well as a source of much innocent enjoyment (Hargreaves 1987).

Sociologists want to know about a wide range of social behaviour. Sport is a social behaviour. As a social behaviour, individuals engage in sport in order to achieve something which could range from material benefits, emotional attachment to even attaining an achieved social status. We can say that participation in sport is goal directed. According to Parsons (1951), before engaging in action (sport), the actor should cognitively have the definition of the relevant aspects of the situation in their relevance to his/her interest. This implies that the actor should have knowledge and an understanding of the culture with its values and norms as well as the consequences for conformity or non-conformity.

All action takes place somewhere and it makes a difference in what it means. Sport takes place within society and it requires special facilities: fields, courses, pools, tracks as well as equipment and attire which are sport specific. Equally important, to be played successfully, sport requires continuous collective practice and training. Authority as a relationship is brought in as organizing the interaction between the coach and players as well as the athletes and other match officials. Prayers, cheering, singing, booing, commentaries, celebrations, riots are some of the social behaviors that occur and surround sport action. These illuminate marginally the interaction of sport with other social institutions like religion, mass media and law enforcement agencies.

As social scientists, when we talk of gender or women and men we are aware that various restrictions created and reinforced by culture, have defined suitable and functional activities to be performed by each sex (biological identity of the person). These restrictions influenced by cultural concepts of femininity and masculinity have implicitly resulted in the domination of one sex (male) over the other (female). Overwhelming evidence has suggested that in many critical areas of life, women in all societies tend to be subordinate to men (Ferraro 1991). According to Turshen (1991), feminists taking the materialist stream of thought that attempt to determine gender differentiation, hold that women become subordinate as a result of the interaction between the way work is organized and the way society is reproduced, a process that creates social hierarchies of race, class and gender.

Moreover, the socially defined roles women play as mothers and wives carry with them few prerogatives and lower prestige than do male roles (Ferraro 1991). Important to appreciate is that forms of subordinations differ from one economic organization to another, for example, women are restricted differently in agricultural, industrial and pastoral societies.

Burman (1979) suggest that the Victorian ideal which largely influenced women's sport participation in England and even present day societies embraced the ideas that a woman's primary duty are as wife and mother and that her proper place was therefore in the home. Thus, any work or activity she engages in outside the home must be subordinated to her domestic obligations and should not interfere with men's rightful priority in paid work. Ardener (in Burman 1979) points out that in defining females, there is a close correlation between what is thought fitting for people to do and what they are thought capable of doing. Therefore, the assumptions that women's main activities are not 'real' work have a detrimental effect on what women are thought to be able to achieve. Such a perception is injurious to women in sport as they will not be taken seriously.

2.2 History of Women's' Participation in Sport

Women in sport are both a social reality and social anomaly; this therefore results in considerable confusion with regard to roles and perceptions of females in sport (Sabo and Runfola 1980). If masculinity and femininity are viewed as polar opposites and if sports are largely assumed to be the prerogative of males then any female intrusion into the domain of sport makes a mockery of the situation (Sabo and Runfola 1980). Throughout history female athletes have been apologetic about their intrusion into a man's world and have compensated for their perceived lack of femininity by participating only in certain types of sports and by avoiding any serious commitment to sports. Metheny (in Snyder and Spreitzer 1983:156) provides us with three categories of sport each having a group of games that have been perceived as acceptable to women.

1. Categorically unacceptable sports such as wrestling, judo, boxing, weightlifting, hammer throw, pole vault, longer foot races, high hurdles and many forms of team sport's. These sport are unacceptable because they involve attempts to physically subdue the opponent by bodily contact, direct application of bodily forces to some heavy object, projection of the body through space over long distances and co-operative face-to-face opposition in situations in which some bodily contact may

occur.

2. Generally not acceptable (except for minority groups) are sports such as shot put, discuss, javelin throw, shorter foot races, low hurdles and long jump. These sports require direct application of bodily force to a moderately heavy object, the projection of the body through space over moderate distances and a display of strength in controlling bodily movements.
3. Generally acceptable forms of competition include swimming, diving, skiing, figure skating, gymnastics, golf, archery, fencing, badminton, squash, tennis, volleyball and bowling. These sports are acceptable because they involve projection of the body through space in aesthetically pleasing patterns, utilization of a manufactured device to facilitate bodily movement, application of force through a light implement, overcoming the resistance of a light object and maintenance of a spatial barrier that prevents body contact with the opponent.

The above categorization of sports seems to have come from a society that is cultural and racially diverse. Some sports in Methenys analysis are not found in Kenya but it is not shocking in Kenya to find some sport predominantly associated with males and others with females. What then, are the factors influencing women's sport participation?

2.3 Factors Influencing Sport Participation

Historically, literature shows that inclusion for women to participate in sport was not easy. For example when the first Olympic Games were held in 776 B.C in ancient Greece, women were not even permitted to be spectators on Mount Olympus.

As Cubertin in 1896 founded the modern Olympics, women were still not permitted to compete in any event. Snyder and Spreitzer (1983) also note that participation for girls and women in sport was contrary to the Victorian ideal. Sport would take a woman out of the home to engage in vigorous activity. It would place a woman in situation where modesty might be compromised where emotional control might be jeopardized and where overall propriety could be endangered (Snyder and Spreitzer 1983)

If women participated in sport, it was feared that attracting a mate and child bearing could

be hindered or prevented by injuries to the face and reproductive organs, resulting from sport accidents. In contrast, under the principle of Equity & Equality in Brighton Declaration of 1994 states:

Equal opportunity to participate and be involved in sport whether for the purpose of leisure and recreation, health promotion or high performance, is the right of every woman regardless of race, colour, language, religion, creed, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief or affiliation, national or social origin.

From ancient Greece to present day in many societies of the world, we find that men/male and certain social groups may use bio-social attribute to deny individual women participation in a sport. After careful analysis of the previous two excerpts, what comes out clearly is that the woman or women in traditional and ancient societies was/are doomed. Women were/are victims of ignorance both on their part and on the part of male. Such societies are/were, according to Goldthorpe (1985) characterized by limited choices. On the other hand, in modern societies characterized by innovation, technological advancement and economic development, women have a voice (Goldthorpe 1985). Modern societies engender in their members flexible, rational minds given to 'having opinions' and the modern minded people (women included) assert autonomy in making important decisions like child bearing (Goldthorpe 1985). Goldthorpe further posits that modern people are imbued with a conviction that they can mould their world, the very opposite of fatalism. Likewise, religious dogma, traditional political authority and male dominance alike are rejected or at least questioned (Goldthorpe 1985). Breakthroughs in scientific research, communication and technology, have broken the ceiling that existed in the traditional social structure, which predestined women to a monolithic way of life that excluded their participation in extra physical, social and mental activities like sport. Relations characterized by these pattern variables are perceived as inefficient in that they result in an under-utilization of human potential and natural resources (Goldthorpe 1985).

2.3.1 Formal Education and Increase in Females Participation in Sport

In present day settings, where education is a right for everyone, it is in schools and educational institutions that introduction to serious sport and physical activities for many women and girls begin. For many girls and women, introduction to sport in Nairobi occurs

in school during Physical Education Classes (P.E) and games time. In this foundation stage, girls and possibly women are introduced to and learn the basic skills that they will require to take part in sport. It is this stage that they may begin to develop positive – or negative – attitudes to physical activity. The Kay report⁵ mentioned in the E.S.C (1998) points out that appropriate school experiences are central to any attempts to overcome inequality between the sexes in access to sport. Not only are school experiences of physical education less successful at instilling a long-term interest in sport among girls in secondary schools than boys, but it is during secondary schooling and adolescence that many girls appear to turn away from involvement in sports.

According to the Kay report in E.S.C. (1998), girls at secondary schools compete at an equal level with boys but for objectives that are achievement-oriented as well as socially oriented. The report points out that the alienation of girls from sports arises from the interaction of the physical education experience at school with external influences that are particularly strong during adolescence. The report also states that girls are likely to withdraw from team sports when they leave schools and that there is a discontinuity between the types of activities to which girls are most likely to have been introduced through school sport and the leisure activities in which they might expect to take part as adults.

Thus, since boys and girls approach sport from markedly different perspectives, the Brighton Declaration of 1994 urges those responsible for sport, education, recreation and physical education of young people to ensure that an equitable range of opportunities and learning experience, which accommodate the values, attitudes and aspirations of girls, be incorporated in programmes to develop physical fitness and basic sport skills of young people. There are other themes that influence female sports participation; we have presented and discussed in the next section as they are at play even when women have been introduced to sport.

⁵ Women and Sport: A Review of Research by Tess Kay of Loughborough University provides a comprehensive overview of research into women's sport.

2.3.2 Role Of Socialization In Determining Women's Participation In Sports

The Brighton Declaration (1994) points out that women are under-represented in the leadership and decision making of all sport and sport-related organization. This is hardly surprising; it is a reflection of the wider society where women are under-represented. This claim has also been observed by Mazrui in Mangan and Baker (1987), The English Sport Council (1998) and the Norwegian Olympic Committee (1995) which are quick to note that participation by girls and women in most forms of sport lags behind that of boys and men. We should be aware of the fact that sport is a way and has been linked to the broader cultural and sociological forces of race, class, religion, sex and gender. These sociological facts are reinforced by the story system of a group or society. The story system⁶ of a culture is coextensive with all that is known and with all that a culture recognizes as knowledge or opinion (Williams and Pearce 1978). Due to this, women's participation in sport as athletes and various leaders is usually strained due to the underlying story systems that mould social institutions like sport. In explaining paucity of women in sport leadership, the gender stereotyped socialization (which relies heavily on various story systems like religion myth beliefs and ignorance) does not encourage women to see themselves as potential political candidates. A large number of people think that women do not enter politics because as girls growing up, they are not encouraged to do so. Findings by Roper Organization in Andersen (1997) showed that almost 40 percent of women and 41 percent of men think there are too few women in high political office to inspire other women, including young girls to vie for a post (Roper Organization in Andersen 1997). Thus, socialization is another key factor that influences women's participation in sport as athletes and leaders. According to Sabo and Runfola (1980:221).

women aren't born losers. They are brainwashed. They don't know how to win because they've been conned and coerced from infancy into believing they shouldn't try. Women have succeeded in liberating their intellects but their bodies are still in corsets. They still think of themselves as passive, non aggressive and supportive. And that is why no matter how intellectually or sexually liberated they are women continue to lose.

⁶ Element of story systems assume many forms and have many names. They are called science, philosophy, myth, legend, history folklore, tradition, scripture, ideology etc.

Through gender socialization, different behaviours and attitudes are encouraged and discouraged in men and women. The pressure to adopt gender-appropriate behaviour is evidence given that the socialization process controls us in several ways as follows:

First, it gives us a definition of ourselves. Second, it defines the external world and our place within it. Third, it provides our definition of others and our relationships with them. Fourth, the socialization process encourages and discourages the acquisition of certain skills by gender (Andersen 1997:33).

Researchers have noted that boys tend to be socialized in childhood for the traditional male role, which includes an instrumental orientation toward the world and an emphasis on physical strength and athletic ability (Hartley and Gagnon in Sabo and Runfola 1980). The ideal sportsman is tough, strong and aggressive. It is in the family – the first conditioning agency – where the boy learns very soon that to be a man he must perform and compete better than girls at least physically (Sabo and Runfola 1980). To be a male child and be thought of as a sissy is a tragic experience. Within the family, he is schooled to muscular and psychic aggressiveness with toys and in games and other exploits denied to girls. He is supposed to understand from the start that social acceptance of him as a man depends on his being dominant towards and protective of females, while being successfully competitive towards males (Bianchi in Sabo and Runfola 1980).

Girls on the other hand are conditioned to suppress their mental and physical potential so that male – dominant culture prevails (Bianchi in Sabo and Runfola 1980). It is known that young girls are capable of developing physical expertise and bodily confidence far beyond what they are permitted. Forming women who are physically adept and strong would be inconsistent with the derivative functions they are destined to perform in society. As adults, they would endanger the structures of patriarchy by expecting to hold leadership positions. Bianchi in Sabo and Runfola (1980) point out therefore that the psychosomatic power to challenge must be drilled out of the young girls. Women's attitudes towards competition and success are established early. Robert, Sutton – Smith in Sabo and Runfola (1980) in a cross cultural study of 1900 elementary school children confirmed the socialization disparities. The study concluded that boys were given higher achievement training while girls are given more consistent obedience – and – responsibility training. These differences in socialization correspond to the general difference between adult male and female roles

over the world. Thus, in the world of sport, girls could be cheerleaders but not combative participants. A survey conducted by Bucher (1983) found that parents and the public associated physical education and sport with boys and neither thought of girls as athletes nor watched them.

Nevertheless, women are engaged in sport inspite of differences in upbringing. We should note that, the restrictions under traditional gender roles not only have consequences for our mental health, but they also divide men and women from each other. Tolson in Anderson, 1997 suggests that by shaping persons into masculine and feminine type, we condemn both to a 'one-sided existence" (Tolson in Anderson 1997). Traditional gender roles deny women access to the public world of power, achievement and independence at the same time that they deny men the nurturing emotive and other-oriented world of domestic life. In this sense traditional gender roles limit the psychological and social possibilities for human beings (Andersen 1997). In Norway, the Norwegian Women Project initiated in 1995 was a response to the disparity in sport participation between men and women. The Norwegian Olympic Committee noted that the number of women engaged as coaches and leaders within Norwegian top level sport was low. For example, the Lillehammmmer Games in 1994 had only 3 women among 74 leaders from the Norwegian Sport Federation. Furthermore non of these three (3) women had status as coach of a national team. In addition, there was at that time, very few women engaged as coaches responsible for junior and recruiting teams. Reasons for the recruiting more female to top level sport were not primarily that women had better qualifications than men, but more specifically that there was a large number of qualified women that simply were not being recognized for their abilities and therefore could not contribute positively to the development of Norwegian top level sports. The purpose of the women project was and still is to increase the number of women among sport leaders, coaches and other team supporters as well as to improve the quality of the female participants in top level sports in order to increase the number of medals won internationally. This can be extended to Kenya if there is political and financial goodwill to women's issues.

2.3.3 Role of Culture in Influencing Women's Sport Participation.

Religion which forms part of a story system of a group has been identified as a factor that influences general participation of women in sports. According to Mazrui in Mangan, Bakar (1987:217)

Stringent Islamic rules of dress even for men, let alone women, have hampered the development of athletics in much of the Muslim world. Exposed knees are considered a form of nakedness and wearing shorts in a public arena is a violation of the moral code of dress. The code for female attire is even stricter making the training of sportswomen or female exceptionally difficult in much of the Muslim world.

Studies analyzed by the E.S.C. (1998) concur with Mazruis observations that cultural and religious beliefs impact significantly on participation in sport by Muslim women and girls.

Decency in women is valued by many people in society. The cultural and religious value for physical decency of women makes it impossible for some of them to put on shorts, bikers, tights, sleeveless shirts or clothes exposing some parts of the body like the abdomen, legs etc. in public setting. The sporting apparel actually demotivates them from competitive sport. Many cultures promote separatist activities among males and females. Women participation in sport is discouraged due to alleged fears that a high density of social interaction occurring with the opposite sex will make women to be 'loose'. Sentiments like these ones are engendered by patriarchal society's belief that women are devoid of mind and thus, should be controlled. Questions of beauty and sexuality are also raised.

Beauty and aesthetics are cultural components and thus, they vary from society to society in Africa and the rest of the world. The cultural definitions of femininity and beauty have largely influenced, women participation for those women and girls who wish to be seen as feminine. Research analysis noted that participation in sport may be increased if the potential benefits to body shape were emphasized and the fears about the negative effects allayed (E.S.C 1993). The muscle-myth is one such misunderstanding. It is feared that female athletes will produce bulging muscles, which imply masculinity. However, this myth has been dismissed by exercise physiologist⁷. Moreover, the aesthetics of sexuality according to Mazrui relates to the question of African women in sports. If the measure of sexual attractiveness is fatness and a measure of fitness is sliminess, then a wide sexercise

⁷ LeUnes and Nation (1991:327) points out that 'bulging' muscle simply are not going to happen to any great extent in the absence of male sex hormones. Normal exercise has a facilitative effect on muscle tone, and females should not shy away from exertion out of fear of becoming mannish.

gap exists. The sexercise gap is the gulf between criteria of sexual beauty and criteria of sporting competence which varies (Mazrui in Mangan and Baker 1987).

Individuals choose to take part in sport and physical recreation for a variety of reasons, including health, fitness, and socializing and simple enjoyment. The (E.S.C) 1998 came to the following conclusion on some factors motivating or demotivating woman's sport participation. Women tend to value the social aspect of participation. This is the interactive part of sport in contradistinction to the male achievement orientation to sport and its motto of 'winning isn't everything, it is the only thing'. Also women's participation in single – sex group activities such as aerobics during daytime or early evening hours, may be perceived as more acceptable to male partners than their involvement in other types of sports which might entail the extended socializing that accompanies much male sport participation. In an early study by Tait and Dobash in Mangan and Baker (1987), restrictions in mobility, financial resources, time and energy directly affect women's participation in sport and their commitment to it.

2.3.4 Prejudice as a Limiting Factor to a Woman's Sports Involvement.

In leadership positions of sport organizations as well as other arenas like politics, women are under-represented; research offers a number of possible explanations. Sheer prejudice embedded in patriarchal culture has taught people to think that women are not well suited to politics and leadership positions in general. To Andersen (1997) this is reflected in the attitude that women are best suited for taking care of their families and in beliefs that women do not have the personality characteristics that suit them for politics and power positions. This is therefore reflected in voting patterns of the electorate. In sports, the structures and processes for upward mobility might be open and fair but women themselves do not vote for women running for higher office perhaps due to their internalising what society has said of their capabilities. Internalising of gender based beliefs as a process begins in childhood through socializing agents. If a woman chooses to venture into sport, she will be expected to continue fulfilling her feminine roles; this introduces the concept of role strain. Women's dual roles in work and the family may put them at a disadvantage in running for political office. This could also explain majority of women's to under-representation in sport as athletes and leaders. In the political office, as long as women hold the primary responsibility for family care, it is difficult for them to meet the time and energy requirements of political office or any other leadership office. Numerous studies

point out that women's family obligations including the availability of child care interfere with their ability to take on political offices like sport officiating. This could imply that to high degree, strong spousal support or support from significant others like parents are important or pre-requisite for women to seek public office (Andersen 1997).

2.4 Perceptions And Experience Of Women Athletes

In a patriarchal culture, women's involvement in sport may be seen as a masculine interest unless they participate in sports which celebrate female qualities such as grace, elegance, and flexibility and should only be for fun, social interaction and exercise. It has been thought that by participation in sport with any serious conviction, women it is feared, will lose their traditional passive, supportive and domestic role and perhaps alter the fabric of an exclusively male preserve. Nevertheless a study by Snyder and Kivlin in Snyder and Spreitzer (1983) did not support the notion that women who assume a liberated stance in sport would also assume a similar position in other areas of life. This finding is surprising and goes against common sense if we bear in mind that females in highly competitive sport are considered deviant. Apparently the non traditional role of the women in athletics does not spill over into all aspects of the gender role.

In this dynamic world, traditional gender roles have been changing; one might ask whether sport involvement for females still carries a negative stigma. A study by Snyder, Kivlin, Spreitzer in Snyder and Spreitzer (1983) concluded that the general population continued to perceive difference in the appropriateness of certain sport for females. The rank-ordering of sport suitable for female noted in this study of Snyder showed that a residue of Victorian ideals of femininity remain within present African culture. Their study however failed to analyse the personal experience of the female athletes in non feminine sport to gauge the impact of these stigmas on their performance and lives. Being female, does not necessarily mean that one is perceived or accepted as feminine. According to Hart in Sabo and Runfola (1980), the woman who wishes to participate in sports and remain 'womanly' faces great stress. By choosing sport, she usually places herself outside the social mainstream. In the United States, for example, the social norms and sex roles are rigid and narrow, hence women in sport do not fit the particular concept of femininity and those who persist in sport suffer for it (Hart in Sabo and Runfola 1980).

2.4.1 *Dissonance as a Factor Affecting Women Athletes.*

The notion of consistency assumes that inconsistency generates “psychological tension” or discomfort within human beings which results in internal pressure to eliminate or reduce the inconsistency and if possible achieve consistency. (Whitmore 1993). A number of theories have been developed around the ideas that individuals strive for consistency between their attitudes, beliefs, values and behavior. Striving for constancy has a social aspect because it is often the perception of others that puts pressure on people to be consistent and also because the source of much of our inconsistency comes through communication with others (Whitmore 1993). The theory of Cognitive Dissonance is one example. This theory holds that two elements of knowledge.

are in dissonant relation if considering these two alone, the obverse of one element would follow from the other being psychologically uncomfortable, will motivate the person to try to reduce dissonance and achieve consonance. In addition to trying to reduce it, the person will actively avoid situations and information, which would likely increase the dissonance. (Festinger in Whitmore 1993).

In today’s society, if one were asked to describe the psychological and behavioral demands of competitive sports, the response would be most compatible with the description of what big boys are made of. Therein lies the rub and perhaps the biggest deterrent to female athletes (Haris in Sabo and Runfola 1980). The behavioural demands of competitive sports reinforce what is stereotypically masculine and what women are supposed to emulate. These psychological and physical demands of competitive sports are not generally considered compatible with society’s stereotyped image of how females should behave. On the contrary, they represent the antitheses of what women are supposed to be, so that athleticism becomes a detriment to the female image.

However, as investigations continue, it has become more evident that characteristics previously considered sex-related are actually culturally determined. The behaviour of males as well as females is only minimally dependent on biological differences. Marmor in Sabo and Runfola (1980) finds that gender roles and identities, although generally related to the biological sex of a child are actually shaped not by biological factors but by cultural ones.

Thus, the dissonance between the behavioural characteristics necessary for success in athletics and those that considered appropriate for women can produce a real identity crisis in the young female who is struggling to establish her identity and enjoys participating in sports. She faces dissonance between smelling sweet and being sweaty, between being rough and being gentle, between being vigorous and being inactive, between being athletic and being feminine. This dissonance must therefore be resolved. Harris in Sabo and Runfola (1980) states that most females have resolved this interpersonal conflict traditionally by withdrawing from involvement in sports. Many girls /women do not engage actively in sport and even avoid it or drop out after high school because of incongruity between sport and femininity. This is due to factors like the muscle myth, fear of being unattractive to the opposite sex and dependency of many females on males for a source of identity. Women and girls in Kenya should know that the game and action of femininity serves patriarchy well but is very deleterious to them (Sabo and Runfola 1980). For some time, women can gain acceptance, win favours and even get men to submit to their whims due to physical beauty (body capital). For those females whose identity comes from their “looks” and body, what happens when their youth and glow fade due to increase in age? What do women who fear liberating their bodies to sport and high physical activities have to hold on to as age creeps in? What is discovered is that an identity of women based on physical beauty as per patriarchy, is short lived. What one is left to do in later years is regret for being a passive man/male pleasing woman during her youthful years. We note that there is nothing one loses especially women by participating actively in sport.

Besides withdrawing, some females continue to play competitive sports but focus on ‘feminine appropriate’ sports such as swimming, tennis, golf or gymnastics. (this is not bad). Somehow these sports are not considered masculine even for men, as team sports, so participation in them does not create the same degree of conflict. Fortunately, increasing numbers of females are discovering that they can cope with any superimposed conflict by adapting to the demands of the situation in which they find themselves. They are secure enough in their feminine selfhood to be capable of a greater diversity of behaviour and healthier psychological functioning (Harris in Sabo Runfola 1980).

A pertinent study on dissonance sought whether women’s participation in sport has such dysfunctional effects on self identity and psychological well-being (Sage and Loudermilk in Snyder and Spreitzer 1983). In the sample of 268 female varsity athletes, many of the

respondents did not experience conflict between their feminine and athletic roles. However, 20% of the respondents reported that they experience substantial role conflict. When those who experience conflict were analyzed by dividing the athletes into two groups that is, the socially approved 'feminine sport (Tennis, golf, swimming and gymnastic) and stigmatized masculine sports (softball, basket ball, volleyball, field hockey, track and field) the athletes in the 'non feminine sport' experienced more role conflict. That is, 46% of the athletes in stigmatized sports experienced role conflict as compared to 34% of females in the socially approved sports. Although the Sage and Loudermilk study (in Synder and spreitzer 1983) indicates that some female athletes experience role conflict, it however does not indicate any negative psychological consequences. This study will try to find out whether athletes in Nairobi Kenya experience role conflict and what benefits they accrue by engaging in sport.

2.4.2 Self Image of Women in the Context of Sport.

When discussing "self" the discussion is not sociologically complete or has no grounding if one does not mention or highlight the work sociology's own heavy weight – George Herbert Mead. Mead's perspective, usually labelled symbolic interactionism, holds that human thought, experience and conduct are essentially social and that they owe their nature to the fact that human beings interact in terms of symbolism, the most important of which are contained in language (Haralambos 1985). Hence, a symbol does not simply stand for an object or event; it defines them in a particular way and indicates a response to them (Haralambos 1985).

What logically follows or is contained in Mead's perspective is that the meaning of symbols should be shared; otherwise meaningful communication would be impossible. Meaning of woman/female is shared in society and has been universally shared using biological/anatomical criteria to distinguish them from men/male or other objects. In Mead's symbolic interaction, he posits that in order for interaction to proceed, each person involved must interpret the meaning and intentions of others; usually involving a process Mead calls 'role-taking' (Haralambos 1985). In this process, Haralambos (1985) points out that individual takes on the role of another by imaginatively placing himself in the position of the position of the person with whom he is interacting. On the basis of this interpretation, she will make her response to the action of the other.

Human interaction in this respect can be seen as a continuous process of interpretation with

each taking the role of the other. Through this process of role-taking, the individual develops a concept of 'self'. By placing herself in the position of others she is able to look back upon herself (Haralambos 1985). In Mead's view, the development of a consciousness of self is an essential part of the process of becoming a human being, which starts from childhood. It provides the basis of thought and action and the foundation for human society (Haralambos 1985). Without an awareness of self the individual or the female athlete could not and cannot direct action or respond to the actions of others. With an awareness of self, the individual (the athlete) is able to see herself as others see her. When she takes the role of others, she observes herself from that stand point (Haralambos 1985).

In such a scenario the female athlete observes herself from the stand point of the males in society and specifically, the male athletes as well as the female non athletes and becomes aware of the views of herself that others hold. This provides in Mead's view, the basic for co-operative action in society (Haralambos 1985), where the individual will become aware of what is expected of her and will tend to modify her actions accordingly. The individual will be conscious of the general attitudes of the community and judge and evaluate herself in terms of this generalized other (Haralambos 1985). The woman athlete based on role-taking will either quit from sport participation or continue persevering with the fear and threat of being labelled abnormal and deviant or continue participating in sport but in womanly sport.

Thought therefore, becomes 'an inner conversation going on between this generalized other and the individual (Haralambos 1985). Thus, a person is constantly asking what will people think and expect when she/he reflects upon themselves. In this perspective of Mead, conduct is regulated in terms of the expectation and attitudes of others (Haralambos 1985). For a long time and up till now, women have had a problem of pleasing others especially males (It is problematic as women still suffers the most in the society). Women can do almost anything to gain approval and acceptance from a man. It is like she lives for man. Women who act contrary to this norm are considered deviant both by men and women. Sanctions are imposed on them. This should not be the case as it does not help them. It is as if they (women) are in a kind of false consciousness that make them not improve but remain docile and passive. In this false consciousness, they do not realize that whatever they do or sacrifice is not considered important or worth recognizing and being appreciated, if society itself and men in particular chose as well as decide to hate and devalue women at all costs.

Society (patriarchal) standards are male; women can never be good enough.) Women just continue playing ignorantly, the game of womanhood and femininity to serve interests of men even in the context of sport.

When we talk of the female athletes, another dimension of interest then is the analysis of their self-image. One common measure of self-image is to determine individual's feelings towards his/her body. Society imposes a great burden on women who commit themselves to sport as participants or as teachers. The women in sport have to try not to keep themselves looking masculine though involved in a traditional masculine endeavour.

For other athletes, the only way to prove femininity is through dressing in attires of bright colors and having these attires tailored to enhance shape, and reveal some body parts. Studies of body image show positive correlation with self-esteem and self-concept and negative correlation with anxiety and insecurity particularly for women (Berschied et al in Snyder and Spreitzer 1983). Another study by Kivlin in Snyder and Spreitzer (1983) sought to measure attitudes towards various aspects of one's body. Their findings show that female athletes have positive feelings towards their body than do non athletes. Another research by Ogilvie and Tutko in Sabo and Runfola (1980) showed that female athletes strives to overcome the social barriers, she develops increased self-confidence and security. In short either more psychologically secure female enter sport or they develop this ego strength through participation. Subtly this implies that women in sport are far from being a temporal scene.

Research has also shown that in spite of the strains experienced by women with multiple roles, those with multiple roles report more gratification, status, security and enrichment in their lives (Gerson in Andersen 1997). Snyder and Spreitzer (1983), note that studies of the psychological well being and self perception are not conclusive because of methodological limitations. Nevertheless, they provide no evidence for the belief that participation in athletics is psychological stressful for females. We should however remember that sport standards are set by males and the woman in sport is compared with men-not with women (Sabo and Runfola 1980). For many and even here in Kenya, women engaged in sports that are actively identified and dominated by men like Basketball and Soccer are perceived by the spectators as either jokers or a mockery of the sport. They are expected, especially if the audience is male, to shoot, score, run, kick, dunk like men, if not, women sport is deemed

boring. Women athletes in Kenya, for example, having few or non female athlete role models- a problem enhanced by media bias, watch male sport and identify with male players, hence they attempt to play like them; this is stressful as they cannot be exactly like them. These male performance standards and the attending social behaviour have resulted in even more serious problems (Sabo and Runfola 1980). Problems of performance enhancing drugs like steroids don't occur in males only; women have become victims of these steroids. Why would a woman take such a drug? Sabo and Runfola (1980:208) answer as follows:

Because the values are on male records and performance, she will attempt to come as close to this goal as possible.

The studies provided under this sub-theme of self image nevertheless provide support and optimism for the continued expansion of sport and physical activities for females in schools. In conclusion, most of the studies on the female athlete have had students as their sample, they have neglected those professional athletes as well as those female athletes not based in learning institutions. Thus, they don't give us a comprehensive picture of women in sport. The studies have not focused on the interrelationship between sport and other institution of which the athletes is part. Studies also fail to highlight the various social problems the female athletes face while participating in sport, for example, issues of inequality in funding, facilities, sponsorship interaction between the coaches and athletes etc. This study looks at sport as a primary social space in which individuals and community identities are developed. Sport is not secondary to work as the studies presented above imply.

2.5 Sports and the Gendered Perspective on the Female Body.

Related to self image and sport is the body as a centre for struggle. It is not just a physical empirical entity. It is transverse with power struggle. It is clear that the body of a woman and her identity is and has been culturally constructed as well as mystified so that it can be controlled in a patriarchal society. The primary focus of attention in sport as a whole is the body. Its attributes namely: strength, skill, endurance, speed, grace, style, shape and general appearance are tested and/or put on display. This does not imply that the mind is not involved; it is the body nevertheless that constitutes the most striking symbol as well as the material core of sport activity (Hargreaves 1987). Hargreaves (1987:13) states that:

The primacy accorded to the mind in Western civilization has ensured that social analysis has been largely confined to the mechanisms for the transmission of values, norms, attitude, emotion, ideologies, or whatever and consequently the body has been almost entirely eliminated from social science discourse.

Lloyd in Ashe, Finlayson, Lloyd, Mackenzie, Martin, O'Neill (1999) points out that the kind of body one has, both defines him/her in certain ways and helps to shape their interactions with others. Lloyd further adds that despite the characteristic of the body, the body can impact on how others view us and how we conceive ourselves. In this case, not only are our bodies intrinsic to our personal identities and social encounters, they are also political, subject to all kinds of power and control. Thus, under-age sex, paedophilia and rape are restricted by the legal establishments (Lloyd in Ashe et al 1999). The law also regulates the availability of certain medical procedures like abortion, contraception and the use of amniocenteses, and it controls access to certain representations of the body (pornography) (Lloyd in Ashe et al 1999). For the female athlete, Hart in Sabo and Runfola (1980:211) cautions us that:

The experiencing of one's body in sport must not be denied to anyone in the name of an earlier century's image of femininity – a binding, limiting, belittling image. This is the age of the woman in space and she demands her female space and identity in sport.

As Social Scientists, we should be aware (if not yet) that control over the appearance, treatment and functioning of the body is an important aspect of social order in all societies. (Hargreaves 1987). Therefore, bodily appearances, posture, movement, gesture, facial expression, eye contact, adornment, smell-undoubtedly constitute a message system or language structuring social action the ritual practices governing the body's usage symbolizes and upholds fundamental social relationships and binds individuals to the social order (Douglas in Hargreaves 1987) Women participating in sports that is, doing something different with their bodies illustrates the point that society is not static but dynamic. According to Hargreaves(1987:13):

Changes in body ritual practices of and general body usage indicate fundamental changes in social relationships and interference with them has serious implication

Dichotomising and hierarchization has been characteristic of the enlightenment period and the resultant disciplines. Incidentally, patriarchy similarly thrives on these two processes of dichotomization and hierachization. According to Finlayson in Ashe et al (1999), feminist writers have shown how women are systematically oppressed or excluded by phallogocentric systems of meaning. A series of oppositions (such as male/female, culture/nature, active/passive) structure our culture, lending authority and power to the first term while subordinating the second, making it impossible for woman (or women) to be thought of in a way that abstracts them from their subjugation (Finlayson in Ashe et al 1999). To Lloyd in Ashe et al (1999), this binary structure of western thought contains an implicit value judgment, where the first term is more highly valued than the second. Thus, the body is thought to be in opposition to mind and inferior to it. Therefore,

for mind to function (that is, to reason), the body must be repudiated. Critiques point out, however, that to see people purely as rational beings centered in the mind is to ignore, even deny, their corporeality and to fail to inquire as to how this bodily existence affects knowledge of the world (Lloyd in Ashe et al 1999:112).

For Stern in Hodge et al (1975), Western dualism, is one of the cultural foundations of the forms of racism, imperialism and sexism practiced in western societies and in other societies which have been permeated by western values Kenya included. Hence, women like blacks, are seen as mindless creatures that must be controlled in a rationalist culture. They are controlled for essentially the same reasons as blacks. They are seen as without rational qualities and are seen as closer to the body (Stern in Hodge et al 1975). Dichotomization and hierachization can also explain processes, the apparent neglect of sport as a mainstream sociological phenomenon as well as, explain its gendered nature. Generally, sport has been traditionally viewed as a lower form of culture that is not reflective of the highest levels of human nature. According to Synder and Spreitzer (1983), the study of sport has been perceived as a low grade subject not worthy of being pursued by men of large vision. Dunning argues that:

Sociologists who define play and sport in terms of fantasy and who are thus, ambivalent about seriously studying the topic may be reflecting a Protestant ethic orientation that considers the study of play, games, sport and leisure as frivolous and unbecoming of a 'serious scientist' (Dunning in Synder and Spreitzer 1983:37)

Dunning in Synder and Spreitzer (1983) reminds us that we have to be aware that sports and games are 'real' in the sense they are observable, whether directly through overt behaviour of people or indirectly through the reports which players and spectators give of what they think and feel while playing and spectating. Theoretically, naturalist theories on the body presuppose a number of things. Lloyd in Ashe et al (1999) informs us that first, the body in question in the biological body and should be understood in anatomical, physiological or genetic terms. Second this body exists prior to and independent of society. In other words, biological bodies existed and functioned before humans lived together in societies. As such, the body derives its meanings from its function rather than from culture. It is the way that human eat, sleep and reproduce that determined the evolution of society and not society that determines the ways our bodies behave. Third, naturalist theories of the body regard differences between the sexes as both natural and innate. A fourth presupposition to Lloyd is that these purportedly fundamental differences affect the way in which society is organized. Thus, for instance, the fact that women give birth to children and that men do not, has been used to explain the sexual division of labour between the home (the site of woman; the nurturer) and the outside world (the site of man; the hunter/ gatherer). One of the basic premises of this kind of theory is that 'biology is destiny' (Lloyd in Ashe et al 1999).

Hubbarb in Petrikin (1995) takes the position that biology does not determine gender roles. She challenges scientific attempts to find innate or physical differences between men and women in differences that she says, have traditionally been used to 'prove' the inferiority of women. She posits that, except for their reproductive organs, there are no significant physical differences between the sexes. Any differences she adds, that are found, with the possible exception of height, are often the result of social conditioning, not inborn capacity. Thus, biology cannot provide an explanation of gender roles and of social organization in general. In other words, one is not born a woman, one becomes a woman. This, however, does not mean that the environment shapes us, but that the concept, woman (or man) is a socially constructed one that little girls/ boys try to fit as they grow up (Hubbarb in Petrikin 1995).

Concept of ourselves is socially constructed and political because our social interpretation of what is and is not normal and natural affects what we do. For example, if we look at height, weight and strength, women and men are physically not very different (Hubbarb in

Petrikin 1995). Hubbarb informs us further that there are enormous overlaps between women and men for all traits that are not directly involved with procreation. According to Hubbarb in Petrikin (1995) height is affected by social factors, weight on the other hand clearly has considerable social components. Different societies consequently have differences in desirable weight. One observes that there is more pressure on women to look 'right' and what is 'right' changes frequently and sometimes quite drastically from one society or situation to another, for example, in the western cultures, being lean and thin is admirable among women, while in some parts of African societies this is considered abnormal.

Hubbarb states that when women exercise or engage in weight training or body building, surprising great changes in strength are noticed even if it is quite moderate training. Are there natural limits to women's strength and therefore natural defences in strength between men and women? In Europe and the United States of America, it has been observed that women and men are far more similar in lower body strength than in the strength of our upper bodies. This fact is not surprising when we consider the different ways girls and boys are encouraged to move and play from early childhood (Hubbarb in Petrikin 1995). We tend to use our legs much more similarly than our arms. Both girls and boys tend to run a lot, hop scotch and skipping rope are considered girls games. However, when it comes to carrying loads, playing baseball and wrestling and other contact sports all of which strengthen the arms and upper body, girls are expected to participate much less than boys (Hubbarb in Petrikin 1995).

These observations can help us understand some social problems like domestic violence on women and rape. In both these deviant and criminal activities, the upper limb strength of the male which he acquires from childhood and encouraged as he grows up finalizes the women's ordeal. The men physically over power the women using their hands and arms. As seen in Metheny's (Metheny in Synder and spreitzer 1983), sports categories, sports, unacceptable for women are those that encourage their upper body strength formation and requires confidence and insensitivity to the opponent. Women in their up bringing lack opportunity to exercise confidence and insensitivity; they are rather exposed to the ethic of care and gentleness. This is not bad or negative but we notice that it does not protect them from violence unleashed by men. In fact, women in sports like Tae Kwondo and Karate (self defense sport) are perceived as deviants, they apparently want to challenge male power

which as we know is not natural.

Critically looking at the above findings, it is plausible to conclude that as much as nature (biology) has an impact in shaping female and male roles in society, this fact has been manipulated and overstretched to be taken as truth, through male's power to define the situation for others (female) and subtle coercive forces of dualistic and phallogocentric thought. Such thoughts put women/female as polar types with males, hence any study that seeks to prove existence of similarities between male and females physically are misguided as they accept the polar definition as dictated by males. Equally, studies in favour of nurture as the determinant of one's destiny are misguided as they don't go in-depth to analyze which group has the power to define life. Thus, most goodwill studies reinforce patriarchy by already accepting its definition of people and activities. Therefore, it seems that men not biology determine destiny. Biology is used as the scapegoat to hide the fact that being male is more a mental factor than a physical one.

2.5.1 Women's Body as Physical Capital.

The body can also be understood as physical capital. Social theorist Bourdieu in Ashe et al (1999) sees the body as a sort of capital. For instance, a successful, lucrative, modeling career is dependent upon the possession of a particular kind of physique. Likewise, fame and success in sport rely upon having particular physical skills or abilities (Lloyd in Ashe et al 1999). There are differences nevertheless between these two cases and the multitude of other instances in which the body works as physical capital. Bourdieu in Ashe et al (1999) declares that the body is the most indisputable materialization of class taste. Different classes have different tastes, largely as a product of the different kinds of things available to them. Thus, one finds a correlation between class position and difference in taste, be it for food, fashion or music and sports. Lloyd points out that the dominant classes with time and resources to devote to their body, may concentrate on the generation and maintenance of a healthy body. Their body project is multidimensional and relatively time consuming. By comparison, the working class view the body in 'instrumental' terms. While the prevailing attitude among dominant class is that their bodies represent 'an end in itself'. The working class views the body as a means to achieve certain ends and is treated as such (Lloyd in Ashe et al 1999). Men engaged in manual labour tend not to have the inclination for the kinds of health oriented activities of the dominant class (running, tennis, golf), preferring instead, the physical hurly burly of a game of football. That is, a game that requires a

considerable investment of effort, sometimes of pain and suffering (Bourdieu in Ashe et al 1999).

Similarly, the working-class women may deprive themselves of food, not in their interest of dieting (as their bourgeois sisters might), but in order to ensure that their partner and children are fed first. This is an indicator of the way the body is shaped according to class culture and how physical capital accrues differently to each class. Physical prowess has been turned into economically rewarding careers. Since physical capital is essentially personal, it often diminishes with age and certainly disappears with death (Lloyd in Ashe et al 1999). Bourdieu's sociological theory is important for the way that it links the body to the imperatives of capitalist social reproduction (Lloyd in Ashe et al 1999). This in turn has an effect on its adequacy as a theory of the body in general. To Lloyd, although Bourdieu has insightful things to say about race and gender, these two categories remain sub-servient to class. As such, the specifications of patriarchal and racist structures on the gendered and racialised body respectively are left under developed. In analysing female athletes in Nairobi Kenya, this study hopes to observe the demeanour of the female athletes and assess how sport participation (using their body in sport) has influenced their life chances.

2.6 Mass Media and Women in Sport.

The mass media are a segment of society that surrounds many and influences social thinking but whose conduct is in turn shaped by the standards of other societal elements like gender class and race. The mass media convey thousand of visual, aural and verbal messages each day. These messages are embedded in dramas, comedies, news reports, music lyrics, sports, comics, cartoons, news stories and commercial advertising. Thus, from childhood to the old age, the mass media are continuing the process of socialization. Sports are one of media major content. Content refers to the information, music and other programmes being broadcast by the media. It is actually what people read, hear and see from the media.

When we talk of media ownership, Creedon (1989) points out that women own and manage relatively few mass media institutions and they generally lack the economic resources to establish their own in significant numbers. Within the media organization even where women fill many lower-ranking positions in which they create the messages that are printed in broadcast, the media remain male institutions, with male definitions of what is and what

is entertaining (Creedon 1989). Tuchman in Creedon (1989:62) states that:

Women also fill substantially fewer news-making roles in society than men, making it more difficult to get their messages into the media from the outside, which often causes the activities and interests of women to be segregated out of the mainstream of the news and entertainment into women's ghettos.

This is true in Kenya where local women sport is underplayed/ under aired compared to male sport. Unless its an athlete who wins women athletes feature nowhere. They can be featured in the acceptable feminine sports like golf and tennis and this is also not a daily affair. Live televised women sports like tennis or the women soccer world cup is never aired live and if so, it is a recent development. Creedon (1989: 62) holds that

Lacking substantive social, political and economic equality with men in the media and society, then women have less access to means of telling the truths of their experiences in effective and meaningful ways through the mass media.

In these male owned and dominated institution of the media, groups of people are represented in certain ways through the media. It has been said that this representation also helps to create the idea that certain people belong to certain categories. These categories become part of our thinking process, which we use to judge people in the real world as well as in the media. Thus, in a society characterized by gender inequality, we are likely to find this inequality reproduced in representation (Robinson and Richardson 1997). In the present information age, the media constitute one of the prime sites for the reproduction of the ideology of domesticity and of gender divisions and sexism. Women in these structures of representation are depicted in ways that define what representation are depicted in ways that define what it means to be a woman in society, what women are naturally like, what they ought to be like, what they are capable of and incapable of, what roles they play in society and how they differ from men (Robinson and Richardson 1997). Bate (1992) argues that the mass media help to create and re-create gender ideals because they are present in nearly all settings and are able to reflect and reinforce certain communication patterns. Bates' observation ushers in an important concept in the discourse of gender, the concept: language. Feminism takes language to be index of patriarchal attitudes and the social distribution of social rules and status (Humm 1995). Radical feminism on the other hand,

understanding that language is weapon which diminishes the range of women's thought argues that liberation of women is rooted in the liberation of language (Humm 1995). Thus, in transforming thought to be more inclusive of gender, race and class, a process of transforming language is involved. Andersen (1997: XI) notes that:

As the civil rights and women's movements have taught us, the language we use to describe different groups is deeply social and political in nature. It can belittle, trivialize, marginalize and ignore the experiences of different groups

D'Abreo (1994) therefore sees the media as propagating and perpetuating the idea that male is in every way superior to the female. No doubt, the media exert a powerful influence on how we define reality and men's and women's roles within it. Except for the specific aim of women's magazine, the images of women conveyed by the dominant culture have been based on distortions and stereotypes that legitimate the status quo while simultaneously, falsely representing the actual experience of women in the society (Andersen 1997). Kane nevertheless points out that increased participation in and media coverage of women's sports is at least partially responsible for a greater general acceptance of female athletes in American culture. However, she adds that certain sports continue to be considered more sex-appropriate for women (example, tennis, gymnastics and golf) than others (basket ball, foot ball, and wrestling) by the dominant culture (Kane in Creedon 1989).

Hargreaves (1987) further points out that the few women who have gained entry to the male media preserve tend to be restricted to reporting and commentating on women's sports'. In Kenya, this is not the case, sports news and commentaries on both male and female events are mostly done by males. The fact that it has proved harder for women to break into media sport as professionals than to break into sport itself is a good indication that media sport plays a strong conservative role in the reproduction of inequality between the sexes. Male commentators in male-dominated sports like soccer and basketball are no doubt what the majority of the audience expect and in fulfilling this expectation, the media clearly accommodate the prevailing pattern of gender division (Hargreaves 1987). Men also report and commentate more frequently in women's sporting activities than vice versa and even when sports are highly popular with women as opposed to unpopular women sport like soccer or cricket, male commentators are far more prominent (Hargreaves 1987).

Generally, media treatment of women can best be described as narrow. On film, in the press and the broadcast media, women's activities and interests typically go no further than the confines of home and family. This apparent neglect of the substantial number of women engaged in the public sphere of work and sports means and reinforces to the audiences (society) the idea that the public sphere is a male domain. Thus, the media to a large extent does not reflect reality. Lack of media coverage of women's participation in sport, even at elite level, plays a major part in defining the perception of women's participation in sport, diminishing its acceptability and significance and failing to provide role models for girls and young women to emulate (E.S.C 1998). In media entertainment whether (film, print, radio or TV) Gallergher in Creedon (1989) reports that women are grossly under represented. In media news, research indicates that women are mostly absent. Infact, Gallergher in Creedon(1989) points out that no country with available data reported that more than 20% of the news was about women and in most cases the figure was much lower. Creedon (1989) states that most existing news about women is trivial- related to family status or appearance. Where important women's activities are covered, they are often simultaneously undermined or demeaned. Call it a misogynist (hatred of women, an aversion to women) culture.

The image of women in media sport is predominantly constructed by men. Experience in other sector of the media suggests that if more women were employed in media sport, sexist stereotyping would not necessarily disappear, but what would be likely to change is the conservative rigidity with which it goes on (Hargreaves 1987). The rigid divisions between men's and women's sport in the culture with all the connotations it carries of what constitute 'manliness' and 'femininity' is replicated in media sport largely without questions. Conventionalism and to a lesser extent titillation, does the main ideological work in reinforcing the idea that physical difference are the basis of inequality between the sexes. Whenever sportswomen appear in the media, they are not only judged on their proficiency in sport, but also on their ability to conform to conventional definitions of what constitutes a 'real' woman (Hargreaves 1987).

To Sabo and Runfola (1980), some news pictures of female tennis players are chosen by desk men primarily because they have more sex appeal than other pictures available. In short, such female participation in sport as there is, is treated as just another girlie show (Sabo and Runfola 1980). It is also routine practice to represent the sportswomen in relation

to the role of wife, mother and girl-friend, that is, in relation to a conventional supporting role to the man. What interests the audience as well as newsmakers is whether married women athletes have children, which is regarded as particularly meritorious achievement when pursuing a career in sport, since it confirms their essentially 'womanly' that is familial role (Hargreaves 1987). Where a sportswoman does not qualify on grounds of femininity or compatibility with playing a supporting role to the man, then she is in danger of acquiring a deviant pejorative sexual image.

Media reports on female athletes being divorced or under going divorce propagates the notion that marriage and sports career for women (and formal employment outside the house) are incompatible. The sport career is seen as the catalyst to the divorce. The public sentiments hold her responsible for the divorce. Due to sport, she is perceived as having failed to perform her duty as wife, mother and working her level best to nurture and maintain the marriage as if marriage were solely a woman's affair. Generally, divorce among sports women is unheard of, as many women tend to drop out of sport after marriage thus, sports is usually associated with the single. This study will seek to discover the marital status of the sample, to prove whether sports is a dominated by singles or married females.

The role-learning theory espoused in Andersen (1997) holds that, values and images of women and men in the media represent some of the most conservative views of women and men. The theory hypothesizes that sexist and racist images in the media (and the absence thereof) encourage role modelling. This is to say that

The media's deleterious role models, when internalised prevent and impede female accomplishments. They also encourage both men and women to define women in terms of men (as sex objects) or in the context of the family (Tuchman in Andersen 1997:59).

This assumption that the media encourage role modelling is the basis for feminist criticisms of the media's depiction of women. The argument projected by this theory assumes that the media should truthfully reproduce social life and that there is some causal connection between the content of the media and its social effects (Tuchman in Andersen 1997). This perspective sees human beings as passive receptacles for whatever media inputs are poured onto them, kind of a 'magic bullet' way of thinking. However, people may in fact view

media images much more critically or even with cynicism, making it unlikely that they would modify their behaviour in accordance with the images (Andersen 1997). Nevertheless, this possibility does not deny the fact that people, especially children do learn from the media. When it comes to sport, many people even children get imparted and learn directly from what is aired.

2.7 A Feminist Perspective of Women in Sport.

2.7.1 Introduction

The feminist theories going to be presented in this chapter implicitly or formally present a generalized, wide ranging system of ideas about the basic features of social life and of human experience as these can be understood from a woman centred perspective.

Feminist theory according to Ritzer (1988: 282) is women centered in three ways.

1. Its major object for investigation, the starting point of all its investigation is the situation (or situations) and experience of women in society. In this study, the female athletes are the major objects for investigation. Their situations as athletes in a patriarchal society and more so in the highly male identified sport institution of Kenya is of importance.
2. It treats women as the central ' subjects' in the investigative process, that is, it seeks to see the world from the distinctive vantage point (or vantage points) of women in the social world. Knowing that sports is assumed to rightly be a male role, women engaged in it are subsumed under the category of sportsmen, that is, society is blind and deaf to the sportswomen and consequently we wind up with a monolith understanding of sport. This study seeks to give voice to the female athletes in Nairobi, by making them subjects of study.
3. Feminist theory is critical and activist on behalf of women seeking to produce a better world for women and thus, they argue for human kind. The athletic role being prototypical of the male role, a call to abandon traditional male sport and creation of a sport culture that suits many women and men should not be ignored.

Ritzer (1988:283) observes that the impetus for contemporary feminist theory is a deceptively simple question:

And what about the women?" In other words, where are the women in any situation being investigated? If they are not present, why? If they are present, what exactly are they doing? How do they experience the situation? What do they contribute to it? What does it mean to them

The consequences of trying to answer these basic questions have been revolutionary. The contemporary scholarly community according to Ritzer (1988: 283)

discovered that what it has assumed to be the universe of experience was really a particularistic account of male actors and male experience.

Feminist theories are utilized in this research because they have narrowed down their subjects of analysis to women in specific social situations while simultaneously analyzing their social situation. Thus, the dangers of over simplicity and under definition are lessened. Feminist theories help us understand the conditions in society and to envision the possibilities for liberating social change. Three major theoretical perspectives have been developed in feminist theory they are: Liberal, Socialist and Radical feminism.

Feminist theories which guide this study attempts to situate the everyday events of women's and men's lives in an analysis that links personal collective experience to an understanding of the structure of gender relationships in society and culture. Some of the basic transformations in women's and men's lives in recent years have been guided by feminist theories (Andersen 1997). "Feminism" according to Johnson (1997) is a critical way of thinking about gender and its place in social life. Apart from being a way of thinking, feminism has also been perceived as both a way of acting and being in the world (Andersen 1997). This study uses feminism as an intellectual framework for analyzing how social life, namely sport, works. To Johnson (1997:102) feminism:

Also provides an ideological basis for change on every level of human existence, from how we behave to transforming patriarchy and its core values of dominance and control. By focusing on how we participate in the gender order, feminism challenges us to live in new ways, to question assumptions about gender and human nature, and to confront the everyday realities of women's oppression and the price men pay in return for gender privilege.

2.7.2 *Historical Look at Women's Study.*

As a social movement aimed to call attention to as well as challenge sexism and oppression of women under patriarchy, feminism has brought many changes in intellectual life. The development of feminist theory and the women's movement are so closely linked that separation is impossible. All forms of feminism according to Johnson (1997) in some way began with the assumption that gender inequality exists and that it is problematic. In the academic sphere, feminists claim that what we know, either intellectually and practically, is thoroughly infused with gendered assumptions about the character of the social world, its problems, its inhabitants and its meanings (Andersen 1997).

Male domination of academic institution influences the social production of knowledge because the existing schemes of understanding have been created within a particular setting one in which men have authority over women. In sociology, for example,

How sociology is thought – its methods, conceptual schemes and theories – have been based on and built up within the male social universe, even when women have participated in its doing. Because the male constituted world stands in authority over women, (both inside and outside the academy) sociologists impose the concepts and terms in which the world of men is thought as the concepts and terms in which women must think about their worlds (Smith in Andersen 1997: 70).

Hence, despite the strong claims of neutrality and objectivity by scientists, the fact is that science is closely tied to the centres of power in our societies and Andersen (1997) sees it interwoven with capitalist and patriarchal institutions. It has been argued that gender identity is at the very heart of the definition of science because scientific norms of detachment, distance, and rationality match those of masculine culture. Critiques of science also reveal that scientific thought often reflects the patriarchal ideology of the culture. Thus, women's exclusion from science is not only as scientists but as Andersen (1997) points out; they (women) are also excluded as subject of scientific research. In this study, we have adapted the various forms of Feminist theory to ground it. The study concurs with Andersen when she posits that:

The point is not to abandon science, but to understand that within scientific studies, bias can enter the scientist's choice of topic, choice of research subjects, definition

of concepts, methods of observation, analysis and interpretation of data, and manner of reporting (Andersen 1997:75).

Whether bias was and is fuelled by ignorance or misogyny scholars in fields have begun thinking seriously about women. Women's studies have proliferated in many institutions of higher learning worldwide. According to Dubois, Kelly, Kennedy, Korsmeyer, Robinson et al (1987:87):

New scholarship on women was part of a general and widespread attempt to understand the phenomenon of sexism, to comprehend its implications for the heritage and experience of women and ultimately to discover the conditions that would lead to liberation.

Heterodoxy and dynamism have characterized feminist scholarship. Dervin in Creedon (1989:24) states that

Feminist scholarship has evolved overtime..... from a focus on sex differences (the traditional approach) to a focus on improving society and making women more like men (the reformist or liberal approach) to the current focus on giving voice to women (the radical feminist approach).

It is obvious that the feminists' stress on the nearly universal and extraordinarily enduring character of women's oppression underscores their convictions that it is one of the major problems facing contemporary society (Dubois et al 1987). However, this tendency to emphasize universality can become a barrier in analyzing women's oppression and especially in achieving a perspective from which it might be overcome. First, women certainly are not one homogenous group.

Power relations among men and women, racial and ethnic groups, various classes, and men and women living in rural and urban areas may vary considerably from culture to culture. (Steeves in Creedon 1989:85).

This implies that identifying 'female' as an oppressed status under patriarchy doesn't mean that every woman suffers its consequences to an equal degree. Thus, Western Feminism is

criticized as flawed because it has ignored this immense variation and has thus, been accused of meddling inappropriately in other cultures, particularly Third World Cultures (Steeves in Creedon 1989). At the least, Third World women complain that western women do not understand their unique circumstances and their need to align with oppressed men (Steeves in Creedon 1989). In Kenya it appears at times that women don't define their lives as miserable under patriarchy. Others don't even know they are oppressed, to them, feminisms' definition of oppressed is what is culture or religious truth for them. This fact enhances the heterogeneity of women.

2.7.3 *Liberal Feminism and Women Participation in Sport.*

From a liberal feminist perspective, the main gender problem is that prejudice, values and norms found in traditional laws and practices deny women equal access to the opportunities, resources and rewards that society offers. According to Steeves in Creedon (1989), liberal feminists assume that rational argument and legal efforts can mobilize women away from the private sphere of the home and toward equity with men in the public world of objectivity and rationality. Their focus is on individual autonomy, the opportunity for everyone to exercise free will and share in decision making. Thus, society should not create barriers to individual liberties. This perspective rejects the conservative view of biological determinism that persons assume their status in life cause of ascribed characteristics but attribute the different status's of people to social learning or socialization and the denial of opportunity (Andersen 1997).

Thus, liberal feminists (along with other feminists) reject the belief that women are bound to particular roles and status's because of their biological capacity to bear children (Anderson 1997). The liberal solution to gender inequality is to remove the barriers to women's freedom of choice and equal participation through persuading people to change by challenging sexist stereotypes and demanding equal access and treatment (Johnson 1997). Gender socialization identified as the origin of gender differences makes liberal feminism assume that changes in socialization practices and the re-education of the public will result in more liberated and egalitarian relations.

In sports, the Brighton Declaration is one such document that follows the liberal feminist thinking. In scope, the declaration of 1994 is addressed to – governments, public authorities, organizations, businesses, educational and research establishments, women's

organizations and individuals – all who are responsible for, or who directly or indirectly influence the conduct, development or care of women in sport. The overriding aim of the declaration is to develop a sporting culture that enables and values the full involvement of women in every aspect of sport.

Hence, appropriate policies structures and mechanisms should be developed by those who the declaration is addressed to, to ensure that first, all women and girls have the opportunity to participate in sport in a safe and supportive environment which preserves the rights, dignity and respect of the individual. Second, increase the involvement of women in sport at all levels and in all functions and roles. Third, the knowledge, experiences and values of women contribute to the development of sport. Fourth, they promote the recognition of women's involvement in sport as a contribution to public life, community development and in building a healthy nation. Last, they promote the recognition by women of the intrinsic value of sport and its contribution to personal development and healthy lifestyle, (Brighton Declaration 1994).

Under the principles of the declaration, equity and equality in society and sport is underscored. The state and government machineries are urged to ensure that institutions and organizations responsible for sport comply with the equality provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Using Liberal Feminism, one can understand how socialization, starting from the family to the biased coverage of mass media make women in sport seem deviant and anomalous. This deters many women from actively engaging in sport or withdrawing from it and hence missing the many physical as well as social benefits that sports has to offer. Women in the end still maintain their disadvantages status. For example, in the corporate world, there is the assumption that women "cannot play the game" Cline in Creedon (1989) observes that women have never learned the team spirit – the corporate spirit – that men learn on football teams or in the armed services. Thus, breaking into the management circle for them and getting onto the fast track according to Cline, are secrets that most women do not learn in male-oriented, male-dominated companies. In Kenya, sport is part of male socialization, making them ready for the corporate scene that is operated along the sports values. For women, sports participation is more of a reaction following liberal tenets, than a

serendipitous chance, explaining the different experiences they encounter in sport.

Cline therefore urges women in this predicament and seeking agency that perhaps they

need to examine what men did learn in team sports. They learned competitiveness as a team not as individuals or perhaps they learned deferring – handing the ball off to your boss – and not getting all the glory that day because the team had to win. They learned to take criticisms and they learned to accept getting yelled at (Cline in Creedon 1989 : 270).

For some women, it is a bit late to join team sports but being intelligent they have and should seek the positives from the men's experience. It is obvious from Clines' observation that sport participation for girls and women at large has both latent and manifest positive contributions to their personalities example; training in objectivity, dealing with failure and success. Under Liberal feminism, we can also understand how the definition of femininity in terms of roles and the false, mystified beliefs about women's body makes them (women) choose domesticity over outside employment. When they choose outside employment, their internalized image of the patriarchal woman, works in contradistinction to the demands and requirements of competitive sport.

Liberal feminism is not void of criticism. Liberal feminism major flaw according to this study is that it subtly accepts that male/masculinity is a standard that women must try to reach. It reinforces the idea that males are leaders and inherently superior while women are followers and inferior. Most of radical feminism is a critique of the liberal perspective. According to Johnson (1997), the historical character of liberal feminism is problematic as it offers no way to explain the origins of the social arrangement it is trying to change, nor does it identify a social engine powerful enough to keep oppression going. The lack of historical perspective has serious consequences because it leads away from questions about patriarchy and systematic oppression, concepts that have little place in liberal thinking (Johnson 1997). Patriarchy is treated as a shadow concept with no serious analytical role to play in making sense of gender (Johnson 1997).

Another deeper problem in this perspective is the single-minded focus on the right of women to be men's equals – to do what men do in the way that men do it. It hence does not

question what might be wrong with a way of organizing the world that encourages men to do what they do in the way they do it. Thus, when women demand access to positions of power in diverse institutions they also affirm the basic patriarchal character to social life. Rather than female athletes challenging the values that shape, for example, politics and sports and how it is practiced, they focus on how to access entry to these biased institutions.

This has created problems for women because as they enter these institutions they find themselves still operating in the world of males and even the equality they demand, is equality in men's terms and in a man's world, by their (men's) rules, hence they are still in bondage. There is nothing wrong with equal opportunity, equal access and equality under the law, but there are some serious, unanticipated consequences for working for equal access to a system without also asking what kind of system it is and how it produces oppression of all sorts, especially when the system is based on characteristics other than gender such as race, sexual orientation and social class (Johnson 1997).

The most ironic problem with liberal feminism according to Johnson (1997: 188) is that:

by focusing on equality only in terms of individual choice and opportunity within patriarchy, it actually undermines the liberal ideal of free choice. By ignoring how patriarchy shapes and limits the alternatives from which people might "freely" choose, it ignores the power to determine just what those alternatives will be. This means that the freedom to participate in the world on patriarchal terms is freedom only in a context that ignores non patriarchal alternatives that patriarchal culture doesn't tell as about.

The weakness of liberal feminism is that it assumes that once men and women enjoy same privileges, society will be a better place for all. Thus, if women athletes in Nairobi Kenya get equal pay, equal access to competitive opportunities like men, it is expected that their performance will improve and that they will be happier. This might work, though performance is a sum of many factors (mental, physical). This perspective fails to see that women are subordinated and treated as inferior because they are culturally defined as inferior (Johnson 1997), not because they were forgotten or discovered later after man.

2.7.4 *Radical feminism and Women in Sport.*

Radical feminism which is a critique of liberal feminism pays attention to patriarchy's consequences and how people experience them, but unlike liberal feminism, radical feminism carries that attention to the underlying male-dominated, male-identified, male centred, control-obsessed patriarchal system that produces gender oppression (Johnson 1997). The distinction between liberal and radical feminism is important not because one is right and the other is wrong, but because they focus on different kinds of questions and problems. As a result, they also lead to different kinds of answers and solutions. Under liberalism, sexist stereotypes are perceived as false beliefs and bad attitudes which can be corrected through re-education of society and socialization or showing what women can do. Radical feminism on the other hand tells us that negative stereotypes about women don't exist in a vacuum (Johnson 1997). The questions to ask in this case are – whose interests' does sexism support and what kind of social order does it perpetuate? Within the radical perspective:

misogyny and other forms of sexism are more than mistaken ideas and bad attitudes. They are also part of a cultural ideology that serves male privilege and supports women's subordination. As a form of sexism, misogyny also helps stabilize patriarchy by encouraging men to use women as targets for the feelings of contempt, frustration and anger that arise from their competitive relations with other men. Patriarchy sets men against other men, but it also rests on male solidarity in relation to women (Johnson 1997 : 122).

According to Radical Feminists, change in gender socialization as advocated by the liberal feminists is not feasible because families and other agents of socialization are dedicated to raising children who will be accepted and succeed in society as it is ; conformists to gender biased society where masculine values are superior (Johnson 1997). To radical feminists, sexism is rooted in a social reality that underpins male privilege and gender oppression. It (sexism) is not going to vanish from patriarchal culture through appeals to people's sense of fairness and decency or their ability to distinguish stereotypes from the facts of who people are (Johnson 1997).

According to Steeves in Creedon (1989) radical feminists do not believe that 'masculine' values such as objectivity and rationality are superior to 'feminine values'. Rather,

they assume that feminine values are superior and need to be celebrated and encouraged. Since patriarchy (the many ways in which men oppress women) is so powerful, most radical feminists believe that separatist activities are an important means by which women can achieve strength (Steeves in Creedon 1989 : 24)

In sports what radical feminist would encourage is alternative feminist sports and media in which women can freely express themselves in their own language. That is, a total rejection of patriarchal sport institution. In Kenya as long as female fight to gain entry and recognition in those activities that males have dominated, they are branded rebellious and seen to be challenging the status quo. It is futile for them to do this as they will need resources that are in the hands of the males, thus applying liberal means of appealing to males reinforces their weak state hence, lessening their impact as an autonomous group. Applying radical feminism to women in sport implies that women in Nairobi Kenya should define recreation and sport. They should have and manage their own organizations and handle their matters separately and differently from the way the males do, without apologizing or trying to be similar to what already exists. The female hockey athlete's succeeded in creating a women's only hockey organization due to their marginalization in the sport in Kenya. These actions are in line with radical thinking, and it forced the Hockey union to change their modus operandi in regards to women.

In conclusion, radical feminism is virtually invisible in the mainstream. It is known primarily as an attitude (such as man-hating), or as rigid orthodoxy (only lesbians are real feminists") or as a form of essentialism (women are superior and ought to rule the world). According to Johnson (1997: 123).

To be sure, all of these can be found somewhere in feminist writings; but they pale beside the overwhelming bulk of the radical analysis of patriarchy, whose insights can help both men and women work for something better.

Liberal feminism is more welcomed than radical feminism because it focuses on gender without confronting the reality of patriarchal oppression without seriously threatening male privilege (Johnson 1997). For Stamp (1989), liberal feminism is that which motivated the United Nations Decade for women and because it does not challenge underlying

assumptions regarding the structural causes of gender relations, it has proved an acceptable bases for reform in many Third World Countries. Radical feminism is avoided, dismissed and attacked because it raises critical questions that most people would rather ignore in the hope that they will go away (Johnson 1997). Radical feminism forces us to confront relationships that most men and women depend on to meet their needs. It challenges us to see how patriarchy divides women and men into subordinate and dominant groups with different interests that put them at odds with one another (Johnson 1997). The third perspective in understanding women is the socialist feminist perspective. It borrows from both liberal and radical feminism but also critiques them.

2.7.5 Socialist Feminism and Women's Sport Engagement

Socialist Feminism helps us understand womens sports involvement. It sheds light as to why it has been a slow and an uphill task for women to excel in external (none domesticated) activities like sport. Socialist Feminism theory starts from an insistence that beneath the serious social, psychological and ideological phenomena of women's oppression lies a material root (Vogel 1989). Socialist Feminists like Vogel (1989) point out that Marxism as a perspective did not adequately analyze this material root. Thus, they hypothesize that the family constitutes a major terrain that nourishes it (Vogel 1989). Socialist feminism is a reaction against idealist or liberal feminism which trivializes the issue of women's oppression as a mere matter of lack of rights and ideological chauvinism. Socialist feminism being concerned with psychological and ideological issues, especially those arising within the family, stands opposed to the crudities of an economic determinist interpretation of women's position which is also common within the socialist movement (Vogel 1989).

Under Socialist Feminism framework, the reason women will not engage in sport actively and consistently is due to the fact that they are involved in economic activities that feeds and maintains capitalism. According to Benston in Vogel (1989), the root of women's secondary status in a capitalist society is economic or material and this can be located in women's unpaid domestic labour. Women clean, cook, care for children, sew, maintain the home/house amongst other things and these are economic activities but these products and services that result from these works are consumed directly and never reach the market place. In Marxian terms, women constitute the group of people who are responsible for the production of simple use-values in those activities associated with home and family. If they

rebel or cause a revolution, the capitalist system is bound to crumble. It is here where ideologies like religion, culture, biology (capitalism's police force) are used to justify the women's activities. Hence, the family should not be seen as a consumption unit but a production unit for housework and childrearing. Accordingly Benston (in Vogel 1989) argues that if such work is moved into public sector, the material basis for discrimination against women will be gone.

It is hence plausible to state that women in Nairobi, Kenya are able to engage in sport due to having external jobs (thanks to liberal feminism) that enable them to hire house helps, baby sitters, or access childcare facilities so that they can focus on sport. Though some of the wifely/ feminine roles have been de-privatized, as long as women are expected to do specific services like serving her husband out of fear of abandonment, her duration in sport will be cut short.

2.7.6 Feminist Theories and Women in Sports.

All these theoretical perspectives guide the study and give us a broad understanding on women's issues. More specifically Liberal Feminism using the example of The Brighton Declaration helps the study in highlighting the fact that women in sport did not just happen, it has been a struggle that finds its origins in the women liberation movement. Education, attitude change and legislation as advocated by liberal feminism have seen women accepted into sport. Radical feminism on the other hand applauds liberal efforts for women but when it comes to sport, oppression and bias still exists in sport, thus even if women are in sport, patriarchy and sexism continue to dominate them and unless they overthrow male institution of sport, women in sport will continue to serve male interests and never reach full self actualization. Socialist feminism makes one understand that women's visions in sport may never be fully realised so long as they accept the label of home-maker. Women's unpaid domestic labour feeds capitalism directly and their entry to sport is likely to jeopardize capitalism explaining the difficulty women face and continue to face when venturing into non domesticated roles like sport. Unless domestic labour becomes remunerated, women are not going to be free to make free choices about their lifestyle.

SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEWED.

The literature reviewed began by taking a look at sociology in general and the sociology of sport in particular. It discussed why sport has not been given top status or favoured in

Kenyan sociological analysis. A historical picture of women and sport in ancient times and yester years is provided followed by discussion on the sports allowed for women and the various factors that influenced women's sport participation both as athletes and sport leaders. Foundation factors like formal education interact with socialization and cultural factors in determining women's destiny as athletes. Women's experiences in sport both social and psychological are discussed. Important themes like the physical body are broadly discussed, acknowledging the fact that the body of an individual is not only a physical entity, it is the centre of power struggle and it also influences social interaction. The interface of nature versus nurture finds expression when discussing the roles of women in society in relation to their bodies. It is the studies view that it is not biology, but males who determine ones (females) destiny. In looking at self image, women who engage in sport have a positive view of themselves. They are likely to continue engaging in sport which feeds and creates the positive identity, though sport is not an escape from patriarchy. From the literature what comes out is that the culture of a people shapes many institutions and one such institution is the mass media especially as it relates to women sport.

Women athletes, the literature reveals, have not had an easy time in sport, despite sport being believed to propagate universal and favourable values. Starting from an unequal standing, they have had to deal with many challenges and oppositions from the generalized others, conflict within themselves (cognitive dissonance) to instability of identity and rewards/benefits from athletic participation. This could highly influence their sport performance and increase their unlikelihood of professionalizing in sport.

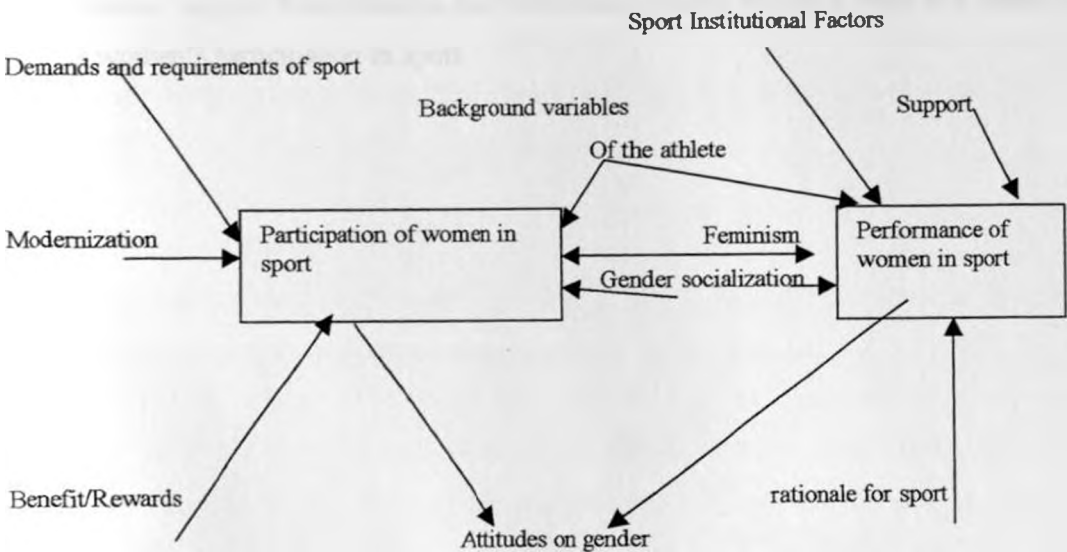
Similarly, the feminist perspective informs us that what was assumed to be the universe of experience was really a particularistic account of male experience. Hence, feminisms' simple question – What about the women? Liberal feminism explains women's oppression in society as a function of gender socialization. A change in socialization patterns, education and affirmative action are ways of changing the quality of women's life and increasing their participation in previously male dominated institutions like sport. Radical feminism looks at women's oppression by asking whose interest sexism supports. Since it (sexism) supports patriarchy, radical feminism and don't support liberal tenants of attitude change in society rather, they call for separate activities in sport (reject patriarchal sport institutions). Socialist feminism posits that women don't engage in sport actively and consistently due to the fact that they are involved in economic activities that feed and

maintain capitalism. Women's unpaid domestic labour is the root of their secondary status. Monetizing domestic labour would make it more valuable. Thus, any labour including women sport would not be frowned upon.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

Under this section, we attempt to formulate a model (see figure 1) to explain women's participation in sport. From the literature we observe that many social processes are linked to women engaging in sport.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Women's Participation in Sport.



The demands and requirements of sport determine to a large extent the participation of women in it. Demands such as the dress codes, number of hours, times of practice, and physical demands of the sport influence women decision to engage in sport. The transition of society from traditional to modern, characterized by breakthroughs in science, education, communication and the rise of feminism through the women's liberation movement seems to have triggered women's consciousness and influence their participation in sport as well as their performance in it. The known benefits of engaging in sport (rewards, health) are also key motivators for women to engage in sport.

Background variables of the athlete like her age, marital status, level of education, religious background are some factors that are taken to determine ones social roles and therefore determine ones eligibility to participate in sport. These factors also affect

women's performance in sport through problems like role conflict. A woman's socialization process will influence her engagement in sport and her eventual rational for being in sport also could determine her performance in that sport. From figure one; we see that women's attitudes on gender are bound to be affected by engaging in sport.

The sport institution itself is a key factor in determining a woman's performance in sport in terms of equity and equality. Aloofness to women as new entrants to the sports scene in Kenya inhibits women's full participation in sports. Discrimination against women in same sports as men restricts the manifestation of the talents of women thus further reinforcing the traditional thoughts that women are best for domestic activities, these impacts on their performance. Support from families and friends and general society is seen as a factor that affects women's participation in sport

CHAPTER THREE

STUDY'S METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

3.0 Introduction

In this section, the study's research design will be discussed. A research design can be taken to be the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure (Selltiz 1959). Under this rubric of methodology, the site of study, sources of data, unit of analysis as well as units of observation are discussed. An outline on the sampling procedure used in obtaining respondents precedes the discussion of the techniques of data collection. The chapter finally comes to a close with a highlight on the actual field experience coupled with the limitations encountered and methods to be used in analysing the data obtained from the field.

3.1 Site Description

This study was carried out in Nairobi. Nairobi is one of the eight provinces of Kenya as well as the capital city of Kenya. Nairobi is host to two national stadia namely: Nyayo National Stadium and the Moi International Sports Complex, Kasarani, these two stadia host both local and international sports events. Hotels, leisure spots, private clubs and educational institutions have various sporting facilities and equipment as well as teams. At times leagues and tournaments are held in these venues. The study site was the various sporting fields/grounds and stadia within Nairobi.

3.2 Site Justification

Nairobi was purposively selected because it is Kenya's capital city. Hence, *prima facie*, it was assumed to have a more developed and varied sport infrastructure compared to other provinces and cities in Kenya. It was also in Nairobi where unlike their rural counterparts, women could and can still be found and seen participating in many diverse physical activity and sports both at leisure and competitive (league) levels respectively. Different games and sports in Kenya are formally organized and come under various sport bodies (associations or federations). Ensemble, these sport bodies fall under the umbrella of the Ministry of Culture and Social Services.

Many of sport governing bodies (association or federations) have their headquarters and offices in Nairobi. Nairobi thus, became a convenient site for the researcher. From these offices, it was envisioned, that vital information concerning the study could be accessed. From these offices also, league season calendars, upcoming tournaments, or friendly matches together with information about the particular teams training ground/venues were available. This was important for the study when it came to tracking down the respondents. Another reason for selecting Nairobi was due to the fact that majority of the women team at league (competitive) levels participating in the sports to be covered in this study were from Nairobi, showing that women sport in Nairobi was at least established and more developed compared to other regions of Kenya.

3.3 Sources of Data.

The study utilized one source of data, primary data. Primary data was the first hand information that the study sought to gather directly from the field. Paucity of information and knowledge on women athletes in Nairobi Kenya engendered the investigator to go directly to the field to get raw data from relevant individuals. Primary data is the actual data and information that was obtained through this study from the relevant respondents namely the female athletes and female key informants in sport. Men in sport were not covered since the study was interested in females' experience of sport in Nairobi Kenya, as sport is assumed to be a male domain.

3.4 Justification of Sport Selected for this Study.

Being implausible to cover all sports in Nairobi, the study undertook to cover 5 sporting events that women engaged in at league level. The 5 sports were purposively selected; they were Volleyball, Basketball, Netball, Hockey and Handball. These games are common and well known among the general population in Nairobi. Most of the girls and women in Nairobi are exposed to any of the five or all of these sports. Indeed, these sports are an integral part of most school physical education curriculum and most high schools and college's field women teams in these sports. Thus, the need to explore women's experiences in these team sports was of interest to the researcher. The justifications for selecting the various disciplines are presented in Table1. This table also informs us of the number of women clubs from Nairobi that participated in the National League.

Table 1 Justification of Each Selected Sport in the Study.

Type of Sport	Nairobi Clubs in League	Justification of Selection
Volleyball	4	Had the reputation of being the most successful women sport.
Hockey	5	Only sport in Kenya to have had a distinct body dealing solely with women-Kenya Ladies Hockey Union.
Netball	4	Considered a feminine sport.
Basketball	6	Popular sport among men, women, young and old.
Handball	2	An upcoming team sport in Kenya for both men and women.

Each of the sport selected for the study had different styles, rules, regulations and expectations from the athletes. They were organized and managed by different bodies; hence the experiences of the female athletes were bound to vary. The study's interest was to capture the variations in female athletes. The study limited itself to women in team sport in Nairobi Kenya, as team sport tends to attract different people/personalities who come together to achieve a goal. This is seen to ignite group processes like conflicts, which need to be overcome otherwise performance of the team may be impeded. The study chose to analyze female athletes at club level because clubs play under leagues which are more structured and run over a period of time. Being in a league connotes commitment of the teams to playing against each other within league standards, thus, sport ceases to be a haphazard, temporal activity but rather a consciously, planned, objective activity with a price at the end of the season.

3.5 Sampling Procedure

After purposively selecting the five sports, the study endeavoured to adopt Representative Quota Sampling in the selection of the respondents based on the number of clubs per sport. Each sport discipline formed a quota of the total sample. Quota sampling is similar to stratified sampling in only that the selection within strata is non-random (convenient). For this study, the use of this sampling procedure implies that the findings cannot therefore be generalised to the entire sport population. Quota sampling was advantageous in terms of cost and time. The investigators task was to ensure that each quota obtained its required size from each club forming a quota. A team consisted of the number of registered players

for a match. The study targeted sample size was 200. The final sample size was 150 female athletes. The women athletic population and the targeted quota sample for each sport are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of Study's Sampling Procedure.

Type of Sport	No. of Clubs(a)	Registered No. of Players (b)	Sport Population (c)	Targeted Quota Sample Per Sport (d)	Actual No. of Respondents in Study
Volleyball	4	12	48	35	35
Hockey	5	14	70	51	30
Netball	4	14	56	41	29
Basketball	6	12	72	52	36
Handball	2	15	30	21	20
Total			N= 276	200	n=150

Key: $c=a*b$; $d=c/N*200$

Fieldwork commenced in the later part of the year starting in September 2002, taking 3 months and coming to a close in early December. Going to the sport headquarters and then various clubs offices, I was briefed on what was currently going on and where I could get the respondents. At the time of data collection, some sports (Hockey, Volleyball and Netball) had closed their league season hence, many athletes were not available. Those in these three sports, who were available, were those trying out for the national team selection. Basketball and Handball were also drawing close to end the season; athletes available were of the specific clubs in the finals. Faced with this scenario, the researcher opted to try and get the required quota size using convenient sampling without consideration of club representation. Henceforth any available female athlete in sport would participate in the study.

Selection of the key informants was to be slightly different. By definition of the study, any woman engaged in the management of a team or as a coach was considered as a key informant. The researcher purposively approached the key informants within the five selected sports and included them in the study after confirming their availability and interest.

3.6 Units of Analysis And Observational Units

The social entities whose social characteristics are the focus of the study would be the units of analysis which '*are the collection of things that will be studied*' (Baker 1994: 102). Thus, the primary unit of analysis in this study was the performance of the female athletes in the 5 games of Basketball, Volleyball, Hockey, Handball and Netball. The units of observation were the female athletes themselves. They were the most appropriate, since they were actively involved in sport thus, they were viewed to be better, well informed and aware of the interplay between sports and their lives. However, for purposes of getting a holistic perspective on women in sport, secondary units of observation – the key informants like coaches, association or federation representatives and team managers were also include in the study.

3.7 Methods of Data Collection

The most important rule for all data collection methods is to report how the data were created and how we came to possess them. Collection of qualitative data was done through the self administered questionnaires. In this study, once the number of respondents required in each quota was established, the researcher set out and administered questionnaires to the female athletes in Nairobi Kenya. This way, data collection was going to be less expensive as the questionnaire could be administered to a large number of individuals simultaneously and with limited amount of funds. Aware of the sample size, the self-administered questionnaire as a method of data collection could and did cover a wider area as well as obtained information from more people at a shorter time compared to personally interviewing them (Selltiz 1959). Before distributing the questionnaire the researcher helped the subjects understand the questions and what the study was looking for. This was done in all the disciplines and the various clubs within them. In each case, after distributing the questionnaires to those who were present during training and willing to be part of the study, a deadline was agreed upon when the filled questionnaire would be collected by the researcher. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed out of this a total, 150 completed and returned the surveys to the researcher.

Simultaneously, informal/unstructured interviews were being conducted with the key informants. An interview guide enabled the researcher to keep the interview in line with the research objectives. It also helped in ensuring that relevant topics and important issues to the study were not left out. The scope of the informal interviews was limited to certain sub

topics where certain key questions had been developed in advance. In this technique of data collection, the researcher had the latitude to adapt the interview to capitalize on the special knowledge, experience or insights of the respondents (key information).

In-depth interview with the key informants went as scheduled. Those interviewed were the ones the investigator could easily access within the five sport discipline and had agreed to it. Interviews occurred on a set date and venue. The study managed to get at least 1 representative per sport to give more information concerning the sport and women. Data obtained was qualitative. A total of 9 key informants participated in the study.

Table 3 is a summary of the techniques that were used to collect data, the target sample size and the actual number that fully participated in the study.

Table 3 Summary Table of Data Collection

Data collection technique	Targeted respondents	Type of Data	Total number covered
Self-administered questionnaire	200 female athletes	Qualitative and Quantitative	150
Unstructured interview using interview guide	Available key informants (Coach, Team Managers)	Qualitative	9

3.8 My Field Experience.

Fieldwork was a very enriching experience. Generally speaking the study was accepted by the stakeholders. There was however some challenges encountered which I will briefly report on. The first challenge was with regards to the selection of respondents. Data collection was carried out during the time when most of the sports under study were off season or winding up their season. Thus, the researcher suddenly found herself facing paucity of respondents from various clubs. Since the study was time bound, a change in sampling procedure from a representative sport quota sample to a convenience quota ensured that the study covered every available athlete in the different sport so as to get the first hand information from them.

A major limitation perhaps experienced in the study was the challenge of persuading the

players to actively participate in my study without promising any token. The respondents were eager to know how they stood to benefit by participating in the study. I could not offer them any thing monetarily apart from making them understand the future implications of the study. This is seen to have heavily affected their eagerness to participate in the study as no immediate benefits were envisioned. Knowing that the researcher was self sponsored and that the study was part of the researchers' academic pursuits, was a blow to the study. This knowledge/information which was given before distributing the questionnaire is firmly believed to have ushered into the study the dynamics of age, class and gender that could make some athletes feel they were loosing out by helping me. It was difficult to convince the subjects that the study was not solely for the researchers' personal achievements but to the sport institution as well. Nevertheless, heavy assistance from the coaches made data collection bearable.

Another challenge faced during field work was that of explaining sociological concepts to non-sociological scholars. Considering the on-goings of sport at the start of data collection, data collection using the self-administered questionnaire was not without problems. Seltiz (1959) pointed out that a questionnaire with standard wording may have diverse meaning for different people, thus it could be comprehensive to some and incomprehensible to others. Even though the researcher helped subjects to understand all the questions, after going over the refilled forms, it was clear that some questions were not properly understood by the respondents and hence were left unanswered. This occurred on some of the open ended questions. Since most open ended questions were to aid in the understanding of a previous closed question, the researcher did the analysis and interpretation of data based on the closed response.

The other challenge encountered was one of collecting the questionnaire from the respondents. It has also been thought that the questionnaire (self-administered) places less pressure on the subject for immediate response (a perceived weakness in interviewing). Thus, it is believed that when given ample time for filling out the questionnaire, the subject, can consider each point carefully rather than reply with the first thought that comes to mind (Seltiz 1959). During actual data collection, the frequency of dishonoured dates of receiving the filled out questionnaire was numerous. The subject claimed that they were busy and tired and never had adequate time to respond to the questions. It appeared that the time span co-operatively agreed upon was not ample enough. This resulted in the researcher

frequently going back to the same venue to collect the questionnaire after setting up a new date hoping that the questionnaires had been filled. This meant loss of time and hence extension of study period. Nevertheless a total of 150 questionnaires were returned, this was encouraging.

Forgetfulness was another problem faced during data collection. Most times when collecting the questionnaires from a club, there were few subjects who had forgotten them back home or those subjects given the questionnaire had not shown-up for training (absenteeism). This was not only tiring, since the researcher had to keep on going back to the particular club to collect them, but it was also slow. Most of the problems encountered were overcome by the researchers' consistency in following up the athletes, by socializing with them and through participating in some sessions with them. They therefore got to know me as a person, which lessened their scepticism toward the research.

During field work, sociology became alive and the researcher was practically experiencing those sociological concepts that appear abstract in both theory and methods. Lastly, I learnt that as appealing as quota sampling was, the researcher was at the mercy of the respondents especially with the self administered questionnaires as the instrument of data collection. The researcher considers the field work to have been a very enriching experience both sociologically and personally, considering that the field of study has barely been opened up to serious sociological analysis and the lack of adequate financial resources to back up the study.

Last, I should not fail to point out in this section that I got the privilege in the course of the study, to interact with Kenya's women athletes. The researcher interacted with the national women's volleyball team who were going to lead Africa in the women's world cup. The researcher also got the opportunity to witness Kenya's top clubs battle it out with other top clubs from other countries in the East and Central Africa Basketball tournament. The researcher also spent time with different clubs during their training/coaching sessions and league matches watching them hence developing a more in-depth knowledge of sport and women. This helped in integrating the researcher to the subjects and friendship bonds were established. To conclude, I reiterate that field work was a very enriching process for me!!

3.9 Data Analysis And Presentation

Data from the athletes were collected, cleaned, coded then analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Scientist (S.P.S.S) to be measured at nominal levels. The findings are presented in Chapter 4. One observation that can be noted in the study's research design is its flexibility to change in accordance with the prevailing circumstances without affecting the goals of the study. This is characteristic of particular kind of studies that Selltitz (1959:50) has termed formulative or exploratory where the *major emphasis is on discovery of ideas and insights*.

This study as earlier indicated in Chapter One was a personal venture motivated by curiosity and private values⁸ that needed to be looked into. As a personal venture, the study was bent toward increasing the investigators familiarity with the sport phenomenon which (perhaps) could later on be investigated in more structured or precise ways. The research question and questionnaire variables posed did not suppose much prior knowledge on women and sport apart from what the investigator knew based on her experiences – these questions sought to explore this phenomenon. Multiple-responses were also yielded and were useful in helping to assess the range and frequencies of factors at play in sport. Despite the study being formulative, two hypotheses were posited for the purpose of trying to control the study and give it focus. According to Selltitz (1959:387), the

Purpose of analysis is to summarize the completed observations in such a manner that they yield answers to the research questions. It is the purpose of interpretation to search for the broader meanings of these answers by linking them to other available knowledge.

The origin of this study and the type of data yielded made the utilization of simple statistics or descriptive statistics attractive. In primary analysis, one tells the reader how many cases of the sample or universe fall into each class (Kerlinger 1964). Primary analysis or descriptive statistics is the summarising of qualitative data, which is a very straightforward procedure, where as mentioned before, the main task is to count the number of observation in each case category. These counts are called frequencies.

⁸ As a collegiate athlete, I observed a degree of 'cold shoulder' treatment of women in my sport (soccer) compared to the males in the same sport. Our performance was dismal similar to women in team sport nationally. The study, wanted to find out if this 'cold shoulder' treatment (lack of support) was the same being experienced by the top level female athletes in the nation and its relation to performance.

Thus, the statistics used to explore the data obtained from this study were the measures of central tendency namely the mean, the mode, range, standard deviation and percentages presented in simple table format. The mean, standard deviation, range and the mode were used to understand and interpret the data that yielded quantitative responses which were a minority compared to the qualitative multiple responses that made use of the mode as a technique of exploring them. Counts and their relative percentages are the most frequent statistic used to understand and interpret the findings of this study. The study went a step further and cross tabulated the key variables. A statistical hypothesis is a statement about the parameters or distribution of one or more populations. In hypothesis testing, it is not the scientific hypothesis that is tested directly, but its negation which is known as the null hypothesis (Kinnear and Gray 2004). The null hypothesis is that in the population, there is no difference among specified parameters. The null hypothesis is tested by gathering data and obtaining the value of a test statistic. The rejection of a null hypothesis only establishes the existence of a statistical association; it does not measure its strength.

In this study, the chi square was the statistic used to determine the presence of an association between the variables. The Pearson Chi-square test that was used compares the observed frequency of cases against the expected frequency for one or more unrelated samples on a variable which may have two or more categories (Cramer 1998). When it comes to interpreting the chi square, one selects a significance level, this study selected a significance level of .05 . The researcher then proceeds to look up the value of chi square against the appropriate degrees of freedom in the theoretical chi square distribution table. If the value of the test statistic (chi square) falls within the critical region in the table, the result is said to be significant and hence the researcher is justified to reject the null hypothesis. The p-value of chi square is the probability under the null hypothesis of obtaining a value at least as extreme as the one obtained. A statistical test shows significance if the probability value is less than the significance level (Kinnear and Gray 2004).

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, survey data are presented and analyzed. The chapter commences with the univariate analysis of data (basic description of variables). The data are reported through the use of descriptive statistics using frequency tables. The study's key variables are discussed using the survey data, the variables include: the personal characteristics of the athletes, reasons for the women athletes engaging in sport (motivation), an exploration on women's athletic experiences focusing on bias in sport and finally athletes' perception on sport and women's cultural development. After descriptive analysis of data, bivariate analysis is done to statistically relate two variables. The chapter ends with a summary of the study's findings.

4.1 The Background of Women Athletes in Nairobi.

This survey sought to understand the personal characteristics of women athletes in Nairobi. Data presented in this chapter cover 150 respondents each of whom filled a questionnaire that had both closed and open-ended questions and from 9 selected key informants who the researcher engaged in in-depth unstructured interviews. The 150 respondents as well as key informants did not all come from one particular sport discipline. Five different sport disciplines were included in this study to come up with the sample as depicted in Table 4.

Table 4: Distribution of Athletes by the Sport Discipline.

Discipline/sport studied	No. of Athletes studied	Percent (%)
Volleyball	35	23.3
Netball	29	19.3
Hockey	30	20
Handball	20	13.3
Basketball	36	24
Total	150	100

As can be observed from Table 4, five team sport disciplines viz. Hockey,

Volleyball, Netball, Basketball and Handball were selected and studied. Even though Netball has always been the conventional sport for women in Kenya, Basketball had the highest contribution to the sample. Indeed, Basketball contributed nearly a quarter (24%) to the sample. The variation in sub-sample size is also due to the timing the study was carried out, availability and willingness of respondents to fill and return the questionnaires. The discussion on the attributes of the respondents starts by presenting the data on age of the athletes. According to Ferraro (1991), age is a criterion adopted and widely used in society to control behaviour by establishing a clear set of roles and statuses. It is also particularly effective as a channel for the distribution of authority as it is equated with mental maturity (Ferraro 1991).

Age was measured by asking the respondents to state their current age in years at the particular time of data collection. Due to the physical demands of top performance, the study expected that sport would be dominated by relatively young athletes (below 30 years of age) as it is rather “unbecoming” in African patriarchal culture for older women (those of marriageable age) to engage in “childlike” activities (sport). Table 5 presents a summary distribution of the respondents by age group

Table 5: Age Distribution in Years

Age in Years	Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
17-25	87	58	58
26-34	45	30	88
35+	18	12	100
Total	150	100	

Data collected by this study confirm that most athletes are relatively young. The minimum age was 17 years while the maximum age was 42 years; average age of the sample was 25.9 years with a standard deviation of 5.8 years. The modal age was 23 years and more than half (58%) of the sample size fell below 26 years. Sport could be meeting a need or capture the interest of relatively young females. As expected, sport appears to be dominated by relatively young women who have the energy and will to play. This is also in line with Africa culture. Thus, relatively young women are more likely to engage in sport than older females.

The study was curious to establish the education levels of women engaged in sport. Education can be used as a measure/variable in social stratification. The study contended that the education level of women athletes in Nairobi had a role to play in determining ones social mobility. Most stereotypes about athletes in general pits athletes as least educated if not educated at all. Education was measured by asking the respondents to state their present educational status. Table 6 presents data on the samples distribution by level of education

Table 6: Distribution of the Athletes by Level of Education.

Sport	Secondary ('O' level)	High School ('A' Level)	University/College	Total
Basketball	18(50%)	-	18(50%)	36(24%)
Netball	18(62.1%)	7(24.1%)	4(13.8%)	29(19.3%)
Hockey	20(66.7%)	-	10(33.3%)	30(20%)
Volleyball	29(82.9)	3(8.6)	3(8.6%)	35(23.3%)
Handball	19((95%)	-	1(5%)	20(13.3%)
Total	104(69.3)	10(6.7%)	36(24%)	150(100%)

Table 6 is an inter sport description of the data on education level of the athletes. Data collected revealed that more than half of the sample (69.3%) had secondary level of education as their highest education attainment. This was the minimum level recorded in the sample. The sample also consisted of women athletes who had higher academic standings. Slightly less than one quarter of the sample (24%) had university/college level of education, while 10 (67%) of the respondents had proceeded from secondary level to advanced level (A level) education.

It is noted that Basketball had the highest number of respondents 18(50%) in the university/college category followed by hockey with 10(33%). Basketball is a popular sport for both old and young and interest in it cuts across levels of education. To be able to create a women's union as the case was with Hockey, the level of education of those women athletes must be relatively high (knowledge obtained from education empowers women to act accordingly). On the other hand, Volleyball, the most reputed successful women sport in Kenya, had the highest number of women with secondary education. This perhaps is the reason why society tends to relate sports women and men with least education or school

failures. From Table 6, it can be noted that sports like Netball and Volleyball had athletes in all education categories. This shows that they were traditional sports for women even before the change in the Kenyan education system, which currently allows a pupil to spend 8 years in Primary education, 4 years Secondary and 4 years in the University. The data on educational levels inform us that women athletes have relatively high levels of education against the popular belief in Kenya that sports men and women are illiterate school failures or dropouts. In this study, having a majority of the sample with secondary education supports the notion that women athletes are relatively well educated.

The study further measured the marital status of the respondents. In many social settings including Nairobi, one's marital status has been observed to influence the kind of activities one engages in. Not only does marriage impact significantly the activities of women, it also affects the timing of those activities. The general trend in Africa patriarchal societies is that once married, a woman has graduated from childhood/immaturity to maturity thus games/sport are unbecoming and undignified for her. Given this general perception, the study anticipated that there would be fewer married athletes in the sample. Data revealed that 113 (75.3%) of the sample were single and had never married, while 36 (24.7%) of the sample were married. The fact that three quarters (75%) of the sample were single supports the general observation that marriage tends to exclude women from sports, though not completely. With modernization through education, married women seem to be taking up sport evidenced by one third of the sample being married. It could be that once married, some women athletes continue with their sport.

The study also measured 'motherhood' amongst the athletes. Motherhood was measured by asking the athletes if they had any child or children of their own. Motherhood was perceived by the study to be a central activity in women's lives and was thus perceived as evidence of femininity. Women in sport are viewed differently perhaps owing to what sport has traditionally portrayed. Women in a masculinised institution like sport with all its tough, mean, violence, physical execution defy what society has beheld of women as loving, caring truant and weak. Hence, measuring motherhood was seen as vital to assess the peculiarity of women athletes (were they 'half men?'). The overwhelming majority (67%) of women studied had never bore children. This tends to support the general observation that motherhood tends to push women away from sport. However, the fact that nearly one third (33%) of the sport women had children suggests that things are changing.

4.2 Reasons Women Engage In Sport

One of the study's objectives was to capture the reasons women engaged in sport at National League Level. The point of view held by this study is that an awareness of the reasons that drove women into active sport would give readers an understanding of the present day scenario of women in sport in Nairobi, Kenya. The dominant assumption in this study was that women were in sport to make a living and partake of the golden opportunities, money, fame and glory associated with competitive sport. The question posed in the questionnaire was open ended and required the respondents to give their reasons for engaging in competitive sport. The study attempted to capture the modal reasons given for engaging in sport. Table 7 gives the categorised multiple responses and frequency yielded from this particular questionnaire item.

Table 7: Reasons Given for Engaging in Sport.

Reasons	Frequency	% Responses
1. They had a love for sport	71	29.7
2 To prove their worth as women	66	27.6
3 To keep fit/health reasons	39	16.3
4 Sports was a means to an end	31	13.0
5 Encouraged by peers/family	23	9.6
6 Employed by club sponsoring	8	3.3
Total Responses	239	100

From Table 7, one observes that there are many factors at play when a woman chooses to engage in sport. Love for sport which implies the exciting new challenge sport posed to the women was the reason that appeared most frequently, followed by the need of the athletes to prove their worth as women. Each of these responses scooped more than a quarter of the total responses – 29.7% and 27.7% respectively. Health and fitness which is assumed to be a major reason for women sport engagement came in third in terms of modal responses. What the study thought motivated women to engage in sport “sport was a means to an end” was ranked fourth with 31(13%) of total responses. The athletes who saw sports as a means to an end are perhaps those who join sport with the hope of securing permanent employment with the sponsoring club. The need for some of the athletes to prove their worth as women by engaging in sport could be described as motivation from the achievement incentive system. Presented are some examples of narratives from athletes that

show the achievement spirit amongst female athletes in Nairobi:-

- *“ I am in sport to be a world champion ”*
- *“ I am in sport to be the best sportswoman ever ”*
- *“ I am in sport to show that women can also do what men can do ”*

Such responses inform the study, that women may join sport not only for the feeling they get in the field but also to get/create a new identity for themselves. Sport can therefore be taken as a means of creating a new identity for women. Since women have been misinterpreted hence restrained from many activities, the study asked the respondents if a desire to prove oneself in life was indeed a motivation for them to be in sport. For more than half of the sample (58%), a desire to prove society wrong about whom they were was a major reason to engage in sport. This is plausible as sport is a masculinised institution hence women excelling in it proves many doctrines and stereotypes about them as baseless. Thus, they are not prisoners to monolithic definitions of who they are.

The researcher also sought to find out from the respondents through a closed-ended question, if proving a point about themselves was one of the reasons for engaging in sports. Findings revealed that 105 (70%) of the athletes in the study had the need of proving a point about themselves as one reason they engaged in sport. The degree or extent of this motivation in their sport endeavour nevertheless varied. Using a scale to find out “how major a reason their need to prove their worth” the following data were derived. Among those who were in sport to prove their worth, 56 (37.3%) stated that proving a point about themselves to the larger society was a major reason for engaging in sport. Slightly more than quarter 38 (25.3%) said that proving a point about themselves was a very major reason for engaging in sport. Only 11(7.3%) of the total 105 (70%) who were engaged in sport to prove a point to society about themselves said that this motivation was minor compared to the other factors that made them engage in sport.

Generally, women’s engaging in sport as a social behaviour is perceived on the basis of rewards. Many social factors like type of sports, age, social class, religious background, opportunity costs, health and marital status influence ones definition of rewards. Perhaps for a bulk of women, self appreciation and recognition, amongst other reasons, form the major rational for their engagement in sport. Women in sport in Nairobi can be said to be in a

form of silent voicing and backlash to a society that has trivialised womanhood. Sport is hence an avenue found and used by diverse women to be noticed and to communicate to society actively using their bodies. Thus, sport should not be taken for granted; they symbolize many things to women as captured by this study.

4.3 Women's Athletic Experiences.

The study also sought to examine the broader experiences of women athletes in Nairobi. Based on the wider social problem of gender inequality, the study was curious to see if discrimination against women was replicated in sport and whether it was responsible for their present sport performance. The experiences are addressed under various subheadings geared to help one understand what women athletes go through.

4.3.1 Fairness and equality in Sport

Under this theme, the study intended to assess the prevailing ethos in sport especially the aspect of fairness and the acceptance of women in sport. To understand the importance of fairness, the study asked the respondents to comment on whether they agreed with the statement that sport is fair to both men and women in Kenya. This was a closed question and they were required to choose from a battery of responses. From the sample 19.3% strongly disagreed with this statement while over half the sample (59.3%) disagreed. Thus, a cumulative majority (78.6%) were of the opinion that sport in Kenya was at least not free and fair. This implies that there could be discrimination of some sort against the women.

The study proceeded to ask the respondents whether there was bias (unfair treatment of any kind) against women engaged in sport in Kenya. Majority 120 (80%) of the athletes acknowledged the presence of bias against women athletes in Nairobi, while the rest did not. These respondents were also asked to give the aspects of discrimination. This was an open-ended question and the researcher was interested in the frequency of the multiple responses given. Table 8 shows the frequencies of the categorised multiple responses obtained from those who reported bias against women in sport.

Table 8: Reported Areas of Bias against Women in Sport.

Reported Biases	Frequency	%
Women undervalued as athletes	57	33.1
Bias in the allocation of resources	45	14.5
Particular women clubs of same sport preferred over others	25	6.4
Particular sport disciplines preferred over others by officials	20	11.6
Bias in the allocation of status	14	8.1
Media coverage favour male sport	11	6.4
Total Responses	172	100

Bias in sport comes in many forms as the respondents have revealed in Table 8. There is inter sport bias mentioned 20 times having 11.6% of total responses. This entails more support and public investment in some sport than in others even though the favoured sport does not perform well e.g. investing in male soccer while female hockey could excel given more focus. Intra sport bias was mentioned 25 times and obtained 14.5% of total response. This is where particular clubs within one sport discipline are more favoured (by the governing sport body officials) than the rest in terms of distribution of resources and national team selection among others. Table 8 reveals a gap in sport leadership and management especially with inter sport and intra sport bias. Men who are mostly the sport officials run sport in Nairobi and also control women sport. The reported bias come in various forms as explained here.

4.3.1.1 Women Undervalued as Athletes

This variable creates the imagery of women not being incorporated fully in sport body compared to the males in sport. This response was mentioned 57 times, it was the modal response capturing 33.1% of those who said bias exists. This response from the athletes was supported by views expressed by the key informants. For example, concerning observed bias in Hockey, one key informant had this to share:

Kenya Hockey Union, the main body in Kenyan Hockey was very domineering and the ladies broke away to form Kenya Ladies Hockey Association.

Culture still plays a strong role in deterring women from sport and subjugating those in it hence maintaining discriminatory practices against women. According to the same hockey informant, society's image of woman affects women's sport development. In this regard:

A woman's place is supposed to be in the kitchen, a woman in the field is taken differently when she says she is going to the field – it implies, she has nothing to do, decent women go home.

Women in sport leadership were also undervalued when it came to contribution in the team as one of the volleyball team manager reported concerning common practices in volleyball. According to her, male coaches do not listen to women officials even if it concerns women sport issues. This is evident in the following excerpt:

The coach(male) feels he is being threatened by a woman especially when she offers a suggestion like substitute or change, he refuses and prefers to let one poor player to remain while the team is losing instead of changing (This is in the ladies team).

Being undervalued implies that women in sport are not fully exploited to the benefit of the sport institution, they are not perceived as capable of adding any value to their sport environment. This statement is supported by the fact that over three quarters of the sample 117 (78%) said they had not reached their best performance levels. A thing is undervalued when its characteristics and potential are not objectively known and understood to be put into correct/right usage. Ignorance about women exists, which leads to discrimination against them in sport impacting negatively on their performance.

4.3.1.2 Bias in Status Allocation

From Table 8, one of the ways bias is manifested is in the allocation of status (promotion/upward mobility). This response was mentioned 14 times and scooped 8.1% of total responses. The respondents had been asked in the questionnaire to state if having more women in sport leadership position would benefit female athletes in Kenya. From their responses, 136 (90.7%) said 'yes' while only 14 (9.3%) said 'no.' According to most athletes, the ability for women to understand each other better was a reason to justify their need for more women leaders in sport. Thus, having few women as leaders in sport is problematic to women athletes when we understand that performance is a sum of many factors. Accordingly, we asked respondents if they thought women were a majority in their specific sport leadership positions. A majority 111(74%) of sample stated 'Not a majority'

while 39(26%) stated that women were a majority in their sport. Most of the affirmative responses were from the sports that have been feminised like Netball, where the association is led and run by women. Those who stated 'not a majority' were required to give reasons. The related data are presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Reasons Explaining Minority Status of Women in Sport leadership

Response	Frequency	Percent (%)
Bias against women	49	29.9
Nature of Women	37	22.6
Women don't vie for seat	28	17.1
Other interest	22	13.4
Minority	15	9.1
New in sport	13	7.9
Total Responses	164	100

From Table 9, bias against women was the modal response given to explain paucity of women in sport leadership in Nairobi. It has 29.9% of the entire sample responses. Some of the athletes' exact sentiments on the issue of women sport leadership are presented in italics;

- Volleyball - *"they (women) have not been given a chance in leadership even coaching hence most of them have shyed off from the sport"*.

- Volleyball - *"Women are looked down upon"*

- Handball - *"... .. men (are) not allowing them (women) to be above them"*.

- Hockey - *"Gender insensitivity within the society"*.

- Basketball - *"I think that there is gender inequality in not only our sport but in our country as a whole where people tend to look down upon women in leadership"*.

- Basketball - *"They (women) are denied the opportunity"*.

These phrases captured from the questionnaires highlight the women's reason for being few

in sport leadership, even in sport where women's performance is exemplary. Passivity amongst the women athletes can be observed when some say that they are not given a chance. This passivity could be a function of the gender role socialisation process where consciously or unconsciously, aggression is not developed in the female to maintain patriarchy. This can affect their performance as sport requires aggression to excel both in leadership and as players.

The response tagged 'nature of women' in Table 9 provided an interesting observation of women and how their experiences in sport are shaped up by themselves. This response scooped 37(22.6%) of total responses. How the 'Nature of women' affects their upward mobility in sport is witnessed by a sample of responses captured by the study:

- Hockey *Women are so shy. They are afraid of being told about their mistakes. We always have ideas that men are the ones who lead us everyday in our lives.*
- Hockey *Women who have been in leadership have totally abused their powers and hence instead of supporting each other, we are tearing each other down.*
- Hockey *I think it's the mentality (women have) that men are better administrators than women.*
- Basketball *They can't manage to share administration with marriage needs (family). Many fear going for such challenges, many ladies lack what it takes to be in such position.*
- Basketball *Women for once, have their natural weakness of being bias to others with no good reasons. Generally women in leadership are never flexible to changes i.e. decisions, opinions etc.*
- Basketball *They (women) don't believe in themselves.*
- Volleyball *Women are 'seasonal', sometimes they are active and sometimes they become inactive.*

Volleyball *Because they are soft hearted and they don't have the ability, time, confidence and courage to lead others.*

What can be concluded from these narratives is that women athletes have an active role to play if their sport is to improve. The athletes' sentiments point to the fact that women have also undervalued themselves as leaders. This undervaluation can be taken as a product of being culturally undervalued in a patriarchal capitalist society. What is observed in Nairobi was also observed in Norway (see Norwegian women project 1995-2000). In Norway, bias against women in sport leadership implies that though qualified, they are not recognized for their abilities and therefore cannot contribute positively to the development of sport. The Norwegian women project was thus, initiated for such reason – to increase the number of women among sport leaders, coaches and other team support as well as to improve the quality of female participants in top level sports in order to increase the number of medals won internationally (Norwegian Olympic committee 1995). These findings on status allocation informs us that without quantitative and qualitative change – women sport is bound to be non impressive locally and internationally.

4.3.1.3 Bias in Allocation of Resources.

Bias in allocation of resources refers to the unfair distribution of scarce resources namely money and materials to facilitate the performance of sport. Financial resources or money is a crucial factor in many industries and the sport industry is not exempted. From Table 8, bias in allocation of resources was mentioned 45 times having 26.2% of total responses. The study chose to observe bias in financial resource allocation in two levels. One was from the club level and the other was from the governing sport body level. The study sought to find out if women thought that, relative to males, they were treated fairly with regards to financial support from their respective governing sport bodies. This was measured at a nominal level and captured Yes/No responses.

In regard to financial support from the governing body, 87 (58%) of respondents said they were NOT treated fairly in their sport in the context of sponsorship, while the minority, 63 (42%) observed equal treatment. It could be that male sport is far more common and more historical thus safer to support than women sport which is new and uncertain. Amongst other players the governing bodies of sport are key influences on the opportunity of women to participate. Their policies and practices in relation to development programmes and

resource allocation are often critical in enabling women to attain higher levels of achievement and get necessary exposure to high-level competition and training (E.S.C. 1998).

Nevertheless, a difference is observed at club level. Majority of athletes 108 (72%) said they were treated fairly relative to their male counterparts in their clubs, while 42 (28%) did not agree. Management of athletes at clubs level is smaller in scope. Thus, it could be much easier for the club to cater for the financial needs of their athletes (female and male) equally without discrimination. Hence it can be concluded that the bias against women in terms of financial resources is likely to occur more at governing sport body level than in respective club level.

4.3.1.4 Bias in Media Coverage

From Table 8 which provides the manifestations of bias in sport, the respondents mentioned that media coverage favours male sports. This factor was cited 11 times having 6.4% of total responses. The media and sport are one of the themes in the literature review. Some questions were posed to get the respondents perspective on the media as an institution that closely works with the sport world.

When asked if the media was unfair in terms of the treatment of sports women, a balanced response was obtained from the sample. One half of the women said the media was unfair while the other half said the media was not unfair. It is really very surprising to establish that 50% of women reported that the media were fair! One can infer from this finding that the mass media are coming of age in women sport as no public outcry has been heard from the women athletes themselves. The respondents also gave statements regarding the media. The findings are reported in Table 10.

Table 10: Responses Regarding Sport, Women and Media

Comments on Media	Frequency	Percent
The media can do more	72	55
Media very encouraging	42	32
Women athletes need to be active	16	12.3
Total	130	100
20 Missing		

From the 130 (100%) respondents who answered the question, a majority of 72(55.4%) were of the opinion that the media could do much more to enhance the status of women sport in Nairobi, Kenya. The other 42(32.3%) observed major improvement in terms of women sport content in the media, hence saw the media as pro-women sport. A minority 16(12.3%) of the respondents however did not see the problem in the media but on women athletes and sport leaders. To this group, women sport being downplayed and being unpopular was a function of lack of dedication of the women in sport as it is their duty (in their opinion) to contact and inform media houses of tournaments coming up and also organize for the media to come. According to the English Sport Council (1998), lack of media coverage of women's sport, even at the elite level, played a major part in defining the perception of women's participation in sport, diminishing its acceptability and significance and failing to provide role models for girls and young women to emulate. Therefore if the media support women sport in Nairobi it is more likely to improve and be accepted.

In conclusion most of the sample 105 (70%) stated that the mentioned aspects of discrimination affected their athletic performance. Thus, it is plausible to state that for improved performance amongst women athletes, an attitude change must occur within the entire sport institution (women included) together with other social institutions that are linked to it.

4.4 A Woman's Participation in Sport and Change in Attitudes towards Femininity.

The next and final objective of the study was to find out the relationship between women's participation in sport and how their attitudes on traditional gender roles have been affected. The study attempted to assess whether women sport participation had impacted on the athletes' attitude toward traditional gender roles for women. Findings revealed that 115 (76.7%) of the respondents identified their sport participation as having led to changes in the opinions they had about women. The respondents were required to explain their reasons. Those who said sport had changed their views on women noted that sport had revealed to them other dimensions of womanhood which they had not known, like zeal, determination, and physical power amongst other qualities. This can be taken to mean that as women venture into sport, they meet and are exposed to other women locally and internationally who have different histories (backgrounds) achievements and abilities. It is through such social environments that long held stereotypes are disproved; One key informant summarily

put it that *'woman can excel in anything with proper support'*

Of those who attempted to explain their response on attitude change toward femininity, only 33 (30.8%) said sport participation had not changed the opinion they had about what women can do. For them, they are those who believe in the ability of women to achieve and their being in sport is a sign that women are worthy social people. The study also sought to explore the extent of changed attitudes towards what has always been said about women. Cumulatively, 84% of the sample admitted that by engaging in sport much of their attitudes towards what has always been said about women changed to a large extent. In conclusion, the athletes were asked if they believed women should be restricted to certain roles in the society. A majority 133 (88.7%) said women should not be restricted to certain roles while 17 (11.3%) thought otherwise. By being in sport, women are already saying NO to a culture that hinders them. They are practically voicing that traditional gender roles don't fit the definition and identity of women.

Summary of Univariate Analysis

Under the univariate analysis, it has been observed that sport is dominated by young females with the average age of 25.9 years. These women are not illiterate as stereotypes suggest. Most of them have secondary level of education as their highest achievement while few of them had "A" level and University level of education in their academic portfolios. It was observed that 75.3% of the sample was single, suggesting incompatibility of marriage/family and sport. An equally important finding was that an overwhelming majority of the sample had bore no children perhaps indicating how the physical demands of sports do not motivate many women in it to consider child bearing. It was also reported that many of the women were in sport due to the challenge sport posed also referred to as 'love of sport'.

For many women, a need to prove their worth as women was also a factor in making them engage in sport. That is, women are in sport for some sort of identity reconstruction purpose. In assessing the women's athletic experiences, an admission to the presence of unfair treatment of women in sport was made therefore; discrimination against women athletes in Nairobi negatively impacts their sport performance. The study also found out that women's engagement in sport had influenced their attitudes towards femininity and thus, were more liberated and bolder to enter non traditional chores.

4.5 Bivariate Analysis

4.5.1 Introduction to bivariate analysis

The preceding segment focused on the univariate analysis of data (basic description of variables) as a prelude to more complex analysis. In bivariate analysis, the goal is to study the relationships between two variables. Four independent variables have been identified to be cross tabulated with one dependent variable. The statistic used to explain three of the contingency tables is the chi-square test for independence. The chi-square statistic allows one to make decisions about whether there is a relationship between two or more variables. If the null hypothesis⁹ is rejected, one concludes that there is a statistically significant relationship between the variables (Linton 2003). The probability level used to test the significance of given relationships amongst variables was .05 .

4.5.2 Understanding Women Sport Participation.

A social scientist interested in female athletes in a modern setting will seek to assess how specified variables affect the athlete's participation in sport. This study sought to investigate what factors could explain the decision by women to engage in sport in Nairobi. The study identified 4 independent variables that could determine women's sport participation; they were age, marital status, employment status and level of education.

4.5.2.1 Age of Women and Participation in Sport

Age of women is highly politicized and impacts largely on the decisions a woman has to make in patriarchal settings. The study identified age as a major factor that could explain women's participation in sport. Age can influence a woman's decision or affect her action. Her choice to marry or not, have children or not, attend school or not can rest entirely on her age. When it comes to sport, a woman's age can determine which sport she engages in. Since sport is socially coded, the study sought to assess whether age does have a bearing or influence on female sport participation. The variable age of women, was cross-tabulated with participation in sport. The athletes in the sample were put into age groups and categorized according to the games they represented. Age was measured by asking the respondent their current age at the time the survey was being conducted. Table 11 shows the results.

⁹Null hypothesis is that the two variables X and Y have no association.

Table 11: Participation of Women in Sport by Age.

Sport Discipline	Age in Years			Total
	17-25	26-34	35+	
Basketball	28 (18.6%)	8 (5.3%)	0 (0%)	36 (24.0%)
Volleyball	19 (12.6%)	10 (6.6%)	6 (4%)	35 (23.3%)
Handball	18 (12%)	2 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	20 (13.3%)
Hockey	17 (11.3%)	13 (8.6%)	0 (0%)	30 (20.0%)
Netball	5 (3.3%)	12 (8%)	12 (8%)	29(19.3%)
Total	87 (58%)	45 (30%)	18 (12%)	150 (100.0%)

N.B-No chi-square test done as more than 80% of cells have an expected value of 5 and less in the table

From Table 11, it is clear that over half the (58%) sample fell into the broader 17-25 year age bracket which closely concurs with the previously stated finding that physical activity is highest among women in age group 18-24 years (Sport England Survey-1999-2000). We find fewer females in the age group of 26-34 years and still less in the 35+ year age bracket. Thus, women's age seems to determine their participation in sport. More specifically, sports like Basketball, Handball and Hockey attracted active young athletes; these three sports did not have any female in the 35+ age category. Only Basketball and Handball had fewer athletes in the 26-34 age group. Basketball and Handball are more aggressive and entertain a degree of physical body contact with opponents unlike the other three which are less aggressive and technically safe as direct physical confrontation with the opponent is forbidden. A sport like Netball had the fewest in the 17-25 age categories. Perhaps Netball is perceived by this age group to be less challenging, boring and carry with it a residue of the Victorian ideals about women. Team sport like Volleyball, Netball and even Hockey which are less aggressive than Handball and Basketball favour older women and having older ages in them suggest that these sports don't contradict major tenets of femininity. Hence, a woman's age is fundamental in choosing to engage in sport. Younger women are more likely to participate in newer, more aggressive, direct contact sport while older women are likely to engage in gentler, indirect contact sport.

4.5.2.2 Marriage and Women Participation in Sport

Closely related to the age of a woman is her marital status. One's marital status is seen to influence many of her decisions. In sub-Saharan Africa, a marriage is partially seen as successful based on the fulfilment of the first key responsibility i.e. bearing children. As

much as marriage is a personal decision, in modern day setting, a married woman is respected and honoured. Marriage pressure is one of patriarchy's ways of ensuring a woman does not focus on what she personally likes to do (example sport). Marriage pressure or pressure to marry causes many females to miss out on character building enterprises like sport. Pressure for females to marry is both overt and subtle. Through media, songs, religion, stories and other agents of socialization, it is inbuilt in women that marriage is a sane direction for her.

When a woman engages in sport, it is a blow to patriarchy and the role of marriage in fostering capitalism. Sport participation increases the age of marriage for females and also delays onset of age of first sexual experience for females (Pemberton and Everhart 2001). Women in sport are a threat to patriarchal hegemony. Sport serves to make women think and be self-sufficient such that they don't need protection from males; they can walk alone from practice in the evening. It can be said that sport hinders early marriage amongst female athletes. Given these observations, the study sought to establish whether women's marital status influenced their participation in sport. Marital status was measured by asking the athletes to indicate the category they best fitted in - single (never married), married, divorced, widowed. To be able to use the chi-square statistic effectively the category, the category single was collapsed to include those athletes who were divorced and widowed. The athletes were grouped by their sport. Table 12 presents the findings

Table 12: Participation of Women in Sport by Marital Status.

Sport Discipline	Marital Status		Total
	Single	Married	
Basketball	30 (20.0%)	6 (4.0%)	36 (24.0%)
Volleyball	21 (14.0%)	14 (9.3%)	35 (23.3%)
Handball	17(11.3%)	3 (2.0%)	20 (13.3%)
Hockey	28 (18.7%)	2 (1.3%)	30 (20.0%)
Netball	18 (12%)	11 (7.3%)	29 (19.3%)
Total	114 (76.0%)	36 (24.0%)	150 (100.0%)

Chi square=15.86; df=4

Table 12 cell values generally tend to suggest that it is not common to be married and engage in sport. Observe that the overwhelming majority of women athletes covered (76%) were single by the time of the survey. It is either that once they get married women in

non traditional sport quit, or those who marry and remain in sports are in particular kinds of sport. The sport that had modal response of 'married' was Volleyball followed by Netball with 14 (9.3%) and 11 (7.3%), respectively. Data in Table 12 suggests that most married women are more likely to be found in less rigorous (female friendly) feminine sports like Netball and Volleyball, while most singles are likely to venture into non conventional sports like Hockey, Basketball and Handball that are less feminine in style. Those women who need to be married and stay in it are likely to be attracted to female identified sport. At the .05 probability level, the statistics for table 12 are significantly well above the critical value necessary to reject the hypothesis that no relationship exists between marital status and participation in sport by women.

4.5.2.3 Employment and Women Participation in Sport.

In attempting to understand women's engagement in sport, their employment status was also analyzed. The study was of the opinion that if women athletes were in full time employment, they would not seriously participate in sport and this could be a factor in explaining their performance. In trying to find out whether a woman's employment status influences her participation in sport, the variable employment was cross tabulated with type of sport and the results are shown in Table 13.

Table 13: Participation of Women in Sport by Employment Status.

Sport discipline	Employment Status		Total
	Employed	Not employed	
Basketball	14 (9.3%)	22 (14.7%)	36 (24.0%)
Volleyball	20 (13.3%)	15 (10.0%)	35 (23.3%)
Handball	13 (8.7%)	7 (4.7%)	20 (13.3%)
Hockey	19 (12.7%)	11 (7.3%)	30 (20.0%)
Netball	22 (14.7%)	7 (4.7%)	29 (19.3%)
Total	88 (58.7%)	62 (41.3%)	150 (100.0%)

Chi square= 9.977 ; Sg = 0.041 ; Df = 4

From Table 13, majority of the sample (58.7%) was employed. That means that they were involved in other work activities that were not sport related. In Kenya, some athletes are employed by the firm that sponsors their club. They are employed in different positions based on their academic and professional credentials. Note also that some firms recruit on the strength of sport credentials, those who excel in sports easily get jobs in some firms. It

could be said that those not employed were mostly students and those engaging in sport with the goal of securing employment contracts with the sponsoring firms. Basketball had the majority who were not employed. This is plausible as Basketball is an active, non traditional female sport; hence, younger females who are probably students will engage in it for the challenge it poses. The most feminine sport- Netball had the highest number of those in employment. Perhaps the more feminine the sport, the higher the chances of being employed as one will not pose a challenge to masculine hegemony in the employment sphere. The firms employing women using certain sport are sure that they will get acceptable recognition and marketing strength by not deviating from societal norms concerning women and sport. It is safe for firms to sponsor and market traditional female sport. Table 13 obtained a chi square value of 9.977 which is higher than the critical chi square value of 9.4877 at the .05 probability level. This implies that the finding is significant, there is a high probability that the relationship was not by chance. There is a significant relationship between ones employment status and the type of sport she engages in.

4.5.2.4 Participation in Sport by Level of Education.

There is a general belief albeit without empirical evidence, that sport is for those with minimal academic inclination and potential. Does a female's level of education determine sport participation, i.e. which kind of sport will she engage in? The minimum level of education in the entire sample was secondary level. For purposes of cross tabulating using the chi square, the education levels of the sample were transformed into two groups- secondary and post secondary (A level and University/College). Table 14 presents the results obtained.

Table 14: Participation of Women in sport by Level of Education

Sport discipline	Education level		Total
	Secondary	Post Secondary	
Basketball	18 (12%)	18 (12%)	36 (24%)
Volleyball	29 (19.3%)	6 (4%)	35 (23.3%)
Handball	19 (12.6%)	1(0.6%)	20 (13.3%)
Hockey	20 (13.3%)	10 (6.6%)	30 (20%)
Netball	18 (12%)	11 (7.3%)	29 (19.3%)
Total	104 (69.3%)	46 (30.6%)	150 (100.0%)

Chi square=16.356 ; Df = 4 ; Sign = 0.03

Most of the respondents in Table 14 had secondary level of education as the highest educational achievement. These findings imply that women athletes are relatively well educated. Only Basketball, Netball followed by Hockey had sizeable number of respondents with post secondary education. Volleyball is the only successful women sport in Kenya and it has a high proportion of its players with secondary education level. Undivided attention, focus, having adequate skills for the game, loving the sport, adequate time in sport is demanded for success in any sport. Hence, for most of the volleyball athletes, it could be that they focus on their sport without hindrances of academic demands faced at higher levels of education. We can conclude that in an achievement oriented society, the lower your level of education, the more one has a desire to achieve in a different field like sport. Statistically, Table 14 generated a chi square value of 16.356 which is higher than the critical value at the .05 probability level. We reject the null hypothesis. The relationship between education levels and participating in sport by women is not by chance. Level of education does significantly determine a woman's engagement in sport and resulting performance.

4.5.3 Summary of Bivariate Data Analysis

From the bivariate analysis, the study observes that age of a woman and her participation in sport are likely to be related. Age tends to influence the kind of sport women engage in. Non traditional feminine sport most likely attracts younger female athletes. In cross tabulating marital status and sport participation, cell values of Table 12 lend support to the fact that one's marital status impacts on her participation in sport. Married athletes, though a minority are likely to be found in feminine/traditional sport. When employment status and participation in sport were cross tabulated, the relationship was statistically significant; one's employment status does significantly determine the type of sport women engage in. The relationship captured by table 14 which cross classified sport participation and level of education was also statistically significant; level of education does significantly determine one's involvement in sport in Nairobi.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the summary of findings from the study will be presented followed by the conclusions that lead to the study's recommendations.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study was anchored on three (3) objectives;

1. To investigate the factors that explains the decision by women to engage in sports.
2. To find out whether discrimination against women impacted on their sport performance
3. To find out if women's participation in sports influenced the attitudes on traditional gender roles.

Being interested in women's sport participation in Nairobi, the study was able to obtain interesting findings. In looking at the female athletes' background, the study observed that sport in Nairobi was dominated by relatively young females. The modal age of the sample was 23 years while, 58% of the sample fell below the age of 26 years. Sports are an activity for the young energetic females who have time for it. In gauging the literacy levels of the sample, the least level of education was secondary level of education. Majority of the sample had secondary level of education. A quarter of the sample comprised of women with higher levels of education. By Kenyan standards, these women had substantive education, making the sports women to be relatively well educated. The study also analyzed the marital status of the interviewees. Majority of them (75%) were single (never married), while a quarter were married. This supports the general observation that marriage and sports are seemingly incompatible, either married women drop out of sport or few married women remain in the sports considered feminine. In assessing motherhood, 67% of the sample had bore no children, this finding support general observation that motherhood as a career tends to push women away from sport and also sport leadership.

In investigating the factors that explain the decision by women to engage in sport, it was

observed that the athletes in the sample had many reasons for engaging in sport. Amongst the reasons mostly mentioned were, their love for sport which refers to the challenge presented by sports followed by a need to prove their worth as women. Health and financial factors were not modal responses. This finding exposed a factor that has not been thought of as important in patriarchal societies; women are not in sport for the common reasons like health, rewards and fame; they are in sport to break patriarchy's devalue of women, by participating in the most obvious male identified institution. *They are in sport in search of their objective identities, thus women in sport should not be taken for granted.*

Since most of the women were in sport because of their love for it and to prove their worth as women, this impacted on how they constructed their social reality. Data collected showed that 80% of the respondents believed there was discrimination against women in sport. The discrimination was in terms of undervaluing of women as human beings, allocation of resources, status allocation and media coverage. In terms of financial support, 58% of the respondents perceived that women in sport were discriminated against in comparison to male athletes especially at the governing body level. Such unfairness in sport was perceived as problematic hence affecting and demotivating women athletes and as such negatively impacting their performance.

When investigating women's participation in sport and change in attitudes on traditional gender roles, majority of the sample (89%) reported that women should not be restricted to certain roles. This finding is evidence that *by being in sports, women attitude towards themselves and others significantly change and biological determinism ceases to be a major force in determining woman's role in society.*

The bivariate analysis for this study identified 4 key independent variables namely age; marital status, employment status and level of education and assessed how they influenced women's participation in sport. Not being able to utilize the chi-square statistic to assess the relationship between age and participation in sport, the study attempted to analyze the cross-tabulation using the cell frequencies. From the frequencies of table 11, the study concludes that there could be a relationship between a woman's age and her participation in sport. Having many young women in sport tends to prove that indeed they are out to curve a

niche for themselves in society. Youthful years are also associated with discovery of identity.

The cross classification on marital status and women's participation in sport was significant at the .05 probability level and this suggests that marriage is incompatible with sport participation. The study also observed that there was a significant relationship between employment status and participation in sport. A woman's employment status does significantly bear on the type of sport she engaged in. Another significant relation was between level of education and sport participation. Therefore a woman engages in sport due to reasons which are dependent of her employment status and level of education.

5.2 IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS AND RESEARCH GAPS.

The findings from the bivariate analysis have several implications. Marriage and participation in sport by women being significant implies that a subtle stigmatization is still present for many women who would want to be married and continue engaging in sport. Until this stigma is removed, many women are not going to live their lives to the fullest as they are being denied avenues of self actualization in the name of compliance to culture.

The significance between a woman's employment status and her engagement in sport informs one that firms being capitalistic and patriarchal will reinforce those sentiments through the type of women sport they sponsor. When their profit needs are not being met it is much easier for them to scrape of the women's team as a cost cutting mechanism. This means that firms are not committed to the nurturing of women sport to higher performance levels unless profits will be forthcoming. Indeed women sport cannot be developed in such environments as they are being used to further the interests that are responsible for there second class treatment.

Having the level of education and women's participation in sport significant, one understands that many women will want to experience upward mobility and experience an achieved status using the vehicle of sport. Since upward mobility through the means of higher education may have been difficult to achieve, they should be given a fair chance to excel and achieve in their choice of sport.

The findings of this study have future implications for the sociology of sport in Kenya. The problem of sport in Kenya should be looked at in light of the history of Kenya. Having adopted various sports that culturally have no place in the African heritage, there are therefore no values or ethos that justifies many sports Kenya participates in leading to the present experiences and the various problems surrounding sport performance and its management. This therefore presents a challenge to social research and social anthropology to investigate more on various traditional games and their place/role in traditional society.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

This study attempted to understand the factors that explain women's engagement in sport. From the findings, 2 factors clearly stand out as reasons justifying their sport engagement; their love for sport and the need to prove their worth as women. The study attempted to find out if a relationship existed between bias and women's performance in sport. The study discovered the presence of bias in sport in Nairobi and its negative impact on women's sport performance. The final objective was to seek for a relationship between women's engagement in sport and attitudes on traditional gender roles. It was observed that women's engagement in sport affects positively their attitudes on traditional gender roles, that is, sports women do not accept the rigid traditional gender roles. The study's conclusion based on these findings is that socio-cultural factors do determine a woman's engagement in sport and her performance in it in Nairobi Kenya.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the study hereby offers some recommendations that could positively affect women athletes as a group.

At the individual level, since women are in sport for the love of it and to prove their worth as women, they should not be afraid to participate in sport to their fullest ability regardless of gender role expectations. Hence, they should not tolerate sexism, stereotypes, injustice, inequality and second class treatment as a group and in society as a whole. The study recommends that women truly in sport for the mentioned reasons to arise fight and voice in order to have sport tailored according to their desires at club level and at governing body level. In a capitalistic society, what one loves or believes in is worth fighting for using

all means necessary. For women sport to go a notch higher in Nairobi Kenya, the women should adopt strategies that will push forward their sport cause.

At the academic level the study recommends that social researchers and anthropologists investigate deeper into the African sporting history to find out more on the games of the past and their similarity or difference with present day games, with a view of recreating or modifying them into structured sport. These sports should then be introduced and marketed locally as they have a historical base. Once accepted, the sport bodies should market the sport internationally for it to gain international status as well as be an event in the major games. The study is of the opinion that if a nation culturally identifies with a sport, it is easier to succeed in it. For example, Kenya's international success in track events could be explained by the fact that running has been cultural (way of life) for some communities in Kenya.

Since bias is present in sport in Nairobi and is problematic, the study recommends changes at both the institutional level and national level with regards to sport.

At the institutional level which has to do with the management of teams, players, coaches and daily activities of club, the study advocates that women teams should be directed by women passionate about sport and its development. These women should be assessed in light of women sport projects initiated and causes of action taken to mitigate the obstacles women athletes' encounter.

At the National level, qualified females and males should be engaged to manage sport as a profession not a part-time job or hobby. They should be employed on contract by the government to overhaul the present cross-sectional management crisis of sport. They should be challenged to come up with a sport industrial structure that invests in and creates world class athletes as well as income for them and the nation as a whole.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE

Hallo! My name is Charity and I am a Sociology student at the University of Nairobi. I am carrying out a research as part of my academic requirement. I am interested in sport and more specifically the women who engage in sport in Nairobi, Kenya. I want to find out about your performance in sport and factors related to it. I kindly request you to spare some of your time to fill in this questionnaire with your responses. Your response will be treated with a lot of confidentiality. Thank you in advance.

A : BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Age?
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2. Religion? (1) Christian (2) Muslim (3) Other
(Specify).....
3. Level of education of athlete?
(1) Primary (2) O level (form four) (3) A level (form six) (4) Other specify
4. District of birth?
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5. Do you have any child or children of your own? (1) Yes (2) No
6. How many if yes?
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7. Marital status (1) Single (Never married) (2) Married (3) Divorced (4) Widowed
5) Separated
8. If single who do you live with?
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B: FACTORS EXPLAINING DECISION TO ENGAGE IN SPORT

9. How did you get involved in sports?.

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10. Was there a negative association between women and sports? (1) Yes (2) No

11. If Yes, how much did this discourage you from active sport participation

(1) Very much (2) Much (3) Not very much (4) Not at all

12. What major factors made you choose to remain active in sport?
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13. Explain why you participate in sport at this level (league).
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14. Is proving a point about yourself one of the reasons for engaging in sport?

(1) Yes (2) No

15. If Yes, how major a reason is it?

(1) Very major (2) Major (3) Minor (4) Very minor

16. Was a desire to prove oneself in life, a major factor in influencing your decision to engage in sport? (1) Very major (2) Major (3) Not at all (4) Minor (5) Very minor

17. Name of current club and sport ?
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C : FACTORS INFLUENCING LEADERSHIP IN SPORT.

18. In your g sport are women a majority in leadership positions (e.g. coach, administrators etc.)? 1) Yes 2) No

19. If No, why do you think they are a minority (less) in sports leadership? Give your reasons.
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20. Do you think having more women in sport leadership levels will benefit the female athletes in Kenya? 1) Yes 2) No

21. Explain

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D : WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT

22. Have you gained anything useful from participating in sport

1) Yes 2) No.

23. If Yes, specify

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E : ATHLETES PERCEPTION ON PROBLEMS AND PERFORMANCE

24. Do you have a major say in the decision making processes of sport activities in your Club? (1) Yes (2) No

25. What are the consequences? (Q.31)

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26. Do you have a major say in the decision making processes of sport activities in your Governing sport body? (1) Yes (2) No

27. What are the consequences? (Q.33)

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28. What other problems (social, financial, cultural, political, etc.) do you face as a team?

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29. Do you think you have reached your best performance level?

1) Yes 2) No

30. What factors (social, economic, cultural, administrative etc.) do you think if considered could lead to good performance?

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F : RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BIAS AND PERFORMANCE

31. Do you agree that sport in Kenya is free and fair?

(1) Strongly agree (2) Agree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly disagree

32. Do you think that there are biases (unfair treatment of any kind) against women engaged in sport in Kenya? 1) Yes 2) No.

33. If there are, specify the areas they occur in.

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34. Do you think women are treated fairly/equally with male athletes in the same sport and level (league) when it comes to (Tick)

- 1. Opportunities for competition
- 2. Financial support from governing body
- 3. Financial support from club
- 4. Material support (clothing, equipment etc.) from governing body
- 5. Material support from club

Yes	No

35. Do the mentioned biases in Q. 40 and 41 any way affect you athletic performance ?

1) Yes 2) No.

36. If Yes, what have you done?

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G : INTERPLAY BETWEEN SOCIO-PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT OF GAMES, FACILITIES AND PERFORMANCE

37. Are you in any form of paid employment? (1) Yes (2) No
38. If No in Q.44, what is your occupation?
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39. Are you in any financial agreements with your sport club? 1) Yes (2) No
40 Explain (specify terms, conditions and amount)
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41. Are you satisfied with this arrangement?
(1) Very satisfied (2) Satisfied (3) Not at all satisfied (4) Not very satisfied
42. Explain
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H : CONFLICT OF VALUES AND PERFORMANCE

43. Is winning the major reason for your participating in sport. 1) Yes 2) No
44. Are your values consistent with the values of competitive sport? 1) Yes 2) No
45. Do you face conflicts in terms of what is important to you and what the sport requires?
1) Yes 2) No

I : MASS MEDIA AND FEMALE SPORT

46. What in your opinion is the current attitude of society towards female athletes in active sport.
1) Very favourable 2) Favourable
3) Very unfavourable 4) Unfavourable
47. Is the media (TV, Radio, Newspaper, Magazines etc.) unfair when it comes to the treatment of sports women? 1) Yes 2) No
48. What is your comment on women, sports and the media?
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J : PARTICIPATION IN SPORT AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS FEMININITY

49. In your opinion do women in sport fit the society's knowledge of who a woman should be? 1) Yes 2) No
50. What are some of the consequences (both positive and negative) you have

experienced by choosing to be an active athlete?

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51. Do you believe that women should be restricted to certain roles/duties in society?

1) Yes 2) No

52. Has participation in sport changed the opinion you had about what a woman can do?

1) Yes 2) No

53. Explain.

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54. To what extent has engaging in sport for you changed your attitudes towards what has always been said about women? 1) very large extent 2) large extent

3) very small extent 4) small extent

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS

- Their athletic history-what is their athletic background, when were they introduced to sport, which sport, at what age, where. Were there any challenges faced by choosing to be a sports woman? How did they cope with the challenges? What made them continue to be in sport?
- Job Description: How long they have held their position. What are their functions? Are they performing effectively and efficiently their roles. Are there any inhibitions to the full performance of their role?
- Requirements and demands to achieve and maintain their status. What did it take for them to get that particular position? Is it easy for women to be leaders in sport, what works for or against them in sport leadership? What abilities, characteristics, resources should one have to be a sport leader?
- Experience as sport leaders. Narrate various experiences as a leader. Have you encountered discrimination, are you fully supported by sponsors with regard to males, are your opinions and contributions valued.
- Nature and Organization of women in sport. What is women sport in Kenya like historically and in terms of strengths and weaknesses
- Interplay between women sports and the sport bodies as well as with other institutions like the mass media, government and non governmental organizations etc.
- Their perception on the athletes (female) and challenges faced by each. What is your opinion on present day athletes (women) and the future of women sport in Nairobi Kenya?